

Vol. 36

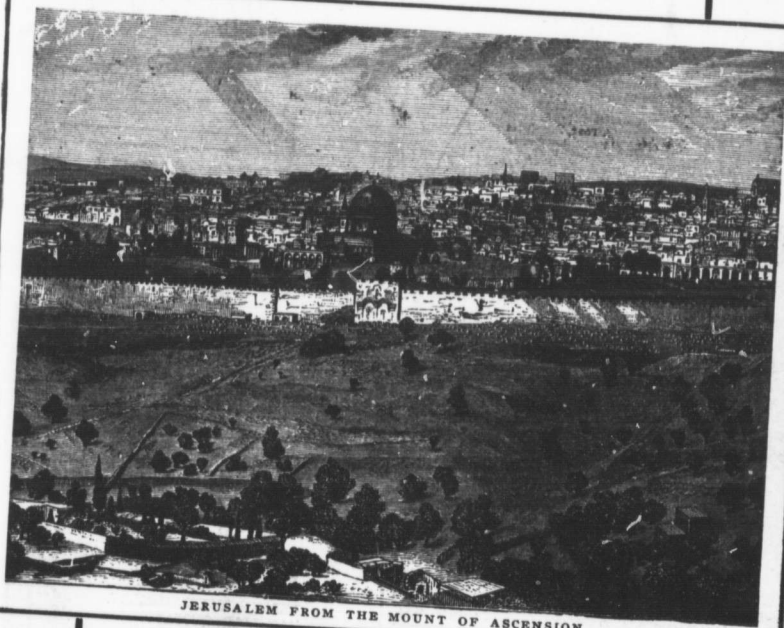
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No. 1

Sunday School

Banner

FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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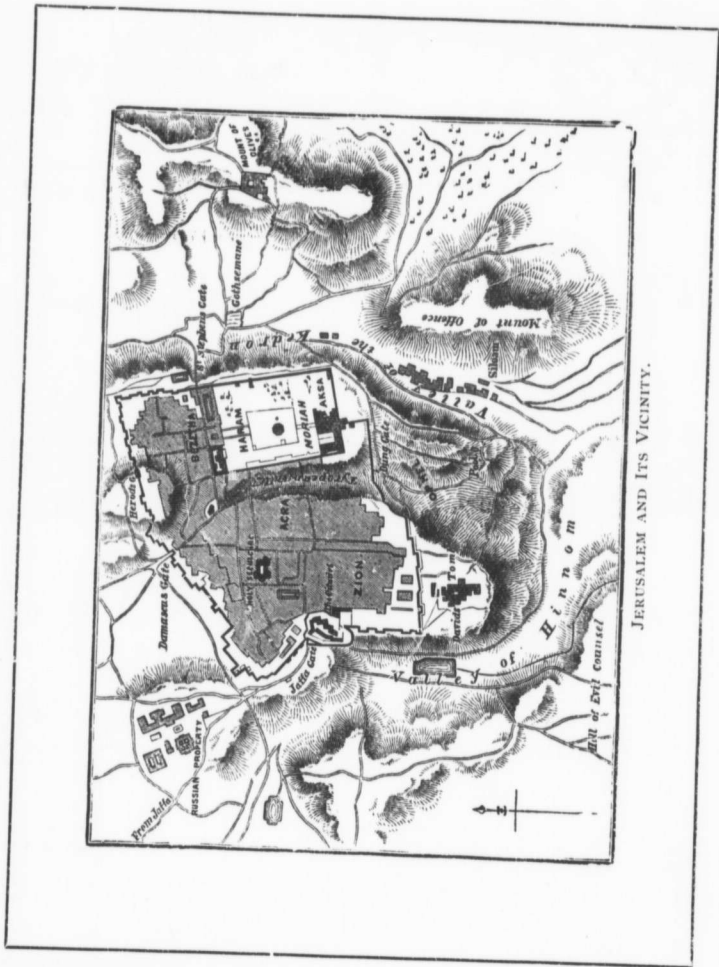
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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

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TEACHERS
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YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 36

JANUARY, 1902

No. 1

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The Greeting of the New Year.

BY CELIA THAXTER.

The snow lies stiff and white,
At the gate of the glad New Year;
Her face with hope is bright,
Though the wintry world is drear.

She smiles with welcome sweet,
She speaks in accents mild:
"Enter, with willing feet,
And the heart of a little child.

"So shall you treasure find,
Better than lands or gold;
Friends that are true and kind,
Love that is wealth untold.

"Humbly my lessons learn,
So shall you wisdom gain;
Deep peace your soul shall earn
Through the discipline of pain."

Hark to the New Year's voice,
With its promise of hope and cheer;
"Courage, brave hearts, rejoice!
For God is always near.

"Skies may be dark with storm,
While fierce the north wind blows,
Yet earth at heart is warm,
And the snowdrift hides the rose."

To Make Our Schools a Success,

In the October Banner three questions are asked:

1. How to retain the older scholars. I think there is but one answer to this question, get them converted in the Sunday School before they are older. I know of very few who were converted as scholars who left the Sunday School. What a responsibility on us as teachers.

2. To secure an intelligent interest in the study of the Word of God. I think it would help, if the pastor gave a good Bible reading, that would include the subject of the Sunday School Lesson, every week, even if there was one sermon less. Ministers ought to be leaders in this work.

3. Acceptance of a personal Saviour. This will have to be done by the Holy Spirit. Let us get the Spirit into the school, and this will be accomplished. We can get the Spirit for the asking.

H. HUGHES.

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Montreal, Que. Halifax, N.S.

Sunday School Banner

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

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1902

The New Year.

THE close of the old year and the beginning of the new is a most fitting time for retrospection and reflection. Then, if ever, should even the most frivolous bestow a moment's earnest thought upon the past, and seek divine aid to essay the duties of the future. Standing as we do, in "the centre of immensities, the conflux of eternities," all things conspire to make us feel that our lives are rapidly sliding away, that they shall soon have passed for ever. The successive New Years are milestones, as it were, by which we measure our progress through time.

As travellers who cross the Alps, climbing the hoary mountains' sides, gain broader, clearer vision, and a wider horizon; as they look back upon the path by which they have ascended and perceive that its devious turnings were necessary to avoid some crevasse or overcome some

difficulty; and as, gaining the summit of the pass, they behold the fertile plains of Lombardy and the far-shining city of their pilgrimage; so, to us, the New Years are hilltops, as it were, whence we may look back on all the way by which the Lord our God has led us, and from which, looking forward, we may get clearer views of the end of our journey, of the goal of our hopes.

Our life's pathway may often seem rugged and devious, but from the vantage-ground of added years we gain wider horizons, and, at last, from the supreme vantage-ground of heaven we may discern that all life's devious ways have been part of God's great plan; that we have been led by a way that we knew not, by a way that we might not have chosen for ourselves, but by a way that has been wise and good and true.

