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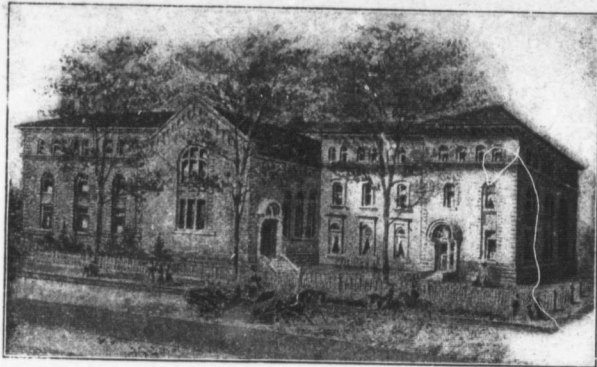
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For teaching material, Beginners' Course, see pages 472-4; and for the Department of Scripture in the General Assembly's new Teacher Training Course, see pages 475-7.

The Teachers Monthly

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

Vol. VIII.

November, 1902

No. 11

The announcement of our publications for 1903 shows that we are leaving no stone unturned to meet the requirements of our Sabbath Schools. Our series of Lesson Helps and Illustrated Papers is now complete, and there is no longer need to go abroad for material for any grade in the school.

"EAST AND WEST—A Paper for Young Canadians"—is the title under which our new illustrated weekly has been launched. It has met with a kindly reception. "Much needed," many say. "What we have long looked for," say others; and they add, "Our young people have now a paper they can call their own."

That is just what the editors most desire. They wish the young people from east to west throughout all our wide Dominion to feel that the paper is indeed their own, a paper which will not only seek to speak to them, but in which they may speak to one another, and in which all that concerns their welfare will find a place. In our land and our church we have a great inheritance, and EAST AND WEST will earnestly seek that the young people who are soon to carry the responsibilities now resting on older shoulders, shall be prepared to play their part worthily.

Rev. J. C. Herdman, D.D., and Rev. James Carmichael, B.D., the two Superintendents of Home Missions recently appointed by the General Assembly, are showing a very warm interest in Sabbath School work in their Western fields. Dr. Herdman says in a letter "written on

the train", "I feel specially interested in the Teacher Training Course, and as I am attending Presbytery this week, I shall hope to be in a position to discuss and recommend the Course and the training it should ensure." In another part of the same letter, Dr. Herdman writes, "I have not forgotten Sabbath Schools in my programme, and address them on the Sabbath at whatever point I am, and confer with teachers, and always question missionaries as to the Sabbath School work in their field."

"TILL THE STARS APPEARED"

By Rev. W. H. Sedgwick, B.A.

"We labored in the work," writes Nehemiah, "from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared." Nehemiah was a brave man and a patient. The little band, who wrought with him, caught the fire of his enthusiasm, and together they finished the work.

The task of life is soul-building. The soul is, at one and the same time, the gift of God and the work of man. It is ours to make or to mar, to develop or to destroy. In our best moments we know that the question of all questions for us is the question of character. In respect of this is our failure; in respect of this is our success.

When shall we begin? "We labored in the work," says Nehemiah, "from the rising of the morning." There is a wise man's saying to the effect that the training of the child determines the life of the man. As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined. The time in which to begin to build character is at "the

Calgary
Alta.

rising of the morning." It is impossible to begin too early. To lose one's youth is to lose much.

How begin? You remember what his brethren called Joseph? "Behold," they said, "this dreamer cometh." Is not that how all great souls begin, by being dreamers? The youth who arrives is the youth who dreams. The one who builds no castles in the air, will never build castles any place else. The way to begin soul-building is by dreaming large dreams. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." It would be time wasted to point out, how it was the vision of a restored fatherland that animated Nehemiah and his men. Rather, let us reflect that it is our visions that will make us.

But dreams are not in themselves sufficient. Soul-building begins in dreaming—how is it continued? "We labored at the work," says Nehemiah. A dream that does not carry with it the inspiration to strive for its fulfilment is useless. Nehemiah and his men labored at their wall-building; you and I must labor at our soul-building. Of what sort is this labor? There is, first, the labor of prayer. "We made our prayer," says Nehemiah, "unto our God." There is not much development possible for the soul that has not learned the hard and happy work of prayer. All true life is a prayer, and it is the strong natures that pray most. There is, secondly, the labor of watching. "We set a watch against them day and night, because of them . . . and half of them held . . . the spears." There is much sentry duty, for the enemies are many. From the cradle to the grave man must wear the armor and wield the sword. There is, lastly, the labor of work. It is work alone that will build walls; dreaming will not do it, prayer will not do it, watching will not do it; nothing but hard and heavy work will do it. You cannot dream yourself into a great soul; you must forge and hammer yourself into greatness. "We labored in the work," and the wall grew. Effort, earnest and untiring—this makes men; this makes great souls.

One question remains—when will our work of soul-building cease? "So we labored in the work . . . from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared."

"Does the road wind up-hill all the way?"

Yes, to the very end.

Will the journey take the whole long day?

From morn till night, my friend."

When life's sun has reached its setting and the stars appear in the sky, your life-work will be over.

"When the evening shadows lengthen

Thou shalt lay thy burden down."

Then, but not till then.

Shubenacadie, N.S.

THE TRAINING COURSE

Enquiries about General Assembly's Teacher Training Course are reaching the secretary of the committee in charge of this work, from all parts of the Dominion. It is already evident that the Course is meeting with much favor in the church from East to West. In many places classes have been commenced, and in others the work is being taken up by individuals. It is not yet too late for those who have not yet done so, to begin preparation for the examination to be held in May, 1903. So long as the supply lasts, copies of the *TEACHERS MONTHLY* for October will be sent on application to those desirous of beginning the Course. It may be added, that the portion of Professor Hamill's Book, *The Sunday School Teacher*, prescribed for examination in 1903, is chapters I. to IX., inclusive. Full information regarding the Course may be obtained from Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D., Secretary, Sub-Committee on Teacher Training, Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

TEACHER TRAINING

By Professor Walter C. Murray

XI. BOYHOOD

The child of six or seven has learned the use and control of the senses and muscles. Through his senses he has acquired a stock of sensations and ideas, which are stored in memory in groups of associations. Thus the foundations of knowledge are laid. The exercise and control of his muscles have resulted in the formation of habits. These habits are the foundations of skill, of power to do things. Childhood, then, is devoted

to the acquisition of associations of ideas and habits of skill.

Boyhood adds to the knowledge and increases the skill of childhood. The sensations and ideas of the boy are more numerous and varied and the associations between them are stronger. His habits are more deeply ingrained and more numerous. The difference between the knowledge of the child and of the boy may be illustrated thus: A toy pistol, as known to a child, is a long, black thing that is hard and makes a horrible noise. Blackness, hardness, and noise are so firmly associated together, that the sight of the color calls up the feel of the hardness or the sound of the noise. The boy knows more about the pistol. He knows its parts, how they work, how to take aim, what the caps are made of, what they cost, the different kinds of pistols, and the dozen and one things that make up pistol lore. Similarly, the skill of the boy exceeds that of the child. The writing of the child is limited to uncertain pot-hooks, dubious curves, and wavy lines that try to appear straight. The boy may labor over his writing or drawing, but the contortions of mouth and body are not so extensive and violent as those of the child. He has greater control of his muscles. His writing is becoming uniform.

This growth in knowledge and skill in the boy is accompanied by an increasing consciousness of power. The limits of knowledge and skill are continually expanding, and he begins to think they are greater than those of his companions. He begins to boast, and is ready to back up his words with deeds. He thinks he can throw a stone farther, run faster, leap higher, dive deeper, or swim longer than any of his peers. His possessions, his claims, are superior to his neighbors. His knife is sharper, is made of better steel, can cut a deeper hack than any knife in the company. He has seen more wonderful things, done more daring deeds, received greater floggings than any other boy in the place. The little girl is not a whit behind her brother in boasting, or in daring.

The spirit of rivalry is the chief character-

istic of the period of boyhood. When it is re-enforced by the hunting passion, the boy delights in outwitting wild animals. If he can trap the crafty fox, his triumph is complete. It is pure delight to catch the swift rabbit, to lure the shy trout from the depths of the pool, to spy out the secrets of the birds, or to deceive the wary crow. He spends his spare moments in devising traps or making plans.

Woodcraft requires more than observation of the ways and haunts of woodfolk. The hunter must be skillful in forecasting what the hunted will do. To succeed, he must anticipate their movements. This requires considerable imaginative power—the same kind of imagination that adds the crowning grace of strategy to generalship. When strategy is pitted against strategy, “that general wins who,” in Wellington’s phrase, “guesses most successfully what is happening on the other side of the hill.”

The imagination of the little warrior and hunter differs from that of the child. The child’s plays are reproductions of what he has seen and heard. The boy invents, constructs anew. This constructive imagination which is involved in forecasting, in inventing, is the prelude to the highest kind of thinking. In this the boy is preparing for the youth, who launches on the sea of abstract thinking.

Since rivalry is so active in boyhood, the question naturally arises: “How should the teacher treat it?” Should it be utilized or suppressed? Certain systems of education go to such extremes in using it that each boy is assigned a rival whom he is urged to surpass. Others condemn it utterly, and would banish prizes, rewards and promotions that cannot be won by one save at the expense of another; they even frown upon competitions with a standard that all may attain, though few do. The public school, anxious to secure industry and discipline, makes more use of this rivalry than the Sunday school. Sunday school prizes are usually given for attendance or good conduct, and are rather gifts than rewards. Is the Sunday school wise, or should it make greater use of rivalry for at least a limited period? While

imitation rules the child and is utilized, may not rivalry be used to govern the boy and sympathy the youth?

Competition or rivalry rules commerce and industry. It runs riot in politics. The excellence of the British constitution is attributed to the party system, to the use of rivalry. Every profession, even the clerical, is permeated by rivalry. There is competition and rivalry between religious denominations. Outside of the affairs controlled by man, the law of natural selection reigns. Here Nature has ordained a struggle for life. In every department of human affairs, and in nature, competition reigns. Should the Sunday school strive to suppress rivalry, or use it and teach the child to control it? Should the appeal be made to love and duty, in the hope that such appeals, though not successful in attaining their immediate object, may become more powerful later? However we decide, something is lost. If rivalry be banished, the school will become less efficient, the scholars will work less, be less attentive, and less obedient. On the other hand, if rivalry be fostered and strengthened, the boy will find it harder to follow the Golden Rule. Much is lost when religion and morality are "commercialized," when low motives are appealed to and material results are sought. Still, one is of the opinion that the spirit of emulation, rivalry to equal, might be appealed to more than it is in the Sunday school. Undesirable results can be neutralized later, when the "social instinct" becomes strong.

Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S.

WHO SHOULD BE ACQUAINTED WITH THE QUARTERLIES?

There are regiments of officers and teachers who never take the trouble to become acquainted with the quarterlies and other lesson helps that are put into the hands of the scholars. This is one of the things that ought not to be. About the first person to look into the quarterlies closely and sharply should be the superintendent; then closely following him should be the teachers. The superintendent should be on speaking terms with every lesson help that comes into his

school. He should know as fully as possible what the editor is driving at in its preparation. There are a dozen things besides the lesson exposition that he should see. If a teacher has charge of a Primary class, he should by all means know the Primary Quarterly from a to z. The same thing is true of those who have charge of intermediate and senior classes. It is always assumed by those who prepare these quarterlies that the teachers will explain their various features to the scholars and show the scholars how to use them to the best advantage. Part of the hour for the teachers' meeting might be profitably employed at least once during the quarter in discussing the lesson helps.—S.S. Work.

THE PRIZE STORIES

The offer of prizes of twenty dollars for the best, and of ten dollars for the second story for our new illustrated weekly, "EAST AND WEST, A Paper for Young Canadians," attracted a large number of competitors from many quarters. On the report of four competent judges, the first prize has been awarded to Miss MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL, Toronto, and the second to Miss ESTHER MILLER, Orillia. The prize stories will appear in early numbers of EAST AND WEST.

A full list of the lessons for 1903 will be given in the December TEACHER'S MONTHLY. In the first six months the Studies in the Book of Acts are completed; and in the remaining six months the period from Samuel to Solomon is covered.

Among the books to be published this autumn by the Fleming H. Revell Company, is one by Rev. Professor W. G. Jordan, D.D., of Queen's University, Kingston, with the title, "Prophetic Ideas and Ideals." Its aim is to set forth in a style suited to the general reader the varied types of ministry and certain ruling ideas of the prophets. This is a most timely theme and we feel sure that Professor Jordan, who is one of our ablest preachers and teachers, will give us a readable and instructive book.

The publishers of the supplies for the Beginners' Course have found it necessary to slightly advance the prices, so that instead of the prices mentioned in the September TEACHERS MONTHLY, the cost will, after 1st November, be as follows: The Beginners' Quarterly, 6c. a quarter, 24c. a year, postpaid. In book form, four quarters in one, strongly and prettily bound, 35c. postpaid.

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II. SINGING.

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IV. THE LORD'S PRAYER (repeated by the whole school).

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SCHOOL. I will abide in Thy Tabernacle forever: I will trust in Thy wings.

V. SINGING.

VI. PRAYER.

VII. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE, in concert or alternate verses.

VIII. Singing.

THE LESSON

I. STUDY IN CLASSES. Let this be entirely undisturbed by Secretary's or Librarian's distributions, or otherwise. The Teacher should get through promptly with roll-call, the collection (which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope), the memory verses, and the catechism.

II. SINGING.

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

CLOSING

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

II. SINGING.

III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPERINTENDENT. Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation.

SCHOOL. My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is in Him.

IV. CLOSING HYMN OR DOXOLOGY.

V. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

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BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR FOURTH
QUARTER, 1902

Ad'-am. The place on the Jordan where the waters were kept back while Israel crossed over. It is supposed to be the ford Damieh.

Am'-o-rites. A highland people who dwelt on both sides of the Jordan.

Ash'-ta-roth. The plural of Ashtoreth, a female deity of the Canaanites.

Ba'-al. The supreme male deity of the Canaanites.

Ba'-shan. The country extending from Gilead to Mount Hermon.

Beth'-le-hem. A small town in the territory of Judah; the home of Naomi and David, and the birthplace of Jesus.

Be'-zer. The southern city of refuge on the east of the Jordan.

Ca'-leb. One of the twelve spies, who, with Joshua, gave a good report of the land, and who received the uplands of Hebron as a possession.

Ca'-naan-ites. A warlike tribe occupying the sea coast of Canaan, and part of the Jordan valley.

Eb-en-e'-zer. "A stone of help"; the place where Samuel erected the memorial pillar, having defeated the Philistines.

E'-gypt. The country in Africa from the first cataract to the mouth of the Nile.

E'-li. The high priest in the early years of Samuel. He dwelt at Shiloh.

Eph'-ra-im. A son of Joseph, and the name of one of the twelve tribes. The name sometimes denotes the northern kingdom of Israel.

Eu-phra'-tes. A large river of Western Asia, flowing into the Persian Gulf.

Gal'-i-lee. A district in Naphtali where Kedesh was situated. See Kedesh.

Gid'-e-on. One of the best judges of Israel. He defeated the Midianites and governed Israel for 40 years.

Gil'-gal. A place near Jericho where the Israelites encamped after crossing the Jordan.

Gir'-ga-shites. A tribe of Canaan; place of abode unknown.

Go'-lan. The northern city of refuge on the east of the Jordan.

He'-bron. The southern city of refuge on the west of Jordan. See Kirjath-arba.

Hi'-vites. One of the races of Canaan before the conquest of the country by the Hebrews.

Hit'-tites. A powerful tribe of Canaanites in the north of Palestine.

Jeb'-u-sites. A tribe of Canaan dwelling at Jebus, that is, Jerusalem.

Jer'-i-cho. The city of palms situated near a palm forest six miles west of the Jordan.

Jer'-ub-ba'-al. The name given to Gid-

eon in connection with the incident of cutting down the grove of Baal. It means "let Baal plead."

Jor'-dan. The only large river of Palestine. It rises in Mount Hermon and flows south into the Dead Sea.

Josh'-u-a. The successor of Moses who led the Israelites into Canaan.

Ju'-dah. The tribe of Israel settled in southern Palestine.

Ka'-desh Bar'-nea. The headquarters of the Israelites during their wanderings in the wilderness.

Ke'-desh. A city of refuge in Naphtali. See Galilee.

Ke'-ne-zite. A tribe in or near Canaan which became united with the Israelites.

Kir'-jath-ar'-ba. The city of Arba, a famous giant. Caleb captured it and called it Hebron.

Kir'-jath-je'-a-rim. "The forest city," nine miles west of Jerusalem. The ark was there for many years after it was returned by the Philistines.

Leb'-a-non. A range of snow-covered mountains in the north of Palestine.

Mid'-i-an-ites. A nomadic tribe in North Arabia.

Miz'-peh. "The watch-tower"; a small town near Jerusalem, on a lofty mountain 3000 feet above sea-level.

Mo'-ab. The Moabites were descendants of Lot, and dwelt east of the Dead Sea, and northward to the brook Jabbok.

Mo'-ses. The son of Amram and Jochebed; the deliverer of Israel from Egyptian bondage. He led them through the wilderness to the Jordan and died at Mount Nebo, before entering the promised land.

Naph'-ta-li. One of the twelve tribes in the far north of Palestine.

Per'-iz-zites. Dwellers in unvalled villages; an important tribe of Canaan.

Ra'-hab. The woman whose family was spared in the destruction of Jericho for her kindness to the spies.

Ra'-moth. The central city of refuge on the east of Jordan.

Reu'-ben. One of the twelve tribes dwelling east of the Jordan.

Sam'-u-el. The son of Elkanah and Hannah. The name means, "asked of God." He was the last of the judges and the first of the prophets.

She'-chem. A city of refuge in the hilly country of Ephraim in the centre of Palestine.

Tim'-nath-he'-res. The burial place of Joshua in the hilly country of Ephraim.

Well of Ha'-rod. A fountain near Mount Gilboa in the plains of Esdraelon. It was about 150 feet in circumference.

Zar'-e-tan. A high hill which projects into and narrows the Jordan near the ford Damieh. See Adam.

International Bible Lessons

Studies in the Old Testament from Moses to Samuel

LESSON CALENDAR: FOURTH QUARTER

1. October 5	.....	Joshua Encouraged.	Josh. 1: 1-11.
2. October 12	.....	Crossing the Jordan.	Josh. 3: 9-17.
3. October 19	.....	The Fall of Jericho.	Josh. 6: 12-20.
4. October 26	.....	Joshua and Caleb.	Josh. 14: 5-15.
5. November 2	.....	Cities of Refuge.	Josh. 20: 1-9.
6. November 9	.....	Joshua's Parting Advice.	Josh. 24: 14-25.
7. November 16	.....	The Time of the Judges.	Judges 2: 7-16.
8. November 23	.....	World's Temperance Lesson.	Isa. 28: 1-7.
9. November 30	.....	Gideon and the Three Hundred.	Judges 7: 1-18.
10. December 7	.....	Ruth and Naomi.	Ruth 1: 16-22.
11. December 14	.....	The Boy Samuel.	1 Sam. 3: 6-14.
12. December 21	.....	Samuel the Judge.	1 Sam. 7: 2-13.
13. December 28	.....	Review.	

Lesson V.

CITIES OF REFUGE

November 2, 1902

Joshua 20: 1-9. Commem. to memory vs. 1-4. Read Psalm 46.

1 The Lord also spake unto Joshua, saying,
2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, I Appoint out for you cities of refuge, wherof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:

3 That the slayer that killeth any person ²unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And ⁴when he that doth flee unto one of those cities ⁴shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, ⁵they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up unto his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, ⁶and until the

Revised Version ¹Assign you; ²Unwittingly and; ³Set apart; ⁴Beyond the; ⁵Appointed cities; ⁶Unwittingly.

death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 And they appointed Ke'desh in Galilee in mount Naph'tali, and Shechem in mount Eph'raim, and Kirjath-ar'ba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.

