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Presbyterian Church in Canada



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AND
BIBLE CLASSES**

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REV. R. DOUGLAS FRASER, M.A.

Editor and Business Manager

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TORONTO



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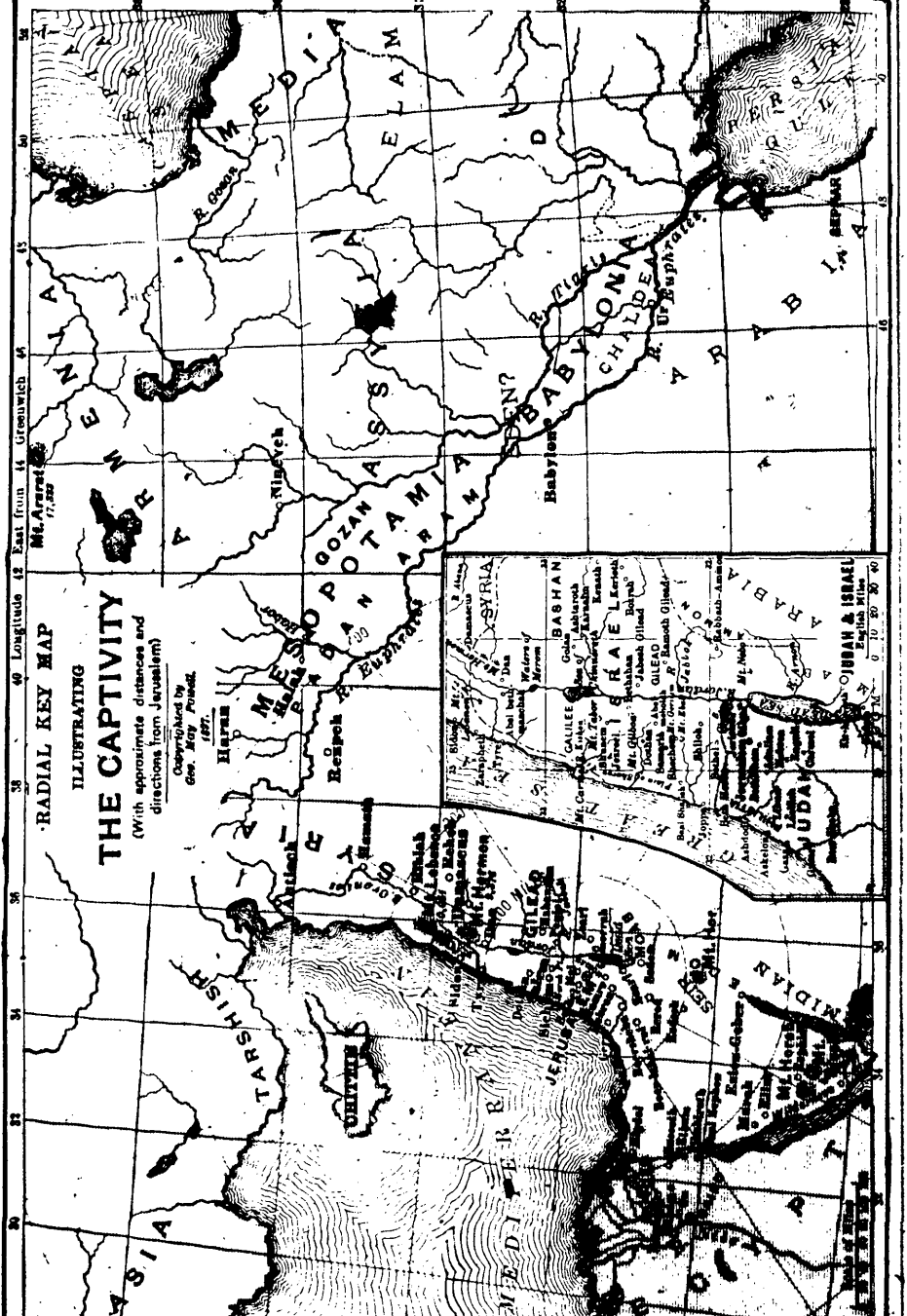
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THE CAPTIVITY

(With approximate distances and directions from Jerusalem)

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 Tarsish
 Haran
 Resoph
 Euphrates
 Taurus
 Amanus
 Syria
 Galilee
 BASHAN
 RAIE
 GILEAD
 JUDAEA
 ARABIA
 JERUSALEM
 MOUNT SION
 MOUNT OLIVET
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The Teachers Monthly

Vol. V.

JULY, 1899.

No. 7

WITH the present numbers, as promised last month, all our publications appear in a new dress of type, clean and clear, so that even old eyes may read with comfort, and that young eyes may not suffer. Our printers are at pains to give an attractive finish to their work.

PROGRESS is the keynote of the report to the General Assembly on Sabbath School Publications. There has been a large increase in the circulation of each one of our five publications, the total issue now bordering close on 100,000.

We are glad to have now an edition of the Shorter Catechism (without proofs) of our own. In finish and appearance we have tried to make it better than the best. We are preparing for an edition with proofs soon, so as to supply all needs.

We are getting ready also to issue an illustrated paper for the Little Ones week by week. The first numbers will be in good time for the New Year. Our hope is that all our schools may order this new paper—the children's "very own"—for the infant classes. It will be bright and pretty.

There are other forward steps in contemplation. A little later on, when our arrangements are completed, we shall give details.

This **TEACHERS MONTHLY** will reach many just as they are packing up for their summer holiday. Do not, on that account, throw it aside. The Sundays from home ought to be real Sabbaths—rest days—and it will help to make them so if you take an hour to go over the lesson, as if at home. One veteran camper we know makes it an invariable rule to get his boys together on Sunday afternoons under a tree, or if the weather be bad, in the tent itself, for an hour with their Sabbath School lesson and some hymns and a prayer. It gives a good taste to the Sundays.

Even as a question of how to get the most out of a holiday it is a bad policy to shut out one's quiet Sunday times. To say nothing better of it, the hour over the lesson, alone or with the children that may be at hand, breaks the monotony in a wholesome fashion. And then, even in vacation, the spiritual nature, not less than the physical, must be fed with wholesome food, if the holiday is to be recreation and not dissipation.

The S.S. Teacher as a Patriot

By the Rev. Principal Grant, D.D., LL.D.

1. Why should our teachers be patriots? Because true religion includes all life. Therefore, to ignore social and national facts and relations would be to degrade Christianity. It would make our religion possibly suited for ghosts, but not for human beings. "There is a great sibness," says a classic of the Scottish Church, "between the Church and the commonwealth. They depend one upon the other, and either is advanced by the prosperity and success of the other." Hence it is that throughout the long development recorded in Holy Scripture our obligations to the nation are enforced, and the privileges we enjoy as members of a community are prized as of inestimable worth. The patriotism of Israel was grounded in religion; indeed, the community was the religious unit. The Psalmists always reflect on the history of the nation, in order to stir up their own faith and to assure Israel that the God of their fathers is the living God. "Truly God is good to Israel" is their abiding conviction. "If I forget thee, oh, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning" is the passionate cry of the Psalmist in exile. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," is their earnest exhortation—Jerusalem meaning the whole community after the return from the exile, and includ-

ing, as we would put it, both the Church and the State.

Our Lord shared in these feelings. He would not have been a true man had He not been a patriot. For,

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said—
This is my own, my native land!"

One reason why the rejection of Him by the people grieved His soul was that He saw that their blindness involved their destruction as a people. How pathetic His lamentation, "Oh, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Was there ever an expression of patriotism so intense as that of Paul—"I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh"?

2. Because a lofty individual life is seldom possible apart from a lofty national life. Everything depends on the purity of our blood, and that is as much affected by the air we breathe as by the food we eat. Now, the thoughts, feelings, words, aims, ideals or general spirit of our fellow-citizens constitute the atmosphere in which we live, move and have our being. A strong man may, to a certain extent, live his own life, but his children cannot. The language of the school, of the playground, of the street, of the market, of the shop or farm will be their language, and will inevitably mould their inner life. "The child is father of the man." The boy will inevitably be pretty much of the same moral stature as his fellows. He will share their aims and thoughts, and, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Where the public life is mean, self-seeking, and vulgar, all are degraded; where it is high, all are unconsciously elevated Godward. This was the reason why a Greek or Roman citizen felt himself immeasurably higher than a barbarian chief. Therefore, let us not forget that when we do anything for the country we are helping ourselves and our children in the best possible way.

3. Because our national and imperial citizenship is the highest upon earth. There

never was such a world-embracing empire as ours or one founded on such spiritual and, therefore, permanent principles. The essence of the British constitution is the faith that men are intended to be free, but that they can be free only as they are fit for self-government. To be governed justly is to be governed in accordance with what the highest reason and conscience of the people decide and what is then formulated into law. All men are equal before British law, and that law is the best possible expression of concrete justice. All consideration of creed, colour or clime are calmly ignored in British courts. Only in this way can the public peace be ensured, for people will be orderly only if persuaded that their rights are respected by the supreme authority. More and more too our laws are becoming the expression of kindly consideration for weak, defenceless and oppressed races and classes, and of Christian regard for the highest possible development of humanity. Justice and mercy are the ideals of the Old and New Testament respectively.

Canada has gradually grown into what may be called the position of junior partnership in the empire. We not only govern ourselves, but we have now the responsibility of governing half a continent. We can do this great work only because the might of the mother country is united with our might. Our responsibilities must increase with our privileges and as we evolve into full imperial citizenship, we must gladly bear our share in the burden of the empire which stands for liberty, justice, mercy, and peace. Sharing in such a public life, our future is full of promise.

The Frenchman will die for "La Belle France," the Russian for "Holy Russia," and the German for the "Fatherland." The Irishman's deepest prayer is "God Save Ireland," the Scotchman's "Scotland Yet," and while the Englishman unites with Shakespeare in unutterable love for "Merrie England," "this dear, dear land," Americans have willingly died by the hundred thousand for "the Union." Are we less worthy than they? Can there be a more inspiring flag than ours?

Queen's University, Kingston.

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ORDER OF SERVICE: Third Quarter.

Opening

I. SILENCE.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.

SCHOOL. For His mercy endureth forever.

SUPT. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

SCHOOL. Whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.

III. SINGING.

IV. PRAYER; closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert.

V. READING OF LESSON, in concert or in alternate verses.

VI. SINGING.

The Lesson

I. STUDY IN CLASSES.

II. SINGING.

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

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS; SECRETARY'S AND LIBRARIAN'S DISTRIBUTIONS.

Closing

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

SCHOOL. And forget not all His benefits.

SUPT. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction.

SCHOOL. Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

SUPT. As the heaven is high above the earth,

SCHOOL. So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.

SUPT. Glory ye in His holy name.

SCHOOL. Let the hearts of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

III. CLOSING HYMN OR DOXOLOGY.

IV. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

Bible Dictionary for Third Quarter, 1899.

A'-bed'-na-go. The Chaldean name given to Daniel's friend Azariah; saved with his two companions from the fiery furnace.

A'-saph. A Levite appointed by David as leader of the praise of the first Temple.

As'-sur, As'shur. Also (Assyria) An ancient kingdom lying in the valley of the Tigris, to the north of Babylonia. Its capital was Nineveh. Its kings overran western Asia and carried off Israel into captivity.

As-a-ri'-ah. The Hebrew name of Abed-nego, which see.

Bab'-y-lon. The kingdom lying south of Assyria in the valley of the Euphrates. Its kings carried Judah captive.

Ben'-ja-min. The tribe founded by the youngest son of Jacob, whose territory lay between Judah and Ephraim.

Chal'-de-ans. Natives of Chaldea. In Daniel the name is applied specially to a priest class who were magicians and astronomers.

Cy'-rus. At first king of Elam to the west of Babylon, and then successfully conqueror of Media, 549, of Persia, 546, of Lydia, 545 and of Babylon, 539, B. C. A great soldier and ruler. Gave the Jews liberty to return and aided them in rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem.

Dan'-iel. The fourth of the "greater prophets"; carried as a lad captive to Babylon, through the fear of God held places of high trust through several reigns.

Da-ri'-us, the Me'di-an. (Dan. 5: 31.) Not as yet fully identified with any historical personage mentioned outside the Scriptures.

Da-ri'-us (Hystaspes). Belonged to the Persian branch of the same royal house as Cyrus. Ruled over the united kingdom of Babylon from 525 to 485 B. C. Aided the Jews at Jerusalem to complete the temple.