At these memorial seasons we are especially reminded of the shortness of life and the flight of time. In Holy Scripture the most fragile and ephemeral things are chosen to represent the duration of human existence. Man's days are a handbreadth, and his years are as nothing in the sight of God. He is like grass that in the morning flourisheth and groweth up fresh and fair and gemmed with dew, but which in the evening, dry and dead, cut down and withered, strews the ground. Like the flight of an arrow through the yielding air, or the gliding of a keel through the returning waves, that leaves no trace behind—like anything most evanescent—such, in the sight of God, is the life of man.

The Christian Year.

ONE of the complaints made concerning the International Lesson System is that it does not sufficiently recognize the great festivals of the Christian year—Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter, Ascension, Whitsuntide or Pentecost. The system is based upon a wider and, we think, a wiser principle. Its purpose is to take the scholars over the whole of the Old and New Testament Scriptures in about seven years. In this course all the events of the Christian year are fully recognized, and all the Christian doctrines are inculcated. The lessons also arrange that appropriate teachings shall coincide with the two more important of the Christian festivals, Christmas and Easter. In 1901, however, it would interrupt the important story of

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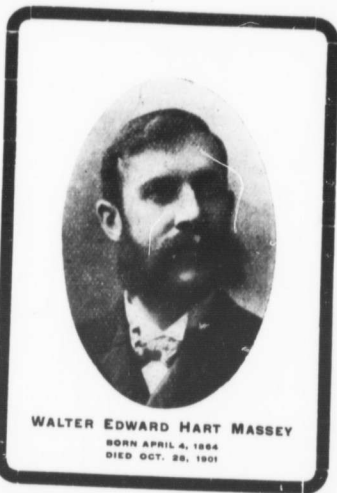
Israel in Egypt if the lesson on the Passage of the Red Sea were omitted on the Sunday before Christmas. The Lesson System, therefore, gives an optional lesson for that Sunday—one on the Exodus, the other on the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. Schools, therefore, may take their choice of these two, or, indeed, may combine them both. It will be observed in The Banner there are full notes on both these subjects. Our own feeling is that it is better to keep up the historic continuity of the lessons, as there is no danger of Christmas being forgotten nor its hallowed teachings ignored. In song and festival, in poem and story, in our Sunday School papers and Sunday School anniversaries this great central fact of Christendom is sure to be duly recognized.

A Successful Teacher.

FEW aspects of the life of the late W. E. H. Massey were more marked than his devotion to duty. Some men born to affluence, as he was, would have sought a life of ignoble ease, or of more ignoble pleasure. Not so Walter E. H. Massey. His life has been one of strenuous toil up to and beyond the measure of his strength.

Mr. Massey placed first things first. He recognized the supreme and primary importance of his duty to God, next his duty to the family God had given him, and then his obligation to the vast secular interests in which he was engaged. While diligent in business he was fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. This service found beautiful expression in his church relations. He was found, whenever possible, at the mid-week as well as the Sabbath services of the church. His late pastor, the Rev. W. H. Hincks, states that the first night of his week service Mr. Massey took his hand and said, "I want you if ever you see anything in my life or conduct inconsistent with the character of a Christian man to tell me." He was ever ready to give counsel, sympathy, financial help to the interests of the church of God and to every worthy cause. His pastor says:

"As a key to his character let me mention that he was pre-eminently a man of prayer. This was so marked in his life and was one of the secrets of his calm amidst the strenuous life he lived in the business world. Many of you knew him as a man who administered the largest



WALTER EDWARD HART MASSEY

BORN APRIL 4, 1864
DIED OCT. 26, 1901

manufactory of its kind in the British Empire, touching from his desk Australia, Germany, France, Austria, Great Britain, and this vast Dominion. We knew him in the evening at his home, and at his prayer service, where in the church he touched the throne of God in simple, direct, earnest prayer. About his prayer there was always a deep, earnest humility, tenderness, reverence, and self-effacement. He greatly prized the privilege of ministering to others in eternal things. The Bible class on his Dentonia Farm Farm, at which some seventy of his employees and friends gathered every Sunday during the summer, was an example of this."

A FRIEND TO YOUNG MEN

He was a friend to young men; he was not satisfied with teaching them on the Sabbath, but earnestly desired to reach them in the week, so in the reconstruction of his beautiful home on Jarvis Street he had a large room specially fitted up for "my boys," as he called them, and every Tuesday of each week, busy as he was, he gave himself up to entertaining these young men, in which work he was enthusiastically joined by his devoted wife. He followed his boys out into life after they left the city, both by letter and expressions of love, and they frequently brought their troubles to him, and not in vain.

Sometimes, he told his pastor, he gave seventeen hours in the week to the study of his Sunday School lesson. Few preachers give that time to the preparation of their two sermons. Yet this busy man of affairs, carrying on great commercial enterprises, reaching to the very Antipodes, found time for such earnest study of the Word of God.

In Walter E. H. Massey the man and the Christian were more than even the merchant and manufacturer. He grew up in a Methodist household, surrounded by the best and sweetest associations of Christian family life. The sons of the household used specially to delight in paying their tribute of affection to a mother's love and a mother's devotion. As a young man Mr. W. E. H. Massey became identified with Sunday School and church work. While making a business tour of the world, and especially while visiting the sacred scenes of the life and labors of our Lord, he found time to write home a series of very interesting and instructive letters to his Bible-class.

A few months ago we invited Mr. Massey to contribute to a symposium in this periodical on the best methods of carrying on Sunday School work, especially of retaining the interests of young men and securing their personal conversion to God. Although such a busy man, Mr. Massey kindly complied with our request, and his wise counsels and suggestions were printed in a recent number of this Sunday School teachers' magazine. In like manner Mr. Massey contributed also wise and thoughtful counsels on business methods to young men in the columns of *The Christian Guardian*.

Small wonder that the tributes of the pulpit and the press to the memory of this good man were of the most generous character. Truly in him are the words of Scripture fulfilled, "Being dead, he yet speaketh." He rests from his labors, but his works do follow him.

"The memory of the just
Smells sweet and blossoms in the dust."

Methodist Magazine and Review for 1902.

THIS Magazine and Review offers for 1902 the best programme of contents it has ever presented. No magazine ever published in Canada has reached like this its fifty-fourth volume. The leading writers of Methodism, both

at home and abroad, and many others, will contribute to its pages.

A very full and comprehensive programme has been prepared, which is announced in part in our advertising pages. It is the purpose of both Publisher and Editor to make this Magazine and Review a welcome visitor—a bright, cheery, inspiring and instructive guest in the Methodist homes of this Dominion. Please note the special prominence given to Canadian, Methodist, missionary, social, and religious topics.

The department of the *World's Progress*, treating the stirring events of the times, religious and missionary, and the trend of religious thought and work, will be fully treated, and the progress of science.

A lady correspondent of literary culture and refinement in the United States writes that it is the best monthly received at their house, although they have the reading of ten of the foremost.

We ask the co-operation of our friends to aid us by counsel and suggestion in the still further improvement of this periodical. One great dependence is, of course, upon the ministers, who are its authorized and official agents. By their aid its past success has been secured, and it is confidently hoped that it will share the prosperity of the growing time of our country. To aid them in the vigorous canvass the November and December numbers will be given free to new subscribers. A liberal scale of premiums at nominal cost will be offered.