8 And ⁸on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Be'zer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reu'ben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Go'lan in Bas'han out of the tribe of Manasseh.

9 These were the ⁹cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person ¹⁰at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

Revised Version ¹Assign you; ²Unwittingly and unawares; ³He shall flee; ⁴And; ⁵And; ⁶Omit unwittingly.

notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God.

TIME AND PLACE

About the time of the division of the land, B.C. 1445 or 1245; Shiloh, the religious capital of Israel during all the time of the Judges, a period of 800 years. It was seventeen miles north-west of Jerusalem.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Need of Refuge, 1, 2.
From the pursuing avenger of blood.
- II. The Condition of Refuge, 3-6.
A fair trial before the public authorities.
- III. The Place of Refuge, 7-9.
One of the cities set apart at convenient distances.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 546; 34 (Ps. Sel.); 155; 162; 148; 237.

GOLDEN TEXT

Ps. 46: 1. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

DAILY READINGS

M. — Joshua 20: 1-9.	Cities of Refuge.
T. — Num. 35: 1-15.	Cities of the Levites.
W. — Deut. 19: 1-13.	The command by Moses.
Th. — 2 Sam. 22: 1-20.	A safe refuge.
F. — Matt. 11: 25-30.	Christ a refuge.
S. — Heb. 6: 13-20.	Strong and sure.
S. — Psalm 91.	A refuge for me.

CATECHISM

Q. 48. What are we specially taught by these words [before me] in the first commandment?

A. These words [before me] in the first commandment teach us, That God, who seeth all things, taketh

EXPOSITION

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

Connecting Links—Chapters 16-19 give an account of the division of the land amongst the tribes. The people now being settled in the land, the injunction of Moses (Deut. 19: 1-13) to set apart cities of refuge is carried out.

I. The Need of Refuge, 1, 2.

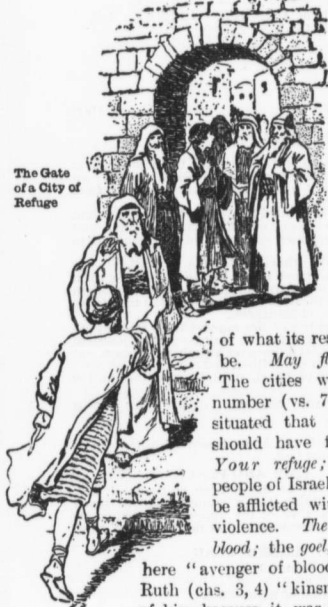
V. 1. *The Lord also spake unto Joshua; as He had spoken to Moses.* In vs. 1-6 the main points of Num. 35: 9-29 and Deut. 19: 1-13 are repeated.

V. 2. *Cities of refuge*; in the Rev. Ver., more definitely, "the cities of refuge," which had been already enjoined as places of asylum for the safety of one who had slain another accidentally, until he could have a fair trial. *Whereof I spake unto you*. In this as in other places the book of Joshua presupposes the Pentateuch.

II. The Condition of Refuge, 3-6.

V. 3. *Unawares and unwittingly*; literally, "by mistake in the failure of knowledge"; that is, where there was no design to commit murder, but the blow was given in ignorance

The Gate of a City of Refuge



of what its results might be. *May flee thither*.

The cities were six in number (vs. 7, 8) and so situated that no refugee should have far to flee. *Your refuge*; that the people of Israel might not be afflicted with needless violence. *The avenger of blood*; the *goel*, translated here "avenger of blood", and in Ruth (chs. 3, 4) "kinsman," next of kin, because it was the custom that the next of kin "should enforce the claim for satisfaction of a murdered kinsman." God in mercy appointed these cities of refuge "to check revenge . . . also to protect the innocent from harm."

V. 4. *At the entering of the gate*. In the public square inside and near the city gate the judges held court, 2 Sam. 15 : 2. There the refugee was to surrender himself for a primary trial, corresponding with our trial before the grand jury. *They*

shall take him into the city unto them; care for him as a fugitive who has left all means of support behind and surrendered himself to their protection.

V. 5. *If the avenger of blood pursue*; as under law and custom it was his duty to do. God now surrounds this custom with restrictions and safeguards to make it equitable and merciful. *They shall not deliver the slayer up*; but secure for him a fair trial. *Because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and hated him not afordtime*. An entire absence of malice was to be presumed until contrary was established by proof.

V. 6. *He shall dwell in that city*; presumably innocent. *Until he stand before the congregation for judgment*; until he be placed on trial before the elders of the people, who should make full enquiry and give a just decision. Two witnesses were required to prove guilt before condemnation. (Num. 35 : 30 ; Deut. 17 : 6, 7.) Then the points of enquiry were specified minutely, to avoid mistake regarding the intention of the accused, (1) as to his knowledge of the effect of his action, Num. 35 : 11, 15, 23 ; Deut. 4 : 42 ; 19 : 4 ; (2) as to whether the instrument used indicated intention, Num. 35 : 16-18, 23 ; (3) as to whether there was an accident, Ex. 21 : 13 ; Num. 35 : 22, 23 ; (4) as to whether there was previously any ill will, Ex. 21:13, 14 ; Deut. 19 : 4, 6, 11. Besides all this, due account was to be taken of the character previously borne by the accused. *Until the death of the high priest*. The death of the high priest was somewhat like a change of government with us. That he was detained for a time showed that the utmost caution in the preservation of human life was always to be exercised. It would also allow the feelings of the friends of the slain person time to abate and thus lessen the possibility of unlawful revenge.

III. The Place of Refuge, 7-9.

Vs. 7, 8. *They appointed*. They set apart as asylums for the preservation of human life, and so invested them with a religious regard. Moses had appointed the three cities east of the Jordan (Deut. 4 : 41-43) and to these there are now added three on the west side of the Jordan.

A glance at the map will show the arrangement, three on either side of the Jordan, and about equi-distant from each other, thus :

ON THE WEST	ON THE EAST
Kedesh, in the north.	Golan, in the north.
Shechem, in the centre.	Ramoth-Gilead, in the centre.
Hebron, in the south.	Bezer, in the south.

According to the Rabbins it was the duty of the Sanhedrim to keep the roads leading to the cities of refuge in perfect order. At every turning there were to be posts bearing the words *Refuge, Refuge*, and two students of the law were appointed to accompany the

fugitive to attempt, if possible, to pacify his pursuer, until the city was reached.

They were all, it may be added, Levitical cities (ch. 21). There the priests dwelt, and the administration of justice was thus guarded by the sacred rites of religion and the fullest security thus gained for the protection of life, that the condition of the times would afford.

V. 9. *For all the children of Israel.* No class was excepted from their protection. *For the stranger that sojourneth.* The provisions of this merciful law were extended to strangers, or naturalized foreigners, as well as to the children of Israel.

APPLICATION

By Rev. George Arnold, B.D., Portage la Prairie, Man.

The Lord . . . spake unto Joshua, saying, v. 1. Man, left to himself, would wander further and further from God. He can never become the author of his own salvation, but of his own destruction. God, before the foundation of the world, planned our salvation and, in the fulness of time, spoke unto our "Joshua," saying, "I appoint Thee as the city of refuge, to which every sinner may flee and be safe."

Appoint out for you cities of refuge, v. 2. The nature and situation of these cities of refuge is suggestive. As to their nature they were all Levite cities; so, although the manslayer could not go out and up to the ark at Shiloh to worship, yet the Levites could teach him the knowledge of God, comfort and encourage him and bid him welcome. May we not see in this the truth that ministers of the gospel should bid poor sinners welcome, and comfort and encourage those who are already Christians. Then, as to the situation of these six cities, they were on hills and so distributed that the manslayer could in one half day reach one. So, Christ is our refuge, and wherever we are, He is a refuge at hand—a very present help in trouble.

That the slayer . . . may flee thither, v. 3. The roads to these cities were prepared, obstacles removed, finger posts at the cross-roads to indicate the proper road to take. We who believe in Jesus Christ are commissioned to point others to Him, to urge them

to flee from the wrath to come and lay hold for refuge on the hope set before them (Heb. 6:18), as Bunyan's pilgrim fled from the City of Destruction to attain the Celestial City.

Your refuge from the avenger of blood, v. 3. The man who believes in Jesus Christ and has fled to Him for refuge shall be saved. He is saved, and he shall be saved; for he is kept by the power of God and under the shadow of the Almighty. No avenger of blood dares cross that threshold. But simply to contemplate Christ's salvation and call Christ a Saviour or the Saviour, will never give security and peace. He must be able to say my Saviour, my refuge, my fortress, and my deliverer.

And when he that doth flee . . . shall stand . . . declare his cause . . . take him into . . . and give him a place . . . among them, v. 4. How beautifully this verse describes the reception by Christ of the returning sinner. We have it paralleled in the father's reception of the returning son (Luke, ch. 15), "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee." Then the father ran, and fell upon his neck and kissed him, and said, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him . . . he was lost, and is found." What a confession! What a reception! "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," John 6:37.

And they appointed Kedesh . . . and Shechem . . . Hebron and Bezer . . . and Ramoth

in *Gilead*, vs. 7, 8. Each city in its name is a type of the character of Christ. (1) **KEDESH**—Holiness, Sanctuary: Christ our sanctuary, our holy of holies. He is made unto us sanctification, 1 Cor. 1:30. (2) **SHECHEM**—Shoulder: Christ the burden bearer. He is our sin-bearer (1 Pet. 2:24), the sorrow-bearer, Isa. 53:4. Then let us roll our burden and ourselves too on the Lord (Ps. 37:5). (3) **HEBRON**—Fellowship: Christ our friend, who died to unite us to God. (4) **BEZER**—Stronghold: Christ our fortress, Ps. 18:2. (5) **RAMOTH-GILEAD**—Heights, Exaltation: Jesus the glorified, gone to heaven that he might send the Comforter to earth. He has ascended into heaven . . . now to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9:24. He is highly exalted and given a name that is above every name, Phil. 2:9.

Through him we are the sons of God, 1 John 4:17. (6) **GOLAN**—Joy, Exultation: Christ our exceeding joy, Ps. 43:4. He is the good tidings of great joy which the angels brought, Luke 2:10. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice," is his message to us, Phil. 4:4.

And for the stranger thou sojournest among them, v. 9. Even for the strangers and sojourners there was refuge. In Jesus Christ there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, makes no difference, "for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved", Rom. 10:13, 14. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," Rev. 22:17. The hand of the Crucified has opened the door of mercy.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

By Rev. George Arnold, B.D.

God is always seeking the salvation of sinners. v. 1.

We should give a cordial welcome to returning sinners. v. 2.

There is no barrier between God and us but our sins. v. 3.

We should warn the impenitent of the wrath to come. v. 3.

No evil can befall those who are in Christ Jesus. v. 3.

We must appropriate Christ in order to gain salvation. v. 3.

An unreserved confession brings an undeserved pardon. v. 4.

God's grace saves us; God's word gives us assurance. v. 5.

Our only salvation is in abiding in Christ. v. 6.

Christ is near unto all who will flee to Him. vs. 7, 8.

The gospel knows no national barriers. v. 9.

Says Professor Henry Drummond: "Who is the avenger? Law. What law? Criminal law, sanitary law, social law, natural law. . . . Wherever want stares, and vice reigns, and rags rot, there the avenger takes his stand. Delay him not. He is the messenger of

Christ. The very nature of things is God's avenger."

Conscience, the law of God in the soul, is an avenger. All these are made clearer and truer by the statement of the work of the Goel, the avenger of blood. It is not revenge, but justice and righteousness, through punishment.—Peloubet.

My conscience hath a thousand separate tongues,

And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.

—Shakespeare.

Hood's poem "The Dream of Eugene Aram," represents this man, a school teacher, as having murdered a man. After that he could not look in the face of the innocent children. He buried the body, but had to take it up; he plunged it into a stream, but the stream ran dry; he covered it with leaves, but the wind blew them away.

"I knew my secret then was one
The earth refused to keep,
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"And lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghostly flame,
Ten thousand, thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame."

God has done all He can to aid and draw men to Jesus. Now, beloved, I think this is a picture of the road to Christ Jesus. It is no round about road of the law; it is no obeying this, that, or the other; it is a

straight road, "Believe and live." It is a road so hard that no self-righteous man can ever tread it, for it is a road so easy that every sinner who knows himself to be a sinner might find his way to Christ.—Spurgeon.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST

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

AVENGER—In primitive society when any misfortune overtook a man or any injustice was done him, his clan, and more particularly his nearest kinsman, was bound to keep the rights of the family intact by redeeming his property, or his person, or by vindicating his cause. In a completely civilized community, the right of punishment for murder is assumed by the state, and is exercised through the judgment of a cool and impartial tribunal. Among wandering tribes with no common bond, this was impossible, and therefore wherever the clan system was developed the duty of visiting the murder with condign punishment was laid on the victim's nearest of kin, and he must imme-

diately set aside every other duty and pursue the guilty one to the death. The Hebrew law was an intermediate stage, and its aim was to regulate the practice by providing a judicial investigation as to whether the act was accidental or malignant, and by protecting the accused until the investigation was completed. The right of sanctuary hospitality may be demanded by a fugitive Arab to-day, and if he call out the name of a chief, it is the duty of all who hear him to aid him in reaching this protector, and it is the duty of the one whose aid has been invoked to protect him when he is brought to him as a prisoner guest, or to avenge his death if the appeal was not heeded.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

By Rev. Principal MacVicar, D.D., LL.D.

Some modern critics have unwarrantably asserted that cities of refuge did not belong to Mosaic legislation. On the contrary they are frequently mentioned in the books of Moses. In Ex. 21 : 13 it is intimated that such cities were to be established. In Num. 35 : 9-34 ; Deut. 19 : 1-13 details are given respecting them. The laws governing them formed part of the moral and judicial appliances of the nation.

1. *They formed a safeguard against undue severity in the avenging of blood.* By ancient custom the nearest of kin had the right to redeem a forfeited inheritance, and the right to put to death instantly, without waiting for judicial investigation, the person who had slain his relative. This might result in gross injustice to a man killing another "unawares and unwittingly," without malice prepense, v. 3. To prevent such occurrences

the accidental homicide had protection given him in the cities of refuge until his case was thoroughly investigated by the proper authorities. If found guilty of wilful murder, he was delivered to the avenger of blood, but if acquitted of this crime, he was kept in safety and set free after a certain time, vs. 4-6.

2. *The rules which governed these cities emphasized the sacredness of human life.* (a) By the temporary protection afforded to the wilful murderer while evidence in his case was being taken, and by the condign punishment inflicted upon him when his guilt was established. (b) The severity of the punishment was fitted to teach men to regard the sacredness of human life, and so was the provision made to sift the facts touching the murderer. (c) His life was not to be sacrificed wantonly. But apart from this provision the "goel", the nearest of kin to the murdered person, could slay him wherever he was found. He could be taken for execution even from the horns of the altar, or from the temple, Ex. 21 : 14 ; 1 Kings 2 : 28-34.

3. *The cities of refuge secured just treatment*

to the homicide. (a) He was to "declare his cause in the ears of the elders of the city," v. 4. If satisfied, they saved him from the hand of the avenger. (b) After a considerable lapse of time probably, he was allowed a second hearing before a larger court, composed of "the congregation," whose judgment was to be final, v. 6. The tribunal, most likely, was the congregation of his own city. (c) The detention to which he was subjected was a mild penalty for the rashness of which he was guilty. This imprisonment within the walls of the city was wholesome discipline, teaching him patient self-control. Refusal or neglect to submit to it implicitly was at the risk of his life, Num. 35 : 26-28. God's appointed way of saving him from the danger, from the consequences to which his conduct had exposed him, must be accepted without change or modification. So it is with the gospel. Christ alone is the Saviour, Acts 4 : 12. To turn away from Him is to perish, Heb. 2 : 3 ; 12 : 25.

4. Finally, were the cities of refuge typical of the "great salvation?" Certainly in one respect. There was safety found in them, and so it is in Christ. But the parallel fails in many respects. The Jewish refuge was for only one class, for unintentional offences. Christ is a refuge for all, for the murderer, as well as the homicide. He saves not merely from misfortune, but from sin. The safety of the city of refuge was temporary, Christ's salvation is eternal, John 10 : 28, 29.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By The Editor

The temptation will be strong merely to "spiritualize" this lesson, using the cities of refuge as a type or symbol of the Saviour. Granted first, an exposition of the lesson as it stands, and of the purpose for which the cities of refuge were appointed, then the spiritualizing will come with aptness and effect. But be sure and take them in their right order—all about the cities of refuge first, and then all about the Saviour as they illustrate His gracious provision for our salvation; for the only fair treatment of Scripture is, first of all, to try to understand it in its true and literal meaning.

We may begin with the ancient custom of

the avenger of blood. His duty arose from the fact that murder of a fellow-being is rightly punished by death, Gen. 9 : 6, which is God's decree in regard to this awful crime, and with a reason given that none can gainsay. As Professor Ross explains in "Light from the East," punishment by an avenger of blood seems to be almost the only way for wandering tribes. There is no machinery amongst them for courts of justice and legal proceedings, according to our understanding of these. It is easy to see, however, how readily abuses might arise. And they did. The "goel," (kinsman) driven by a strong sense of duty, taking the life of the murderer, might become the kinsman in hot revenge turning murderer himself.

And so the Lord of life, who holds life so sacred, fences this old custom around with wholesome regulations. Chief among these is the providing of a place of refuge for the manslayer, just as we shut him up in prison from the possible fury of the people until his case may be tried calmly and fairly.

In regard to the cities of refuge, note, amongst other points, these—(a) God appoints them. They become, therefore, part of the law of the land, for God was the Ruler and Law-giver of Israel. (b) Every one who needs may reach them—sufficient in number, and conveniently situated. (c) Once inside the gate, the fugitive is safe, held innocent till he be proved guilty.

These three points are also the a, b, c, of our religion. (a) God has appointed a way of salvation for the guilty, John 3 : 16; (b) The Saviour is within reach of all; (c) He who takes refuge in Christ is safe. A number of the favorite hymns are in praise of Christ the Refuge. See Hymns 191, 161, 162, Book of Praise.

Some Test Questions

By whom first had the Lord given directions as to the cities of refuge?

By whom does He speak now?

What was their purpose?

Who were open to their protection?

What was the fugitive to do on reaching the city?

What privileges were given him?

If innocent, how long was he to be protected from the "avenger of blood"?

Name the cities? How distributed? With what end in view?

Prove from Scripture

That human life is precious.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The value of life.
2. Justice *versus* revenge.
3. "Other Refuge have I none."

The Catechism

By the Associate Editor

(For examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.)

Ques. 48. *Reasons for obedience to the First Commandment.* Luther asks, "What is it to have a God? or What is God?" and answers, "To have a God is nothing else than to trust Him and believe in Him with all the heart. . . . In what thing soever thou hast thy mind's reliance and thine heart fixed, that is beyond doubt thy God." If we utter the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," and then live as if food depended entirely upon our trade or profession, we mock the true God with merely formal worship, while any real worship we give, is given to our own powers and efforts.

Three reasons are here suggested why we should keep this commandment. The first

is that God sees all things, including our deeds and words and even thoughts. In the first six verses of the hundred and thirtieth psalm, the writer dwells upon the omniscience of God, while in the following six he declares the divine omnipresence. Wherever we go, we are at all times before God.

The second reason is stronger than the first. God takes notice of what we do. It may seem for a time that He is not concerned about our actions. But our record is before Him and He does not overlook a single item. Some day we shall have to face this record.