Da'-vid. Son of Jesse, and after Saul called to be king of Israel and Judah.

E'-den. The garden in which our first parents were placed at their creation.

E'-gypt. The country of the Nile basin in Africa, in which the children of Israel were in bondage for four hundred years.

En'-ge-di. A spring of warm water which bursts forth from the cliffs overlooking the west shore of the Dead Sea, near its centre, and a town near by.

En-eg-la'im. A locality probably on the N. W. shore of the Dead Sea, near the mouth of the Jordan, named only by Ezekiel.

E'-sar-had'-don. Favorite son and successor to Sennacherib, King of Assyria. Repeopled parts of Sidon and Israel with people from Elam and Babylonia.

Han-a-ni'-ah. The Hebrew name of Shadrach, one of Daniel's three friends, who with his two companions was saved in the fiery furnace.

Hag'-gai. A prophet of the Restoration, who stirred up the people to rebuild the temple. Wrote one of the books of the Old Testament.

Is'-ra-el. Name given to Jacob because he prevailed in prayer. Later given to his descendants, the whole nation; and later still to the kingdom of the Ten Tribes.

Jer-emi'-ah. Born of a priestly family at Anathoth, and prophesied from 626 to 586, B. C., the period before and during the exile.

Jer-u'-sa-lem. The Holy City, capital of all Israel, and after the separation, of the kingdom of Judah.

Josh'-u-a (or Jesh'-u-a). The High Priest of the people in the time of the Restoration.

Jos'-e-dech. The father of Joshua, the High Priest of the Restoration.

Ju'-dah. The fourth son of Jacob and the tribe springing from him. After the division of the kingdom, the name was applied to the southern division, which included Judah and Benjamin, with a portion of Simeon and Dan, and had Jerusalem as its capital.

Leb'-a-non. A mountain range in the north of Palestine.

Le'-vites. Descendants of Levi, the third son of Jacob by Leah; set apart for the service of the Sanctuary. The family of Aaron, to whom the priesthood was appropriated, was of the tribe of Levi.

Medes. One of the most powerful nations of western Asia and forming one of the most important portions of the kingdom of Cyrus.

Me'-shach, Mi'-sha-el. The Chaldean name given to one of Daniel's three companions and who was miraculously preserved in the fiery furnace.

Mith'-re-dath. The treasurer of Cyrus, King of Babylon, at the time of the Restoration.

Neb'-u-chad-nes'-zar (Nebuchadrezzar). The great King of Babylon who besieged Jerusalem and carried Judah captive, and who built up Babylon in glory and pride.

Per'-sia. A kingdom lying east of Babylon whose kings overcame Babylon and ruled over all the western part of Asia.

Sha'-drach. The Chaldean name for Hananiah, which see.

She-al'-ti-el. The father of Zerubbabel, the ruler of Judah in the Restoration.

Shesh-bar'-zar. The Persian name of Zerubbabel, the Prince of the Jews in the Restoration, who ruled over the state and supervised the building of the temple.

Zer-ub'-ba-bel. See Sheshbazzar.

International Bible Lessons

Studies in the Old Testament

LESSON CALENDAR: THIRD QUARTER

1. July 2	Gracious Invitations. Hosea 14: 1-9.
2. July 9	Daniel in Babylon. Daniel 1: 8-21.
3. July 16	The Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace. Daniel 3: 14-28.
4. July 23	The Handwriting on the Wall. Daniel 5: 17-31.
5. July 30	Daniel in the Den of Lions. Daniel 6: 10-23.
6. August 6	The New Heart. Ezekiel 36: 25-30.
7. August 13	Ezekiel's Great Vision. Ezekiel 37: 1-14.
8. August 20	The River of Salvation. Ezekiel 47: 1-12.
9. August 27	Returning from Captivity. Ezra 1: 1-11.
10. September 3	Rebuilding the Temple. Ezra 3: 10-4: 5.
11. September 10	Encouraging the Builders. Haggai 2: 1-9.
12. September 17	Power Through the Spirit. Zechariah 4: 1-14.
13. September 24	REVIEW.

LESSON I.

GRACIOUS INVITATIONS

July 2, 1899

Hosea 11: 1-9. Commit to memory vs. 4-7. Read 10: 1-13.

1 O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.
 2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.
 3 As Asshur shall not save us: we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, *Ye are our gods*: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.
 4 I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.
 5 I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.
 7 They that dwell under his shadow shall return: they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.
 8 Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.
 9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things, prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

Revised Version—Return unto; 2 Accept that which is good; so will we render as bullocks the offering of our lips; 3 Blossom; 4 Margin, O Ephraim, what, etc.; 5 I have answered, and will regard him.

GOLDEN TEXT

"Come, and let us turn unto the Lord." Hos. 6: 1.

DAILY READINGS*

- M.—Hosea 14. Gracious invitations.
 T.—Hosea 2: 16-23. Precious promises.
 W.—Isa. 1: 16-20. "Come now."
 Th.—Jer. 3: 12-19. Proclamation of pardon.
 F.—Joel 2: 12-19. Turning with the heart.
 S.—Matt. 11: 25-30. The Saviour's invitation.
 S.—1 John 1. Confession and pardon.

*The Daily Readings throughout the year are those of the International Bible Reading Association, by whose courtesy they are here used.

TIME

About the middle of the eighth century, B.C., close to the time of the founding of the city of Rome.

PLACE

The kingdom of Israel, of which Samaria was the capital.

CATECHISM

Q. 63. Which is the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment is, Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

LESSON PLAN

A DIALOGUE

- I. The Prophet, 1, 2. Calls to repentance.
- II. The People, 3. Respond by a vow.
- III. The Lord, 4-6. Makes gracious promises.
- IV. The Prophet, 7. Gives strong assurance.
- V. The Lord, 8. Further confirms.
- VI. The Writer, 9. Adds a final appeal.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—43 (Ps.); 161, 185, 189, 199.

CONNECTING LINKS

Rev. S. B. McLeod, New

The first lesson of this quarter carries us back to the closing lessons of the third quarter of 1898, and to the final scenes in the career of the kingdom of Israel. Under Jeroboam II., in whose reign Hosea began to prophesy (Ch. 1: 1), Israel enjoyed a prosperity unequalled since the days of Solomon. But wealth brought luxury and vice; and Hosea was sent to protest against the sins of the people. In the lesson of to-day the severe denunciations of the preceding chapters give way to a summons to repentance that is extremely tender and touching.

EXPOSITION

I. The Prophet Speaks, 19: 1; 2.

V. 1. *O Israel return unto the Lord*; a summons to repentance. The verb "to return" means to turn right around, to face in the opposite direction, to retrace one's footsteps. True repentance implies, not only sorrow for sin, but the forsaking of sin through confession (Ps. 32: 5). *Thou hast fallen*; made a false step, stumbled. *By thine iniquity*; by sinning against God (4: 1).

V. 2. *Take with you words*. They were to approach God, not through mere outward acts of worship, but with confession of their sins. *And turn unto the Lord*; with heart and life, as in v. 1. *Say unto him*. The prophet puts the words of confession into their mouths. *Take away all iniquity*; by forgiveness and restoration to divine favor. *And receive ungraciously*; with favor although we do not deserve it. The Rev. Ver. reads "accept that which is good," that is, the only good thing which we can bring, our penitence and our prayers; the broken and the contrite heart of Ps. 51: 17. *So will we render as, bullocks the offering of our lips* (Rev. Ver.). They will present their prayers, their confessions and their vows to God as sacrifices (6: 6). No outward act of worship is worth the doing unless there be the inward feeling to correspond. The appointed sacrifices are nothing to God unless the heart and life are right.

II. The People Speak, 3.

V. 3. *Asshur shall not save us*. They will no longer look to Assyria for help (12: 1). *We will not ride upon horses*; will not rely upon military forces. Perhaps there is a reference to the cavalry of Egypt. Egypt was the great heathen nation to the south, as was Assyria to the north, and there was an Egyptian, as well as an Assyrian party in the kingdom (ch. 7: 11 and Isaiah 31: 1; Deut. 17: 16). *To the work of our hands*; to the idols which they themselves had made. Isaiah gives a vivid description of the process of idol manufacture (ch. 44: 12-17). *Ye are our gods*. They will utterly renounce idolatry. It was the great sin of Israel. All manner of vice followed in its train. Even

the most abominable things were done as acts of worship. *The fatherless*; orphans, and, therefore, destitute and helpless (1: 9). *Findeth mercy*; the love of God that forgives and saves the sinner in his guilt.

III. The Lord Speaks, 4-6.

V. 4. *I will heal their backsliding*. Such is the Lord's reply. He will forgive past sins, and heal the injuries they have received from them. The word translated "backsliding" comes from the same Hebrew word as the word translated "return" in v. 1 and means "turning away from, defection, apostasy" (Jer. 3: 22). *I will love them freely*; that is, spontaneously, willingly. It implies liberality and abundance. *For mine anger*. The divine anger is not blind passion. It is the holy will of God directed against anything that comes between Himself and the love of His people. *Is turned away*; because His people are now returning to Him (11: 9).

V. 5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel*. His presence will be to them as the dew to the plant in the time of drought, giving new life and vigour (1 Kings 17: 1; Ps. 133: 3). *He shall grow; blossom. As the lily; in beauty and profuseness*. The fragrant white lily is common in Palestine, and so luxuriant that it often produces, it is said, fifty bulbs from a single root. "The Huleh (which is native to that part of Palestine) is very large, and the three inner petals meet above to form a gorgeous canopy, such as art never approached and king never sat under, even in his utmost glory."—(*The Land and the Book*.) *And cast forth his roots*; as the forest of Lebanon, or as the mountain of Lebanon itself. The figure suggests strength and stability. Lebanon "rises from great roots, cast out across the land like those of some giant oak."—(*G. Adam Smith*.)

V. 6. *His branches shall spread*. Israel shall grow in numbers, in influence and in power. *His beauty... olive tree*. Ruskin speaks of "the softness of the mantle, silver-grey and tender, like the down on a bird's breast, with which the olive tree veils the undulation of the mountains. The olive is always in leaf. The spiritual beauty which God confers is

abiding." *His smell as Lebanon.* Life shall be fragrant with goodness "as the mountain air with the scent of the pines upon it."

IV. The Prophet Speaks, 7.

V. 7. *They that dwell under his shadow;* under Israel's shadow. Israel is here regarded as a great and fruitful tree under whose sheltering branches other nations flourish. (*Keil*.) To be under the shadow of Israel was to be under the shadow of the promises of God. *Shall return;* to life, and vigor and fruitfulness. *Shall revive as the corn;* a repetition of the same thought. *And grow (blossom) as the vine;* in beauty and fruitfulness. *The scent;* fragrance. *As the wine of Lebanon;* which was celebrated for its richness and flavour.

V. The Lord Speaks, 8.

V. 8. It will be noted that *shall say* is in italics as printed in the Bible, which means that the words are not in the Hebrew and may be omitted. The Lord says, "*Ephraim,*

ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

O Israel, v. 1. There is not to be found, even in the Gospels, a more gracious invitation than *Hosea* here gives.

To realize how gracious it is one needs to read the whole book, and the history of Israel during that troubled time, from the reign of Jeroboam II. onward through the reigns of Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah and Pekah, the record of which we have in the fifteenth chapter of second Kings. Bloodshed and robbing are rife. There is no loyalty and no sense of security. The "iniquity of their heels compasses them about." The prophet lays bare the nation's sin and shame; but he wounds only that he may heal, he smites that he may bind up. What can exceed his tenderness, and God's tenderness here? The invitation is to repentance, to confession, to prayer, to thanksgiving and the assurances of a gracious answer are set forth under the most exquisite imagery.

Return unto the Lord thy God. The invitation implies previous departure. The call is addressed to the nation, but includes every individual, as well, who has turned away from God. They are invited to return

what has he to do any more with idols!" His repentance is genuine and complete. *I have heard him;* hearkened and answered. *And observed him;* looked after him with anxiety and care. *Like a green fir tree;* giving shelter to His people. He is the tree of life. *From me is thy fruit found;* all life's blessings must come from God (John 15 : 4, 5).