SPECIAL OFFER TO SCHOOLS.

A special reduction is given to schools taking copies of this Magazine for circulation in their libraries. Two or more copies so taken will be furnished for \$1.60 each. This includes the November and December numbers free to new subscribers—fourteen numbers for \$1.60, or about 11½ cents per number of ninety-six closely printed, well-illustrated pages. Many schools have taken this periodical for several years, some in quantities as large as ten or more copies. They have found it more interesting, instructive, up-to-date, and economical than any other way of purchasing good literature.

PREMIUMS.

Subscribers so desiring may secure copies of Withrow's "Barbara Heck," "Neville Trueman," "Lawrence Temple," or "Valeria," at 30 cents each, post free; regular price, 75 cents.

Another Year.

BY FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

Another year is dawning!
Dear Master, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year with thee!

Another year of leaning
Upon thy loving breast,
Of ever-deepening trustfulness,
Of quiet, happy rest.

Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace;
Another year of gladness
In the shining of thy face.

Another year of progress,
Another year of praise,
Another year of proving
Thy presence "all the days."

Another year of service,
Of witness for thy love;
Another year of training
For holier work above.

Another year is dawning!
Dear Master, let it be
On earth, or else in heaven,
Another year for thee!

Thoughts for the New Year

BY THE REV. JOSEPH AGAR BEET, D.D.

ANOTHER year, with its unknown joys and sorrows, and its many opportunities of usefulness and of spiritual growth, is upon us; another New Year, soon in its turn to be numbered among the years gone by. The pressing question of the moment is, How may we so use the New Year that its fleeting days and weeks and months shall produce abiding results of blessing? Accept from an old Sunday School teacher a few words of counsel.

All the best works of man are the accomplishment of deliberate and careful purpose. The best results have been attained by pursuit of a definite aim along a well-chosen path. And every Sunday School teacher will do well to ask himself on the threshold of a new year, what results do I intend to gain, and by what methods can I best attain them?

A dozen or so boys or girls, it may be young men or women, gather round you on Sunday afternoon. They have left their homes to meet you, and you have left yours to meet them. What do you wish to do with them and for them? Your immediate aim, as I understand it, is to lead each of them into the conscious enjoyment of saving union with Christ, and into fellowship with the servants of Christ. A further aim is to develop in them a noble Christian character, and to train them for effective service of Christ in the various positions they will occupy in after life. These aims reach within the veil. You desire so to teach that they who learn from you may, themselves enriched with the reward of successful work for Christ, be your crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

An aim so lofty deserves and demands sustained and well-directed effort. Let us consider the means at our disposal for its attainment. The teacher's chief weapon is religious truth, and especially the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In order that he may use this weapon he must first himself grasp it and make it his own. This can be done only by careful study, by diligent preparation of each Sunday's lesson. In your plans for the new year include a scheme for Bible study. On this matter a few suggestions may be of use.

Fortunately the helps for Bible study are now both abundant and cheap. All that is really needful is a good Teachers' Bible, with references, and with "aids" and maps at the end. If to these the teacher can add one of the good and well-known popular commentaries on the portion of Scripture to be expounded, so much the better.

The most important point is the method of study. Make it a rule to read over every Sunday evening the lesson for next Sunday, and to read it again each day during the week. All experience tells us that in order to gain a firm hold of truth we need to keep it long before the mind. Indeed, this unwearied repetition is one of the secrets of solid scholarship. An advantage of an early and frequent reading of next Sunday's lesson is that it will thus become matter for reflection during the week. The teacher will thus have something to think about in the many vacant moments which are to be found in even the busiest lives, and which otherwise would be wasted. And when he takes his seat on Sunday afternoon in the midst of his class he will speak from the matured thought of the week.

The teacher needs not only himself to know the truth, but so to put it before his scholars that they will be able to grasp it. If he has it in his thought during the week, and especially if he is endeavoring to gain from his lesson help for his own spiritual life, he will be constantly on the outlook for, and will frequently find, illustrations suitable for his scholars. The lesson will thus be mixed up with his whole life, and will become a living word to them.

This careful preparation of lessons will bring with it an important collateral advantage, viz., mental training and the acquisition of important Bible truth. To thousands of teachers it has been a wonderful stimulus to intellectual effort; and this effort has borne rich fruit in their spiritual life.

And now most heartily I wish you, my fellow-workers for the kingdom of God, a Happy New Year, a year of intellectual and spiritual growth and of success in the work of Christ.—Wesleyan Sunday School Magazine.

I stand upon the threshold of two years,
And backward look, and forward strain
my eyes;
Upon the blotted record fall my tears,
While, brushing them aside, a sweet
surprise
Breaks like a day-dawn on my upturned
face,
As I remember all thy daily grace.

Thou hast been good to me; the burdened
past
Thou hast borne with me, and the
future days
Are in thy hands; I tremble not, but cast
My care upon thee, and in prayer and
praise
Prepare to make the coming year the best,
Because of noble work and sweeter rest.

Descriptive and Explanatory Index

OF PERSONS, PLACES, INSTITUTIONS, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS REFERRED TO IN THE LESSONS.

Alpheus.—Lesson I.—Father of that apostle James who is commonly called James the Less. Alpheus was husband of one of the three Marys who ministered so lovingly to Jesus.

Andrew.—Lesson I.—A son of Jonas and brother of Peter. He brought the latter to Christ. After the resurrection of our Lord he appears only in the list of apostles in Acts 1. 13. Tradition reports him to have preached the Gospel in

Magazine and Review for December.

This magazine completes its fifty-fourth volume with an admirable number. It includes copiously illustrated articles on Booker T. Washington and his work, "The Doukhobors in Russia and Canada," "Child Wives and Child Widows in India, and Sir E. Burne-Jones and his work; also, "The Romance of the Savinns Banks," and a number of Christmas stories, poems, and pictures. Isabelle Horton's stirring serial, "What Happened to Ted," is continued. The announcement for 1902 is a strong programme, and indicates a marked advance in this oldest Canadian magazine. Among the more striking features are numerous illustrated papers on Canada and its resources, its storied past, and romantic lumbering and fishing interests, papers of adventure, travel, social economics, popular science, character sketches, missionary adventure, illustrated papers on art and music, and the like, with serial and short stories by well-known writers. November and December numbers are given free to new subscribers.

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

WE generally present with the January number of The Banner a colored map of the region treated in the lessons. We have procured such a map of the journeyings of St. Paul, which will occupy our attention during a large part of the first half-year. That map, however, we shall reserve till we come to treat the history of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. We give with this number a radial map of Palestine, which will be of more service for the early lessons of the year. Let teachers and scholars make constant reference to the map. They will find such a study very illuminative of the sacred text.

Scythia, Greece, and Asia Minor, and to have been crucified upon a cross in the form of an X—"St Andrew's cross."

Bartholomew.—Lesson I.—One of the twelve apostles. He is supposed to be identical with Nathanael, mentioned in John 1. 45-51 and 21. 2. Legends tell how he introduced the Gospel to India (Arabia Felix) and Armenia.