The third reason is the strongest of the three. It is that God is displeased with the sin of having any other God. This is not the displeasure of a stern Judge or hard Master, but of a loving Father. The Israelites ought to have been kept back from worshipping idols by remembering that their sin would displease the God who had delivered them from Egypt. And we should be restrained from giving to any other the love and trust that belong to Him by the recollection of all He has done for us. "John has given us in a single phrase the key to the keeping of this First Commandment when he says, 'We love him because he first loved us' (1 John 4:19)." (Dykes.)

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

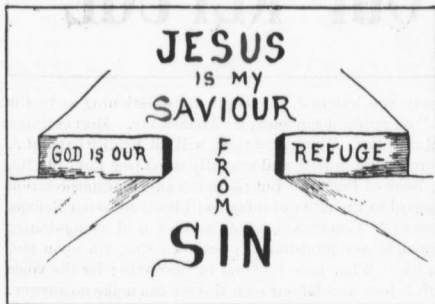
By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, North Bay, Ont.

Links—Print Golden Text of last Sunday. Print CALEB. Recall the faithfulness and courage of this noble man, and the reward which the Lord gave him in his old age.

Lesson Thought—Jesus is my Saviour.

Introduction—Have you ever played "hide and seek" and tried to get "home free" while Willie was running and shouting close to your heels trying to catch you before you got into the "goal?" The thought to be impressed is that God saves those who seek the safety He provides for them.

Lesson—It is not necessary for the children to remember the names of the cities of refuge—sufficient to show them that



God put them within easy reach of all (Map). Explain the lesson in story form. A young man of Israel was fighting in sport with another young man and, getting excited, gave a blow that knocked the other to the ground dead. The friends of the dead man rushed to seize the other fighter and kill him. The young man had not meant to kill his companion and was very sorry, but he could not make the friends believe it, so he turned and ran away as fast as he could.

Can they not go wherever he goes and find him and kill him? No! He knows of a place of safety. God had told Joshua to name six cities of refuge just for such as he.

Watch him running almost breathless! Away before him he sees the walls of a city of refuge. At every turning he sees a signpost bearing the words, *Refuge, Refuge*. He looks back! The men are close behind shouting to him to stop! On he goes! At last he is near the gate! Will it be closed? No! It stands open day and night. Almost breathless, he reaches the gate and throws himself in headlong—SAFE. He is cared for till he is able to tell his story to the chief men of the city. They give him a home until it is safe for him to return to his own

city. (The home city—the fleeing man—the pursuer—the city of refuge—the safe arrival—may all be depicted by means of a few strokes.)

Golden Text—Print GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH. We'll print the name of something that big people and little people must try to get away from—SIN. When we are tempted to do naughty things, that is sin catching hold of us. Repeat Golden Text.

Jesus our Saviour—God does not mean us to run into a walled city for safety from sin. He has sent us a SAVIOUR. Recall the meaning of the name *Jesus*, and why it was given, Matt. 1:21.

JESUS SAVES
S from
IN

"Ask the Saviour to help you,
Comfort, strengthen and keep you;
He is willing to aid you,
He will carry you through."

We need Jesus' help to keep us from doing harm to others. (Sometimes we strike too hard in play, etc.) Jesus wants to help us to forgive those who do us harm, instead of trying to pay them back. Copy our Saviour—be slow to anger.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

By The Editor

JESUS Our REFUGE

Present the blackboard with only the letters J. R. Begin by questioning as to the meaning of the now familiar "E. R." on public documents, mail boxes, etc. Most children know Latin enough to expand the R into Rex, King; and they will all readily expand J. R. into Jesus Rex, King Jesus—a worthy title indeed, and worthily worn (see Rev. 19:16), a title in which we glory (Hymn 90, Book of Praise). But there is a sweeter interpretation still, to which a question or two in regard to the cities of refuge will lead, Jesus our Refuge. What are the "avengers" that pursue us? Conscience, which accuses us of wrong-doing; God's displeasure at sin, which demands our punishment; our own sins, sin upon sin, which can be atoned for only by our life. What hope? None in ourselves; for the voice of conscience is true, and God's wrath is just, and for our own sins we can make no answer. Hymn 161, especially verses 2, 3, may be sung.

Lesson VI.

JOSHUA'S PARTING ADVICE

November 9, 1902

Joshua 24: 14-25. Commit to memory vs. 14, 15. Read Joshua 21: 43-24: 33.

14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served ¹ on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were ² on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Am'orites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods:

17 For the LORD our God, he ³ it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the ⁴ people through whom we passed:

18 And the LORD drove out from before us all the people, even the Am'orites which dwell in the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he ⁵ is our God.

Revised Version—¹Beyond the river; ²Peoples.

GOLDEN TEXT

Josh. 24: 15. Choose you this day whom ye will serve.

DAILY READINGS

M. —Joshua 23: 1-13. An old man's warning.
T. —Joshua 24: 1-13. Reminder of mercies.
W. —Joshua 24: 14-25. Joshua's parting advice.
Th. —Joshua 24: 26-33. Death of Joshua.
F. —1 Kings 18: 17-24. Call for decision.
S. —Phil. 1: 8-21. Living for Christ.
S. —Matt. 6: 24-34. The first claim.

CATECHISM

Q. 49. Which is the second commandment?
A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto

19 And Josh'ua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he ⁶ is an holy God; he ⁷ is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Josh'ua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

22 And Josh'ua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Josh'ua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Josh'ua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shech'em.

the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

TIME AND PLACE

Eighteen years after the last lesson and twenty-five years after the crossing of the Jordan. The place, Shechem, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Choice of Service, 14, 15.
Of the true God or of false gods.
- II. The Motive of Service, 16-18.
The past and present goodness of God.
- III. The Condition of Service, 19-21.
It must be sincere and true.
- IV. The Pledge of Service, 22-25.
Idols cast away and a covenant made.
- LESSON HYMNS
Book of Praise, 26 (Ps. Sel.); 237; 132; 545; 232; 150.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—After the appointment of the cities of refuge, and the Levitical cities for the maintenance of the priestly tribe of Levi (ch. 21), the Reubenites, Gadites and half tribe of Manasseh were sent to their inheritance east of the Jordan, ch. 22: 1-9. The erection of an altar there by these tribes gave rise to misunderstanding, which was removed by the explanation that it was an altar for witness not an altar for sacrifice, ch. 22: 10-34. When the children of Israel were settled in the land and the ordinances of religion established for a number of years, Joshua gathered them together at Shechem for the renewal of the covenant with God, and the deliverance of his last charge, chs. 23 and 24.

I. The Choice of Service, 14, 15.

V. 14. *Now therefore.* These words refer to the review of providential guidance to Israel

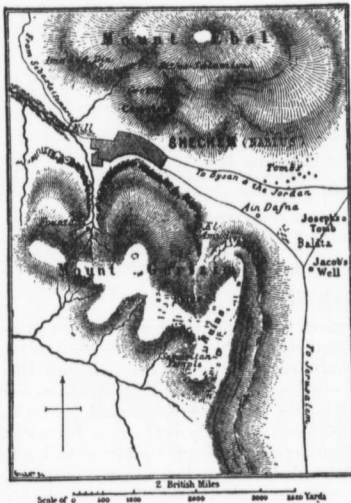
given in the preceding verses, and call attention to an inevitable inference from the facts stated. *Fear the Lord.* Regard Him with reverential awe. To those who so fear Him the Lord comes close indeed, Ps. 25: 14. *Serve him in sincerity and in truth.* Serve Him not in pretence, but to the utmost and with the whole heart. *Put away the strange gods which your fathers served.* From this it is clear that some of the idolatry of Padan-Aram—on the other side of the flood, that is east of the Euphrates, whence Abraham came—with which Rachel had been identified long before (Gen. 31: 19) still clung to them. *And in Egypt.* Nor had the idolatrous taint of Egypt been thoroughly purged out.

V. 15. *Choose.* They were required to choose between Jehovah and all others. He will not accept a heart divided in its affections. *This day.* They have had the fullest experience of God's mercy and grace. Now

they are required to make an immediate decision. *Or the gods of the Amorites.* The Amorites are here taken as the representatives of all the heathen tribes of Canaan. It would seem that already the Israelites were beginning to look favorably towards the gods of their heathen neighbors. *But as for me and my house.* He would help them to a right decision by his own example and fixed choice.

II. The Motive of Service, 16-18.

V. 16. *The people answered.* Their choice was free and unconstrained. *God forbid.* An expression of horror at the thought of idolatry. *That we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods.* This was a deliberate deci-



Shechem, with the Valley and Adjacent Hills

sion. Made under strong feeling, Joshua caused them to repeat it three times (see vs. 21, 24), each time in stronger terms, but though honestly made, liable to be changed unless rendered fixed and permanent.

Vs. 17, 18. *The Lord our God.* They proceeded to give reasons for the choice of their own Jehovah. *He it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt.* There is grateful recognition of the fact that all they

have and all they are they owe entirely to God's grace. So their heart-whole service is due to God alone. *Those great signs;* Exodus chs. 4 to 14. *We also.* They and their families, as well as Joshua and his household, would serve Jehovah alone. *For he is our God.* This repetition emphasizes their part in the covenant under which they occupied the land as the people of God.

III. The Condition of Service, 19-21.

V. 19. *Ye cannot serve the Lord.* Joshua would have them understand what this covenant bound them to do. They must know that a grateful emotion or passing resolution would not be equal to the task of keeping it. In order to ensure their fidelity they must remember ever, (1) *That he is an holy God.* Those whose worship is acceptable to Him must be holy, free from any taint of sensuous heathen worship. (2) *That he is a jealous God.* He will allow no rival in the affections of His worshippers. He will not lightly forgive this sin, Ex. 20 : 5.

V. 20. *If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods.* Their worship of the gods of the land or any other false god meant the forsaking of Jehovah. *Then he will turn.* God is unchangeable, but as the hearts of men change in their attitude to Him, they are treated differently, according to the principles of His justice and righteousness, Isa. 63 : 10. *Do you hurt, and consume you.* What this might mean, they could learn from the wilderness experience of their ancestors.

V. 21. *Nay; but we will serve the Lord.* The challenge of Joshua served to sharpen their resolution. How they kept it is stated in v. 31.

IV. The Pledge of Service, 22-25.

V. 22. *Ye are witnesses against yourselves.* By their recorded resolutions they would condemn themselves and vindicate God's justice in their punishment. *And they said, We are witnesses.* Thus Joshua had the covenant confirmed, so that it could never be disavowed.

V. 23. *Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods.* Begin now to fulfil the covenant. Delay not to do right. Hesitation in the performance of duty is yielding to tempt-

tation. *Incline your heart unto the Lord.* They must not only cease to do evil, but begin at once to do well. The service of God is positive.

V. 24. *The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey.* Thus again the people promise and expressly state that they will accept the supreme test of obedience, namely, the revealed will of God.

APPLICATION

Now, therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth, v. 14. God counts sincere service as blameless, covering all its imperfection with the mantle of love. If we will be blameless here, He will present us faultless there, Jude 24. To render such a service we must have no divided heart.

Put away the gods which your fathers served, v. 14. Idolatry is the weakness and besetting sin of mankind. Created to love, worship, and find his supreme satisfaction in God, man is ever choosing inferior and unworthy objects and setting his affections on them. This is one of the effects of the fall. Man's judgment is perverted, his choices are wrong, he judges that good which is evil. All who have not been born of the Spirit are idolaters. They may not bow down to gods of wood and stone, but they just as really worship the creation of their own hands, such as pleasure, self, fame and fashion. God calls upon us, as Joshua did upon Israel, to "put away" these. Let the break come quickly and decisively. Let the blow fall at once which will kill the sin. The Lord's instantaneous method of uprooting the evil is the only effective method.

Choose you this day whom ye will serve, v. 15. God requires of us, (1) A voluntary service—"choose." None are saved against their will nor until they desire it more than anything else. (2) A personal service—"choose you." God's call is to individuals. We are not saved in the gross, but as individuals. (3) An immediate service—"this day." Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. They found on the fly leaf of a little boy's Bible, after he had gone to heaven, "I take God this day to be my God and no fooling about it." (4) A deliberate service—"choose . . . whom ye will

V. 25. *So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day.* He solemnly renewed the Sinaitic covenant, following the example of Moses, Deut. 29: 1. *Set them a statute and an ordinance.* Established the covenant as a national law with their full consent, as well as the regulations for carrying it out. *In Shechem.* See ch. 8: 30-35. Read also the three verses following the lesson.

serve." There can be no compromise. Count the cost before you give yourself to the Lord. Weigh the "pros" and "cons" and then decide.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord, v. 15. There be no one but himself and his house he will still adhere to the service of God; for "those that are bound for heaven must be willing to swim against the stream, and must not do as the most do, but as the best do." Moreover, Joshua does not say, as do many to-day, if we can judge by their conduct, "It is enough that my wife and children, my household, attend the services of God's house and serve Him." Nor again, as some seem to say by their carelessness in regard to the training of their children, "It is enough that I serve the Lord. It matters not as to my children." Joshua's decision here rebukes both of these attitudes towards Christ and His service. "Not my house without me" nor "I without my house," but "I and my house."

Therefore will we . . . serve, v. 18. Joshua's call and the people's choice were based on a review of what God had done for them. The memory of God's great goodness toward us in the past, His hand in our life and work as individuals and as a church ought to prove the most potent influence in our future service to Him.

And Joshua said . . . ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God, v. 19. Matthew Henry says that here Joshua "drives the nail to the head." He acts upon the maxim, "Fast bind, fast find." No hasty, superficial promising will do in God's service.

If ye forsake the Lord . . . he will do you hurt, v. 20. If any nation might have looked for exemption from the operation of law it was surely the Jews, God's chosen

people. But no, they came under its most rigid sweep. Just because the Lord had done them good, they were all the more severely punished for forsaking the Lord. We may see a similar instance in the seven churches of Asia (Rev., chs. 2, 3), who, with their rare privileges, failed to rise to their responsibility. And the same law holds true of individual churches and men to-day. God's goodness to us in the past gives us no right to presume. True it is, alas, "If we forsake the Lord, He will forsake us."

Now therefore put away . . . the strange gods . . . and incline your heart unto the Lord, v. 23. There is salvation for the guiltiest and vilest, if they will repent and return to God through Jesus Christ. Not that their repentance deserves the pardon, but there can be no pardon without repentance. Jesus Christ will save no man in his sins, but He will save every man from his sins. These conditions are set down clearly in such passages—how lightsome to the guilt-laden—as Isa. 1: 16-18; 55: 7; Acts 3: 19.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

The greatest of men is none too great for the Lord's work. v. 15.

It should be easier to choose the Lord's service when He has been our father's God. v. 15.

We should seek, first, to bring the members of our own homes to serve the Lord. v. 15.

The more we have, the better we should be. vs. 17, 18

God will have no rival in our hearts. v. 19.

Permanent prosperity from God requires permanent allegiance to God. v. 20.

Our professions of religion are an abiding witness against us, if we forsake God. v. 22.

We cannot serve God and mammon. v. 23.

We need outward memorials of living religious truths. v. 25.

There were four claimants to be considered: (1) Jehovah; (2) the Chaldean gods worshipped by their ancestors; (3) the gods of the Egyptians; and (4) the gods of the Amorites among whom they dwelt. Make your choice between these, said Joshua, if you are dissatisfied with Jehovah. But could there be any reasonable choice between these gods and Jehovah?—Blaikie.

Joshua at first repelled those who wished to declare themselves on the side of the Lord. So those who seek to enter upon the Christian life often meet with obstacles at the outset. These serve, among other purposes, to separate true from false seekers. We find an illustration of this experience in the following passage from the Pilgrim's Progress:

"When Pliable and Christian came to the Slough of Despond which lay before the wicket-gate, they both fell in and wallowed for a time in the mire, unable to escape. Pliable was offended, and angrily said to his fellow: "Is this the happiness you have told us of all this while?" So, after a desperate struggle or two he got out of the mire on that side of the Slough which was next his own house, and away he went, and Christian saw him no more. But Christian endeavored to struggle to that side of the Slough which was furthest from his own house, and next to the wicket-gate, and so he escaped and came at last upon sound ground."

Both of them met with discouragement, but Christian came out at last on the dry land because he persevered. So God will in the end accept us if we are only sincere.

Shechem, or Nablus, is about 31½ miles north of Jerusalem and 5½ southeast of Samaria. It lies in the upland valley, bounded by mount Ebal on the north, and by mount Gerizim on the south. (These two mountains are famous as the scene of the curses and blessings which were pronounced on the assembled Israelites when they had crossed the Jordan, Josh. 8: 30-35.) The streets of Nablus are narrow and vaulted over, besides which in rainy weather some of them become the beds of streams. Eighty springs of water are said to exist in and around the city; the fertility of the district is, therefore, exceptionally great. These are used to make channels through the gardens, then, uniting, to turn a mill. The gardens and orchards are one mass of trees, flowers, and

fruits, including mulberries, oranges, pomegranates, etc. The mass of the inhabitants are Mohanmedans, then follow a few hundred Greek Christians, a small Jewish population, and about 150 Samaritans, the last named religionists living most of them together in the northwestern part of the city. Jacob's well is about 2 miles east-southeast, and the reputed tomb of Joseph about 2 east, of Shechem.—Davis.

Light from the East

AMORITE—This name is supposed to mean first, highland, and then a hero. It survives in the Arabic *emir*, a ruler, and in the "Ameer" of Afghanistan. They were one of the most ancient and powerful nations of Canaan, which was known as "the land of the Amorite" as far back as the days of

Sargon of Accad in 3800 B.C., and this continued to be the title of Palestine for twenty-seven centuries. Before the Exodus the Amorites were tributary to Egypt and were ruled by a governor from that country. Their tall stature impressed the Israelites deeply, for long afterwards the prophet Amos compared their height to the cedar and their strength to the oak. On the monuments of Egypt they are depicted as a tall, fair-skinned race, with light hair and blue eyes. There is nothing to indicate their religion unless Num. 21:29 may imply that those of them east of the Jordan had adopted the worship of Chemosh, the god of the Moabites whom they had supplanted there. In all probability the human sacrifices by which he was worshipped were a part of the Amorite ritual.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

The meeting referred to in the lesson, at which Joshua delivered his valedictory to the tribes of Israel, was held at Shechem. There were present elders, heads of tribes, judges and other officers. It was a most august, solemn and memorable assembly. The address contained a recital of the leading events of their national history, showing especially from first to last the wonderful unmerited interposition of God in their behalf. Upon this historical résumé Joshua based the exhortation and all that occurred on that covenant making day. We have here:

1. *Joshua's personal resolution.* (a) He is determined not to be swayed or governed by the conduct of others. The old man (ch. 23:1) will be consistent and true to his past history. Others may follow their crooked, foolish ways; "but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," v. 15. This is the spirit of true leadership. (b) Joshua carried his family with him in his resolute decision to serve God. This was as it should be always. Deep responsibility rests upon parents in this most important matter.

2. *Joshua's appeal to the people.* (a) He called upon them to cherish deep reverence for the God of their salvation. "Fear the Lord," v. 14. This was urged on the ground of all that He did for their fathers in Egypt and for themselves in the wilderness and in giving them possession of Canaan. (b) He appealed to them as rational, responsible, moral agents, capable of making intelligent choice. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," v. 15. Let the choice be based upon facts. As if he had said, Gather all the evidence you can in favor of the gods of the nations, the gods your fathers worshipped. Do the same regarding Jehovah; and decide who has the supreme claim upon your love and obedience. In like manner Elijah pressed the people, 1 Kings 18:21. God's service is rational and voluntary. Christianity is pre-eminently rational. Let any one estimate truly what Christ does for sinners, and will he dare refuse Him supreme love and service? He gave His life for us. He gives pardon, purification, guidance, peace, eternal life. (c) The service called for by Joshua was most definite and practical, vs. 14, 23. Mere profession is not enough. What is needed is not simply the utterance of the lips, but decisive action, works worthy of repentance, Acts 26:20.