VI. The Writer Speaks, 9.

V. 9. *Who . . . these things?* Referring to all that has been said in the prophecy. *Prudent?* Literally, the one understanding. *The ways of the Lord;* His government and guidance of men. *Right;* straight; in accordance with truth and justice. *The just;* those who have returned to God and received His pardoning love as in vs. 1, 4. *Shall walk in them;* doing His will, which is life. *But the transgressors;* those who continue in sin. *Shall fall;* and shall not reach the end of the way, which is life eternal. See 2 Cor. 2: 16.

unto, not simply towards, but to; i.e., till they come to God, a complete repentance. They had fallen by their iniquity, yet not so that they may not rise again. A fall is only fatal that is persisted in. They may return if they will. The invitation is one that they can and should accept. It is given in good faith, and full directions are set forth for its acceptance.

Take with you words, v. 2. Not that God needs our words to tell Him what He already knows far better than we do; but we need "words" to make us realize how guilty we are before God, and how unworthy of the least of His mercies; words of confession and petition, words of consecration, words of praise and thanksgiving. Of the first we have a model in Psalm 51; of the second, in Pa. 110: 6; and of the third, in Pa. 103. Our "words" representing our inmost feelings, our very selves, are to be offered as sacrifices to God, words of confession instead of the sin offering, and words of thanksgiving instead of the burnt offering. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Pa. 51 : 17.)

Rev. J. B. Frazer

Ashur shall not save us, v. 3. This is the practical side of penitence, the bringing forth of "fruits meet for repentance," (Matt. 3: 8); the renouncing of all dependence on *Ashur* (*Assyria*) for help, on *Egypt* for horses (cavalry), and on dumb idols, the work of their own hands, to whom they had turned from the living God. They realize, at last, that it is in the Lord alone that "the fatherless (the hopeless and helpless) findeth mercy." And this is what every sinner must do in returning to the Lord. We all have our *Ashurs* and horses and idols, in which we have trusted and which we must renounce and abjure if we would return to the Lord and find grace at His hands.

I will heal their backsliding, v. 4. This is the Lord's loving response to penitence. He alone can heal the hurt of the soul, and backsliding is a deadly disease for which there is no remedy but His infinite mercy.

His anger is turned away. His anger, which blazed out upon them in their backsliding, turns all to love. What is more amazing, more affecting, than the love of God? How it is lavished on His prodigal sons, without merit and without measure!

As the dew, v. 5. What a profusion and variety of metaphors are employed to impress upon prodigal Israel, the graciousness of pardoning mercy! All that *dew*, the night mist, is to Palestine, burnt up with the sirocco blasts from the desert, we can scarcely realize in this moderate climate, so copious often as to refresh the thirsty ground like rain. How suggestive the simile of the dew! Gently, silently, imperceptibly it falls. How refreshing, beautifying, fertilizing, its effects! As the dry, parched grass and grain and flowers are revived by the dew from heaven, so poor, perishing, penitent children of God are restored by the dews of His grace, the baptism of His Holy Spirit. As the *lily*, waked from its long winter sleep into new life by the spring sun, grows into marvellous luxuriance of bloom, so the penitent child of God shall grow and bloom in the light of God's countenance. There is no earthly thing so beautiful as the "beauty of holiness." Whether the mountain or the

trees on the mountain are to be understood by *Lebanon*, the figure is one of stability. There is here the assurance of continuance, as well as of luxuriance and beauty. There are none so "sure of things" as the child of God. (Re-read these three passages: 2 Tim. 1: 12; Rom. 8: 38, 39; 1 Cor. 3: 21-23.) There shall be expansion and extension. *His branches shall spread*; a symbol of vigorous growth in character; *his beauty shall be as the olive tree*, which refreshes by its evergreen foliage and gives the additional practical cheer of food and light; *his smell as Lebanon*. The life of a true child of God is fragrant before heaven and before men, as the breezes from the pines and the vines of the Syrian mountain.

Dwell under his shadow, v. 7. Penitent, faithful, fruitful Israel shall be a blessing to others as well. How true to the life! It is said of our Lord when He sought retirement and rest—"but he could not be hid." There was an aroma of sweetness and helpfulness that went from Him and betrayed His presence. A Godlike man is a source of strength and refreshing to all about him.

Ephraim, v. 8. Ephraim had been joined to his idols (ch. 4: 17), yet now, by the loving chastisements of the Lord, he is turned from them and turned against them. True penitence renounces the sin repented of; it turns from its sin unto God, "with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience."

Like a green fir tree. One who has himself lived in a tropical climate says: "What the shade of the evergreen fir, with its low, thick, wide-spreading branches is, only those who have sweltered under a tropical sun can fully appreciate." A perfect shade, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. 32: 2), is Jehovah, our God.

Who is wise? v. 9. Very striking and solemn is this final challenge. The book is a picture painted in colors drawn from the eternities, a picture of man's sin and suffering and of God's judgments and grace. The lesson stands out, writ in letters that all the world may read—RETURN UNTO THE LORD. It is only a fool that will fail to see. And wise indeed is he who, seeing, observes. *The ways of the*

Lord are right; gracious and bounteous to all who seek to be Godlike, but as surely—and

just because they are right way—destruction to those who transgress.

TEACHING HINTS

First, pick up the threads.

The lessons now change from the New Testament to the Old.

For this quarter and the next the selections are from the later prophets. The eighth century B.C. in which Hosea spoke to Israel (The Ten Tribes) was the time of Israel's greatest prosperity. Wealth accumulated, luxury crept in and vice with it. The conditions were in this respect not unlike those of our own day.

The present lesson is the prophet's final word to the erring people. It is in the form of dialogue. Commentators are not quite agreed at one or two points as to where the breaks in the dialogue come in, but the Lesson Plan suggests the order that seems most likely.

There can be no more intelligible way of taking up the lesson than simply to follow the dialogue.

The Dialogue.

1. *The prophet speaks*, 1, 2; to Israel, God's chosen people, who have fallen into degradation and from God's favor by their iniquity. Put emphasis upon the fact that true repentance means to turn from sin as well as

to be sorry for sin.

2. *The people speak*, 3. They respond heartily. No longer will they trust to Assyria or to the Egyptian squadrons of cavalry, nor to idols of their own making, but, as orphans, they will look to God the Father for compassion.

3. *The Lord speaks*, 4-6. And very gracious are His words, healing, love, the turning away of all anger, the softly falling dew, the gorgeous lily, the steadfast Lebanon, the olive and the sweet-scented pines,—these are the emblems.

4. *The prophet speaks*, 7. In view of the people's penitence and the promises of God just recorded, the prophet repeats the assurance of divine favour in beautiful metaphors.

5. *The Lord speaks again*, 8. He addresses Ephraim directly, and likens Himself to the green fir tree overshadowing and sheltering.

6. Finally, *The writer speaks*, 9. And it is a proclamation to all the world.

The teacher will be careful in closing the lesson to place the emphasis where it is intended to be placed by the prophet, on the first verse of the lesson, the call to repentance.

TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. The dew, the lily and the olive.
2. The moral effects of idolatry on its votaries.
3. God's way with backsliders.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THE GRACELESS PEOPLE
THE GRACIOUS INVITATION
THE GLORIOUS PROMISES

LESSON II.

DANIEL IN BABYLON

July 9, 1899

Daniel 1: 8-21. (May be used as a Temperance Lesson.) Commit to memory vs. 17-20. Read the whole chapter

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

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

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

11 Then said Dan'el to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Dan'el, Hanani'ah, Mishael, and Azari'ah.

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

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

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

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

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

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

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Dan'el, Hanani'ah, Mishael, and Azari'ah; therefore stood they before the king.

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

21 And Dan'el continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

Revised Version.—1 Omit portion of the; 2 Made Daniel to find favour and compassion in the sight of the prince; 3 Youths which are of your own age; 4 So should ye endanger; 5 The steward; 6 Youths; 7 Hearkened unto; 8 So the steward took away their meat; 9 Now as; 10 And at; 11 Appointed for bringing them in, the prince; 12 Enchanters.

GOLDEN TEXT

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself." Dan. 1: 8.

DAILY READINGS

- M.—Daniel 1: 1-7. Captivity.
T.—Daniel 1: 8-21. Daniel in Babylon.
W.—Gen. 39: 1-6. Prosperity from God.
Th.—Psalm 1. The safe way.
F.—Prov. 16: 1-9. The upright way.
S.—1 Cor. 9: 19-27. Temperate in all things.
S.—Jer. 35: 12-19. The Rechabites honored.

TIME

B.C. 605-3, at the beginning of the 70 years' captivity.

PLACE

Babylon, to which the Jews had been carried captive. It was on the River Euphrates; and 500 miles east of Jerusalem.

CATECHISM

Q. 64. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment requireth the preserving the honour, and performing the duties, belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—100 (P.S.): 533, 263, 252, 260.

LESSON PLAN

DANIEL IN BABYLON

I. The Resolution, 8.

On Daniel's part and that of his three friends that they would not defile themselves with the king's meat nor drink.

II. The Opposition, 9, 10.

Of the prince of the eunuchs from love to Daniel.

III. The Experiment, 11-16.

Of pulse and water for ten days and then for three years (v. 5).

IV. The Outcome, 17-21.

None like Daniel and his three friends.

CONNECTING LINKS

Israel refused to listen to the warnings of Hosea, and the kingdom was destroyed by the King of Assyria. Judah survived for more than a century later. But about 605 B.C. the King of Babylon, who had overthrown the Assyrian power, attacked Jerusalem (ch. 1: 1). Among the prisoners carried off to Babylon were Daniel and his three friends. This lesson shows us how nobly they stood to their religious convictions at the royal court.

EXPOSITION

I. The Resolution, 8.

V. 8. Daniel purposed in his heart; decided to do the right, to stand upon principle. His three friends (v. 6) were with him in this matter (vs. 11-13). That he would not defile himself. Daniel and his three friends were selected to be educated at the palace

school (vs. 3 and 4). The motive was doubtless political. They would be valuable aids in governing foreign subjects. Their food, which they refused, was provided from the royal table (v. 5). The word "defile" would indicate religious scruples. Perhaps the food may have been prohibited

by Jewish law (Lev. 11; Deut. 12: 23-25). Or it may have been consecrated to idols (Acts 15: 29). Daniel knew, too, from the effect of wine upon others, that abstinence was the most prudent course. *The king's meat*; food from the royal table. *He requested of the prince*; whose name was Ashpenaz (v. 3). Like a wise lad Daniel first sought to gain his end by peaceable means instead of by open resistance to the will of the king. *That he might not defile himself*. This implies that he explained the whole situation, confessed his religious scruples and his faith in the God of his fathers.

II. The Opposition, 9, 10.

V. 9. *To find favour and compassion*, Rev. Ver. He gave Daniel those gifts of body, mind and spirit that won the favour of the prince. And we may be sure that the Lord, by His Spirit, inclined the heart of the prince towards His servant (Ps. 106: 46; Prov. 16: 7). *I fear my lord the king*. It might have cost him his life if he had directly sanctioned Daniel's proposal, and thus opposed the will of the king. *Worse liking*. The Hebrew word so translated means angry, then morose, gloomy, sad. It refers here to the emaciated appearance of the face as the result of poor living. *Than the children of your sort*; that is, as in Rev. Ver., the youths of your own age—those attending the palace school. *Endanger my head*; imperil my life.

III. The Experiment, 11-16.

Vs. 11-14. *To Melzar*. The prince, notwithstanding his fear of the king, seems to have stretched a point in Daniel's favour. Melzar is not a proper name, but the name of an office. The melzar was the chief steward in charge of furnishing the daily portion of food. *Prove thy servant*; try a change of diet for ten days as an experiment, and see what the result will be. *Pulse to eat*; such plants, or their seeds, as beans, peas, etc. *Then let our countenances be looked upon*; to see if they had suffered in appearance from the change of diet.

Vs. 15, 16. *Fairer*. Far from suffering in health, they, under the blessing of God, grew more beautiful and healthful than the

others. *Thus Melzar took away*. The experiment was so satisfactory that they were allowed to substitute the diet of pulse and water for the king's delicacies.