"Breaking bread."—Lesson III.—Most of the bread of the ancient East was

baked hard, much like our crackers. It was never cut with the knife; hence the frequent use of this phrase. "Every evening after sundown, at the customary hour for the principal meal of a Jewish household, these earliest Christians appear to have come together to a family table very much as our Lord and disciples had done on the memorable night on which he was betrayed. It was the chief token and bond of their unity in Christ. To make the bond tighter by more formally recalling its basis in his death who sat no longer at the head of the board, they closed their meal by breaking bread as he had done, and had hidden them do, 'in remembrance' of him."—J. O. Dykes.

Cappadocia.—Lesson II.—The largest and most easterly province in the interior of ancient Asia Minor.

Crete.—Lesson II.—Cretans; inhabitants of the island of Crete. These Creteans were of Jewish blood.

Egypt.—Lesson II.—In our Lord's day Egypt swarmed with Jews.

Elamites.—Lesson II.—Inhabitants of Elam, a country west of Persia proper, though a province of the Persian empire, having Susa (Shushan) for its capital. The Elamites here referred to were Hebrews.

Galilee, Galileans, "men of Galilee."—Lessons I, II, VII.—The northern province of Palestine in the time of our Lord, and its inhabitants—a large and populous portion of the country, embracing the territory of the tribes of Asher, Issachar, Naphtali, and Zebulun. Recent scholarship does not sustain the older belief that Galilee was a degraded province, and that its people were barbarous when compared with the rest of the Hebrew race.

"Hour of prayer."—Lesson IV.—The hours of public prayer among the Jews were the third hour, about 9 a. m., and the ninth hour, about 3 p. m. At the latter hour especially the temple was thronged with worshippers.

James.—In verse 13 of Lesson I. the name "James" occurs three times. The James who is mentioned between Peter and John was brother of the latter, and therefore one of the "sons of Zebedee" and of Salome. He was surnamed "the elder" to distinguish him from "James the son of Alphaeus," whose name appears in the list after that of Matthew, and who is commonly called "James the Less."

James, the son of Alphaeus.—Lesson I.—Called "the Less" or "Little." One of the twelve apostles. Perhaps his mother was a sister of Mary, mother of Jesus.

Joel.—Lesson II.—One of the minor prophets.

John (the Baptist).—Lesson I.—The forerunner of Christ, son of Zacharias, and cousin of our Lord. The sum of his preaching was repentance; his mission, to point to the Lamb of God. Shortly after he had given his testimony to the Messiah he was imprisoned in the castle of Machaerus, and was there beheaded by order of Herod Antipas.

Judas.—Lesson I.—One of the twelve apostles, a brother of James the Less; supposed by some to be the author of the Epistle of Jude, and a brother of Jesus.

Libya.—Lesson II.—A general name for northern Africa west of Egypt, but strictly applied to what is now Tripoli.

Mary, the mother of Jesus.—Lesson I.—The wife of Joseph. She lived at Nazareth, was present at the crucifixion, and afterward was under the care of the apostle John.

Matthew.—Lesson I.—The publican who became an apostle. His history, both before and after the ministry of Jesus, is unknown. The first gospel is ascribed to him.

Medes.—Lesson II.—Inhabitants of Media, a country lying in the north-west of Persia, south and south-west of the great salt desert. The Medes here mentioned were, like the others named, either Jews or Jewish proselytes.

Mesopotamia.—Lesson II.—The district between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Here many Jews, taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, were settled.

Olivet.—Lesson I.—The mount of Olives. A range rather more than a mile in length running north and south on the east of Jerusalem, from which it is divided by the valley of Jehosaphat. The summit is about three hundred feet higher than the site of the temple. Olivet was formerly covered with groves of olive trees. From its summit "over against Bethany" our Lord ascended to heaven, as narrated by Luke.

Pamphylia.—Lesson II.—A small district of Asia Minor between Cilicia and Lycia. Together with Lycia it formed a province. The name, All-tribe-land, indicates the varied races of its inhabitants.

Parmanas.—Lesson VIII.—One of "the seven" appointed by the church of Jerusalem.

Parthians.—Lesson II.—Parthia was a rival of the Roman empire on the east, extending from the Tigris to India. The Parthians spoke a dialect of the Persian language. In their vast empire there were at the time of Christ thousands, if not millions, of Jews, descendants of those

who had been carried into captivity long before.

Pentecost.—Lesson II.—A Jewish feast which, from the seven weeks' interval between it and the passover, was originally called by the Hebrews the Feast of Weeks. But later it was called Pentecost, from the Greek words signifying fiftieth, from the number of intervening days. It marked a second wheat harvest. That it also commemorated the giving of the law on Mount Sinai is not, indeed, said expressly in the Scriptures, but is generally accepted by biblical scholars.

Pilate (Pontius).—Lesson IV.—The sixth Roman governor of Judea, who delivered Jesus to death. He was appointed A.D. 25, in the twelfth year of Tiberius. He was a despotic man, and the turbulence of the Jews gave him much trouble. His political influence at the Roman court had begun to lessen at the time of our Lord's trial.

Thomas.—Lesson I.—One of the apostles; a man of cautious character, but of strong devotion. He is said to have preached in Persia, to have suffered martyrdom, and to have been buried at Edessa.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—FIRST QUARTER.

Studies in the Book of the Acts.

Lesson 1. Jan. 5.—**THE PROMISE OF POWER.** Acts 1:1-11. Study Acts 1:1-14. *Commit vs. 6-8.* (Read ch. 1.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 1: 8. Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

2. Jan. 12.—THE PROMISE OF POWER FULFILLED. Acts 2:1-11. Study Acts 2:1-21. *Commit vs. 2-4.* (Read ch. 2:1-36; Joel 2:21-32.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 2:39. The promise is unto you and to your children.

3. Jan. 19.—THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Acts 2:37-47. *Commit vs. 37-39.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 2:47. The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

4. Jan. 26.—THE LAME MAN HEALED. Acts 3:1-10. Study Acts 3:1-16. *Commit vs. 6-8.* (Read ch. 3.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Exod. 15: 2. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.

5. Feb. 2.—THE FIRST PERSECUTION. Acts 4:1-22. Study Acts 4:1-22. *Commit vs. 8-10.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 4:12. There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

6. Feb. 9.—THE SIN OF LYING. Acts 5:1-11. Study Acts 5:1-33 to 5:11. *Commit vs. 3-5.* (Read James 3.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Eph. 4:25. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor.

7. Feb. 16.—THE SECOND PERSECUTION. Acts 5:32-42. Study Acts 5:25-42. *Commit vs. 40-42.* (Read ch. 5:12-24.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Matt. 5:10. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Lesson 8. Feb. 23.—**THE ARREST OF STEPHEN.** Acts 6:7-17. Study Acts 6:1-15. *Commit vs. 7, 8.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** Matt. 10:28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.