3. *The people's response and Joshua's warn-*

ing. (a) The people at once yielded, vowed that they would abandon idols and follow God, v. 16. They did more. They stated their great reason for pursuing this course, gratitude for the manifestation of God's sovereign power in behalf of their fathers in breaking the yoke of the oppressor in Egypt, gratitude for preservation in all their way, and for victory over the tribes of Palestine. "Therefore," said they, "we will serve the Lord; for He is our God," vs. 16-18. This apparently sincere and enthusiastic confession would seem to be satisfactory. Yet such has often been followed by defection and apostasy. Hence (b) Joshua's warning, v. 19. He does not mean to contradict the account of Himself given by God to Moses, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious," etc., Ex. 34 : 6. His aim is to emphasize the truth "that He will by no means clear the guilty," the impenitent, and that idolatry is a sin which God abhors. Still more. The warning is directed against the danger of self-sufficiency and human fickleness. Joshua had painful experience of these two tendencies in the people, and well knew that at the very moment they declared fealty to God alone, there were "strange gods among them," v. 23. Hence the keenness with which he pressed their consciences, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves," etc. "And they said, we are witnesses," v. 22. "So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day," v. 25. It was a renewal and confirmation of the covenant with their fathers.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

"What are you going to be?" is a question often asked of boys and girls; and quite naturally youth is the time for choices. "What are you going to be?" means, "What are you going to do; what sort of work?"

This lesson, as the Lesson Plan (always worth studying) indicates, is on work, service. The outline there given may guide us.

1. *The Choice of Service*, 14, 15. It was a great gathering of all the people and their rulers, ch. 24 : 1, who were called to make right choice—very impressive and momentous, a nation's making or marring in the balance. The nation's choice depended on the choice of the individuals. Each one

must choose for himself, and there is but one alternative—God, or not God. Joshua's advice is good, v. 14; and His example even better, v. 15. It is of the sort of stuff that was in Joshua that strong Christians and strong nations are made.

2. *The Motive of Service*. How strangely alike are the Old Testament and the New. Compare Rom. 12 : 1 with vs. 16-18 of our lesson—God's goodness the motive in each case. Encourage the class to give instances of God's goodness (a) to the Israelites, (b) to us. The argument from God's goodness as our Father and Redeemer is irresistible, if we will but think it out.

3. *The Condition of Service*. God's service is no holiday, as vs. 19-21 testify. See also Mark 8 : 34, 35, and similar passages. God will have all or none; and His demand for holiness is so exacting that in our own strength we cannot meet it. But Christ is strong, and His strength, by faith, becomes ours.

"Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee."

4. *The Pledge of Service*, 22-25. A double one in this case, the putting away of idols and a solemn covenant to be God's people. Deeds and words; and the deeds were to come first. An interesting, almost amusing discussion of this point is found in James 2 : 14-17.

Every Sabbath should be a "Decision Day;" and certainly the teacher should not fail in this lesson to press home to the judgment and conscience and heart of the scholars decision for Christ and His service.

Some Test Questions

- Who were now gathered together?
- Who had called them?
- To what place?
- Of what does Joshua remind them?
- What duty does he enforce? v. 16.
- On what ground?
- What choice offered?
- What choice made?
- What reason for it given?
- What warning uttered?
- What is the people's response?
- What solemn pledge made?
- What sin to be abandoned?

To whom were they to incline their hearts?
Recite their promise.

Prove from Scripture

That God's service requires sincerity.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The great choice.
2. Rom. 12 : 1.
3. The pledge, v. 24.

The Catechism

[For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course, see p. 430.]

Ques. 49. *The Second Commandment.* God is a Spirit; man is a spirit; and Paul argues (Acts 17 : 29) from this likeness of nature in God and man that it is absurd to think that God can be compared to gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art or man's device. It is bowing down to and serving images as if they represented God that this Commandment forbids.

The jealousy of God is given as a reason why He forbids His people to use images in His worship. God is jealous of us because He loves us. What parent would not be jealous if the heart of his child were in danger of being stolen from him by designing strangers or evil companions? It is because the worship of any work of art, however lovely, would show that we were finding

satisfaction in a created thing rather than in the Creator, that God is jealous. The fact that He is jealous shows that He cares for us, and that He wants to have us for Himself. It proves also that He will help us to overcome all that would draw us away from Him.

Then comes a solemn warning. God says that He will visit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate" Him. This is just one way of saying that children suffer for the wrong-doing of their parents. It is not only in the Bible that this law is found, but it is written large also on all human experience. The reverse of this law is true, and children inherit the reward of the virtue found in their parents.

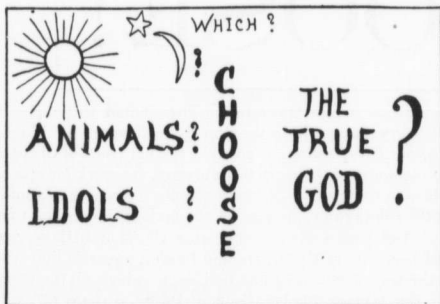
The Commandment closes with a glorious assurance regarding the mercy of God. His wrath can be measured. It extends to the "third and fourth generation." But He shows His mercy to "a thousand generations," as the margin of the Revised Version rightly translates, instead of merely "thousands" of people. Compare Deut. 7 : 9. "God is not a Master . . . but a Father, jealous if we refuse our hearts. He visits sin upon the posterity 'of them that hate,' not only disobey Him. . . . He does not requite those who serve Him with a measured wage." (Chadwick.)

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Links—Draw outline of a walled city with its broad gateway. Print golden text of last lesson. Question about the cities of refuge. Remind the little ones of Jesus the Refuge.

Lesson Thought — I should choose God.

Introduction — Tell a short story of a boy told about four different toys and asked to choose which he will have. Very little children know what the word "choose" means. "Is Mamie going to be good and love mother, or is she going to do what makes mother cry?" "No, no, Muzzie, me'll be dood. Me love 'oo. Wipe 'oo eyes Muzzie, don't cry, Muzzie dear," pleaded the little voice.



Parting Advice—A group of children stood beside the bed on which their dear mother lay very ill. God was going to take her to heaven, and she would have no pain there. But oh! how sorry she was to leave her little ones, John and Charlie and Susie and Elsie and baby Fred! She knows that if they love Jesus they will all go sometime to be in heaven too, but she fears they may choose to do naughty things. As she lovingly kisses each little one, she asks them very solemnly not to love foolish and wicked things, but to choose to serve God.

Lesson—We are going to hear Joshua's parting advice. When dying he asks the children of Israel to choose to serve God rather than idols.

He gathers the people at Schechem (Map) and tells them the Lord's words to them. God reminds them of all He has done for them. (Recall some of the times when their God had helped them wonderfully.)

Choices—Joshua offers four kinds of gods and asks the people to choose which they will serve.

Gods of their Fathers—Speak of the Chaldean gods worshipped by Terah, the father of Abraham—Sun—Moon—Stars. How foolish to think these could help people. They have no life. God made them all and put them in their places in the sky.

Gods of the Egyptians—Speak of the worship of animals, the "sacred bull" being one of the chief gods of the Egyptians. God made them all and has power over all.

Gods of the Amorites—Deut. 29: 17. "Idols of wood and stone, silver and gold." "The work of men's hands," etc. Ps. 135: 15-18.

The God of gods—All other gods are useless.

Golden Text—Print **CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE.** Little ones can choose to become little servants of the true God. Jesus wants the little ones.

The Way to Choose Jesus—

LOVE Him above all
TRUST Him with all your heart
PRAY to Him only
WORK for Him faithfully.

Our Choice—Print **MY CHOICE—THE TRUE GOD.**

Repeat (pointing upward)—"The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey." (v. 24.) Ways of serving may be mentioned and ways in which we may hear God's voice speaking to us.

Missionary Effort—Many little children have not yet been offered their choice. Send some one to tell them about the true God, so that they may turn from their idols. Think of these little children in heathen lands, and remember that your pennies and prayers and work can help them.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

CHOOSE!

It will require grace as well as skill to review this lesson. The scholars will expect a personal appeal, and possibly for that very reason will be the more difficult to reach. Would it be a mistake to begin by bringing out (by questions, if possible) the hard side of Christ's service,—the denying of one's self, the doing of the right thing always, the work for others He demands, the standing up for Him at any cost? The heroic appeals strongly to young minds. That was Jesus' way with the young ruler. It was not the fault of the method that he did not make the right choice. Then the rewards of choosing Christ and His service may be enumerated,—a good conscience, a good Master, a grand Leader, a service that will itself ennoble; in short, to make the best of this life; and besides, to inherit all the glory and joy of heaven. Some one of the Hymns 135-148, Book of Praise, perhaps 137, will bring the choice to a head, in song.

Lesson VII.

THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

November 16, 1902

Judges 2:7-16. Study Judges 2:7-19. Commit to memory vs. 18, 19. Read Judges chs. 2-5.

7 And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel.

8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. 9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Ba'alim:

12 And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and

Revised Version—1 The north of the mountain of

followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.

13 And they forsook the Lord, and served Ba'al and Ash'urim.

14 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were sorely distressed.

16 Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

GOLDEN TEXT

Ps. 107: 19. They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

DAILY READINGS

M. —Judges 2: 7-19.	The time of the Judges.
T. —Judges 3: 1-11.	Sinning and repenting.
W. —Deut. 31: 14-21.	Warning.
Th. —Jer. 2: 1-13.	Surprising folly.
F. —Isa. 1: 1-9.	Depravity of heart.
S. —Psalm 81.	Wilful disobedience.
S. —Psalm 106: 34-48.	The Merciful Deliverer.

CATECHISM

Q. 50. What is required in the second commandment?
A. The second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in his word.

TIME AND PLACE

There is in this lesson a general statement of the condition of Israel in the land of Canaan from the death of Joshua, 1427 B.C., for a period of about 300 years.

LESSON PLAN

- I. Loyalty to the Lord, 7-10 (a).**
Shown by the witneses of God's mighty works.
II. Forsaking of the Lord, 10 b-13.
By unworthy descendants of noble ancestors.
III. The Anger of the Lord, 14, 15.
Against the sin of heathen worship.
IV. The Mercy of the Lord, 16.
Which delivered them from their enemies.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 35 (Ps. Scl.); 301; 163; 474; 542; 250.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—The Book of Joshua closes with an account of Israel settled in the land of promise. The Book of Judges continues the history of the people in the land, until the beginning of the Kingdom of Israel. The verses of this lesson give a general summary of the book. Verses 6 to 9 are quoted from Joshua 24: 28-31 in order (1) to connect the following history with that in the Book of Joshua and (2) to mark the contrast between Israel in his days and Israel in after years.

I. Loyalty to the Lord, 7-10, (a).

V. 7. *The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua.* This links the narrative with Josh. 24: 31. Such loyal allegiance to the right on the part of the people shows how great was the influence of Joshua. *The elders*; "the head men of the clans and families, who were the natural guardians of Israelitish custom, law and religion." *Who had seen.* The reference here is principally to what God did during the conquest. So great was the impression of God's work upon

them that they remained true to the covenant of Joshua 24: 21, 24. *Great*; and therefore the sin of the people in rebelling against God was very grievous.

Vs. 8, 9 repeat with slight variations the narrative of Josh. 24: 29, 30. *The servant of the Lord.* His faith and courage won for him the title which Moses bore, Deut. 34: 5. *They buried him in the border of his inheritance.* Within the bounds of the land assigned to him, rather than on its boundary. *In Timnath-heres*; that is "the portion of the sun," but *heres* is probably written accidentally for *serah*, meaning "extra." See Josh. 19: 50; 24: 30. *In the Mount of Ephraim.* The highlands of Ephraim, Joshua's own tribe. *The hill Gaash.* Of this nothing is known, save its mention in 2 Sam. 23: 30, and 1 Chron. 11: 32.

II. Forsaking of the Lord, 10 (b)-13.

V. 10. *All that generation*; the contemporaries of Joshua and those who outlived him. *Another generation . . . which knew not the Lord.* "They had not that vivid, overpowering

knowledge of Him which was possessed by those who had seen His wonders." This was the turning point in the history of Israel, the beginning of the defection which issued in its final overthrow.

V. 11. *The children of Israel did evil.* For instances see ch. 3: 7; 6: 1; 10: 6; 12: 4; 13: 1. *In the sight of the Lord.* They knew that His eye was upon them and yet, in utter disregard of Him, they went on in sin. *Served Baalim*; literally "lords," the plural form of Baal, the supreme male deity of the Canaanites. Baal was worshipped in different localities under a local name. The worship of Baal was accompanied by lascivious rites (compare 1 Kings 14: 24), the sacrifice of children in the fire (Jer. 19: 5), and kissing the image, 1 Kings 19: 18; Hos. 13: 2.

Vs. 12, 13. *And they forsook the Lord God.* This is the evil that brought all others in its train, Deut. 31: 16, 17. There may have been some exceptions, as there were in the day of Elijah (1 Kings 19: 18), but it is clear that the great majority of the people were guilty. *The Lord God of their fathers.* "The Lord" in this passage is "Jehovah" in the original. There is a contrast between the name of the God of Israel and the name of the heathen deity. *Which brought them out of the land of Egypt.* This emphasizes the baseness of their ingratitude to Him. *Provoked the Lord to anger.* The original is very strong, "they exasperated Jehovah." The contention between Jehovah and His people was not over mere forms of worship; the most frightful moral evils were connected

with the false worship of Palestine. See Lev. 18: 24-28. *Ashtaroth.* The plural of Ashtareth, the female deity corresponding to Baal, worshipped, like the Roman Venus, with rites of impurity.

III. The Anger of the Lord, 14, 15.

V. 14. *The anger of the Lord was hot.* The destructive effects of the just indignation of holy love against sin are like that of fire. *He delivered them into the hands of the spoilers.* He allowed their enemies to prevail over and punish them. *He sold them.* This term represents the absolute giving up into the hands of their enemies. It is no doubt derived from the idea of selling a slave. (See ch. 3: 8 and 4: 2.) The opposite of this is redemption spoken of later in the history.

V. 15. *Whithersoever they went.* In every undertaking. *The hand of the Lord was against them.* The power of God was exercised to punish them by calamities. *As the Lord had sworn.* Thus His truth combined with His holiness and His justice to punish them. *They were sore distressed.* This brought them to repentance.

IV. The Mercy of the Lord, 16.

V. 16. *Raised up judges.* These were more than judicial officers. They were also champions and defenders, ch. 3: 10; 1 Sam. 12: 11. By their sufferings God led the people to repentance, and as soon as they repented He raised up deliverers. (See ch. 2: 16; 3: 9, 10.) Their name was probably derived from the idea of placing upright.

APPLICATION

And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and . . . of the elders . . . who had seen, v. 7. The remembrance of God's goodness to us in the gifts of His bounty, and especially in the gift of Jesus Christ, will keep us steadfast in our allegiance to Him. The experience of the Christian is his strongest shield against unbelief. No one else has ever been to him what Jesus is, or done to him what Jesus has done; and one may as well attempt to persuade a man at noonday that the sun is not shining overhead, as seek to shake the Christian's confidence in his Lord.

And Joshua . . . the servant of the Lord, died, v. 8. It should be our continual aim to finish the work God has given us to do. We may have no shining talents like Joshua, and we may occupy no place in the gallery of the earth's great ones; but if we be only "the servants of the Lord," we shall hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." This will make life "a long life," whether it have "length of days" or not.

And the children of Israel . . . served Baalim, v. 11. They forgot God and turned unto idols. The human heart will have some

object of worship. Doubtless the worship of "other gods" was strange to the Israelites at first, yet it was no doubt with them as the poet has said :

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen ;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

And they forsook the Lord God . . . and followed other gods, v. 12. There is great danger in making intimate friendships with the world, its customs, fashions, its haunts of vice, its selfish pleasures. The church in the world has been compared to the Gulf Stream, a warm stream flowing through a cold ocean ; icebergs in it indeed, and itself not so warm as it should be, but far warmer than the chill waters through which it flows, and bringing a warm climate to American and European shores, which would be almost barren and uninhabitable without it.

And they . . . served Baal and . . . Ashtaroth, v. 13. The old Scotch lady was not far astray, when she said that most of those found backsliding had not gone very far forward. The top that spins fast stands firm ; when it goes slowly it falls to the ground. Yet we need ever to remember the words of the inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God," Heb. 3 : 12.

And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, v. 14. The Lord is angry with the wicked every day. He, the Holy One, could not be otherwise. Yet His anger is not the anger of a tyrant, but the anger of love. Because He loves us, He is angry

with us for our sin and disobedience, just as a parent is with his child because of disobedience.

And he delivered them into the hands of spoilers, v. 14. There can be no sin without evil consequences. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," Gal. 6 : 7. Thus the Lord, through the punishment of His people of old, would teach us that it is an evil thing and bitter to forsake the Lord.

"Sorrow follows wrong,
As echo follows song ;
On, on, on, on !"

Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, v. 15. Their only Hope was now their Enemy. They had forsaken God and had forgotten that He is a "jealous God" (Josh. 24 : 19), and His "glory" He "will not give to another," Isa. 42 : 8. Because of this the hand of the Lord was against them for evil. (Compare 2 Chron. 15 : 2.) The great Napoleon once sneeringly said, "I perceive that the Lord is always on the side of the strongest battalions." Human history and experience give this the lie.

As the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them, v. 15. When God threatens, He means what He says, and He will bring it to pass. God is faithful who has threatened. Let then the promises of God win you to repentance, and the threatenings of Jehovah warn you from impenitency. "Turn and live"—so saith the Lord, Ezek. 33 : 11. "If He turn not, He will whet his sword ; He hath bent his bow, and made it ready," Psa. 7 : 12. There is the threatening. Make your choice, and make it now.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

Past mercies furnish fuel to present devotion. v. 7.

Each human life has its work, its goal, its eternal issues. v. 8.

We should tell those who come after us the great things the Lord hath done for us. v. 10.

The world, money, pleasure, self are the Baals whom modern men worship. v. 11.

Decay of faith leads to decay of morals in nations and in individuals. v. 12.

To make a friend of the world is to make an enemy of God. v. 12.

God's love of righteousness is the measure of His hatred of sin. v. 14.

From the root of disobedience comes the fruit of sorrow. v. 14.

Success in life depends on the favor of God. v. 14.

The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, (Psa. 34 : 16). v. 15.

The door of deliverance opens at the touch of the penitent. v. 16.

Condor says of the reputed tomb of Joshua, "That it is a sepulchre of a man of distinction is manifest from the great number of lamp-niches which cover the walls of the porch, being over 200 in number, arranged in vertical rows, and all smoke-blackened. One can well imagine the wild and picturesque appearance presented at any time when the votive lamps were all in place and the blaze of light shone out of the wild hillside, casting long shadows from the central columns. The tomb is a square chamber, with five excavations on three of its sides, the central one forming a passage leading into a second chamber beyond. Here is a single cavity, with a niche for a lamp, and here is good reason to believe is the resting-place of the warrior-chief of Israel."

As the worship of Baal was the prevailing idolatry of Western Asia, whenever the Israelites relapsed into idolatry they usually resorted to some form of Baal worship.—Dowling.

Light from the East

Baal—This word, which is found in all Semitic tongues, means first owner and then master or lord. At an early period Israel

applied the term to Jehovah, and their use of the term no doubt made it easier for them to fall into the worship of the Baalim, which, in Canaan, was all round them and which was incorporated with agricultural customs and festivals. Every region had its Baal, who was supposed to give it increase and was worshipped on mountain tops and under evergreen trees, with fruits, incense, dances, and occasionally with animal and even human sacrifices. His image was a man with ram's horns and some sacrificial animal beside him.