IV. The Outcome, 17-21.

V. 17. *Children*; youths. *God gave them knowledge and skill*. This may include special inspiration, as in Exodus 31: 2, 3. But all mental gifts are from God; and their diligence and temperate habits would, under divine blessing, help them to make the most of their mental abilities. *In all learning*. Babylon was the centre of the world-culture of the age in science, literature, and philosophy. Much light is thrown on the extent of the learning of the times by hundreds of clay tablets that have been dug up from the ruined library of Nineveh. A large proportion of these consist of "grammars, dictionaries, histories, geographies, and scientific manuals."—(Geikie). *And wisdom*; the power to turn their knowledge to practical account. *And Daniel had understanding*. He was specially endowed to receive revelations from God, and to interpret the dreams and visions of others.

Vs. 18, 19. *At the end of the days*; the three years of their college course spoken of in v. 5. *The prince . . . brought them in*; to be examined by the king as to their proficiency in study. It was what we would call a graduating examination. *The king communed with them*; talked with them to discover their abilities and progress. *Stood they before the king*. He was so satisfied with their attainments that he made them his personal advisers and the leading officers of his kingdom.

Vs. 20, 21. *In all matters of wisdom*; in everything which required peculiar wisdom to understand and explain it.—(Barnes.) *The magicians*; the priestly class who professed to read the future through dreams and visions. *The astrologers*; the Magi, or "wise men," who interpreted human affairs by the study of the stars. *In all his realm*; not in Babylon alone, but throughout the whole of his vast kingdom. *Unto the first year of king Cyrus*. Cyrus conquered Babylon 538 B.C., and two years later issued a proclama-

tion to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. Thus the seventy years' captivity came to an

A. M. Hambley

ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

Daniel purposed in his heart, v. 8. A mere youth, but already a leader; for his three companions did as he did. The key to his conduct is his fixed purpose of heart. There are some decisions which should not be open to reconsideration. Is a certain course of action right? Then there will be in every heart that is set on God's service an unalterable resolution to take that course, and an equally unalterable resolution to take no other course. This is not obstinacy. It is principle. It is the sort of iron that entered into the blood of our ancestors who opposed an unbending purpose to worship God in their own way to the determination of tyrants in Church and State that they should worship otherwise.

That he would not defile himself. The Babylonian notion of mental and physical development was different from that in which Daniel had been trained. They thought that luxurious food and drink were helpful to health of body and beauty of form. Daniel had been taught that abstinence and not indulgence was the secret of a good appearance. The hygienic principle is sound. It is better to be a little underfed than overfed. Both God and nature favour self-denial. Besides, he would be the better student for his plain living. To "cultivate literature on a little oatmeal" is by no means the least successful method. In practice it has given grand results.

There was more, however, than this in Daniel's purpose. He was in a heathen city. The food had been offered to idols. To eat it would be in reality to share in the worship of these false gods and so to be untrue to the God of his fathers and his own God. The stand he took was upon a religious scruple. The folly of many who have exalted some ridiculous prejudice into a principle to be fought for and suffered for, warns us of the need of caution here. We must be very sure of our ground. But, once sure that what we are contending for is indeed a principle to violate which would be to sin against God,

Daniel survived the exile, but did not return, perhaps on account of advanced age.

we should be absolutely inflexible. It is spiritual suicide to compromise with our convictions of right. The man who allows himself in such surrender is on the highway to ruin.

He requested. Daniel was as wise as he was brave and strong. He will win pleasantly if he may. He seems to have possessed that master-key to many a difficult situation,—tact, which is just the bringing of oneself into close touch with his surroundings. A most valuable acquisition and well worth cultivating. The Lord Jesus is the highest example of it. His tact never failed Him. It is an education in itself to sit down and go over the incidents of His earthly life, observing how intensively sensitive He was to everything about Him, and how, once and again, He won His way, as into the heart of Nicodemus or the woman at the well, by this same delicate perception of just how to deal with each particular person.

Into favour and tender love, v. 9. Daniel had won the eunuch's heart. God's grace had wrought a sweet winsomeness in Daniel which could not be resisted. It is a mistake which some young people make that it is necessary to be rough in order to be manly. Here is a thoroughly manly lad, one who is prepared to stand like a rock against the tempest of the king's wrath, if need be; and yet he is gentle and winning in disposition and manner. The fact is that a certain womanliness is necessary to the highest manliness.

At the end of ten days . . . fairer and fatter, v. 15. Plain fare had done it. There was no miracle, except the miracle that any one may see in his own body who will refrain from self-indulgence in food and drink. The centenarians are always, whether rich or poor, people who have eaten and drunk sparingly. Every athlete is, of necessity, an abstainer. On this ground, young man, you are perfectly safe, but upon no other.

God gave them knowledge, v. 17. God's challenge to man is "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and His prom-

ise is that all else—the commoner blessings—shall come as a matter of course. It is well worth trying. Notoriously “the way

of the transgressor is hard”. Even natural law is against him. Just as truly does loyalty to God’s ways win heavenly approval.

TEACHING HINTS

This story has always been a classic amongst boys, and the teacher has, therefore, a rare opportunity.

Take time to make the scenes live again before the eyes of the scholars.

Here they are:

1. An invading army.
2. Bands of captives (amongst them Daniel and his three friends), wrenched away from their homes and hurried off over trackless plains to be slaves in a foreign land.
3. Daniel and his companions summoned to the palace school for training as royal counsellors.
4. The hateful proposal—hateful, yet tempting—of fare from the king’s table, and the anxious consultations of the lads about it.
5. Daniel’s fixed purpose (in which, following him as a leader, the others join).
6. The broaching of the matter to the prince of the eunuchs; the prince’s fear of

the king’s displeasure, and, withal, his tender side towards Daniel.

7. Daniel’s proposition as to the pulse and water; Melzar’s hesitating acceptance of it.

8. The anxious ten days.

9. The shining faces of the four at the end of the time; shining with the satisfaction of having done right and of enjoying the favour of God as well as with vigorous health.

10. The three years’ plain diet.

11. God’s special goodness to these loyal servants of His.

12. The examination before the king, with double and treble first-class honors.

13. The extended and prosperous life of Daniel—like a long, bright, glorious midsummer day.

This is the outline. There will be little need for much of exhortation, if the facts are made life-like. Personal incidents such as these have a way of going home to young hearts full better than many a sermon.

TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. The value of a fixed purpose.
2. The argument for total abstinence from the experience of Daniel and his companions.
3. God’s personal interest in the welfare of His servants.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Five Excellent Things:

A TRUE HEART

A WISE HEAD

A WINSOME WAY

THE FAVOR OF MEN

THE HELP OF GOD

LESSON III.

THE HEBREWS IN THE FIERY FURNACE

July 16, 1899

Daniel 3: 14-28. Commit to memory vs. 16-18. Read the whole chapter

14 Neb'uchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve ^{any} my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

15 Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, lute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made: well; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that ^{God} that shall deliver you out of my hands?

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Neb'uchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

17 If it be so, our God whom ye say is able to deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

19 Then was Neb'uchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace ^{six} seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

20 And he commanded ^{the} most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

21 Then these men were bound in ^{their} coats, and their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

22 Therefore because the king's commandment was

Revised Version.—1 Answered; 2 Of purpose; 3 My god; 4 That god; 5 Have no need; 6 Own one; 7 Certain mighty men; 8 Their hosen, their tunics (margin, turbans), and their mantles; 9 Aspect; 10 A son of the gods; 11 The satraps, the deputies and the governors; 12 That the fire had no power upon their bodies; 13 Hosen.

urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

24 Then Neb'uchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

25 He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like ^{to} the Son of God.

26 Then Neb'uchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

27 And ^{the} princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, ^{upon} whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their ^{coats} changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

28 Then Neb'uchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

GOLDEN TEXT

"Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us." Dan. 3: 17.

DAILY READINGS.

M.—Daniel 3: 1-7. The golden image.

T.—Daniel 3: 8-18. The fiery furnace.

W.—Daniel 3: 19-30. The fiery furnace.

Th.—Isa. 43: 1-7. God's presence in trouble.

F.—Isa. 41: 8-16. An Almighty helper.

S.—1 Peter 4: 12-19. Patience in suffering.

S.—Acts 12: 1-11. The Lord's angel.

TIME

Perhaps 20 years after events of last lesson, when Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Jerusalem and conquered well nigh the whole known world.

PLACE

The Plain of Dura within the limits of Babylon.

CATECHISM

Q. 65. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honor and duty, which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.

LESSON HYMNS.

Book of Praise—34 (Ps.), 530, 277, 276, 384.

LESSON PLAN

I. The furious King, 14, 15.

Raging because the three Hebrews did not worship his golden image.

II. The faithful Hebrews, 16-18.

Who will do right even if God should allow them to die for it.

III. The Fiery Furnace, 19-28.

Seven times hotter than "it was wont to be heated."

IV. The Wonderful Deliverance, 24-28.

The men safe in the fire, because God was with them.

CONNECTING LINKS

About twenty years intervene between this lesson and the last. The King of Babylon has become master of the most of the known world. To celebrate his victories he erected a golden image in the plain, of Dura, and summoned official representatives from all parts of his kingdom to the inauguration ceremonies (3: 1-3). Says Canon Tristram: "The site of Dura, still bearing the same name, has been discovered within the *enceinte* of the city, and the pedestal of a colossal statue. By survey it has been ascertained that the summit of an erection of this height (v. 1) could be seen at sunrise to a distance of over twelve miles. Now this is exactly the radius from the centre of that greatest of ancient cities: so that all the inhabitants could see the image." When the signal for worship was given (v. 7) the three friends of Daniel refused to bow before the image; and were cast into a burning furnace.

EXPOSITION

I. The Furious King, 14, 15.

V. 14. *Nebuchadnezzar spake . . . unto them.* Certain Chaldeans, moved doubtless by envy (v. 12), had informed the king that the three refused to worship the image. He at once summoned them to his presence (v. 13). *Is it true?* "Is it of purpose?" (Rev. Ver.) Have you done this intentionally, or is there some misunderstanding? *Do not ye serve my gods?* This was the charge brought against them in v. 12.

V. 15. *Now if ye be ready.* He will give them another opportunity of proving their homage to his god and their loyalty to himself. *At what time;* on the very instant. *The cornet;* a horn, either straight or curved. *The flute;* a favorite wind instrument. *The harp;* it resembled the modern harp. *The sackbut;* a stringed instrument with a sharp, piercing note. *The psalter;* something like the lyre. *The dulcimer;* a sort of bag-pipe. *The same hour.* The word "hour" is not here a division of time. It means literally "a look"; hence instantly. *Fiery furnace.* It would seem from v. 25 that it was very large, and open to the inspection of those at a certain distance. It may have been used for melting the gold for the image, or it may have been for the cremation of their dead. *And who is that God, etc.?* He regarded the God of the Jews as but one of many gods. But inasmuch as he had conquered all the nations, and inasmuch as their gods—including Jehovah—had not saved them, he concluded that he himself was superior to them all. (See the boast of the King of Assyria in Isaiah 36: 20.)

II. The Faithful Hebrews, 16-18.

V. 16. *We are not careful.* "Careful" is the old English for anxious, solicitous. Thus in Phil. 4: 6, "Be careful for nothing." The Rev. Ver. here reads, "we have no need to answer." It was useless to discuss the matter. The king's mind was made up; and their minds were made up.

Vs. 17, 18. *If it be so;* that we are to be cast into the furnace. *Our God whom we serve;* a reply to the king's proud boast in v. 15. *But if not;* if He does not see fit in His prov-

idence to save us. *We will not serve thy god;* a calm, dignified courageous reply. Compare Acts 4: 19, 20.

III. The Fiery Furnace, 19-23.

V. 19. *Full of fury.* He, the haughty monarch, could not appreciate the motives of these plain men. They had opposed his will and he was simply furious. *The form of his visage was changed.* In his excitement and anger he had lost all self-control, and his features were contorted with rage. *Heat the furnace seven times;* make it as hot as possible; showing the fury of the man. His fury, however, defeated itself; for the greater the heat the less painful would have been the death. Had not God preserved them, it would have been, at worst, but an instant's agony and all would have been over.

V. 20. *Commanded the most mighty men;* that there might be no possibility of escape. *Fiery furnace.* See on v. 15.

V. 21. *Bound in their coats, their hosen and their hats.* The Rev. Ver. reads, "hosen", "tunics", "mantles". They were taken just as they were, dressed in "large and loose trousers (hosen), a tunic or inner garment, and an outer garment or cloak."—Burnes.

V. 22. *Because the king's commandment was urgent.* The king would allow no delay; and the men were killed by the terrible heat in approaching the mouth of the furnace.