9. March 2.—THE STONING OF STEPHEN. Acts 7:54 to 8:1. *Commit vs. 59, 60.* (Read ch. 7.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Matt. 5:44. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

10. March 9.—THE DISCIPLES SCATTERED. Acts 8:3-13. Study Acts 8:3-17. *Commit vs. 3-5.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 8:4. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

11. March 16.—THE ETHIOPIAN CONVERTED. Acts 8:26-39. Study Acts 8:26-40. *Commit vs. 34, 35.* (Read Isa. 53.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Rom. 10:10. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

12. March 23.—TEMPERANCE LESSON. Eph. 5:11-21. *Commit vs. 15-18.* (Read ch. 5.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Eph. 5:18. Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.

13. March 30.—REVIEW. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 2:36. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

OR, EASTER LESSON. John 20:6-18. Study John 20:1-18. *Commit vs. 13, 14.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** John 11:25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.

ORDER OF SERVICES—FIRST QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. SILENCE.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 125.)

SUPR. They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion,

SCHOOL. Which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

SUPR. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,

SCHOOL. So the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

SUPR. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous;

SCHOOL. Lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

SUPR. Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good,

SCHOOL. And to them that are upright in their hearts.

SUPR. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways,

SCHOOL. The LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel.

III. SINGING.

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

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

VI. SINGING.

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 119, 33, 34.)

SUPR. Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes;

SCHOOL. And I shall keep it unto the end.

SUPR. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law;

SCHOOL. Yes, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

CLOSING SERVICE.

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International Bible Lessons.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS.

LESSON I. The Promise of Power.

[Jan. 5.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.
Acts 1. 8.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Acts 1.]

Acts 1. 1-11. [Commit to memory verses 6-8.]

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theoph'li-lus, of all that Je'sus began both to do and teach,

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Ho'ly Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Je-ru'sa-lem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saieth he*, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Ho'ly Ghost not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Is'ra-el?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Ho'ly Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Je-ru'sa-lem, and in all Ju-de'a, and in Sa-ma'ri-a, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men of Gal'i-lee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Je'sus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 The former treatise I made, O Theoph'li-lus, concerning all that Jesus began both
- 2 to do and to teach, until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandment through the Ho'ly Ghost unto
- 3 the apostles who a he had chosen: to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God:
- 4 and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, *said he*, ye heard from me:
- 5 for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Ho'ly Ghost not many days hence.
- 6 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?
- 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father
- 8 hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Ho'ly Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out
- 9 of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white
- 10 apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

Home Readings.

- M. The Promise of Power. Acts 1. 1-14.
Th. Beginning at Jerusalem. Luke 24. 44-53.
W. Christ gives power. Matt. 10. 1-15.

- Th. Another Comforter. John 14. 1-19.
F. A Teacher. John 14. 20-31.
S. The Spirit of Truth. John 15. 17-27.
S. The guiding Spirit. John 16. 1-14.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 314.

Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious;
See the "Man of Sorrows" now.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 430.

"Be ye strong in the Lord and the power of
his might!"

Firmly standing for the truth of his Word.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 51.

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

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Promise.*

What does Luke mean by the "former treatise"?

Of what did it treat?

Through whom did Christ give commandment to his disciples?

What were some of the infallible proofs of Christ's resurrection?

What was the subject of conversation between Christ and his disciples?

Where were they to wait for the promise of the Father?

What was this promise?

2. *The Kingdom of God.*

How did the disciples show that they did not understand Jesus?

To what nation was the kingdom of Israel in bondage?

What was now the real kingdom of Israel?

Did Jesus answer their question?

What power were they to receive?

For what mission was it to prepare them?

3. *The Ascended Lord.*

What was the scene as the disciples looked up to heaven?

What prophecy did the two men make to the disciples?

Why were they called men of Galilee?

Where did the ascension take place?

4. *The Praying Disciples.*

To what city did the disciples return after the ascension?

Who made up the company in the upper room?

With what expectation did they assemble?

In what spirit did they continue in prayer?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Who it was that promised power* (verses 1-4).

Who is the author of the book of Acts?

In what other book had he written about Jesus?

With what narrative does Luke say he closed that former book?

How many times did Jesus show himself to his disciples after his resurrection?

For how long a period of time?

What proofs of Christ's power had they seen?

2. *What kind of power* (verses 5-8).

What sort of power did the apostles think they would receive?

What kind of a kingdom had they in mind?

Whose power did Jesus offer?

Who would give the right measure of it to every man?

What should it enable them to do?

What other things mean the same work as "witnessing" unto Jesus?

What kinds of mission work are here included?

3. *Where and how to wait for it* (verses 9-11).

How soon would the promise be fulfilled?

Did they know the exact time?

What were they doing while waiting?

In what did this baptism differ from John's baptism?

Who is the Holy Ghost?

Where were they to wait for the power?

How many were present at one time in the upper room? (Verses 13, 14.)

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Who wrote the Acts of the Apostles? *Luke.*
What was his "former treatise"? *The gospel of Luke.*

Whom may Luke have meant by "Theophilus"?
Perhaps a dear friend, certainly all who love God.

What does he first tell them? *Of the Lord's last talk with his disciples.*

Why did our Lord want to tell them many things? *Because he was about to leave them.*

What did he tell them to wait for? *The Holy Spirit.*

What did he say they should be? *Witnesses.*
What must a witness do? *Tell the truth about what he knows.*

What did the disciples know? *That Jesus died and rose again.*

While he spoke what did he do? *He went up out of their sight.*

Where did they then go? *To an upper room to wait and pray.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. To whom did Jesus appear after his resurrection? *To his disciples.*

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2. During how many days did he appear to them? *During forty days.*

3. What promise did he give? **GOLDEN TEXT:** "*Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*"

4. What did he command them to be? *Witness in his name.*

5. What did he do at the end of forty days? *He ascended to heaven.*

The Church Catechism.

40. Repeat the Ten Commandments. *Ex. 20. 3-17.*
41. Into what two tables are these Ten Commandments divided? The Ten Commandments are usually divided into the first table, setting forth our duty to God in the first four Commandments; and the second table, setting forth our duty to our fellow-men in the last six.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Five Duties of the Christian.

I. HE IS TO CARRY ON OUR LORD'S DOINGS AND TEACHINGS.

All that Jesus began both to do and teach. v. 1.

Mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. *Luke 24. 19.*

Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. *John 14. 12.*

II. HE IS UNQUESTIONINGLY TO FOLLOW HIS LORD'S LEADERSHIP.

It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. v. 7.

Of that day knoweth no man, neither the Son. *Mark 13. 32.*

Secret things belong unto the Lord our God. *Deut. 29. 29.*

I will guide thee with mine eye. *Psa. 32. 8.*

III. HE IS TO BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND WITH POWER.

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. v. 8.

I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. *Joel 2. 28.*

In demonstration of the Spirit and of power. *1 Cor. 2. 4.*

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. *Phil. 4. 13.*

IV. HE IS TO DO HIS BEST TO EVANGELIZE THE WIDE WORLD.

Ye shall be witnesses unto me unto the uttermost part of the earth. v. 8.

Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. *Rev. 10. 18.*

Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel. *Mark 16. 15.*

The Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness. *Matt. 24. 14.*

V. HE IS TO EXPECT HIS LORD TO COME AGAIN.

This same Jesus shall so come in like manner. v. 11.

Ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord. *Luke 12. 36.*

I will come again, and receive you unto myself. *John 14. 3.*

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. *Rev. 22. 20.*

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The Acts of the Apostles was written by Luke, the author of the third gospel, about A. D. 63 (probably). Both books were compiled from the accounts of eyewitnesses and from the author's observations. It is impossible to fix beyond question all the dates of this pivotal era. Assuming, as many do, that Christ was crucified on Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, he rose from the dead on the following Sunday morning, and the ascension took place forty days later, on Thursday, May 18. Our minds are thus directed to those forty delightful days in which the risen Christ associated with his disciples. What strange, deep conversations on things pertaining to the kingdom of God must the little company of believers have had with their Redeemer! With what wild conjecture must they have received his postponement of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, his renewed promise of the gift of power! With what awe-struck yearnings must they have beheld him rise from Olivet until the cloud received him out of their sight; and with what a strange mixture of confidence and anxiety must they have returned to Jerusalem to await the coming of the Holy Spirit! All this we are invited to reproduce in our imagination by the very structure of our lesson. Avenues of thought and fancy open in every direction into infinity. The lesson closes ("Additional Study Verses") with the meeting of our Lord's apostles, his relatives, and "the women," in the upper room where prayer and supplication were made with one accord.

Verses 1, 2. *The former treatise* is the Gospel according to Luke, which, like this book, was dedicated to *Theophilus*. In his preface to the

gospel Luke gives three reasons for writing it: that others had taken the same work in hand; that he had peculiar opportunities of knowing

the truth; and that he desired to complete the instruction of Theophilus, who, from the phrase "most excellent" with which he is titled in Luke 1. 3, we infer to have been in some peculiar way a representative man. The last two reasons, and the fact that the gospel record is not complete without some of the events here recorded, explain why he wrote this book also. *Jesus* in person began both by deed and word a work which was to be carried on by his apostles. "This second book appears intended to give us, and does, in fact, profess to give us, that which *Jesus* continued to do and teach after the day in which he was taken up"—that is, the day of his ascension, which is described in verses 9-11 of this lesson. *Through*. By the inspiration of *Commandments*, singular in the original; a special injunction or charge. *The apostles whom he had chosen* are named in verse 13 of this lesson, all but Judas.

3. *To whom also he showed himself alive.* "He presented himself before him." *His passion*. His sufferings, including his death. *Many infallible proofs*. The Revised Version omits "infallible." There is but one word in the Greek here, and it has the force of certainty. *For being seen* we have in the Revised Version the word "appearing." The Greek indicates that he was not with them constantly. *Of them* is an antique form for "by them." *Forty days* means through forty days. At intervals during that period our Lord showed himself. The Revised Version makes the meaning plainer by inserting the words "by the space of." This is the only passage which tells us how long after the resurrection the ascension came. *Speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*. These "things" were the topic of all the conversation between our risen Master and his disciples. "The kingdom of God" includes the whole Christian dispensation, its message, progress, and economy."

4. *Being assembled together*. The Greek phrase means "eating salt together," and carries in it not only the idea of association at table, but of friendship. *Commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem*. "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24. 49; see also John 11. 16). *Wait for the promise of the Father*. John 14. 16, 26; 15. 26. *Ye have heard of me*. "From me."

5. *John truly baptized with water*. With this entire verse compare Luke 3. 16. *But ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*. It is not likely that the apostles understood how they were

to be "baptized with the Holy Ghost." They had been taught by their holy writings (our Old Testament) that the Holy Spirit resting upon men fitted them for extraordinary achievements for God's cause. They doubtless expected to be thus specially fitted, but further than that it is not likely they knew. The *not many days* of delay proved to be ten in number.

6. The meeting of verse 6 was probably the last meeting of our Lord and his disciples, near to Bethany. *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* "The disciples had not yet unlearned their notions of a temporal kingdom." Our Lord had interwoven his promises of the gift of the Holy Ghost with the promises of his own departure, so that they clearly understood that the present opportunity for familiar intercourse could not be protracted; and, as since the resurrection they could have no further doubt that Jesus was in the fullest sense King of the Jews, this question was most natural.

7. *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons.* (See Matt. 24. 36.) This is a difficult lesson for Christians to learn. There has been a strong tendency in all ages of the Church to unravel God's mysteries and make out programs for him to follow. But the future the Father hath put in his own power. The force of the word "own" is "private," "personal," "apart."

8. *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you*. The precise character of that power was as yet unknown to them. *Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth*. As his eleven chosen ones, they fully expected to be the "witnesses," advocates, lieutenants, ambassadors of the King of the Jews, but our Lord here again points to the larger conception of the Christian dispensation. They are to begin their work in Jerusalem, the capital of their nation, then to go through Judea, which may here comprehend all Hebrew Palestine, then to Samaria, that abominable region of impostors, and then throughout heathendom. Manifestly the apostles had a larger task on hand than to restore a kingdom—they were to found a holy Church throughout all the world.

9. *While they beheld, he was taken up*. Luke's other account of the ascension, Luke 24. 50-53, should be carefully compared with this. The ascension is briefly reported by Mark, but is not recorded by the other evangelists. It is alluded to by Paul, Eph. 4. 9, 10; 1 Tim. 3. 16.

10. *They looked steadfastly toward heaven*. Gazed with the closest attention. *Two men*

stood by them in white apparel. Supernatural men evidently.

11. *Ye men of Galilee.* A natural mode of address in a country and at a time when each province had its peculiarities of accent and attire, and when there was much provincial pride. We have seen in other lessons that Galileans were readily recognized. *Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? An adequate answer to this question cannot be given without involving the entire Christian doctrine and dispensation. They were gazing into the past. This is God's call to them to gaze into the future. This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come*

in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. The meaning that most readers come fresh upon this passage would take from it is that he is to come again visibly in his glorified body. But concerning "the second coming" God has left more unrevealed than he has told us.

12-14. The return from Olivet to Jerusalem and the continued prayer service in the upper room of the private house engaged in by the apostles here named, the women who had accompanied and ministered to Jesus, and the "brethren" of our Lord, form a fit conclusion to this singularly interesting story of the ascension of our Lord.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

THE PROMISE GIVEN.