Ashtorath—The Ishtar of Assyria (plural, Ashtaroth), the chief female deity of the Phœnicians, and her worship spread over all Syria. She is represented as a woman, somewhat short in stature, holding a dove to her bosom. She was the "queen of heaven" to whom at a later period the women of Israel made moon-shaped cakes and poured out libations. On the one hand she was regarded as a protectress of a city or country, a warlike goddess carrying a quiver and a bow. On the other she was the dispenser of life and fertility, the goddess of reproduction and as such she was worshipped with exceedingly sensual rites.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

After Joshua had dismissed the tribes to take possession of their several inheritances (Josh. 24 : 28), an "angel came up from Gilgal to Bochim" and delivered a message to them. It was historic and prophetic. He recounted what the Lord had promised, and what He had done in their behalf. He foretold their future evil career and consequent punishment. Then "the people lifted up their voice and wept . . . and they sacrificed unto the Lord," vs. 4, 5. So far well, but alas how human, how fickle, how much like ourselves! They cry, and sacrifice to the Lord, and then are off after dumb idols. What a mingling of piety and instability! Note:

1. *The potent influence of true servants of*

God (a) As recounted in v. 7. How do we account for the staying and ruling power of these men? Was it due to their military renown in the conquest of Canaan? This no doubt counted for much in the mind of the multitude. But we must look for the full explanation in (b) Their knowledge of God. They "had seen all the great works of the Lord, which He had done for Israel," v. 7. Personal experience is what inspires. We need to come face to face with God and eternal verities, if we are to be brave and true and influential. (c) Eminent service also counted. Notice how the leader among them is described, "Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord," v. 8. It is this that exalts; and the harder the service the greater the honor for performing it. (Compare Phil. 2 : 5-11; Matt. 20 : 26-28.)

2. *The downward course of the people.* The steps are distinctly marked. (a) They buried Joshua. A great moral and spiritual

force was withdrawn from a wayward nation. Read Stephen's account of them, Acts 7. (b) All the generation to which Joshua belonged are gathered to their fathers. The new generation starts on its career characterized by ignorance of God and of the historic past, v. 10. Degradation and disaster follows. It is always so. The Bible may be neglected in homes and excluded from schools and colleges. Some may be unwise enough to boast of this state of things, and others may treat it with indifference, but ignorance of God and its legitimate consequences inevitably ensue. (c) Twice it is declared (vs. 12, 13), that, as the outcome of ignorance, "they forsook the Lord." They ceased to trust and worship Him. His sanctuary and altars were abandoned. In modern phraseology, they ceased to be "church-goers," and to offer sacrifices and give tithes, etc. "They served Baal and Ashtaroth" (v. 13) with vile and unholy rites.

3. *The Lord's treatment of the people in this state of apostasy.* (a) His "anger was hot against Israel," v. 14. God's anger means His necessary, inherent abhorrence of sin. He cannot but hate sin, while He compassionates, pities the sinner. (b) He manifested His anger. This He did in two ways. "He delivered them into the hands of spoilers," gave them up to their enemies, v. 14. He turned His hand "against them for evil," v. 15. It is no wonder that "they were greatly distressed." The way of transgressors is hard. (Compare Jer. 2 : 19.)

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

All these first books of the Bible are just a picture of a nation in the making—God moulding and shaping, out of stiff and perverse material (Deut. 32 : 5), a people for Himself, who should show forth His praise, Isa. 43 : 21. Peloubet presents it thus to the eye :

Patriar- chal Period.	The Dis- cipline of Egypt.	The Wil- derness Training.	The Con- quest.	The Judges.	The Kings.
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The first four periods we have studied. Upon the fifth we now enter. It lasted about 80 years, and was a time of many ups and

downs. The story is all told in three words—Transgression, Oppression, Rescue; much that is dark, some bright spots, too.

1. *A bright spot.* The period opens with happy years. While the influence of Joshua lasted, the people were faithful to God. Like attracts like. Joshua, the great leader, had had about him rulers ("elders") of like sort, and they, in turn, had influenced the people, v. 11. Grand old Joshua, v. 8, and lovely burial place—for Timnath-heres (v.9) means "the portion of the sun," "Sunny-side." How beautifully the Bible speaks of death, "gathered unto their fathers" (v. 10), "fallen asleep," 1 Cor. 15 : 6. Why should we fear death when it means to be "forever with the Lord" ?

2. *Transgression.* Steady, persistent, strong, is the current of evil. See how it comes to the surface again, v. 10. The people forgot what Joshua had taught them about God, and the wonderful deliverance God had wrought for them, vs. 10-12. Hideous Baal, the sun-god ("Baalim" is the plural of Baal) and vile Ashtoreth ("Ashtaroth" is the plural), the gods of their neighbors, took the place of the pure and holy Jehovah, their own God—a lesson on the effect of evil associates, 1 Cor. 15 : 33. People become like the gods they worship; and so these people became hateful and vile.

3. *Punishment.* What else could God do? (See such passages as Lev. 26; Deut. 28; compare Heb. 12 : 29.) Sin takes all the life out of both men and nations. When God undertakes to punish, He makes thorough work of it.

4. *Rescue.* But God loves His people, and does not forget. His wrath is like the goldsmith's fire, to soften, not to destroy. When their hearts melt He delivers. The "judges," as we shall see from the lessons following, were "deliverers," types of the Great Deliverer, Jesus Christ our Lord, Luke 19 : 10.

Some Test Questions

- Why called "The Book of Judges?"
- How long a period covered by it?
- How much of this was peace, and how much, war?
- How many "Judges?"
- By whom appointed?

For what purpose chiefly?
 How long after Joshua's death did his great influence last?
 What was the character of the new generation that followed?
 What gods did they worship?
 What was the character of their worship?
 How did God punish them?
 In what form did He send deliverance?

Prove from Scripture

That human nature is weak.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The influence of a good life.
2. Evil, our undying foe.
3. God's mercy to sinners.

The Catechism

(For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.)

Ques. 50. *What the Second Commandment requires.* Our attention is directed in this question to two things: (1) The instruction which God has given about the methods of worship, and (2) Our duty in relation to this instruction.

1. God has told us in His word how He is to be worshipped. Amongst His ordinances of worship, the principal are: (a) Prayer, which includes thanksgiving, Phil. 4 : 6. Prayer may be public, as in the church (Acts 2 : 42), private, as in the family (Jer. 10 : 25), or secret, as when alone, Matt. 6 : 6.

(b) Praise, that is, singing the praises of God. This should be done both in public and in private. See Ps. 149 : 1 ; James 5 : 13 ; Eph. 5 : 18-20 ; Col. 3 : 16. (c) The reading, hearing and preaching of the word. The reading and hearing of the word is to be observed both in public and in private. See Acts 15 : 21 ; John 5 : 39 ; James 1 : 21-25 ; Acts 10 : 23. The word is to be preached in public (2 Tim. 4 : 2), and the preaching of it should be attended to that men may learn the way of salvation. (d) The observance of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. See Matt. 28 : 19 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 23.

2. Our duty in relation to God's ordinances of worship is threefold: (a) We should receive them. It is not our part to say how we shall worship, any more than the soldier has the right to choose the color of his uniform or the form of his flag. If we are loyal to God, we shall submit ourselves to His directions in our worship. (b) We should observe them. It is only in this way that we can prove to ourselves and show to others that we really approve of them. Our faithful observance of God's ordinances is a powerful testimony for Him to all around. (c) We should keep them pure and entire: that is, we should take care that nothing is added to what God has appointed and that everything which He has appointed is observed with loving diligence and care.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Links—All stand and stretch up hands and clap them. Have they done anything to serve Jesus? Touch ears. Have they listened for God's voice? Touch eyes. Have they looked up to God in love and trust? Touch lips. Have they spoken words for Jesus? Point to feet. Have they gone errands of love for Jesus' sake? Hand on heart. Does your little heart love Jesus? What promise did we make last Sunday? (The same promise that the children of Israel made to Joshua.) Repeat (pointing upward with clasped hands) "The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey." (Hands behind ears.)



Lesson Thought—God hates sin.

Introduction—Annie and Lily were going home from school together one afternoon, and Annie was coaxing Lily to go off somewhere and play with her. "But mother told me to come right home from school," said Lily. "Well, she has gone away and would never know if you did go away for a little while," said naughty Annie. "But God has not gone away; He would know," Lily replied, as she ran home fast.

Lesson—Joshua had gone away, but God had not gone away. He knew whether or not the children of Israel were keeping their promise.

A story of a little lad, who was naughty and disobeyed his good, kind mother, and then was sorry and promised to love and obey her always—good for a while, then forgets about his promises and does again the naughty things—will show just how the children of Israel *broke their promises* of loving and obeying God. Good for a while, but as years went on they forgot God, disobeyed Him and served idols.

To Teachers—Evidently the elders failed to instruct the young in regard to the worship of the true God. Teachers! let us be more than ever in earnest in our work; then none need ever say, "No one has ever told it to me." Let us so teach that an influence may go out from our class that will spread the gospel till all shall know Him from the least even unto the greatest.

Baal-worship—See notes on page 452. Show the folly and sin of it all. Recall some of the "great works" (v. 8), such as the crossing of the Red Sea, the manna, the crossing of Jordan, the fall of Jericho, etc. Impress the ingratitude of the people in forgetting all these things.

God's Anger—God looked down from heaven and saw all their sin. God was angry. He withdrew His loving care and let their enemies get hold of them.

God's Mercy—Repeat, "Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not." Neh. 9:19. Tell of God's help. Judges appointed, v. 18.

Our Idols—Have we idols as well as the Israelites? Yes, anything that we love better than we love God is an idol. A little girl was playing on the floor with her toys when her mother told her to run an errand for her. She paid no attention to her mother's words but went on playing. Her love of play was not wrong till it kept her from obeying her mother. To love anything so that it keeps us from obeying God is to make it an idol.

Golden Text—God is ready to help us, even when we have been very naughty.

"We never will give in to sin,
But show a brave good fight;
Faithful to God we'll ever be,
And dare to do the right."

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Jesus Seeking Sinners Saving

The very youngest children know what it is to be "naughty," and it is better that they should find out in time how dreadful a thing sin is and who alone can save us from it. Tell them of God who has made us and has made the world so beautiful and bountiful. Show them how His love goes out to us day by day as our Father and Friend. We ought to want to obey such a loving God and Father, and please Him in all things; but do we? Do we break His loving Commandments? That is sin. Then tell them how sin offends God and grieves His loving heart; and how, if we keep on in sin, God, just because He is holy and good, must punish us for ever. The way is now open for the sweet story of salvation through Jesus Christ, and of God's grace, and His grace, in His seeking and saving sinners.

Lesson VIII.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE LESSON

November 23, 1902

Isaiah 28 : 1-7. Study Isa. 28 : 1-13. Commit to memory v. 7. Read Isaiah, 28.

1 Woe to the crown of pride 1 to the drunkards of Eph'raim, 2 whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which 3 are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hail.

3 The crown of pride, 4 the drunkards of Eph'raim, shall be trodden under feet:

4 And the 5 glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that

Revised Version—1 Of; 2 And to the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be as the hasty fruit, etc.; 3 Back the battle at the gate.

GOLDEN TEXT

Isa. 28 : 7. They also have erred through wine.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Isa. 28 : 1-13.	World's Temperance Lesson.
T.—Prov. 20 : 1-13.	The mocker.
W.—Prov. 23 : 15-25.	Good counsel.
Th.—Isa. 5 : 11-24.	Woe to the drunkard.
F.—Amos 6 : 1-11.	Danger of drink.
S.—Nahum 1 : 7-10.	God's punishment.
S.—1 Cor. 6 : 1-11.	Drunkards shut out.

CATECHISM

Q. 51. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word.

TIME AND PLACE

Time, 725 B.C., three years before the fall of Samaria, in the reign of Hezekiah, King of Judah and Hoshea, King of Israel. Like most of Isaiah's prophecies, it was probably uttered in Jerusalem.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Slaves of Passion, 1-4.
Whose appetite for drink was their ruin.
- II. The Heroes of Righteousness, 5, 6.
Who displayed justice and valor.
- III. The Mockers of Instruction, 7.
Who despised the message of the prophet.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 251; 91 (Ps. Sel.); 200; 529; 263; 530.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—In Isaiah's time the twelve tribes were governed, not by judges, but by kings. For two centuries they had been separated into two kingdoms, the northern, called Israel or Ephraim, with Samaria as its capital, and the southern, Judah, whose capital was Jerusalem. In this chapter, the prophet, after a brief note of warning to Samaria, turns his attention to Judah, and warns her against the sin which was soon to bring destruction (v. 2) upon her northern neighbor. One of the outstanding sins of the age was drunkenness.

I. The Slaves of Passion, 1-4.

V. 1. *Woe!* Behold the doom impending. Be forewarned. *The crown of pride . . . and the fading flower*; two descriptions of Samaria, the capital of Israel and the royal residence, the first referring to its commanding position on a hill overlooking the whole country round, and to the pride of its people in its magnificence; the second, to the withering of its glory, through the vices of its inhabitants. *The drunkards*. The prophets denounce drunkenness as one of the great sins of the age. See Amos 4 : 1; 6 : 4-6.

looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he catch it up.

5 In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people.

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn 6 the battle to the gate.

7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

8 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn 6 the battle to the gate.

Of Ephraim; the northern kingdom, so named because Ephraim was the strongest of the ten tribes comprised in it. See 1 Kings 11 : 31. *On the head of the fat valley*. It was surrounded by the fruitful valley of Shechem with its encircling range of lofty mountains. "Samaria stood upon a beautiful swelling hill which commanded the whole country in a most regal way." (Delitzsch.) *Overcome with wine*. The inhabitants are prostrate through over-indulgence in wine, like one who has been stunned by a blow.

V. 2. *A mighty and strong one*; the kingdom of Assyria, which, while they were indulging in sin, Jehovah had been preparing for their punishment. *As a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters*. "The fearfully devastating force of an Assyrian invasion is set forth under three distinct images, a hailstorm, a furious tempest of wind, and a violent inundation." (Rawlinson.) To beat down, to destroy with its fury, to sweep away as an irresistible deluge, the Assyrian will come, the accumulation of terms heightening the idea of the approaching devastation. *With the*

hand. The Lord's own hand. Assyria was to be simply the instrument.

V. 3. *Trodden under feet*; as a flower is trampled in the dust. The date of this prophecy is 725 B.C. In 722 B.C., the people of Israel were carried into captivity. (Compare 2 Kings 17 : 6.)

V. 4. *And the glorious beauty*. The vision of the regal splendor of the city would serve to whet the appetite of the Assyrian to make it his prize. *The hasty fruit* (Rev. Ver. "the first ripe fig"); referring to the early fig which ripens in June, and was, therefore, considered a delicacy and eagerly eaten. August was the usual time for the fig harvest. *Eateth it up*; a vivid picture of the eagerness of the Assyrians in seizing the beautiful city of Samaria. It is a fact that no intermission was allowed in the siege of the city, but it was pressed without delay.

II. The Heroes of Righteousness, 5, 6.

V. 5. *In that day*; when judgment has come upon Ephraim. *A crown of glory*; contrasted with the "crown of pride," v. 1. The spiritual glory of God's presence and favor would be a brighter glory than that of Samaria. *A diadem of beauty*; instead of the "fading flower" of Samaria.

V. 6. *For a spirit of judgment*. In ch. 1 : 15-27 the prophet charges the judges with want of righteousness. Now, the presence of God would inspire these judges with the spirit of wisdom in their decisions. *And for strength*; to the soldiers who defended their country. *That turn the battle to the gate*; that drive hostile invaders to their own land.

For want of the presence of God, Samaria could not repel hostile attack.

III. Mockers of Instruction, 7.

V. 7. *They also*; Judah as well as Ephraim. *Have erred through wine*. Their obedience to God has not been firm and steady, but like to the reeling, staggering gait of one intoxicated. *The priest and the prophet*. Not only the common people, but those engaged in the most sacred offices of religion, have erred through strong drink. In the case of the priests the law prohibited this upon pain of death, Lev. 10 : 9. *They err in vision*. Drink blinds them to the will of God. *Stumble in judgment*. The priests were authorized to give judgment in certain cases (Deut. 17 : 8, 9; 19 : 17; 2 Chron. 19 : 8), and judges were warned not to drink wine, Prov. 31 : 4, 5. Yet through the effect of strong drink they had rendered themselves unfit to give just judgment.

Vs. 8-10 present a painful picture of the result of debauchery and excess, and record the mocking reply with which the drunken revellers met the prophet's words. Is he prepared to teach them as nurslings? To such let him direct his attention. Then they gibe him in monosyllables as children prattle, "cept on 'cept, line on line, a bit here and a bit there." (Green.)

The sharp rejoinder to these mockers (vs. 9-13) is that they will find the truth of the prophet's words from men of strange speech. Henceforth God will speak to the people of Judah, not by the words of the prophet, but by the yoke of the oppressor.

APPLICATION

Whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, v. 1. It is not alone the vulgar, illiterate, and homely who are "overcome with wine," but the refined, the accomplished, the beautiful. The higher and more sensitive the physical organization, the greater will be the injurious effects of alcohol upon it. Animals are not injured by the use of stimulants as human beings are. Intoxicants will steal the lustre from the eye of the brightest, the smile from the lip of the most cheerful, the pity from the heart of the kindest. It has no respect to man's person. No one is safe

from its dangers in his own strength.

Trodden under feet, v. 3. There is a limit to probation. There comes a time when it is too late to change, when, as in the case of Esau, repentance, though it be with bitter tears, cannot restore the lost birthright. The flames have gone so far that the building cannot be saved. So with strong drink; there is a time, while the habit is forming, when it is possible, however difficult, to leave off. But if the drinking goes on, the habit is so confirmed, the disease of the body is so inwrought, the will so weak, that

the drunkard may pray and strive with bitter tears for release and yet go straight to his cup again.

A mighty and strong one . . . a tempest of hail . . . a destroying storm . . . a flood of mighty waters, v. 2. The Assyrian hordes with all their fierceness and fury did not so much evil to Israel as intemperance has done and is now doing to men. It injures the body, ruins the soul, disables the mind, unfits for daily life, brings poverty, leads into bad company, injures family and friends, tempts others, leads to crime and fills poor-houses and prisons. What a category of evils!

Have erred through wine, v. 7. There is an old fable which tells of a man who had the choice of three sins he would commit—drunkenness, adultery or murder. He chose drunkenness as being apparently the least; but when he was intoxicated, so the story runs, he committed both the others, and thus ended by being guilty of all the three.

Have erred through strong drink, v. 7. The strength of one evil habit may overcome even the greatest and best. Alexander the Great died at the early age of thirty-three, the victim of his own excesses. We think of those two poets, the one a peer, the other

a ploughman, who won for themselves the crown of the rarest genius, and yet were held by the chains of ignominious and debasing habit. The successful merchant, the skillful workman, the talented youth, the eloquent orator, the fervent preacher, all furnish us illustrations of the truth of this verse.

They are swallowed up of wine, v. 7. Strong drink is a devouring monster. It wastes money, changing comfort and plenty into poverty and want. It saps away strength of body and mind, leaving its victim a helpless wreck. It destroys the affections, turning love and kindness into selfishness and cruelty. It blunts the sense of right and wrong, paving the way for every kind of crime. Sooner or later it will swallow up everything that is noble and manly.

They err in vision, they stumble in judgment, v. 7. No matter what a man's business is, he has no more brain than he needs to do his work well; and liquor, even though taken moderately, will after a little limit his mental powers so that he cannot see things as they really are and so cannot judge anything correctly. We must be sober to have clear perceptions and sound judgment.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

The wise will find a warning in the woes of the wine-bibbers. v. 1.

The judgments of the Lord are slow, but they are certain. v. 2.

Moral corruption is in the end fatal to national greatness. v. 3.

The palaces of passion are doomed to destruction. v. 4.

National godliness is the secret of national well being. v. 5.

Civil justice is a fruit of true religion. v. 6.

The sinner with the most light merits the deepest condemnation. v. 7.