V. 23. *These three men . . . fell down.* The furnace was probably enclosed and they were thrown in through an opening at the top. *Bound.* The Babylonians were accustomed to bind with chains (Jer. 52: 11).

IV. The Wonderful Deliverance, 24-28.

V: 24. *The king was astonished.* He was astonished at seeing the men walking in the furnace and with them a fourth. *Rose up in haste;* expressive of his astonishment and terror. *Unto his counsellors;* to his chief advisers, the highest officials in his government. *Did not we cast three men?* The emphasis is on "three."

V. 25. *The fourth is like the Son of God.* The Rev. Ver. reads, "A son of the gods." It was no doubt the Son of God, "the Angel

of the Covenant," who so often appeared in the Old Testament; but the king did not know Him as such. His language is intended to describe his dignified and exalted appearance. In v. 28, he speaks of him as an "angel." Only one who was divine could live in the fire, as the king knew.

V. 28. *Come near to the mouth . . . furnace*; as near as the heat would permit. Convinced that there was a power greater than his own, or that of his god, he would undo what he had done. *The most high God*. He now acknowledges the supremacy of the God of the

Jews, in striking contrast to the vain-glorious and idle boast of v. 15.

V. 27. *And the princes . . . saw*. It was a public deliverance. There could be no doubt about the miracle. Not a hair of their heads was singed; not even the smell of fire was on them.

V. 28. *Blessed be the God*. He again acknowledges Jehovah as supreme above all other gods. *Changed the king's word*; the king's purpose or command. *Yielded their bodies*; willing to surrender life itself rather than disobey their conscience and their God.

W. Clark, London . ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

The story of the three young Hebrews who were subjected to so great a temptation, and who stood the test so nobly, has never lost its attractiveness and never will. The heroic will always call forth admiration, and especially when it is surrounded by such spectacular circumstances as those which are brought before us in this chapter.

The despotic Nebuchadnezzar had built a magnificent image, and to its dedication had summoned all the representative men in his dominions. It was doubtless with a political end in view that he planned this demonstration. The Church and State were combined in his person and government, and he probably thought that he would by this great festival more closely unite the various officials to himself. Among the multitude assembled were three young Hebrews, worshippers of the God of Israel. We may imagine how seriously they would consider the king's command, and how anxiously they would canvass the outlook. But whatever temptations may have beset them, the result of their cogitation was a determination to do what was right let the consequences be what they might. So, when the signal was given, with all the blare of trumpet and music of flute and harp and other instruments, and the vast multitude fell as one man in adoration of the great golden idol, these young men stood upright and refused to bow before an idol, the work of men's hands. They were not unnoticed, and certain Chaldeans speedily brought the tale of their contumacy to the king. The story

aroused his royal rage and he hastily had the young men summoned before him. Our lesson text opens with his question.

Nebuchadnezzar spake and said . . . worship the golden image which I have set up? v. 14. This Oriental despot could not bring himself to believe that these three young foreigners would dare to deliberately defy his will, and imagined that some mistake must have been made in the report that had come to him of their conduct. If, however, such madness has been justly charged to them, he will put their fate plainly before them. In his wrath he will be merciful. He was possessed by a very insanity of pride when he demanded: "Who is the god that shall deliver you out of my hands?" It is not often that a man is as outspoken in his defiance of the unseen powers as was Nebuchadnezzar on this occasion, and yet when anyone makes his plans without an acknowledgment that they are all subject to the will of God, he is guilty of the same fault. It is not necessary that we should always audibly declare, "If the Lord will," but there should be the spirit of submission, and without it, like this king of old, we shall be taught our dependence upon God.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego . . . not careful to answer thee in this matter, v. 18. How beautifully simple is the pathway of the man the law of whose life is the law of righteousness! The opportunist is ever asking himself which is the likeliest path to profit him; is ever balancing this against that, and is frequently in an agony of undecision. Not

so with these young men, for the way they ought to go is perfectly plain and they are not called upon to hesitate. Their faith is that God is able to save them from the fiery breath of the furnace, but they recognize the possibility that it may be His will that they should die. This is the sort of faith that a great many Christians are deficient in. Too frequently we are inclined to identify our comfort and well-being with God's will, and if they are disturbed we lose trust in Him. There are those who tell us that if we only have strong enough faith in God we shall never be sick and never be in trouble; but such people need to sit at the feet and learn lessons of right faith from these young Jews. They could die, and die by horrible torture, but they could not deny Jehovah. It is such faith as this that has moved the world,—a faith that does not count results when a matter of right-doing is involved. Would we could see more of it in our own day!

But if not, v. 18. "These three words are among the sublimest uttered in all Scripture. They represent the truth that the man who truly trusts in God will continue to say even to the end, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' They are the triumph of faith over adverse circumstances."—(Farrar.)

Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury . . . into the burning fiery furnace, vs. 19, 20. Here we have a strong presentation of the limitations of man's power. Had the tyrant had his own way, and these young men gone to their death, their deliverance would only have been the swifter because of his rage. His most furious anger only displayed how weak he was. It has always been so, and no tyrant has ever devised a plan by which he could completely hold his fellow-mortal in bondage. At the worst there is God's servant, death, to free from tyranny.

Then comes the wonderful sequel. The soldiers who cast the three young men into the furnace were themselves slain by the fiery flame that leaped forth, but the three

young men walked unhurt in its blazing avenues, and with them there walked a fourth like a son of the gods. The whole story reminds one of Browning's "Instants Tyrannus," wherein we have depicted the way in which a mighty king set himself to destroy one among his million or two of subjects. He hemmed him around so that there seemed no escape, and then looked on to enjoy the end.

When sudden . . . how think ye, the end?
Did I say "without friend"?
Say rather, from marge to blue marge
The whole sky grew his targe
With the sun's self for visible boss,
While an Arm ran across
Which the earth heaved beneath like a
breast
Where the wretch was safe prest.
Do you see? Just my vengeance complete,
The man sprang to his feet,
Stood erect, caught at God's skirts and
prayed
So, I was afraid.

It is not a passage for exposition of every detail. These glorious lessons shine out resplendent:

1. To be a true man and do God's will regardless of consequences is the thing that makes heroes.

2. God never forgets His servants, and whether He is seen or not, the Son of God is ever by the side of those who are faithful to Him, even though they walk in the midst of the fire.

3. Such faithful testimony as that borne by these three young men is sure to have its effect, and whether there is any such acknowledgment as the king made in our lesson, we may rest satisfied that good will result sooner or later.

4. The very same temptation is before young men and women to-day, and although they are not threatened with a burning fiery furnace, they are threatened with the scorn and hatred of those who oppose themselves to God. It requires heroism to stand firm; but those who thus stand never lose their reward.

TEACHING HINTS

It is the fruiting season in garden and orchard, and the teacher might begin by asking a few questions of the scholars about fruit-growing. How are fruit trees propa-

gated? Why is the nurseryman so careful to keep each sort by itself, and when the young trees go out, to label each tree with its name? Because trees are true to their kind. What the slip is, and the young tree in its place in the rows in the nursery, so these will be when set out in the orchard and when they begin to bear fruit.

The scholars are considering whither all this talk is leading. Recall Daniel's three friends in last lesson and the brave stand they, with him, took for conscience and God. They were but boys then, but boys of the right sort. They are men now, and, as the lesson of to-day shows, they have remained true to type.

It is not always well to keep the "application" to the end of the lesson. There are often interruptions in the closing moments, or the class may have grown weary. Make the practical applications at whatever time you have the best opportunity. There could be no better opportunity than this. "The boy is the father of the man" is the gist of the application.

Now for the three Hebrews and their strange experience.

It is a lesson on faith.

It may be well, first of all, to bring out from the class what faith is; and with the eleventh chapter of Hebrews in mind it ought not to be difficult to find examples of what faith can nerve even weak men to do.

1. *Faith tested.* A fiery test truly; the flames for all who would not worship as the king commanded. Let the alternative be stated plainly, "Bow down to the image of gold" or "burn." The test was made the more keen, also, by the long waiting. It must have taken months to construct the image and to get the officials together from the distant provinces, and all the while, probably, the threat of the fiery furnace was known. It is a regal faith that can bear such a long-continued strain.

2. *Faith triumphant.* The hour had come. When the myriads fell down before the image these three "non-conformists," as they have been called, remained bolt upright. Summoned before the raging monarch, neither his fury nor the leaping flames of the furnace move them. The stories of the martyrs should be drawn upon for additional illustrations.

3. *Faith rewarded.* By deliverance; the very Son of God coming in person to walk with His servants in the flames. Rewarded, too, in Nebuchadnezzar's testimony to the true God. Bring out some of the great promises made to faith, as Matt. 17: 20; Mark 9: 23; John 11: 40; and, lest any may think such faith beyond them, dwell on the smallness of the faith (Matt. 17: 20, just quoted) which can accomplish such great things. It is this in the way of even the least to be heroes.

TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. Heroes.
2. The fourth one in the furnace.
3. The effect of faithful testimony to God upon the ungodly.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THE TEST
TRIUMPH
ESTIMONY

LESSON IV.

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

July 23, 1890

Daniel 5: 17-31. Commit to memory vs. 24-28. Read Chaps. 4 and 5

17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yvet I will read the writing upon the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

18 O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:

19 And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him; whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

21 And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointed over it whomsoever he will.

22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;

23 But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of

heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose ore all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

24 Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written:

25 And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHAR'SIN.

26 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it;

27 TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

29 Then commended Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

30 In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

31 And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

Revised Version—1 Nevertheless; 2 The kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty; 3 Because of this greatness; 4 The peoples; 5 Raised up; 6 His spirit was hardened that he dealt proudly; 7 He was fed; 8 Ruled; 9 Settled up; 10 Before him; 11 Inscribed; 12 Brought it to an end; 13 Purple; 14 The Chaldean king; 15 The Mede; 16 Received.

GOLDEN TEXT

"God is the judge." Ps. 75: 7.

DAILY READINGS

- M.—Daniel 5: 1-9. Belshazzar's feast.
T.—Daniel 5: 10-16. Daniel called.
W.—Daniel 5: 17-31. The handwriting on the wall.
Th.—Jer. 52: 12-19. The temple vessels.
F.—Jer. 51: 47-58. Prophecy against Babylon.
S.—Acts 12: 18-23. Herod's punishment.
S.—Luke 12: 13-21. Found wanting.

TIME

Forty or fifty years after our last lesson, probably 539 or 538 B.C., the year that Babylon was taken by Cyrus.

PLACE

Probably Babylon; perhaps Accad, where, according to an ancient inscription, the "king's son" was when Babylon was taken.

CATECHISM

Q. 66. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment?
A. The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

LESSON PLAN

I. The King Rebuked, 17-24.

Because, like Nebuchadnezzar, he had lifted himself up against the Lord of heaven.

II. The Handwriting Interpreted, 25-28.

God's judgment on the king and the kingdom.

III. Daniel Rewarded, 29.

According to the king's promise (v. 16).

IV. Belshazzar Slain, 30.

That very night.

V. The Kingdom Taken, 31.

By "Darius the Median."

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—103 (Ps.); 331, 129, 131, 163.

CONNECTING LINKS

In the last lesson we saw Nebuchadnezzar at the height of his power. In this lesson, forty or fifty years later, comes the fall of Babylon, 539 or 538 B.C. Belshazzar is said to be king. He makes a great feast to his lords (v. 1), and holds a night of wildest revel. But the appearance of a man's hand writing upon the wall fills his guilty soul with terror; and Daniel is summoned to interpret the message so strangely given.

EXPOSITION

I. The King Rebuked, 17-24.

V. 17. *Then Daniel answered.* The learned men of the king's court had all failed to read the writing (v. 8); and, acting on the suggestion of the queen, Daniel was sent for (vs. 10, 11). *Let thy gifts be to thyself.* The king had promised him wealth and promotion if he could read and interpret the writing

(v. 16). But Daniel will do his duty without fear or favour. In v. 29 he accepts the reward at the king's command, but the promise of it influenced him neither one way nor another. *But I will read the writing.* We know from ch. 1: 17 that God gave Daniel special inspiration in the interpretation of visions, and hence his confidence in this matter.

¶ V. 18. *The most high God.* He reminds the king that God has something to do in the establishing of kingdoms; and relates the story of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 4) to impress upon the mind of the guilty king that sin must bring its punishment. *Thy father.* Belshazzar was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar. He was, according to recently-discovered stone tablets, the son of King Nabonidus, one of the successors of Nebuchadnezzar. The term "father" is often used loosely in Hebrew, sometimes being equal to grandfather. The relationship is not known.