Before his crucifixion Jesus had said to his disciples, "After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee" (Matt. 26. 32). After his resurrection he sent them a reminder of this promise by the women to whom he appeared: "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (Matt. 28. 10). From Matt. 28. 16 we learn that Jesus had appointed a certain mountain in Galilee as the place of meeting. On account of their unbelief the disciples were slow to keep the trust with their Lord. Finally, however, they repaired to the place appointed. Then and there this promise was made: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24. 49). The promissory method occupies a large place in the divine economy. God is ever leading on to "some better thing." The call to Abraham was energized by a group of promises which must have fairly startled him (Gen. 12. 1-3). What enlargement to the scope of his life's influence! His faith attested to him the "substance of things hoped for," and he wrought with a power born of the consciousness of present possession. During the forty years of wanderings in the wilderness the picture of the land flowing with milk and honey was kept continually before the minds of the people. The Old-Testament dispensation closes with the promise of the coming Elijah. In the New Testament dispensation the method is the same. Peter puts it well: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1. 4). To the traveler over life's dusty highway the prom-

ise of heaven is an unfailing benediction. "It o'ersweeps all pains, all tears, all time, all fears." Well, indeed, has the pen of inspiration characterized its influence as "the power of an endless life." The New Testament closes with a comforting promise to those who agonize for the coming of the kingdom. John's vision of a new heaven and a new earth still leads on the ransomed hosts. "Magnificent promises are always to be suspected," says one whose experience had taught him to distrust his fellows. It is often so with man's promises. It is never so with God's. Jesus knew the divine method. He exemplified it in thus dealing with the disciples.

POWER THE DEFINITE STIPULATION.

From the beginning God intended that man should be a creature of power. The moment he comes forth from the hand of his Maker a destiny of power is set before him. "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1. 28). "Sent into the world to be a growing and exhaustless force." In spite of man's recreancy God's gracious purpose for him remains unchanged through the ages. It is the same on the day of Pentecost as on the day of creation. God's call to his child is a call to the exercise of power. "A little lower than the angels," or, as in the Revised Version, "but little lower than God"—this is God's rating of man. "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason; how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a God! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" It is a solemn thought that few of us exercise the full power our Father offers us.

THE PURPOSE OF THE WAITING.

Note that the power promised was a power to be received. They were to tarry at Jerusalem until it came. Not in a purely passive state, however. Their attitude was to be that of expectant, agonizing prayer. All the soul's activities must be enlisted in such an undertaking. No effort can be more intense. And yet the purpose of the waiting was to develop simply a readiness to receive that which had been promised. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" was the purport of the directions given. The way once prepared, all the rest was assured. Capacity is vital in the law of development. The chief problem in education is to enlarge the capacity to receive—to lead out the mind—to draw out its latent powers to the point of conscious contact with other minds and their achievements, so that it shall appropriate to itself. This is preeminently true of culture in spiritual things. Capacity to receive is fundamental in Christian experience. It is, indeed, the only limit upon the soul's growth Godward. It is amazing that so many good people overlook this simple principle. How often do we hear God supplicated for the baptism of the Holy Spirit as though he were unwilling to bestow it! This is in no sense a proper prayer. Here preeminently "prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness." The words of our Lord leave us in no doubt as to God's attitude. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Luke 11. 13). God gives to all of his children at every moment of their lives just as large a measure of his Spirit's presence as there is capacity to receive. It is not needful, therefore, that God be persuaded to bestow the Spirit. It is only needful that prayer be made for capacity to receive that which he ever stands ready to give.

Thoughts for Young People.

1. *The verity of the resurrection of Christ should be emphasized.* Skepticism pervades our mental atmosphere as deadly contagion sometimes pervades the air. Unadvertised and not guarded against, it works. Let us emphasize the cardinal truths of our faith. It was by "infallible proofs" that Christ "shewed himself alive" after his passion. Every Lord's Day is a commemoration of the first Eastertide.

2. *The Christian's present duty is on earth, not in heaven.* Even measured by human wisdom, the angels' question was a sensible one.

Stargazers never accomplish much. Meditation and study are necessary; but the Christian's life is a life of activity, a life of missionary aggressiveness, a life of earnest struggle for the right. John and Peter and their associates had to turn from the dazzling cloud and the vanishing form of their Saviour to a world of unbelievers who were to be converted by means of their words and appeals and prayers. Let us not ignore our great privilege of gazing at times through the open clouds at our glorified Saviour, but let us also heed the words of the angel, and turn from that inspiring vision with new force to our glorious task as Christian workers.

3. *The Christian receives power from on high.* Without it he is of no account in the task of turning the world to God. Use *Dr. Arthur's* illustration of the locomotive, and secure consciously the presence of divine power in your own heart.

4. *The apostles were mistaken in their understanding of the divine revelation.* It is foolish and wrong for one Christian to be uncharitable toward another Christian who conscientiously understands the Bible differently from himself. Even John and Peter and Paul grossly misunderstood Scripture till they were divinely guided to its right meaning. It is true that errors of doctrine lead easily to errors in practice, and often to sin; and we should shirk no effort to thoroughly understand God's written message. But let us remember that no study is profitable without that profound endowment of the Spirit of God which warms the heart while it enlightens the eyes; and let us be charitable to all who honestly differ from us.

5. *The second coming of our Lord.* Good men sometimes forget that the brief statement of verse 11, so full of meaning to us all, was made almost immediately after our Lord's statement, "It is not for you to know times or seasons." It is possible to spend too much time and too recondite study in endeavors to ascertain precisely when and precisely how our Lord will come. Let us calmly believe the words of Scripture and recognize that the most important thing for us is to have our Lord with us every moment of our lives; then no surprise can be disaster.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

According to our practice, we will group our suggestions around a few words, which may be easily memorized by the teacher in preparation.

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While
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Instea-
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1. *Jesu-*
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2. *The*
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and readily recalled in the teaching process, during which time there is very much gained by being able to look the pupils in the face while questioning them. Our memory word for this quarter will be "Hints," and we will arrange our outlines as follows:

HISTORY.**I NTRODUCTION.****NARRATIVE.****T RUTH EMPHASIZED.****S TUDY IN ADVANCE.****HISTORY.**

While it is not helpful to spend much time in intermediate classes on the historical connection, teachers should always aim to have the history clearly in mind, for two reasons: First, for their own sakes. It is always very helpful to be able to place events in their proper relationship. Second, so as to be able to dispose of any question connected with the history of the lesson, that may come up in the class.

I NTRODUCTION.

In the Hints for May 12, 1901, the teacher was advised to have the pupils learn the answers to the following questions concerning the writing of the book of the Acts:

BY **W** HEN?
HERE?
HOM?
HY?

Rapidly drill the members of the class in the answers to these questions.

NARRATIVE.

Instead of constantly seeking for something unknown to the learners, expert teachers always welcome the opportunity to review, and thus to reimpress, that with which their pupils are already acquainted. Therefore, we will use our Scripture narrative as a summary of the life of Jesus, which may be divided and questioned upon somewhat as follows:

1. *Jesus's works and words* (verse 1). By rapid questioning have the class give some of the principal doings and sayings of Jesus. (The interest in and the profit derived from this exercise will depend on the preparation which the teacher has made to ask stimulating questions.)

2. *The passion of Jesus* (verse 3). Explain the meaning of the word "passion," and in accordance with the suggestions of the preceding paragraph question concerning the sufferings and the crucifixion of Jesus.

3. *The forty days* (verses 3-8). Ask: What was done with the body of Jesus after the crucifixion? How long did it remain in the tomb? What took place on the Sunday after the crucifixion? What do we call that day? How long did Jesus remain on the earth after the resurrection? To whom did he appear? How many times in all? What did he say to his disciples during one of these appearances? Have some one read aloud verses 4-8. (See Luke 24. 43-49.)