To-day, amid the peaceful beauty of the scene, the secluded vale covered with corn-fields, through which the winding streams flash and glisten into the hazy distance, and the gentle hill rises without a scarp to the olives waving over its summit, it is possible to appreciate Isaiah's name for Samaria, "the crown of pride of Ephraim, the flower

of his glorious beauty which is on the head of the fat valley."—George Adam Smith.

Though it (Samaria) would now be commanded from the northern range, it must before the invention of gunpowder have been almost impregnable.—Conder.

The love of sumptuous food and delicious drinks is never good, and with the use of the most temperate diet body and soul can flourish most admirably.—Ewald.

When I was young I never did apply Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood, Nor did not with unblushful forehead woo The means of weakness and debility; Therefore mine age is as a lusty winter, Frosty yet kindly. —Shakespeare.

To guard against perils is better than subsequent attempts at remedy or consequent pains of remorse. God told His people of old that when they built their flat-roofed houses, on which many an hour would be

spent, they must build a battlement.

The indwelling Spirit confers three benefits: 1. A clear head—"a spirit of judgment." Solomon asked this blessing. It does not fall to many of us to sit on the bench, but what is good for the judge is a precious gift for all. 2. A brave heart—"to them that turn the battle to the gate." The soldier as well as the judge is to participate in the gifts of God's Spirit. We have a spiritual warfare to wage, and we are pledged to conquer the world for Christ. 3. A strong arm. Self-denial is a source of moral courage and of spiritual strength. Far from us be the dissoluteness which enfeebles our powers, both of mind and body.

In vs. 9, 10, we hear the drunkards mocking Isaiah over their cups . . . the monosyllabic forms in the Hebrew (qav la-qav qav la qav) present at once the stammers of a drunkard, and the monotonous character attributed to Isaiah's teaching.—Cheyne.

Light from the East

FAT VALLEYS—Samaria stood on the oval hill whose sides are still fertile and which rises in the centre of a large rich valley with

many smaller ones opening into it. In travelling through Palestine one is struck with the close connection between the fertility of parts of it and the wickedness of the people who once dwelt there. The special richness of certain portions seems to have resulted in special sensuality. In the lower Jordan valley where the soil was wonderfully productive, well watered, and the temperature that of a hot-house, sensuality burst all bounds and some communities were swept away by a special judgment from heaven. Around Samaria, where the valleys were covered with grain and the hillsides with trestle work which literally groaned with rich juicy grapes, the drunkenness of the people became a proverb in every tongue; whereas, further up the range, thrift and industry compelled a severer morality and a soberer view of life. So among ourselves, the farmers on barren ridges often have mortgages on fine farms in the valley, and people in the city who have become much better off than they were once, begin to use strong drink before unknown to them, and it sometimes demoralizes their homes and destroys their happiness.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

The prophecy belongs to the earliest years of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. In the days of Ahaz the people tamely submitted to the Assyrian yoke. Under Hezekiah they made feeble attempts to secure liberty, in which they relied more upon Egypt than upon God. The sin and ruin of Israel are held up as a warning to Judah.

1. *The sins of the people.* (a) Pride and insolent contempt for God and men, v. 1. The Israelites inhabited rich valleys, and wealth is apt to generate pride and forgetfulness of God, to lead to self indulgence, and luxurious immoral living. But God says, 1 Tim. 6: 9, 10, 17; Luke 6: 24. (b) Drunkenness. They were "overcome with wine," v. 1. They "erred through wine and through strong drink," v. 7. This is

God's direct testimony regarding the people generally. (c) The teachers and leaders of the people were specially blameworthy: "The priests and prophets have erred through strong drink," v. 7. "Erred" is too mild a term. "They are swallowed up of wine." Hence their teaching and judicial decisions are worse than worthless, they are pernicious in the last degree. They have become blind leaders of the blind; and the Saviour declares their doom, Matt. 15: 14. Example descends. When those in high office in church and state become unfaithful, impure, dissolute, their vices are copied and multiplied. No limit can be set to the extent to which the curse may spread, or to the disgusting and utterly revolting forms which it may assume. Hence (d) "All tables are full of vomit and filthiness . . . no place is clean," v. 8. What an appalling horrible picture! Priests and prophets giddy, reeling and babbling in their abominable orgies, utterly unfit for their sacred func-

tions. See in this the unspeakable depths of degradation to which intemperance leads, and the need of taking a resolute stand against the beginnings of an evil so seductive and potent to work ruin to personal and national character.

2. *The judgment of God against their sins.*

(a) He pronounced successive woes upon them. The flower of their glorious beauty was to be destroyed as by a tempest of hail, vs. 1, 2. The Lord would bring "a mighty and strong one," the Assyrians, against Samaria, "the crown of the pride of the drunkards of Ephraim." (b) The flourishing prosperity and illusive happiness of Israel, which fed their vanity and pride, would be of short duration. They would vanish quickly, like "the first ripe fig before the summer." (Compare Ps. 1 : 6 ; 2 : 9.) Would that the warning beacons of the historic past were heeded by our country and the nations of to-day.

3. *The compassion of God notwithstanding the aggravated guilt of Israel.* (a) Amidst the severe vengeance of God His tender mercies are unending. "In that day He shall be for a crown of glory," etc. . . "unto a residue of his people." (v. 6). Where sin abounds grace doth much more abound. (b) The tribe of Judah was a small remnant of the nation, but in God there was enough to give them riches, wisdom, "a spirit of judgment," and "strength to turn back the battle to the gate," v. 6. But they also have erred through wine and strong drink (v. 7), and therefore need special treatment. (c) They are to be taught like little children, line upon line, precept upon precept, with manifold repetitions, here a little and there a little. They have been so incapacitated by strong drink that they are unfit to be their own instructors. They must be taught "by men of strange lips and with another tongue." Teaching and the grace of God is what inebriates need. (vs. 9-13).

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

There is still need of a "World's Temperance Sunday" and a "World's Temperance Lesson," for perhaps no evil is more wide-spread or more deadly than the drink evil, and, so seductive is it in its beginnings

that against no other evil is it more necessary to keep vigilant watch.

We have here God's own warnings through His servant the prophet. It is a page of history, with God's commentary upon it for our instruction, and has its lessons for us both personally and as nation builders.

In the forefront stands the terrible example of ruin through drink. Set out the situation—the prosperous northern nation of Israel, with beautiful Samaria as its capital city, "overcome with wine," v. 1. The following passages afford glimpses of the wealth and luxury of Samaria, Amos 3 : 15 ; 4 : 9 ; 5 : 11, 23 ; 6 : 4, 6 ; 1 Kings 22 : 39. Very rich, very splendid, but "wine-smitten,"—a vivid picture of some rich people and some rich nations to-day. Black ruin follows. Beauty becomes "a fading flower," v. 1, and quickly eaten summer fruit, v. 4, and the fierce Assyrians, the Lord's "mighty and strong one," crushes. See vs. 2, 3.

Intemperance brings destruction ; that is an unvarying and unending rule. There is a picture of strength in vs. 5, 6. The reference is to Judah, the lesser nation, and Jerusalem its capital. They are still sturdy, and the Lord is still to them "a crown of glory" and "a diadem of beauty," because they are sober and God-fearing. God makes their judges wise and their warriors sturdy. Can anything be more hideous or hopeless than drunken judges or drunken soldiers?

But the picture is marred. Even in Judah and Jerusalem, the curse of drink is beginning to work. For its awful effects see the revolting description in vs. 7, 8. The teacher will not need to go far abroad for illustration. Vs. 9-13 tell how God seeks to win wanderers back, but will smite if they continue obdurate in sin.

Some Test Questions

The writer?

Those addressed?

Who held up as a warning?

What city described?

Who meant by the Lord's "mighty and strong one"?

What figures used to describe the ruin?

Who meant by "the residue," v. 5?

What promises to them?

With what faults were they also chargeable?

Wherefore special mention of the priest and the prophets?

What the result of their excesses?

How does the Lord seek to save His people?

What the fate of the obdurate?

Prove from Scripture

That God teaches us patiently.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous)

1. The city of Samaria.
2. The effect of intemperance on the national life.
3. Sober leaders.

The Catechism

(For examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.)

Ques. 51. *What the Second Commandment forbids.* Two kinds of false worship were prevalent in Israel. One was the worship of strange gods. Ahab is said to have sinned more grievously than any other king of Israel (1 Kings 16: 33) because he worshipped Baal. The other was the setting up of images to represent not strange gods but the true God. This form of false worship is sternly condemned by Scripture as well as the first. Jeroboam is known as the king who "made Israel to sin, because he set up

golden calves at Dan and Bethel, as symbols of Jehovah."

Isaiah (ch. 34) ridicules the worship of images by representing a man as warming himself with a piece of wood and roasting meat with another portion, and of the remainder making a god. It is no sufficient answer to say that the timber is not the god, but simply the place in which the God dwells. For, in the first place, the ordinary worshipper of idols does not distinguish between the god and his abode, and, further, it is a degraded idea of God which allows Him to be compared to a stick or a stone.

This commandment does not forbid the use of pictures or other works of art for purposes of adornment. God ordered the making of the serpent of brass and the figures in the temple. But when the people of Israel began to worship the brazen serpent it was destroyed by the order of King Hezekiah.

Not only is the worship of God by images forbidden, but also any other mode of worship which He has not ordained. The appointment of officers in the church not sanctioned by Scripture, the setting apart of sacred days without divine authority, the celebration of the sacraments otherwise than God's word prescribes, are breaches of the Second Commandment, as truly as are the actual image-worship of the Romish or picture-worship of the Greek Church.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

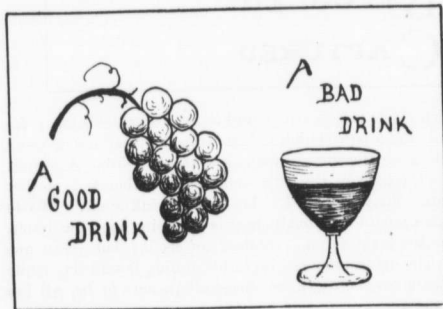
Links—There is a little blue flower that grows in our gardens that reminds us of our lesson last Sunday. We'll print the name of it—FORGET-ME-NOT. This is the message

God is sending to us by all the flowers and trees and everything around us.

Do you remember some people who forgot God and did the very things God had forbidden them to do? (Recall lesson.) Do boys and girls ever forget God?

Lesson Thought—Strong drink is dangerous.

Introduction In nature God provides warnings. Many harmful insects have brilliant colors, so that their prey may see and avoid them. One kind



of snake has its rattle as a warning of its approach. The bee has its "buzz" (imitate). Have you ever seen a "yellow-jacket"? Its pretty color may attract you, but would you like to touch this pretty hornet? We are going to speak of harmful drinks.

Fruit Bottles—God has given us a nice drink in little skin bottles of different colors—green—white—red—blue—black. He sends them to us fresh every summer. Show some grapes. You may each pick off one of these little skin bottles. See! you have left the cork behind! Now taste the sweet juice. God has made this fruit for our enjoyment. He wants us to use them while they are fresh and sweet.

A True Story of a Little Bird—A gentleman had a canary with bright black eyes and a yellow coat. He kept it in a cage in his office. Every morning he gave it seed and water. One day he gave it some grapes that had been lying in a basket on his desk for some days. He did not notice that the grapes were decayed. They had begun to ferment. The bird began to eat the fermented fruit, and soon it was so drunk it could hardly sit on its perch. When it tried to hop it fell down. Its sweet songs were all stopped.

Alcohol—In fermented fruit the juice is

turned into a poison—alcohol. Some men make it their business to put this poison juice called wine into glass bottles, and sell it for a drink. (Show a glass of red wine.) Repeat Prov. 23 : 31, 32. We should heed God's warnings.

Lesson—Our lesson tells us about some of the children of Israel who used their fruit to make wine and God is telling them it is because they have been drinking wine that they have fallen into sin.

Golden Text—Repeat and explain. (Draw a glass, with wine in it—red chalk.)

Our Pledge—Shall we not promise never to drink the juice of fruit made into wine, or other liquors?

My Strength—Describe the enemies marching up to the gate of the city, hoping to take it, and then turned back even to their own country by the strong, brave defenders. Even little children have enemies in their daily temptations. God will make them strong to drive their enemies away.

My Drink—Here is a drink we may all take without fear. (Show a glass of pure water.)

"Each flower holds a dainty cup
To catch the rain and dew,
The drink of flowers, distilled in showers
Is just the drink for you."

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

A STRAY
B EFOOLED
C APTURED

The A.B.C. of an alphabet which needs to be learned, and the younger the better; for it spells a deadly peril to be avoided, and a peril which is best escaped by making up one's mind against it in time. The A.B.C. gives the story of many a victim to drink. A. stands for **A**STRAY. He has wandered from the path of the wise counsels of father and mother and minister and teacher and friends. They have said, "Let strong drink alone." To do so is the only way of safety. He has thought differently, and is dropping into the habit. B. stands for **B**EFOOLED, which describes his position. He does not see it; but every one else does. He is going in for fun. The drink humors him in his notion, but all the while its deadly hold is increasing. C. stands for **C**APTURED, as almost all are sure to be, all too soon, body and soul, in its awful fetters.

Lesson IX.

GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED

November 30, 1902

Judges 7: 1-8. Study Judges 7: 1-8; 16-21. Commit to memory vs. 19-21.

Read Judges, chs. 6-8.

1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gid'eon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Ha'rod: so that the host of the Mid'anites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Mo'reh, in the valley.

2 And the Lord said unto Gid'eon. The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Mid'anites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gil'ead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the Lord said unto Gid'eon. The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say

Revised Version—1 Spring; 2 Camp; 3 Midian.

GOLDEN TEXT

Ps. 118: 8. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Judges 6: 7-24. Call of Gideon.
T.—Judges 6: 33-40. Gideon assured.
W.—Judges 7: 1-8. } Gideon and the three hundred.
Th.—Judges 7: 9-18. }
F.—Judges 7: 19-25. }
S.—Zech. 4: 1-10. Power in weakness.
S.—Isa. 40: 21-31. Strength from God.

CATECHISM

Q. 52. What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment?

A. The reasons annexed to the second commandment are, God's sovereignty over us, his propriety in

unto thee. This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gid'eon. Every one that leppeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the Lord said unto Gid'eon. By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Mid'anites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel over the hill Moreh. Near this place Saul fought his last battle, 1 Sam. 29: 1; 31: 1.

us, and the zeal he hath to his own worship.

TIME AND PLACE

According to the common view, about B.C. 1222, two hundred years after the conquest of Canaan, Gideon's home was in Ophrah near Shechem. He mustered his army at the fountain of Harod near the hill Moreh. Near this place Saul fought his last battle, 1 Sam. 29: 1; 31: 1.

LESSON PLAN

I. The First Test, 1-8.
By which the faint-hearted were removed.
II. The Second Test, 4-8.
By which the faith of Gideon was proven: verses 16-21 give the result.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise, 232; 63 (Ps. Sel.); 175; 237; 276; 250.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—Between Lesson VII. and the present lesson there is an interval of nearly 200 years. After the general view of the condition of Israel during the period of the Judges (ch. 2: 19), there is a brief account of the nations that remained in the land, ch. 3: 1-6. Then follows the record of the successive lapses of Israel into idolatry through the influence of these nations, the consequent divine punishments, and merciful acts of deliverance when the people repented. The leader of the fourth deliverance was Gideon. Ch. 6 shows how the Lord brought him to undertake the work, and this lesson indicates how it was done.

I. The First Test, 1-3.

V. 1. *Jerubbaal*. He had thrown down the altar of Baal (ch. 6: 25-27), hence this name, meaning "Let Baal plead," was given to him, ch. 6: 32. *Gideon*; that is, "feller" or "hewer." *All the people*; the army of 32,000 (ch. 7: 3) whom he had enlisted from

his own clan and neighboring tribes, to repel the Midianites, ch. 6: 34, 35. *The well of Harod*. Harod means "Place of Terror," and the name may have been given because of the transaction here recorded. *The hill of Moreh*; supposed to be identical with little Hermon.

Vs. 2, 3. *And the Lord said*; perhaps by "the angel," ch. 6: 12. *The people are too many*; less than one to four, 32,000 (v. 3) against 135,000 (ch. 8: 10); but God was on the side of Israel. *Lest Israel vaunt*; ascribe to themselves what was solely due to God. *Whosoever is fearful*. It was not to be wondered at, if an untrained civilian multitude should be afraid of a disciplined army of more than four times their number. *Let him return*; lest he should discourage others, Deut. 20: 8. There returned of the people twenty and two thousand. To see two-thirds of his army leave him at a time when his forces required increase rather than diminution, must have been a severe trial to the

faith of Gideon. *Mount Gilead*. There is a difficulty here, arising from the fact that Gilead was on the opposite side of Jordan from the camp of Gideon. Two solutions have been offered: (1) Gilead is here a scribe's error for Gilboa, the Hebrew letters in the two names being very much alike; (2) there may have been a Mount Gilead west of the Jordan.

II. The Second Test, 4-8.

V. 4. *The people are yet too many*; for the display of His own power which God was about to make. *To the water*; from the fountain of Harod. *Try them*. The idea is that of preparation, as metals are refined by separating the dross or baser elements. This test of the people would also be another test of the faith of Gideon. As he required of God two tests (ch. 6:36-40), so God required of him two signs.

Vs. 5, 6. *Everyone that lappeth*; eager for the conflict, and so not taking time to stop, but simply sipping what water could be caught up hastily in the hollow of the hand. Of such there were only three hundred. *That boweth down*; his own physical comfort being the first consideration.

V. 7. *By the three hundred . . . will I save you*. This is another illustration of how God chooses the weak things of the world to conquer worldly strength. So David was chosen to defeat Goliath, and a few fishermen to Christianize the world. "There is

no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few," 1 Sam. 14:6. Gideon found himself surrounded by only a few, but each was a hero, and to them God gave the promise of victory.

V. 8. *So the people took victuals, etc.* Apparently the meaning is that the three hundred took food in pitchers or jars (v. 3) and trumpets in their hands. They had torches also, and when the jars were emptied they could be used to hide the light, until the proper time should come to surprise the enemy. There would be a full supply for all among the stuff that, in all probability, the 9,700 left behind them. *And the host of Midian . . . in the valley*. "The writer repeats this to give a perfect picture of the situation."

Vs. 16-18. Gideon, encouraged by what he saw on a night visit to the camp of the enemy (vs. 9-15), hastily disposed his men in three groups, so as to surround the camp of the Midianites. Each man had a trumpet, and a lamp or torch covered with a pitcher, till the signal should be given for exposure.

Vs. 19-21. At the hour of deepest sleep, the men of Gideon blew a strong trumpet blast and uncovered their lights. Suddenly aroused, and seeing the hills on three sides ablaze with light, the Midianites were thrown into a panic in the dark, so that they fled and in confusion slaughtered one another. Thus the Lord crowned with victory the skilful stratagem of Gideon.

APPLICATION

Jerubbaal, v. 1. This name suggests the thought that before Gideon could be used of God to smite the enemies of his people, he must first lift up his hand against the sin that was in his own house. We may prevent God from working through us by cherishing sin in our hearts. While we are waiting for God to do something, He is waiting for us to remove the sin that keeps Him from acting on our behalf.

Who is Gideon, v. 1. The call to his great mission came to this man while he was doing his humble duty. It is not idlers who receive calls from God. "He that hath, to him shall be given," Mark 4:25. Then, too, Gideon, like Isaiah (Isa. ch. 6), was

conscious of his own unfitness for the work to which God had called him, but it was true in his case, as it frequently is, that God choose what the world, judging by appearances, pronounces "the foolish things" (1 Cor. 1:27); for the might is not in what men are, whether their endowments be great or small, but in what God is in them.

The Lord said, v. 2. We do well, like Gideon, to make ourselves sure that we are called of God before we go on with His work. Strong faith needs a sure foundation to rest upon. We need continually "to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," Eph. 3:16.