V. 19. *And for the majesty that he gave him;* on account of the greatness and the power that he conferred on him. *All peoples and nations.* The empire of Babylon was made up of different nations speaking different languages. *Trembled and feared;* stood in awe of him. *Whom he would he slew;* and . . . *alive;* a true description of an Oriental despot, exercising the power of life and death over his subjects. *Whom he would he set up;* and . . . *down;* he promoted or degraded officers at his pleasure.

V. 20. *But when his heart was lifted up.* The Rev. Ver. reads, "And his spirit was hardened that he dealt proudly." (See ch. 4: 30.) It was the sin of self-sufficiency and of independence of God. *He was deposed from his throne;* not by his subjects, but by the providence of God. It would seem from ch. 4: 34, where the king says, "My understanding returned unto me," that he was afflicted with insanity.

V. 21. *Was driven from the sons of men;* from their society. It is generally agreed that he was afflicted with a form of madness "in which the habits of animals are in some form assumed by the insane person. Instances of those afflicted in this way eating grass, leaves, twigs, etc., like the great king, are familiar to medical men."—(Griek.) *Till he knew, etc.;* that God was over all and above all. This does not imply that he did not believe in other deities. But he acknowledged Jehovah as supreme (4: 34).

V. 22. *And thou his son.* See note on v. 18. *Hast not humbled thine heart. Past*

warnings were lost upon him in his pride. *Though thou knewest all this.* He had not sinned in ignorance. Hence his guilt was the greater.

V. 23. *But hast lifted up thyself.* He exalted himself in defiance of God. He had done this all his lifetime; but there was special defiance in the profane use of the sacred vessels of the Temple. *Have brought the vessels of his house;* from the place where they had been kept (doubtless the temple of Bel) since the conqueror had brought them from Jerusalem (2 Chron. 36: 18.) *Drank wine in them;* as an insult to God. *In whose hand thy breath is.* His life was in God's power. *And whose are all thy ways.* God had power over the whole course of his life. *Hast thou not glorified;* by humble submission to His will.

V. 24. *Then;* when it was seen that warnings were in vain. *The part of a man's hand,* the fingers mentioned in v. 5. *And this is the writing that is written.* The characters may have been in Hebrew, and, therefore, familiar to Daniel, though not to the learned men of Babylon. But see notes on v. 17.

II. The Handwriting on the Wall, 25-28.

MENE; numbered. *TEKEL;* weighed. *UPHARSIN;* divisions. *Numbered thy kingdom;* counted out the allotted term. *And finished it.* The last day of its existence has come. *Thou art weighed;* in the scales of divine judgment. *Found wanting;* light of weight; morally and spiritually deficient. *PERES* is the singular, whilst "*UPHARSIN*" is the plural with "*U*" prefixed. *Thy kingdom is divided;* rent asunder, destroyed.

III. Daniel Rewarded, 29.

Clothed Daniel with scarlet; as promised in v. 16. Scarlet was the color usually worn by persons of rank. *Chain of gold;* indicating rank and authority. *The third ruler in the kingdom.* The tablets say that Nabonidus was king. Belshazzar, called king in 5: 1, may have been only associated with his father in the government, and, therefore, the second ruler, the "Crown Prince." Daniel was to be the third ruler.

IV. Belshazzar Slain, 30.

In that night was Belshazzar . . . slain.

Cyrus, king of the Medes and Persians, took the city 538 B.C. Herodotus says that by cutting a canal he changed the course of the river that flowed through the city and entered by night by the river-bed.

V. The Kingdom Taken, 3.

Darius the Median. No such person is known in history outside of the Bible, as a little while ago Sargon and the Hittites were not known. More light will doubtless be shed on this by further discoveries.

ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

Rev. C. L. Smith, P. H. D.
(of the writing)

Then Daniel . . . let thy gifts be to thyself and thy rewards to another, v. 17. Belshazzar must have been surprised at these noble words, for his astrologers and magicians never used such language. They were too keen for gain to be guilty of such folly. Very noble is the unselfish spirit shown by Daniel. He will do right, gain or no gain; duty first, gifts and rewards afterwards.

Thou . . . hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this. It is easy to blame Belshazzar for his foolish heedlessness of so conspicuous a warning. Let us beware that we do not follow in his steps. There is nothing easier than to forget, or to make ourselves think that we shall escape, even if others shall suffer. God is too just for that, and God's ways of dealing with men are too well established. He metes out an even measure to all, and pride and forgetfulness of God will never go unpunished.

Hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven, v. 23. His over-weening pride was rushing Belshazzar onward with fearful pace towards his fall. The name of Jehovah had come to his mind during the feast, the great Jehovah who had dealt so severely and yet so generously with Nebuchadnezzar. It should have sobered him, but it did not. Even at that late moment, at the eleventh hour, before his destiny was blazoned forth on the wall by the mysterious fingers of the man's hand, Belshazzar might have saved himself and the state. Oh, the peril of not hearkening to the voice of God within! It is sometimes but a whisper in the midst of the maddening din of the baser things that call us, but His least whisper is of authority, and who is he that can afford to set up his own way against the way of the Lord God Almighty?

They have brought the vessels. This was the last straw. Belshazzar and his lords drank

from the vessels of the sanctuary, and that nothing in the way of profanation might be omitted, while the revellers drank their wine they "praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, wood and stone." Such sacrilege cannot go unpunished. There comes a time in the course of every sinner's downward way when mercy ends and judgment begins. The time often comes suddenly and when least expected. It should make us walk carefully, oh, so carefully, and so earnestly desirous to honor God in all things, to know that any other course leads us step by step, but inevitably, onward to certain doom.

Then was part of the hand sent, v. 24. It is pitiable to read of the king's terror when he saw the hand and the writing. The very "joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other" (v. 6). True, there is in every heart awe in the presence of the supernatural; but abject fear came to Belshazzar through his conscience being at last aroused. He remembered what God had done to Nebuchadnezzar. He recalled the sharp check his own conscience had given him when, a little while before, he was about to order in the sacred vessels for profane use. He has grievously sinned, and he knows it. A dreadful awakening. The whole story is infinitely sad. It seems to bring a cloud over this bright summer day to read it, but how else can God convince us of the awful nature of sin and how else make us turn away from it? May the good Lord cause our eyes to see its blackness and deceitfulness so clearly that even now we may "turn from it with full purpose of and endeavour after new obedience."

This is the interpretation, v. 26. It is Daniel, the spiritual man, who alone can interpret God's mind. It is only as we cherish and maintain our spiritual nature that we are

quick to discern what God says to us. How shall this be done? By preserving a wholesome fear of God and a conscience void of offence; by hearing and heeding every word of God. We speak a mean word or do a base deed, and the rush of hot blood to the cheek tells of the sense of shame. Or there is a twinge of conscience, in which we recognize the voice of God. Let us give heed at once while we understand. If we do not, the nature becomes less sensitive and susceptible to good influences; the heart grows harder, the spiritual sight duller. The process has begun which, if not arrested,

brings up at last at the mile post marked "Past Feeling." It is not very far then to the dungeon "No Hope."

Found wanting, v. 27. Words solemn and searching; and Oh! so sad; found wanting by the Judge of all the earth. And there was no need that it should have been so. If we shall be found wanting when we stand before that same just Judge, the bitterest drop in the cup of woe will be that we are "without excuse." No one need be found wanting who accepts the mercy God offers him and walks according to the guidance God is ready to give.

TEACHING HINTS

The book of Daniel affords very striking situations. There can be no complaint of lack of variety.

This lesson is a sad one, but one that is ever needed; for both men and nations are prone to forget.

The Golden Text contains the gist of the lesson, which may be taken up verse by verse and under the headings as indicated in the LESSON PLAN.

The following method may also be made impressive, especially with a Senior Class;

Here is a prince in the splendour of a palace, and in the maddest whirl of debauchery suddenly brought to judgment. (The teacher should take pains to bring out Belshazzar and his surroundings with the utmost vividness.)

1. The judgment was preceded by warnings.

Shew in detail what these were, and how distinct and pointed each was.

2. The sentence;

It is short, sharp and final. It is also reasonable and just. Belshazzar had had his opportunity. He has been put in the scales. He is found wanting. The kingdom, too; it had followed its princes in evil. They and it must alike pay the penalty.

3. The doom.

"In that night." Yes! very certainly and swiftly the blow fell,—Belshazzar slain and the kingdom transferred into safer hands before the morning broke.

Two practical lessons should be lodged in the minds of the scholars, so that they can never be dislodged.

(1) That neither nations nor individuals can afford to defy God.

(2) That the longest day of mercy has an ending. Nor should it be forgotten that the longer the day, the more swiftly and suddenly will the night fall.

TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. The feast. (A brief description.)
2. The handwriting on the wall.
3. What doth every sin deserve?

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THE LORD AS JUDGE

WARNS CLEARLY
 WAITS PATIENTLY
 SPEAKS PLAINLY
 STRIKES SWIFTLY

LESSON V.

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

July 30, 1899

Daniel 6 : 10-23. Commit to memory vs. 21-23. Read the whole chapter.

10 Now when Dan'el knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jeru'salem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

11 Then these men assembled, and found Dan'el praying and making supplication before his God.

12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Dan'el, which is of the children of the captivity of Jud'ah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeas'd with himself, and set his heart on Dan'el to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

15 Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16 Then the king commanded and they brought

Revised Version— Making petition and supplication : † Interdict : ‡ Omit with himself ; § Nothing might be changed ; ¶ To the den to Daniel (omit unto Daniel at the end of the clause) ; * For him omitted ; † Had trusted.

GOLDEN TEXT

"The Lord is thy keeper." Ps. 121 : 5.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Daniel 6 : 1-9. Conspiracy against Daniel.
T.—Daniel 6 : 10-17. Daniel in the den of lions.
W.—Daniel 6 : 18-23. Daniel in the den of lions.
Th.—Psalm 56. Trust in the Lord.
F.—Acts 5 : 25-32. God rather than man.
S.—2 Tim. 4 : 1-8, 16-18. Delivered.
S.—Rev. 2 : 1-10. Be faithful!

TIME

Between B.C. 538 and 536, the two years during which Darius was reigning under Cyrus.

PLACE

Babylon, where Daniel was in high authority.

CATECHISM

Q. 67. Which is the sixth commandment?
A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—97 (1's.), 233, 273, 278, 373.

LESSON PLAN

I. Praying to His God, 10.

Notwithstanding the king's decree.

II. Accused Before the King, 11-13.

By the envious plotters.

III. In the Den of Lions, 14-17.

To the great distress of the king, who had made the foolish decree (v. 7).

IV. Delivered, 18-23.

By God's angel and to the king's great joy, and "because he believed in his God."

CONNECTING LINKS

In our last lesson we saw the fall of Babylon and Darius the Mede placed upon the throne by Cyrus. He made Daniel the chief president or primé minister. This excited the envy of the other presidents and their subordinate officers and they decided to secure his downfall. To this end they asked the king to sign a decree that all his subjects should for thirty days worship him only. Daniel had the moral courage to disobey, and was cast into the den of lions.

EXPOSITION

I. Praying to His God.

V. 10. Now when Daniel knew . . . signed. He may not have known anything about the plot until the edict was proclaimed. If he had, it is more than probable that his influence at the court would have defeated the conspiracy. He went into his own house; in

Dan'el, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Dan'el, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

17 And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Dan'el.

18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of musick brought before him; and his sleep went from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Dan'el; and the king spake and said to Dan'el, O Dan'el, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Dan'el unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Dan'el up out of the den. So Dan'el was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

† believed in his God.

prayer and meditation. *Toward Jerusalem*; in accordance with his feelings of patriotism and religion. Jerusalem was the peculiar dwelling-place of God on earth. It was also in accordance with Scripture (1 Kings 8: 46-49). *He knelt*; an attitude of humble devotion. *Three times a day*. See Ps. 55: 17. *And prayed and gave thanks*. Petition and thanksgiving are elements of all true prayer. *As he did aforesime*. He acted in his accustomed manner. To have done otherwise would have shown fear and been a surrender of principle.

II. Accused Before the King, 11-13.

V. 11. *Then these men*; the presidents and princes of v. 4. *Assembled*. The word means "to run together with tumult," showing their eagerness to find Daniel at his devotions. *And found Daniel*. They went searching for evidence. His devotions, therefore, could not have been so public as some have imagined. He made no parade.

V. 12. *Then they came near . . . decree*. They lost no time in presenting their proofs to the king, and in reminding him of the law. *Decree*. The word literally means "binding"; then anything that binds, prohibits; then an interdict, a law. *Save of thee, O King*. The Persian kings claimed for themselves divine honours. It was thus easy for the conspirators to hide their real motives under the veil of honouring this divine claim. *Cast into the den of lions*; into a pit or underground cave where lions were kept, probably "to be turned out for the chase when the king wished."—(*Geikie*.) *The thing is true*. He stands ready to carry out his own law whatever the consequences. He did not then suspect that Daniel was involved.

V. 13. *Then answered they . . . the king*. They feel sure now of their victim; and at once announce his offence. *That Daniel*. They try to make his conduct appear in the worst light possible by referring to him as the captive Jew. *Regardeth not thee*; pays no attention to thine authority, but presents his petitions to his God.

III. In the Den of Lions, 14-17.

Vs. 14, 15. *Then the king . . . sore displeased*; for having so hastily and foolishly signed a decree that must be followed by

such serious consequences. "And he laboured . . . to deliver him; sought to find some way of rescuing him from the penalty of the law. Then these men assembled; to prevent the king from carrying out his purpose of saving Daniel. (For the meaning of "assembled" see notes on v. 11.) *Know, O king*. They take their stand upon the unalterable character of the law. They have the advantage of the king and they use it without mercy.

V. 16. *Then the king commanded*. He yields to the pressure of the princes. *Now the king spake*; as they were about to throw Daniel to the lions. *Thy God . . . will deliver thee*. The king was not ignorant of the power of Daniel's God; but he spake better than he knew. *Whom thou servest continually*; at all times and under all circumstances.

V. 17. *And a stone . . . upon the mouth of the den*; at the door or entrance. It was usual to close up sepulchres in the same way. (John 11: 38). *The king sealed it*. He affixed his seal to the stone by means of clay or wax. The princes did the same. *That nothing might be changed concerning Daniel*. Rev. Ver.; so that neither of "the parties could interfere to aid or injure Daniel without it being known."

IV. Delivered, 18-28.

*Vs. 18-20. *Went to his palace*. Anxiety and remorse deprived him of all desire for either food or pleasure. *Then the king arose*; in anxious haste. *He cried with a lamentable voice*; literally, "a voice of grief." *Is thy God able to deliver thee?* His feelings are divided between hope and fear. *Whom thou servest continually*. See note on v. 16.

Vs. 21-23. *O king, live forever*; a common mode of addressing a king. Compare "Long live the king!" *My God has sent his angel*; no doubt the "Angel of the Covenant" who so often appeared in the Old Testament, the very Son of God. *Innocency was found in me*. His conscience was clear in disobeying the unjust law. *And also before thee*. He had been truly loyal to the king. *Then was the king exceeding glad*; that Daniel was unharmed. *Because he had trusted in his God*. True faith is never disappointed.

ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

Rev. N. Haddon *Selford*

Kneeled upon his knees three times a day,
 v. 10. It is well to form the habit of constant prayer, of lifting the heart to God quickly from time to time in all the changing circumstances of the day. But it is well also to have frequent and definite seasons for prayer, when with deliberation we may review God's blessings and give Him thanks, examine our hearts and confess our sins and ask for all the things we need for our bodies and souls.

As he did aforetime. He did not court martyrdom. After the signing of the decree he did not obtrude his devotions any more than he had done before. He went into his chamber, where he would probably not have been seen unless he had been watched. Nor did he wish to be disobedient to the laws of the land. He was a loyal subject of the king and a high officer of the State, and in ordinary matters would gladly conform to the king's decrees. But this was not an ordinary matter. The supreme authority in Daniel's life was the will of God. His life ran upon the lines of God's will as a train upon its rails, and when God's will was plain, the decrees of an earthly monarch could no more affect his conduct than the whistling wind can affect the onward sweep of the locomotive. Now, he had no doubt that loyalty to God and the needs of his own soul demanded that he should continue in daily prayer; and so, when he knew that the decree was signed, calmly and steadfastly he continued to kneel and pray as he did aforetime.

This is a great example. In order that our lives may be strong and noble it is necessary that we discover and lay down for ourselves principles of conduct in accordance with the will of God. We should not elevate matters of indifference into principles, but where God's will and our duty are plain, we must be as immovable as rock. Neither fashion, nor public opinion, nor human law, should move us then.

These men assembled, v. 11. What had Daniel done to these men that they were plotting against his life? Nothing. He had simply done his duty according to his ability

in the sphere where Providence had placed him. But his ability was great and his fidelity was equal to it, and so he had risen to pre-eminence. And now envy pursued him. How vile a thing is envy! Here is a homely but accurate picture of the filthy passion (The poem is quoted from memory):

"A glow-worm sat in the dusk;
 As I passed through the woods I found it,
 Bright as a diamond it shone,
 With a halo of light around it.

A toad came up from the fen,
 It was ugly in every feature;
 Like a thief it crept to the worm,
 And it spat on the shining creature.

'What have I done,' said the worm,
 'As I sat here in silence nightly?'
 'Nothing', replied the toad,
 'But why do you shine so brightly?'

The law of the Medes and Persians is that no . . . statute may be changed, v. 15. If this was the law, it was a very bad law. Consistency is not a virtue in itself, but only consistency in what is right. If one has made up his mind wrongly he should not be afraid to unmake it; nor should he be afraid to break a vow if it is a wicked vow.

Thy God . . . will deliver thee, v. 16. This was a proper reflection for Daniel but not for the king. As far as the king was concerned, he had no right to suppose that God would interfere to prevent the consequences of his wrong action. And, as a matter of fact, the reflection brought him no comfort. "His sleep went from him." Happy is the man who, even in the midst of alarms, can lie down to quiet sleep, because his heart condemns him not and he has confidence toward God.

No manner of hurt was found upon him, v. 23. Do we always learn from this lesson that God will deliver His people from such danger as that to which Daniel was exposed, if, like Daniel, they trust in Him? We do not. In the early days of Christianity there was a time when every public disaster was laid at the door of the Christians, who were supposed to have drawn down the anger of the gods. If the Nile failed to rise and fer-

tilize the fields of Egypt, if the Tiber overflowed its banks at Rome, if there was an earthquake, or a famine or a calamity of any kind, at once the cry went forth, "The Christians to the lions!" In those days many a man as faithful and God-fearing as Daniel, was thrown to the lions and found no deliverance. And though, by His providence, God often keeps His people safe in the midst of bodily danger, it is not the common rule of His working to deliver them

by miraculous interference. A few times only in the history of the race he has done this, to help the weak faith of men and make it easier for them to believe in His existence and His power.

And yet it is still true that no manner of hurt is ever found on those who trust in God. Pain, sorrow, danger, a cruel and violent death, any of these things or all of them, they may have to bear. But none of these things can do them any manner of hurt.

TEACHING HINTS

Again one of the familiar stories.

Perhaps a good way of beginning the lesson would be to call up some of the memorable deliverances of the Bible. Moses, Joseph, David are sure to be mentioned from the Old Testament; and in the New Testament, a long list. This brings in the Golden Text, which should be written on the board and kept in sight during the whole lesson.

The lesson turns upon two D's.

1. DUTY.

It was by doing his duty to God and to men that Daniel had attained such a high place in the State. (Recall this from previous lessons.) He was a living example of the word of the Lord, "Them that honour me I will honour." (Dan. 2:30.)

His day of severest trial now comes. What has brought it on? Simply the doing of his duty, which brought honour and thereby roused envy. In the face of certain commit-

tal to the den of lions, what do Daniel do?

Again, simply his daily duty. He prays as he is wont. The act is sublime, just because it is so common-place. The common-place, when heroically done, is heroic. "I ought," said Daniel to himself. That was all.

2. DELIVERANCE. The king cuts a poor figure. He is tied hand and foot by his own hasty and wicked decree. How mean he must have felt (if kings ever feel mean, as other mortals do) when he said to Daniel (v. 16), "Thy God, he will deliver thee." What a night of it he had, and how ludicrous the "lamentable voice" with which he cried to Daniel when the morning came.

And the deliverance, how dignified! how complete! A picture of a great artist has Daniel asleep with one of the lions for his pillow. Without even a scratch Daniel comes forth. "No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."

TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to take the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. Envy.
2. Daniel as an example of steadfastness to duty.
3. How God keeps watch over His own.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

DECREE MADE
DUTY DONE
DEATH FACED
DELIVERANCE SENT

Primary Department

HELPS FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES, BY MISS JESSIE A. MUNRO, TORONTO

THIRD QUARTER

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Preview

For the last two Quarters we have been studying our Lord Jesus as the LIGHT OF THE WORLD, and as our Redeemer, SAVING US BY HIS LIFE AND DEATH.

We turn now for this quarter and the next to God's dealings with His people in the olden time before Christ came into the world as the Man of Nazareth. We shall see that God has always been gracious, and that even before Christ came the Lord saved all those who were sorry for sin, and helped all those who trusted Him.

In the lessons of this quarter we have

twelve instances of how THE LORD BLESSES AND HELPS.

1. He gives grace to the penitent.
2. He prospered a brave boy.
3. He delivered three true men.
4. He honoured a faithful prophet.
5. He protected a loyal worshipper.
6. He bestows a new heart.
7. He raises to a new life.
8. He gives the water of life.
9. He helped his people.
10. By giving them a king's favor.
11. By allowing them to build His house.
12. By promising to be with them.

By pouring out His Spirit upon them.

LESSON I.—July 2, 1899

GRACIOUS INVITATIONS, Hosea 14:1-9

PREVIEW THOUGHT: **The Lord blesses and helps**

Golden Text—Come and let us return unto the Lord.—Hosea 6:1

To-Day's Lesson Thought—God wants us to come to Him.

Introduction—Do you remember the twelve little story books we had last Sunday? Can you tell me the names of any of them? Who wrote them? Why did John write them? Have you told anyone these stories about Christ Jesus our Saviour?

We are now going to hear what God's people were like before Jesus came to the world.

The Lesson—Here I hold in my hand a letter, and the first word I see is "Come." How many ever got a letter asking

you to come some place? Perhaps it was from Mary's mother asking Jennie to come and play with Mary, or was it from Auntie or Grandma asking

you to come and visit? That letter was an invitation. I am going to tell you about some people who went away from their Father and would not speak to Him

nor love Him. He was so sorry they had left Him and was always inviting them to come back to Him, and He promised He

would forgive them and love them and forget that they had ever been bad, and would bless and help them.

I wonder if you remember the Bible story about Joseph and his brothers. (Recall story.) Their father had two names, Jacob and Israel. (Explain.) All Joseph's brothers and their children and all their relations who went down to live in Egypt were called the children of Israel. God loved them very much and took especial care of them. Do you remember how God led them away from the cruel people of Egypt who were very unkind to them? (Recall story.) God led them to the Promised Land, the beautiful land of Palestine, and gave it to them for their home.

They had lived so long with the wicked Egyptians that they had learned their bad ways (the influence of bad companions.) Show an idol or a picture of one. Can it speak or move or help people in any way? (Psalm 135: 15-17.) Would you believe? the people of Egypt made all sorts of idols and prayed to them and built grand temples for them. They called them their gods. (Repeat First Commandment.) Sad to say, the children of Israel disobeyed God and learned to pray to those lifeless

idols. They learned to do many other bad things also in Egypt.

God was very much grieved. He told one of His good wise men—the prophet Hosea—to speak to the people and tell them to throw away their idols and come back to their own true God and Father. Hosea begged them to give up all their sins and ask God to forgive them. He told them God would forgive and love and bless them again. They did give up their idols and said (Golden Text). Hosea said some words I want you to remember. (Repeat "For the ways of the Lord are right.")

Practical Thoughts—If we love anything more than we love God, we are just as bad as the children of Israel. Many boys and girls think more about their dress and their pleasures than of God. We all have sinned. God is always sending an invitation to come back to Him. (Through His Book, the words of parents, Sabbath School teachers and ministers). God wants you to come to Him now. Give the invitation to others also.

(Give each child an envelope addressed to himself, with the Golden Text written on a card enclosed.)