The Midianites, v. 2. The church of God

in all ages has been opposed by powerful enemies. In the early days of the Christian church, the mighty Roman Empire overwhelmed it with fierce persecution. In the days of Luther, false doctrines threatened its very life. In the time of Wesley a cold and heartless formalism had deadened its activities. In our own time greed of gain, love of pleasure, and worldly ambition are arrayed against it. But, in spite of all its enemies, the church has grown and increased in power, and the victories of the past are a prophecy and assurance of still more glorious conquests in the future. Each soul, also, has its foes to meet, in the passions and desires and evil affections, which rise in rebellion against the God whose kingdom should be established there. We need Gideon's God to strengthen us for our inward conflicts.

Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, v. 3. There are, alas! too many Christians who neglect to count the cost when they give themselves to Jesus Christ. Their conception of the Christian life is that of a holiday parade, to be concluded with a

grand review; so, when the call to battle against the Midianites of sin resounds through the land, they are the first to desert, because they had not calculated on any such emergency. He who does that is not fit for the Kingdom.

I will try them for thee there, v. 4. God tests His workers in various ways. Martyr times, hard work, reproaches, unpopular duties, trials, missionary labors, test the quality of God's people. Blessed is he that "shall endure unto the end," for "the same shall be saved," Matt. 24: 13.

Them that lapped, v. 6. No one will accomplish much in any department unless he be ready to apply himself. If the athlete is to win the race or be a victor in the game, he must submit to long days of strict self-restraint in the matter of food and drink and other enjoyments. In like manner, no one can be a useful and efficient instrument for the Master's use who seeks too eagerly and too frequently to gratify himself at the fountains of earthly pleasures, of which, if a man drink, he shall thirst again. Appetite should be a servant, not a master.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

The presence of God should not be an excuse for indolence, but an incentive to exertion. v. 1.

Every virtue is a victory over evil. v. 1.

The secret of success in the service of God is surrender. v. 2.

Courage and cowardice are alike contagious. v. 3.

Quality counts for more than quantity with God. v. 4.

There is room for cleverness as well as courage in the service of Christ. v. 6.

Men are but instruments; the power is God's. v. 7.

Lost opportunities never return. v. 8.

Says Peloubet, "All Gideon's previous faithfulness in daily life had been preparing him unconsciously for the great work of his life. By daily duties done from worthy motives we are prepared for our life's work.

"We rise by things that are under our feet,
By what we have mastered of good or of gain,

By the pride despised, and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet."

For a period of seven years, the Midianites had swept over almost the whole land, pitched their tents, and fed their camels in the midst of the rich cornfields of Israel. This was the most extensive and destructive servitude the nation had yet suffered. The people fled to mountain fastnesses, and hid themselves in caves, and a grievous famine ensued.—Milman.

Cincinnatus at his farm, David among his sheep, Cromwell on the flats of Huntingdonshire, are historical parallels to Gideon called from peaceful privacy to become a public leader in stormy times.

Anybody who has looked across the scene can appreciate the suitability of the test which Gideon imposed on his men. The stream, which makes it possible for the occupiers of the hill to hold also the well against an enemy on the plain, forbids them

to be careless in their use of the water; for they drink in face of that enemy, and the reeds and shrubs which mark its course afford ample cover for hostile ambushes. . . What Gideon had in view was a night march and the sudden surprise of a great host—tactics that may be spoiled by a few careless men. Soldiers who behaved at the water as did the three hundred, showed just the common-sense and vigilance to render such tactics successful.—George Adam Smith.

Keil gives several instances of such stratagems from ancient and modern history. Hannibal extricated himself in a similar manner, when surrounded by Fabius. Niebuhr relates how in the last century an Arab chief escaped from a fortress in which he was besieged by a vastly superior force, through the employment of the same means as we here find employed by Gideon.—Cambridge Bible.

“Three hundred good and true men are far better for a campaign of truth and righteousness than ten thousand swept together by chance conscription or picked up for a shilling a head in some public house.”

The first of the figures to denote a thousand millions is one; the rest are many. But that one is an integer or real quantity, while the others are but ciphers; and though these ciphers count for much when the fig-

ure backs them, without it they count for nothing, though increased a million fold. Numerically, God is but one; His creatures are many. But without that One what are these many?—John Guthrie.

Light from the East

HAROD—There is little doubt that this was the spring Ain Jalud, about two miles east of where Jezreel afterwards stood, and a little to the south. A large stream issues from the foot of Gilboa, and flows eastward, fifteen feet wide and two feet deep, at the bottom of a deep channel with soft banks. Gideon and his men were holding the steep hill immediately behind this, with the stream in front of them, and, less than two miles across the valley, the Midianites were encamped on the opposite hills. The valley was doubtless covered with reeds and shrubs to the water's edge, and it was no place for soldiers who appreciated the danger to lie flat down and drink where the enemy might spring upon them from an ambush at any moment. Those who kept their feet and the spear in their left hand while they dipped up the water with the right, who kept one eye on the bushes and the other on the water, had in them the qualities of carefulness and presence of mind by which alone their commander might hope to make a sudden night surprise a complete success.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

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

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

Gideon had 32,000 men and the Midianites about 135,000, ch. 8 : 10. No wonder that Gideon should hesitate to face such a formidable foe. But his faith was stimulated by witnessing two successive signs wrought by the hand of God, 6 : 36-40, and he faced the foe, ch. 7 : 1. The lesson relates :

1. *The preparation of the army.* (a) By divine command Gideon's army is greatly diminished. All cowards and unreliable men are dismissed from the ranks. They are always a weakness and a menace to any cause, for cowardice like courage is contagious. “The fearful,” that is, the cow-

ardly, are excluded from the church triumphant (Rev. 21 : 8), and they are a great drawback to the church militant. By the law of Moses, the “fearful and faint hearted” were to have no place in the armies of Israel, Deut. 20 : 8. Hence Gideon was directed to make a proclamation to this effect, and it resulted in 22,000 withdrawing from the ranks, and only 10,000 remained. But (b) even this reduced number must be still further diminished, v. 4. Then a double test applied, v. 5. Thus the ten thousand yielded only 300. Why this sifting process? The purpose is disclosed in verse 7—to beget full confidence in God's omnipotence. The army thus sifted is ready for battle. Let us look a little at :

2. *The training and conduct of Gideon the leader.* (a) God was his teacher, and passed

him through a series of impressive lessons, the first, already referred to, 6 : 36-40; the second, by his dealing with the army, the aim of both lessons being to develop in him the cardinal virtue of a strong and noble character, faith in God. The third and culminating lesson is described in vs. 9-14. Then he said, "Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian," v. 15. (b) Thus divinely trained, he became a true leader. He promptly marshalled his men, divided them into companies, put strange weapons into their hands, trumpets, pitchers, lamps, gave them a war-cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and finally, gave them the brave word of command, "Look on me," "as I do, so shall ye do,"—"Follow me," the very words of the Captain of our salvation; the words of every true teacher and preacher: "Follow me even as I follow Christ."

3. *The victory achieved.* It was complete, decisive, vs. 19-22. The Midianites were discomfited without the Israelites striking a blow. This was the Lord's doing; and He can work with or without means. The lamps, pitchers and trumpets provided by Gideon had their place and served their purpose, but "the sword of the Lord" was conspicuous. There was a union of divine and human agency, the former supreme, the latter subordinate, but most essential; for it is God's method to choose "the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," 1 Cor. 1 : 27. All ground of glorying on man's part is thus removed, and one may truly say, "When I am weak, then am I strong," 2 Cor. 12 : 10.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The lesson passage tells only a little piece of the story. The scholars will wish to hear (or better still to tell) it all. Chapters 6 and 7 give the account. The headings at the top of our ordinary Bibles summarize it thus. "The Midianites oppress Israel," "Gideon sent for Israel's deliverance," "The Midianites are put to flight." This is rather brief and juiceless. The following is more extended, and a little effort on the part of the teacher will make it live :—

1. The people sin, ch. 6 : 1; nothing new, but all the sadder for that.

2. And therefore suffer, vs. 2-6; the details of which are very picturesque.

3. When they repented, help was sent; first, in the shape of a prophet to reprove, vs. 7-10; then, in the shape of a leader to deliver.—GIDEON, vs. 11 and following.

4. Gideon is to go at God's command. v. 14.

5. God makes it plain to Gideon that it is really He who has commanded. vs. 15-24. The fire from the rock consuming Gideon's offering was God's way of confirmation.

6. At God's command Gideon destroys the altar of Baal and its grove and gets a new name from his brave deed, vs. 25-32.

7. The enemy gathers. v. 33.

8. Gideon rallies the forces of Israel, vs. 34-35.

9. God strengthens his faith by the miracle of the fleece, vs. 36-40.

10. The army is sifted, ch. 7 : 1-8. The story is of undying interest to children, and the illustration it affords of the sort of soldiers Christ wants in His army should be used to its utmost.

11. The Lord further encourages Gideon by a near view of the enemy, vs. 9-15. He got a glimpse of what they were thinking about, which glimpse guaranteed him victory in advance. God had filled the hearts of his enemies with fear.

12. The battle is fought according to God's directions, vs. 16-22, with the result of a complete rout.

The Golden Text is the key to the story.

Some Test Questions

Who were the Midianites?

How came they to be pitted against Israel?

Who was summoned by God as deliverer?

Tell the story of his call.

By what sign did he recognize God's presence?

What brave deed did he do in God's name?

What name did he thereby receive?

When the enemy gathered, what did Gideon do?

What signs did he ask of God?

What was God's plan of sifting the army?

How many did it leave?

Of what sort were they?
How was Gideon's faith further strengthened?
Describe the battle and the rout?

Prove from Scripture

That God can work great wonders.

Topics from Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. Gideon's new name.
2. The famous three hundred.
3. God, the great General.

The Catechism

(For Examination in Doctrine in the General Assembly's Teacher Training Course.)

Ques. 52. *Reasons for obedience to the Second Commandment.* God has given us a Commandment regarding the way in which He ought to be worshipped. In the question before us we have a statement of the reasons which form the basis of His claim. These reasons are three in number.

1. God is a King, and we are His lawful subjects. The Scriptures are full of this idea of God's kingship. In the Psalms, which expressed the deepest feelings of Old Testament saints, the title "King" is very common. See Psalm 5:2; 20:9; 45:1, etc. The New Testament takes up the same thought in such words as those of 1 Tim.

1:17; 6:15. Our fullest knowledge of God's character is obtained from Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God, and He always speaks as a King. His heart overflows with tenderness, and from His lips come the most gracious invitations. But beneath and behind His most melting words there is the tone of authority, and if we disobey it is at our own peril.

2. God is an Owner, and we belong to Him. The "word 'propriety' comes from a Latin adjective which means 'one's own' . . . It denotes 'exclusive right of possession.'" (Salmond.) God has a title to ownership in the fact that He has made us. He has a still stronger title in that He has redeemed us. Paul expresses this divine claim in 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

3. God is zealous for His own worship. The word "zeal" comes from a Greek root meaning "to boil," and denotes "intense interest." God is so deeply interested in His worship that He will not overlook anything unworthy in it. (See 2 Kings 19:31; Isa. 9:7.) In words afterwards applied to Christ (John 2:17), the Psalmist (Ps. 69:9) says: "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up." God expects in us like zeal for all that belongs to His worship.

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the degrading effects of idolatry are traced by the pen of an inspired author.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Links—I think you all remember the little bottles we were talking about last Sunday. Tell me about them. (Question.) Recall previous lesson. Repeat its Golden Text.

The children of Israel SINNED through WINE and IDOLS. God was always ready to forgive and help them, whenever they turned to Him and trusted Him.

Lesson Thought—I should trust God.

Introduction—How many of you have a dog? What is his name? Does he go out for a walk with you? Did you ever notice him when you were near any water? He scampers by the water stopping to hastily "lap" it with his tongue as he



passes, then bounds on again, afraid of losing sight of you. Remember this; for we are going to hear in our lesson about the way a dog drinks.

Lesson—Describe Gideon, the son of a poor man, at work one day threshing out grain to make bread for the family, hiding behind the winepress (instead of working out on the hill) for fear the enemy, the Midianites, would see and come and take the grain from them. God was letting their enemies trouble the children of Israel because they had sinned and disobeyed Him. Now He is going to help them out of their troubles once more. Gideon is at his work. See! An angel comes and sits under yonder oak tree! Listen while he speaks to Gideon! ch. 6: 12-16.

Gideon is humble. God says, "Surely I will be with thee."

Gathering the Army—Did you ever see a trumpet? Gideon blew on a trumpet made of a ram's horn and sent messengers and gathered the families of Israel about him till he had a great army ready to go and fight the enemy.

Brave Ones—God wants brave helpers for His work. See! Gideon is talking to the big army. "If any of you are afraid, you must go back home." A great many left the army and went home.

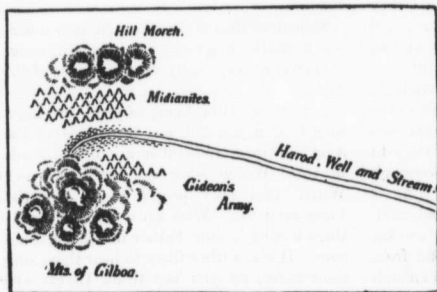
Active Ones—God wants active helpers for His work. See! Gideon brings the army of men to the water. A few of them seem in such a hurry, they do not want to take time even to take a drink. They are so eager to do as God told them to do, so watchful of the enemy! Watch them! They snatch up some water in their hands and drink it hastily (all imitate the action), just as your dog laps a drink and hurries on. They are eager, watching for the enemy, not thinking of themselves nor their own comfort. Watch the others! They stoop down to drink, perhaps get down on their knees. They take their time, forgetting their duties, thinking of their own thirst. God chooses these few eager active men to do His work.

The Attack—Describe the three hundred men surrounding the tents of the enemy. In the hands of each a trumpet, and a torch hidden inside a pitcher. (Describe.) It is a dark night. The enemy cannot see them. Suddenly Gideon blows his trumpet; all the trumpets are blown and a shout raised. Pitchers are broken and torches are waved in the air. (Imitate motions. The enemy ran and cried and fled.

God wants us to be BRAVE
ACTIVE } little
OBEDIENT } helpers.

He will help us always if we trust Him.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW



whatever task God sets. Be careful, as Gideon was, to make sure that it is God who sets it, and then go forward; (2) It is quality and not bulk or numbers that tell in God's cause; (3) Do not fear to stand with God and a few against any multitude; (4) Take God's way of fighting His battles, however strange His way may seem.

Even as old soldiers like to "fight their battles o'er again," the scholars will welcome the little sketch of the battle ground (which it requires no special skill to transfer to the blackboard), and will help with all the details of preparation and of the victory, and their blood will thrill as they realize how mighty is the Lord of hosts, and how strong he is who has the Lord on his side. Then four great lessons should be pressed home. (1) Undertake

Mrs. Maudie Lee Gray
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Md.

The Beginners' Course

For Children Under Six Years of Age

An Optional Course: Issued by the International Lesson Committee

Theme of Lesson IX.: God's Loving Care; Lessons X.-XIII.: Praising God.

LESSON IX.

GOD CARING FOR HIS PEOPLE, Exodus 16: 11-21.

Golden Text: *He careth for you*, 1 Peter 5: 7.
CENTRAL TRUTH—Daily food is a direct gift from God.

POINT OF DEPARTURE—A child's experience with hunger and being fed.

SPIRITUAL RESULT DESIRED—A new thankfulness for the gift of our daily bread. Gratitude to God, leading to love for the heavenly Father.

APPROACH—Have you ever been hungry? Where do you get your food? From the market, grocery, farm, garden, vegetable wagon. Should you like to hear of some hungry people, who got their food sent straight from heaven by our Father?

LESSON STORY—Once upon a time, there was a company of people travelling all together on a long journey. These people were the children of Israel, and their leader was this very Moses we learned about two Sabbaths ago, who had grown into a big strong man. As the people travelled through the wilderness, they ate all the food they had brought with them from home, and they were far away, with no money and no bread. Then Moses had a talk with our Father in heaven, and He told Moses this: "I will send bread to the people every morning, and when they wake they will see it on the ground. Also will I send flesh in the evening, and there will be just enough for everybody and none left over." Moses then told the people what God had said. Truly in the morning when they awoke, there on the ground was the bread from heaven, and each one gathered just enough for his own family, and so there was plenty to go round. At the evening again on the ground was flesh which our Father sent, and so they were fed, although there were thousands of them. Every morning God sent

the bread, and every evening He sent the meat. All they had to do was to pick it up and get it ready, and they never had to pay for it, for God knew they had no money.

THINK OF THIS—God our Father sends His rain and sunshine to-day on the earth which He gave us. So our seeds grow, and we have wheat and corn and meal and flour and bread. Do you feel like thanking those who have done something for you? Shall we not thank our Father for His goodness?

LESSON X.

CHILDREN PRAISING GOD, Matt. 21: 12-16.

Golden Text: *O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.* Psalm 106: 1.

TEACHER'S NOTE—It naturally follows that, after the preceding lessons, which speak of God's watchful, protecting, never-failing care, there should come a lesson of gratitude for all His goodness to His creatures—to me and to you.

CENTRAL TRUTH—Happiness and singing are privileges from God.

POINT OF DEPARTURE—A child's experience of listening to a song, and singing himself.

SPIRITUAL RESULT DESIRED A new meaning to music, a greater joy in singing songs everywhere, especially in the House of the Lord.

APPROACH—How many of you ever sang a song? Can you tell me the name of the song? Do you remember any of the words in it? Which song do you like best? Why? Can only people sing? No, the birds sing too. Who do you think taught them to sing? Our Father in heaven, I am sure. If the Father likes to hear them sing their notes, do you not think He cares to hear children singing words of praise to Him for all He has done?

LESSON STORY—Long ago when Jesus, God's Son, was on earth, He went into His own house, the temple, one day, and there

He saw men selling and buying things, just as though it had been a store. This made Jesus sad at heart, and He had the tables all turned over, and told the men that His house was a house of prayer, and not a place to buy and sell in. He found lame and blind people there in the temple, and helped them, so that they might see and walk again.

Jesus would have been very sad that day thinking how the people had done wrong, but something beautiful happened that comforted Him for all day long. He suddenly heard such sweet singing that He knew it was children's voices, and He heard them shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Then Jesus turned and spoke to the old and wise men saying, "Out of the mouth of babes I have found perfect praise that has gladdened my heart. How I love to hear the children singing to me!"

THINK OF THIS—Has Jesus ever grown tired of hearing children sing to Him? Is He pleased to-day, when He hears you sing of His love and our Father's goodness? What songs do you think we shall choose to sing to the baby and mother and the old friend we visit this week? How shall we sing to-day?

LESSON XI.

A LEPER PRAISING GOD, Luke 17 : 11-19.
Golden Text—Same as for Lesson X.

CENTRAL TRUTH—Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness and good will towards those who show us kindness.

POINT OF DEPARTURE—The child's experience of kindness shown him by others.

SPIRITUAL RESULT DESIRED—A readiness to show appreciation for the small acts of love performed by another, leading up to deep gratitude for God's goodness to us.

APPROACH—I wonder how many of you ever had a present given to you by someone? Nearly everybody has, have they not? Isn't it nice to have kind friends that will give you presents to make you happy? But suppose you were very sick and wanted to get well, which would you like best, a gift of money or toys, or to be well again?

LESSON STORY—One day Jesus came to a village, where He found ten men all sick with the same disease. These men had to stand

far off from everybody else for fear of making others sick also, and they had an illness that no physician could cure, for they were lepers. When they saw Jesus, they lifted up their voices and called aloud that He might hear them, and they said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them, He said, "Go show yourselves unto the priests." They started on the way as He had told them to do, and behold! even before they came to where the priests were, they were all well and strong and happy. Now, in all that company of ten only one remembered to be thankful for what had been done for him, and he came all the way back to where Jesus was, and fell down on his face at Jesus' feet, and thanked Him over and over again for making Him well.