LESSON II.—July 9, 1899

DANIEL IN BABYLON, Daniel 1: 8-21

PREVIEW THOUGHT: **The Lord blesses and helps**

Golden Text—Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself.—Dan. 1: 8.

To-day's Lesson Thought—We should dare to do right at all times.

Connection—Do you remember the invitation you got last Sunday? Who said these words? What had the children of Israel done? Did God want them to come back to Him? Does He want us to come? Should we come?

The Lesson—Show some peas and beans in the pod and talk about the good, plain, wholesome food that makes us grow strong.

Something like these grew in Babylon, and people called it pulse. I am going to tell you about a boy who chose to eat pulse and drink water rather than eat the meats and rich food and drink the wine from a king's table because he thought it was right.

This boy's name was Daniel. We shall put him on the board, so that we shall think about him all the time. He belonged to the children of Israel, and lived in Jerusalem. One day a great king, Nebuchadnezzar, a stroke with a crown above it, came with his soldiers to Jerusalem and took a great many of the children of Israel captives

(Explain) and carried them away off to his city of Babylon. Among these captives were four little boys. One was Daniel. He was about fourteen years old, just a little older than most of you. How lonely and strange they would feel in this new city, taken away from their home and friends! (Name the other boys.) What funny names! When they got to Babylon the king changed their names. (Give new names.)

These boys had been well trained at home, and had been taught to eat good, plain food and never touch wine or strong drink. King Nebuchadnezzar saw that they were fine, healthy-looking lads, and very quick to learn. He said they must be brought into his palace and trained to serve him. He ordered that the lads should be fed upon rich food and drink wine (such as was used at the king's table) for three years, and they were to be brought before the king and become his officers.

Daniel knew that this food and drink would do him harm. (He remembered his own training.) Besides, the food had been offered to the idols (Explain), and Daniel thought it would be a sin to eat it. So he made up his mind he would never touch the

king's food or drink his wine. (Teach and explain Golden Text. Teach also Prov. 20 : 1 ; 23 : 29-32.)

God saw that Daniel wanted to do right, and He helped him. (Tell the story very simply.) Daniel had not only dared to do right himself, but his example helped others. These four boys formed the first

Band of Hope. God gave Daniel great wisdom. He knew more than any person in the whole land, and he lived till he became an old, old man; and had great honor.

Practical Thoughts.—We should dare to do right at all times. We have to fight with ourselves sometimes to make us do right (Example). God will help us. Learn to say no when it is necessary to do so.

LESSON III.—July 16, 1899

THE HEBREWS IN THE FIERY FURNACE—Dan. 3 : 14-28

PREVIEW THOUGHT; **The Lord blesses and helps**

Golden Text—Our God whom we serve is able to help us.—Dan. 3 : 17.

To-day's Lesson Thought—God takes care of those who love Him.

Connection—See! I am putting four strokes on the board. These are the four boys we heard about last Sunday. (Recall lesson.) These four boys continued to live in Babylon and, amongst all the wicked people, they were true to God and dared to do

right at all times. The king was so pleased with Daniel that he made him a great man and gave him many beautiful gifts, Daniel was not selfish. He wanted his three friends to share his good fortune; so he asked the king, and he made them great men, too.

The Lesson—The teacher should be familiar with the facts described in chapter 3. Make the scene very vivid. Speak of the sin of worshipping idols. What does God

say about it? (First Commandment.)

A man went about amongst the people shouting out the king's commands. (A herald.) Listen! He is telling them that, when they hear the sound of bands of music played on all sorts of instruments, they must fall down on their knees and pray to the

right. Now they are big men, and they are not afraid to do right still.

The king was very angry, and ordered them to be brought to him. He told them he would give them one more chance. If they would fall down and pray to the golden image—well. If not, they should be thrown

into the burning fiery furnace—a great cave with a fierce fire burning in it. They said (re-peat Golden Text). Then they were bound round and round with ropes or chains, and men took and threw them into the fiery furnace. (Tell the story.)

The most wonderful thing happened. The king looked in, and what do you think he saw? There were the three men walking about in the fire un-hurt; not even a hair of their heads was burned. The king called to them to come out, and

golden god; and that all who will not do so will be thrown into a burning fiery furnace. (Explain.)

Hark! there is the sound of music. Look! Everybody is kneeling to worship the image. No, not everybody. See! Three young men are standing straight up. Who are they who will not worship the golden god? They are the three boys who, with Daniel, sixteen years ago, showed that they dared to do

the people saw that the fire had not burned them. The king knew it was their own true God who had saved them, and let them worship Him and was very kind to them ever afterward. (God delivered Noah, Joseph, Peter, etc.)

Practical Thoughts—God takes care of those who love Him. Our God is able to help us. He keeps us from many unseen dangers. (Examples.)

LESSON IV.—July 23, 1899

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL—Dan. 5 : 17-31

PREVIEW THOUGHT : **The Lord blesses and helps**

Golden Text—"God is the judge."—Psalm 75 : 7.

To-Day's Lesson Thought—God blesses his faithful children.

Connection—Did we all thank God this morning for taking care of us during the night? We do not know what danger God kept from us while we were sleeping. Do you remember our story last Sunday about God taking care of some people who loved and obeyed Him? Who were they? Recall the lesson, the fiery furnace.

The Lesson—Daniel lived in the beautiful city of Babylon. It had high walls around it and a hundred gates of iron and brass. Nebuchadnezzar had gone to Jerusalem some years before and had taken the people prisoners and brought them to Babylon. Cyrus, King of Persia, had now come to take the city of Babylon. Cyrus had his soldiers all around outside the walls ready to take the city.

The people of Babylon were rich and very proud and thought they could take care of

themselves. They thought their walls were strong and that the soldiers could not get in. Nebuchadnezzar was dead. Belshazzar, a wild, foolish young man, was now king. (Describe the feast.) He wanted his table to look very beautiful, so he ordered that the golden dishes Nebuchadnezzar had stolen from God's temple at Jerusalem should be put on the table. He and his guests drank wine out of them and sang praises to their false gods. This was very displeasing to God, who is the only true God.

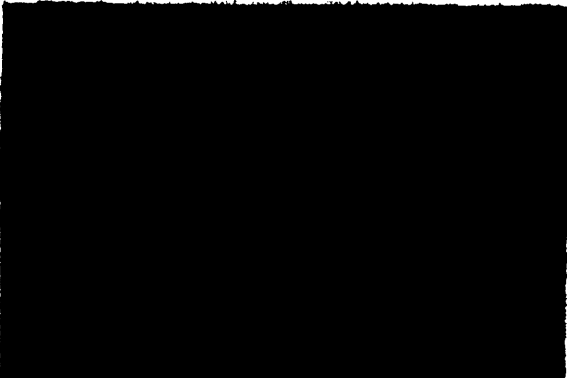
While they were drinking and shouting and praising their idols something very strange happened. Belshazzar looks up. A hand is writing some words on the wall. No one could see who was writing them. The king was frightened. He sent for the wise men, but none of them could

tell the meaning of the strange words. The queen said Daniel could tell. He was sent for. He did not fear the king's anger but spoke the words as God gave him wisdom. He told the king that the words were written by God to let the king know that God was angry with him and that God was going to let the soldiers from Persia come into the city and take the people prisoners and put the king to death.

This was to punish them for their sins.

Our Golden Text says: (Repeat.) God punishes those who sin and blesses those who love and obey Him.

Because Daniel was so true and wise, the king gave him a beautiful scarlet cloak and put a golden chain about his neck and made him the greatest man in the kingdom next



to himself. Everything came true that Daniel had said.

Practical Thoughts—We should be reverent in using things belonging to God's House (Bibles, hymn-books, etc.), or in speaking of God or His Book. We can warn people of sin and its punishment. If we are faithful children God will bless us. He may give us good things now and we are sure He will give us our reward in the beautiful heavenly home.



NOTE BY EDITOR.—The lesson for July 30, DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS, is held over for want of space. It will be found in the August TEACHERS MONTHLY, which will be sent out in good time for the last Sabbath of July.



THE BOOK PAGE

"That is a good book which is opened with expectation and closed with profit."

"What books will be helpful to me for this Quarter's Lessons?" is an inquiry from many sides.

We answer with a brief list, some new, some older, all readable and useful and all within reach as to price. It is taken for granted that such commentaries as Matthew Henry (never excelled for its keen, pungent common sense, and its truly evangelical spirit), Brown and Fausset, etc., are well known. The more critical works are not named. Most of our readers are too busy to go through them. They are looking for the result of critical study in brief compass rather than the processes by which that result may have been reached.

The Books of Scripture from which the lessons are taken are: Hosea (one lesson), Daniel (four lessons), Ezekiel (three lessons), Ezra (two lessons), and Haggai and Zechariah (one lesson each).

THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ITS CONTENTS, by Professor Robertson in The Guild Text Books (Paper, 25c.; cloth, 40c.; Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto), gives a remarkably clear and concise account of the authorship, contents, etc., of the different books.

GEIKIE'S HOURS WITH THE BIBLE is older, but contains a well-informed and readable running commentary. Vol. VI., "From the Exile to Malachi," embraces the whole period of the Lessons. (In cheap form, John B. Alden, New York.)

Professor George Adam Smith's THE BOOK OF THE TWELVE PROPHETS (2 vols., \$1 each; Hodder & Stoughton, London) takes in all except Daniel. Hosea is found in Vol. I., the rest in Vol. II. Critical, but easily followed.

FARRAR'S MINOR PROPHETS, in "Men of the Bible Series" (75c., Fleming H. Revell Co.) covers the same ground. Our readers will not likely agree with either of the two last-named writers in all points. Pusey's well-known book on Daniel gives the older view.

Hosea in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (\$1) may also be consulted.

For the lessons in Daniel, Deane's DANIEL, His Life and Times, in the "Men of the Bible" Series (75c.) is brief, but satisfying.

DANIEL, THE BELOVED, by Rev. Dr. Wm. M. Taylor (\$1.50, Harper & Bros.), is now old, but is excellently instructive and practical.

Professor A. B. Davidson's EZEKIEL in the Cambridge Bible (\$1.50) is very full, and Skinner's EZEKIEL, in the Expositor Bible Series (\$1), is a strong book.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH, by Rev. H. E. Ryle in the Cambridge Bible (\$1.75), and EZRA AND NEHEMIAH, Their Lives and Times, by Professor Rawlinson in the "Men of the Bible" Series (75c.), will be found quite sufficient, the one in the way of commentary, the other, as its title indicates, of a wider scope.

Archdeacon Perowne covers HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH AND MALACHI in one volume in the "Men of the Bible" Series (90c.), and Professor Marcus Dods, in T. & T. Clark's Handbooks for Bible Classes (70c.), deals with the same writers.

SAYCE'S FRESH LIGHT FROM THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS (\$1, Fleming H. Revell Company), with its numerous illustrations and its array of facts from recent excavations and discoveries, should be at hand, and two volumes noticed in THE TEACHERS MONTHLY in January, and from the same publishers, may be again mentioned as particularly valuable to those to whom maps and diagrams are useful, THE HOLY LAND IN GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY, by Townsend McCoun (\$1 per volume).

THE CRUISE OF THE CACHELOT. Round the World After Sperm Whales. By Frank T. Bullen, First Mate. (Pp. 379. Paper, 75c.; cloth, \$1.25. Toronto: William Briggs.) A fine sea story. Rudyard Kipling certifies it as "immense," which is high praise from such a quarter. The author knows the *cachetot*, or sperm whale, intimately in his native haunts and in all his varying moods, and will hold the interest of every boy, and every man who has not forgotten what it is to be a boy, from the start to the end of his long chase round the world after this monster of the deep.

BORDER LINES IN THE FIELD OF DOUBTFUL PRACTICES. By H. Clay Trumbull. (Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto; pp. 199, price, 75c.)

"Many a line in morals is like a mathematical line; it has length, but neither breadth nor thickness. As a matter of fact, such a line is not always easily perceived." How to see such lines clearly and to keep on the right side of them is the problem discussed, and discussed, on the whole, calmly, kindly, and wisely; for the author, the well-known editor of the *Sunday School Times*, is a man of wide experience and earnest spirit. The questions are the old ones, doubtful practices and amusements, but what the writer has to say is so good and so well said, and withal so beautifully printed—for the book is a very pretty one—that young people will read it with both interest and profit.

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