When Jesus saw this He said, "Were there not ten of you made well and strong? Are you the only one who has remembered to be grateful?"

THINK OF THIS—To which company would you have liked to belong? If our Father has given you a strong, young body, do you just want to take it as a gift and never say, "Thank you," or would you like to show Him that you are grateful by doing something for Him? Let us choose which side we shall be with to-day. Shall we?

LESSON XII.

A LAME MAN PRAISING GOD, Acts 3 : 1-9.
Golden Text—Same as for Lesson X.

CENTRAL TRUTH—God can do wondrous things, beyond the power of man. He can help us to do things that we could not do alone.

POINT OF DEPARTURE—A child's interest in the usefulness of his own feet.

SPIRITUAL RESULT DESIRED—A willingness to run on ready feet, to help all who need your feet and mine. Gratitude for the gift of the power of walking.

APPROACH—The power of walking. If Rob's ball rolls to the other end of the yard, how can he get it? If mother wants an errand done quickly and is too busy to do it herself, I wonder if she has any other feet she can call on to help? Yes, yours and mine, I am sure. Did you ever take time to thank God for giving you strong young feet,

to give you so much pleasure all through life?

LESSON STORY—Once upon a time there was a man who had never walked in his life, for he had been lame every since he was born. One day the poor fellow asked two of his friends to carry him up to the Beautiful Gate of the temple, where people went to worship God. This lame man had no way to earn money, for he was too weak; so he sat at the gate to ask help of those who went in and out to pray to our Father. Well, as he sat there he saw two men coming toward him, and they had such kind faces that he cried out, "Sirs, could you help me a little, for I have no way to earn my living, and no money with which to buy bread."

Now these two men were none other than Peter and John, disciples of Jesus. They came close up to the man, and Peter said, "Dear friend, we have no silver and gold, but such as we have we give to you gladly. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth arise and walk." At once the man leaped to his feet well and strong, and what do you suppose was the first thing he did? Why, he went right into the temple, and praised and thanked God for letting Peter and John help him.

THINK OF THIS—Our Father needs your feet and mine to go on some errand for Him to-day, and going is one way of thanking Him for giving us the power to walk. How many will take time to thank Him by doing some errand for God every day this week?

LESSON XIII

PRAISING GOD FOR ALL THINGS, Psalm 104 : 10-24.

Golden Text—Same as for Lesson X.

CENTRAL TRUTH—Every good gift cometh down from the Father above.

POINT OF DEPARTURE—A child's general knowledge of the perfect workings of God's natural love.

SPIRITUAL RESULT DESIRED—A closer observation of daily benefits as coming directly from the Heavenly Father's love.

APPROACH—Can you tell me anything you do by day? Play, go to school, read books, eat, go visiting, work, sew, tidy the house, milk, get up the wood. We do some of these

things, big brother and sister do others, and mother and father do still others. But when the night comes, what do we *all* do? Sleep and rest. What do you live in? A house. Where do the birds live? In nests. Where do they make them? In trees. Where do the cattle stay most of the time? In the fields. Why? To eat. Who made their food? Our Father in Heaven. (This may be carried out by the teachers into all the various lines suggested by the text of the lesson.)

LESSON STORY—Of all the many wonderful things that grown men can make, they can not do anything half so wonderful as our Father in heaven, and to-day, right out of His blessed Book, we shall hear of just a few of His gifts to us. He sends the springs running down from the hilltops into the valleys, where they make quiet streams, at which the cows, sheep, oxen, goats, horses, mules, and even wild animals may drink. He makes trees near the streams, where the birds of heaven may build nests in their sheltering branches and sing tuneful, happy songs. He causes the rain to fall from heaven, watering the streams, and keeping them fresh and clear and pure. He gives seed for the vegetables and herbs and plants and grains that grow. for the foods of men, also the oil and sap in the trees, that the heart of man may be glad. The whole earth is full of all His riches and goodness.

THINK OF THIS—If God made so many beautiful things for His children, do you not think He must have loved them very much? Can we not thank Him for His benefits to us? He hath said, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." Let us begin right here and each one tell of one of His benefits to him or her and then, shall we thank Him for our blessings?

Hear us, O Father, as we pray
 Thanking Thee for Thy love ;
 Help us to praise Thee day by day
 For blessings from above.
 Teach us to love Thee, Thine we are,
 The work of Thy dear Hand ;
 Lead us dear Lord from near and far
 Into Thy heavenly land.

(To be reverently repeated by the teacher, unless, perhaps better, she teach it to the children.)

*Rev. Prof. Salomon
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Teacher Training Course

Presbyterian Church of Canada

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

DEPARTMENT OF SCRIPTURE—I. The New Testament—Its Contents and Growth.

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

LESSON V.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

OCCASION AND READERS OF THE GOSPEL—Most of the Jews who accepted Jesus as their Messiah clung passionately to their nationality, and for some time hoped that their fellow-countrymen would repent. But the outbreak of the Jewish war in the year 66 was the nation's death knell. This crisis was very severe on the Jewish Christians. They were scorned by the Jews as traitors, and Jesus had not come back to establish His kingdom on earth, as they believed He had promised to do. If the temple and Jerusalem crumbled into ruins, where else could God have any local habitation on earth? A gospel was needed for such a crisis. We have it in our gospel of Matthew. The readers were Greek-speaking Jews, who needed to have Aramaic and Hebrew words interpreted for them, ch. 1 : 23 ; 27 : 33, 46. The date is uncertain, but it may be put shortly before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

PURPOSE—It is to show that Jesus was the true Messiah of Israel. By His words, deeds, life, suffering and resurrection He fulfilled all the promises of God as given in the Old Testament.

CHARACTERISTICS—This is the most Jewish Gospel of the four. It contains more quotations from the Old Testament than the others. The righteousness of the kingdom of God is contrasted with the righteousness of the Pharisees. The twelve are sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, ch. 10 : 6. Terms occur which are familiar to Jews : Palestine is the land of Israel (ch. 2 : 20, 21) ; Jerusalem is the holy city (ch. 4 : 5 ; 27 : 53 ; 5 : 35) ; there is the tribute of the half-shekel, ch. 17 : 24. A new Israel, a true Messiah, a kingdom of heaven, are the notes of this gospel. As Mark is the gospel of

action, Matthew is the gospel of the words of Jesus. These are grouped, not chronologically, but in masses; for example, in chs. 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 16, 24, 25, many of the sections of each seeming to have been uttered on different occasions. So also the works of Jesus are put together, in order to bring out some aspects of His life and teaching.

THE AUTHOR—According to widespread early tradition, the apostle Matthew wrote a gospel in Hebrew, consisting chiefly of our Lord's discourses. This would suit our gospel, except that it was originally written in Greek. But whoever gave it its final shape, the first gospel gets its name from the apostle, because it owes him its distinctive character. It would seem that the gospel of Mark was used for the historic outline of the life of Christ, and this was filled out with discourses and other material which the apostle Matthew had composed in Hebrew.

LESSON VI.

CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

I. PREPARATION, 1 : 1 to 4 : 11.

1. Genealogy of the Messiah traced to Abraham the father of Israel. Jesus, who "shall save His people from their sins," has homage paid Him at His birth as the Messianic King by the magi ("wise men"). The flight into Egypt and the return to Nazareth fulfil prophecy, chs. 1 and 2.

2. Work of John, Baptism of Jesus, ch. 3 : 1-17.

3. Temptation of Jesus given in detail, not as in Mark, ch. 4 : 1-11.

II. THE MINISTRY IN GALILEE, 4 : 12 to 18 : 35.

1. Jesus removes to Capernaum, and begins His public work in Galilee by calling the first disciples, 4 : 12-25.

2. "The Sermon on the Mount," often

called "the legislation of the kingdom," placed at the beginning of the ministry in order to set forth the moral law of the new Israel, as was done by Moses at Sinai for old Israel, chs. 5, 6, 7.

(a) Words of blessing open this dispensation. Citizens of the kingdom, 5 : 3-16.

(b) The Messiah does not destroy, but fulfils, the law by a better righteousness than that of the scribes and Pharisees, 5 : 17-20. Applications of this truth in Christ's demand for a higher morality (5 : 21-48); religious service of the spirit not form, for example, almsgiving, prayer and fasting (6 : 1-13); freedom both from desire for riches and from worldly care, 6 : 19-34.

(c) Exhortations to true righteousness in view of current practices, 7 : 1-23.

(d) Concluding parable of the two builders, 7 : 24-27.

3. Group of events, chiefly miracles, enforcing the authority Jesus had assumed in giving a new Law in the "Sermon," 8 : 1 to 9 : 34.

4. Discourse to the twelve as they go on their mission to the twelve tribes of the house of Israel, that is, to the Jews in Galilee, 9 : 35 to 10 : 42.

5. Growing hostility, chs. 11, 12.

6. Group of parables on the rise, growth, and consummation of the kingdom, ch. 13.

7. Close of ministry in Galilee, much as in Mark, 13 : 53 to 18 : 35.

III. JOURNEY FROM GALILEE THROUGH PEREA TO JERUSALEM, chs. 19, 20.

IV. LAST DAYS IN JERUSALEM, chs. 21 to 25.

Note the groups of words of Jesus, woes against the Pharisees, parables of warning, and discourses as to the end of the Jewish nation, the future of the disciples, and of the world.

V. TRIAL, PASSION AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS, chs. 26 to 28.

The gospel ends with the triumph of the Messiah and His commission to the disciples to preach the kingdom to all nations.

LESSON VII.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

THE AUTHOR—Early tradition ascribes it to Luke, the beloved physician and companion of Paul, and there is no reason for

doubting this. See Acts 16 : 11, and following ; Col. 4 : 14 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 11. He seems to have known our Gospel of Mark, and like Matthew to have used it as a framework in which to set his fresh material. But apparently he had not seen our Gospel of Matthew, though if he and Matthew both used our Mark and a collection of Christ's words, this will account for the fact that many of the same discourses and parables are found in both. But Luke has much new material. (See contents.)

READERS AND DATE—This is the only synoptic gospel with a preface. Many had already undertaken to give a narrative of the life of Christ, but Luke had traced the course of all things accurately from the first, and sends his noble patron, Theophilus, a gospel history on which he may rely, 1 : 1-4. Theophilus, a man of high rank, probably was a Christian, and represents the class for whom this gospel was intended—Gentile Christians in the great Roman world outside Palestine. The date was perhaps between 65-80, A.D.

PURPOSE—If the Romans were beginning to grow hostile to the Church, and the Jews, amongst others, were charging the Christians with imposture, this gospel might serve to encourage Christians and their heathen friends throughout the great cities and countries evangelized by Paul. Here is the Saviour of men. Luke is at pains to fit the life of Christ into secular history, ch. 3 : 1, 2. Jesus is the flower of the human race. In Him heaven stoops to earth, and earth rises to heaven.

CHARACTERISTICS—In this gospel the discourses and parables of Jesus are not put in groups, but with the events that gave rise to them. Luke writes as a historian. He depicts Jesus as the perfect man whose descent goes back to Adam, full of sympathy for the poor, of gentleness for the suffering. His life is one of prayer and thanksgiving. As the divine Saviour He shows God's love to sinners and His grace in coming to save the world of Jews and Gentiles alike.

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION, 1 : 1 to 4 : 13. Jesus sprang from the finest stock in Israel, and grew in grace into perfect manhood. His

genealogy is traced to Adam, for He is the "second man," 1 Cor. 15 : 47. The narrative of the infancy and the genealogies are different from those of Matthew.

II. THE GALILEAN MINISTRY, 4 : 14 to 9 : 50. Same general plan as in Mark and Matthew. "The Sermon on the Plain" is very similar to "The Sermon on the Mount" of Matthew, but much shorter, and those sections dealing with the righteousness of the Pharisees are omitted as being of little interest to Gentiles. Woes are added after the beatitudes, 6 : 17-49.

III. MINISTRY, CHIEFLY OUTSIDE GALILEE, 9 : 51 to 18 : 43. This record of the journey of Jesus towards Jerusalem consists of events and words of Jesus, on the whole, peculiar to Luke, the mission of the seventy, many beautiful parables (chs. 14 to 16) and gracious narratives.

IV. MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM, 19 : 1 to 22 : 38.

V. PASSION AND RESURRECTION, 22 : 39 to ch. 24. New incidents are the trial before Herod, words to weeping daughters of Jerusalem, the penitent thief, walk with the disciples to Emmaus.

LESSON VIII.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

OCCASION—This Gospel could not have been written much before the end of the first century, and quotations from it appear in early writings shortly after the first decade of the second century. Its home was Ephesus or Asia (our Western Asia Minor). Times had changed greatly since the synoptic gospels were written. Jerusalem was in ruins and the Jews scattered. Persecution had swept over the church. The Roman or the Jew would fling the taunt that a crucified man like Jesus was discredited as the Messiah. Further, the air was full of speculation and superstition, and Christians were in danger of being infected. Some had turned Christianity into a new philosophy or a vague fantasy.

PURPOSE—It is definitely stated in 20 : 31. This gospel is the testimony of an eye-witness, 1 : 14, 16. He says : "I knew Jesus, and discovered that He is the Christ, the Son of God. He gave me life. If you have faith in Him, He will give you life also."

So he writes not to supplement our synoptic gospels, but to show how Jesus was found by faith to be the Christ, the Son of God, and was rejected by unbelieving Jews because they hated the light.

CHARACTERISTICS—This gospel palpitates with love for Jesus, whom His disciples found to be full of grace and truth, the way to the Father. It is a profound study of His person. Abide with Jesus, and He will unfold to you the secret of His life. He will send you the life of God: The gospel opens with a remarkable term, "The Word." In Greek it may mean either "reason" or "speech." The Greek thought of God as reason or mind, but could never explain how pure reason could create matter, which was evil and utterly unlike mind. The Jews were not troubled with this problem. God had spoken in the Old Testament. But as faith failed, He had withdrawn far away, and no word had come from Him to them for ages. So John begins his gospel with the glad news that God has again spoken. Jesus is the complete "Word" of God. He is not mere reason. He is a Person. God through love created the world by Him. God the invisible Father may be seen in Jesus the Son. Thus Jesus solves the riddle of life and thought.

THE AUTHOR—Who could write such a gospel, so different from the others, so profound, so authoritative? Tradition says uniformly, the apostle John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." And this is the simplest solution. We have every reason for holding that John died at Ephesus towards the end of the first century in extreme old age. The gospel is an old man's story. The long years have taught him more deeply than others the meaning of his Master's life. He lingers less on the righteousness of the law, the parables of the growth of the kingdom, and the discourses of Jesus as to the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world. He ponders instead on the eternal spirit of Christ and His words. He lays bare the roots of unbelief, and shows how faith will forever find in Jesus the Saviour of the world.

NOTE.—Lesson IX., being the fifth lesson for November will be given in THE TEACHERS MONTHLY for December.

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THE BOOK PAGE

The Kindred of the Wild By Charles G. D. Roberts. The Copp, Clark Company, Toronto. Pages 374 ; price \$1.75 net.

Mr. Roberts has been a keen observer of that drama in which the actors are not men and women, but the beasts and birds that inhabit the depths of the dusky forest, where human footprints are rarely seen. He has given us, in a group of fascinating stories, which young and old will read with eager interest, some vivid descriptions of the working of passion and instinct in the lower animals. The hunger which develops such great craft and cunning to satisfy its urgent demands; the love of young which impels to effort and sacrifice; the curiosity which often proves fatal; the rivalry which results in fierce strife, are all portrayed with a skillful touch. This is just the kind of book to be read in the family circle during the long winter evenings, and it will not only enable its readers better to understand the wild inhabitants of the woods, but will also kindle in them sympathy with the joys and sorrows of these inferior creatures, which have so much in common with ourselves. The book is made more attractive by profuse and striking illustrations.

The Primary Sunday School Hymnal. By Rev. Rufus W. Miller. The Heidelberg Press, Philadelphia. Price 35 cts.

This collection of hymns, numbering in all two hundred and fifty-six, is not intended to replace in any degree our own Book of Praise in the classes for

little children. But although prepared for a different church in another country, it may be used with good effect as an auxiliary, and will prove a perfect treasure house to the teacher of the little ones who is seeking fresh selections for special days and seasons. The spirit of the selections is reverent and devotional, while the words are so simple that all the little ones will be able to grasp the meaning of what they sing. The music is good, but not difficult; in fact, both in words and music the book is free from the trashy style which so often marks collections of songs for children. In addition to the hymns, the book is enriched by several exceedingly well considered orders of service, and other supplemental matter from which the Primary teacher may glean valuable suggestions.

Extempore Prayer, Its Principles, Preparation and Practice. By the Rev. Marshall P. Talling, Ph.D. Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto. Pages 302, price \$1.25 net.

We have in this volume a useful aid to the leaders of public worship in those churches which do not use a liturgy. In these churches, one of the most difficult, and at the same time, one of the most important, duties of the minister, is to correctly interpret and suitably express the needs of his congregation in public prayer. Dr. Talling has rendered good service in presenting with clearness and conciseness the principles which should guide the leader of worship in his public prayers, the methods of preparation he should employ, and the incalculable benefits of care-

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ful practice in this part of his work. The young minister, especially, will be helped by this timely and painstaking treatment of a great theme.

When Mother was a Little Girl. By Frances S. Brewster. George W. Jacobs and Company, Philadelphia. Pages 229; price 80c. net.

"Tell us a story please," is a request that comes very often to every mother, and the stories the children like best are usually those which begin, 'Once, long ago, when I was a little girl.' If the teller of tales, as in this instance, has been so fortunate as to be brought up on a great stock farm, there is no end to the delightful adventures to be narrated. The book contains also several stories of the old Greek myths, charmingly told. There are nine beautiful, full-page half-tone illustrations. The cover is an attractive design in colors, and every line of the book will be read and re-read by the child fortunate enough to own it.

The Crown of Wild Olive. Ruskin. Edited by John C. Saul, M.A., and D. M. Duncan, M.A. The Copp, Clark Company, Toronto. Pages 261, price 60c.

This is an edition specially prepared and officially authorized for use in schools, of the work in which, along with Sesame and Lilies may be found stated in popular form, the substance of Ruskin's teaching on political economy and social science. In 1866, under the title at the head of this notice, Ruskin published his three lectures on Work, Traffic, and

War. In 1873, he added to these a fourth lecture on The Future of England. In the volume before us, we find these four lectures, with an introduction containing a concise and interesting account of the author, a valuable list of aids to the study of his writings, and a catalogue of his various works; and fifty-four pages of explanatory notes. The editors have done their work with great care, and have furnished both the student and the general reader with all the assistance required in order to understand the author. We have here much in little, of valuable information and illuminating comment.

Books Received

Funk & Wagnalls Company New York.
A Vacation With Nature—F. DeWitt Talmage, \$1 net.

Presbyterian Committee of Publication,
Richmond, Va.

Grandpa Bright's Q.P.'s—Dickson, 50c.
A Wee Lassie—Hawkins, \$1.

Baptist Board, Nashville, Tenn.
The Pastor and Sunday-School—Hatcher.

International Y.M.C.A. New York.
Studies in the Acts and Epistles—Bosworth, 75c.

The Copp, Clark Company, Toronto.
A Speckled Bird—Wilson, \$1.25.

William Briggs, Toronto.
The Destiny of To-Day—Maclean, 50c.

Andrew Melrose, London.
Francis E. Clark—Chaplin, 35c.




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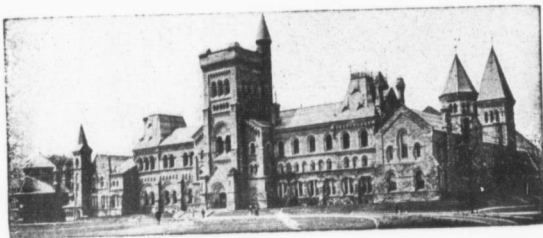
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