4. *The ascension* (verse 9). Ask: What does this word mean? When did Jesus ascend? From what mount? To what place? How? Where is Jesus now? What is he doing for us? (See Heb. 7. 25, and recall the lesson for June 2, 1901.)

5. *Christ's second coming* (verses 10, 11). Who appeared to the disciples as Jesus ascended? What did they say? What do these words mean? While we do not know *when* or *where* Jesus will return to earth, we should be comforted with the thought that he will surely come again, and we should so teach.

T RUTH EMPHASIZED.

Have each member of the class tell what ought to be done for such a person as the one whose life we have thus hastily considered. Endeavor to make Jesus real to the pupils, and try to get them to talk naturally about him. Make the best possible use of the answers given—commending what is good and correcting what is objectionable. Finally, have each one sum up the lesson teaching in this resolution:

**BECAUSE OF WHAT HE IS AND DOES,
I WILL**

WORK
ITNESS
ATCH **FOR JESUS.**

S TUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to learn all they can during the week about Pentecost. If they are accustomed to draw, ask them to make a map of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, and to mark thereon the places named in verses 9-11 of next Sunday's lesson.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

"*Both to do and teach.*" Verse 1. Jesus connected his teaching with his miracles, which is a lesson to Christian workers. When he sent his disciples out he said to them, "Heal the sick; preach the Gospel." Medical missionary work, which combines healing and preaching, has

proven to be an effective agency in the spread of the Gospel. When the lawyer came to Christ asking what he should do to inherit eternal life and showed that he was acquainted with the law, Christ pointed out to him the wounded traveler on the Jericho road, and his duty to the men who were in need. On the night of the Lord's Supper he washed the feet of his disciples, thus teaching humility by example as well as by precept. We can best teach what we have done. Preaching and practice complement each other.

"*Speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*" Verse 3. In the Cologne Cathedral hangs the original pencil drawing of the cathedral, by Gerard, made about 1250. He put into existence plans whose fulfillment would require centuries of labor. The work was begun, but war and political changes left it unfinished. For several centuries the plans disappeared. Then, having been found, work was again begun in 1830, almost six hundred years after the plans were made, and the cathedral was carried to completion. Jesus was going on now to carry out the plans formed from the foundation of the world, and begun by him during his bodily life. The new kingdom is wondrously beautiful, but is not yet completed.—*Select Notes.*

"*But wait.*" Verse 4. Jesus spent thirty years in preparation for the work of three. Paul spent three years in the wilderness, preparing for the active life of an apostle. Every secular profession and business makes its demand for preparation. A young minister said to Mr. Spurgeon concerning the preparation of one of his sermons, "I threw that off in twenty minutes." "Your audience was with you in that," answered Mr. Spurgeon, "for they threw it off in twenty minutes." "No time is lost in sharpening the scythe; the prelude on the grindstone makes a quicker harvesting. Tuning the instruments is the way to the best music."

Verses 7, 8. The little child in the home would no doubt like to be taken into all the councils which the father and mother have, but often it must be content to know just its duty with assurance of help in doing it and the place where it must be done. This was just the knowledge granted to the disciples. In the new kingdom they were to be not princes, nor prime ministers, but witnesses. This is the perpetual office of Christ's people. A *herald* is the voice of a message, and therefore may or may not have a personal interest in his work; but a *witness* is the voice of an experience and must know whereof he speaks.

The order in which promise and command occur here shows how graciously Jesus considered

the apostles' weakness. Not a word does he say of their task of witnessing till he has filled their hearts with the promise of the Spirit. He shows them the armor of power in which they are to be clothed, before he points them to the battlefield.—*McLaren.*

Verses 10, 11. I saw a company of people on the pier in Halifax watching the outgoing of an ocean steamer, and they did not turn away their gaze, even when it had vanished, keeping their eyes on the horizon where last they had seen it. The gaze of the disciples must have been prompted by love, and it was rewarded by an angel message. But heavenward gaze must be exchanged for earth's duty. The disciples had to come down from the Mount of Transfiguration to share and relieve earth's misery.

A Christian woman who received a great blessing went again and again to the place where she had received it. She thought it was given to prepare her for death, and hoped to go to heaven from that sacred room. But her pastor told her the blessing was given as a preparation for service. Within a short time she was called to an office of great responsibility in the missionary society of her Church.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Do you catch the deeper meaning of that precious saying of Jesus? I wish I could unfold it before you as it speaks to me. How greatly to be coveted is this simple, believing, open, receptive heart that sees God in everything! He longs to have us see him. From the days of Eden until now he has been seeking to reveal himself. All the lessons of the year that we have studied in the Old Testament have proved this. And now in this last revelation of himself through the Holy Spirit, he makes—may I say it?—a final effort to reach our hearts and make us see and understand him. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." The things of the Spirit of God are God's thoughts toward us; they are really the only things worth knowing; they include his thoughts of us in the creation of this beautiful world for our present dwelling; his thoughts of us in the capacities he has given

us of body, mind, and spirit; his thoughts of us in redeeming us from sin through Jesus our Saviour. The things which God hath prepared for them that love him! What height and depth, what length and breadth of wonder, beauty, blessing are in these things revealed to us by his Spirit. And we never really see any of them in their true significance until they are so revealed. "We never find God through nature, but we find nature through God."

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes of his shoes—
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries."

Only the pure in heart see God in all that he has made.

In our lessons of last year we read, "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Desolation, emptiness, darkness; order, beauty, light, and life from the overbrooding, all-pervading Spirit. As it is in the creation of the material world, so in the re-creation of our spiritual nature. He is the renewing, re-creating Force which brings order, beauty, light, and life into human hearts empty, dark, and desolate through sin. From the time the morning stars first sang together the Holy Spirit has been in the world and has spoken to the hearts of men. Old Testament history has many illustrations of this. But as there was a day when the eternal Son of God was born upon earth so there was a day when God the Spirit came to abide with us, and to do a special work in human hearts which he alone can do. So very essential it is to your really knowing God, and the things that are freely given to you of God, that you should open your mind and heart to the coming of the Spirit in you, personally and individually, that I do most earnestly pray you may study these lessons with a devout purpose to learn as much as you can understand of what they teach. Indeed, I hope you may learn far more than you can understand; for in the work and mission of the Holy Spirit there is life and light and love and blessing which "passeth understanding."

Jesus said, "I have many things to say to you which you cannot hear; but the Spirit will guide you into all truth. He will take of mine and show it unto you." He said the Spirit would reveal to us our sin. We never know how really vile sin is until we see it as God sees it. He said the Spirit would show us that the one great sin is not to believe in Jesus the Saviour, that we are not condemned because we have a sinful

nature, which really we cannot help, but we are condemned for not believing in the Saviour who died to save us from sin. He said the Spirit would show us this Saviour, and show us that Satan is a conquered foe whom we need not fear so long as we take refuge in the Redeemer who has conquered him. He said the Holy Spirit would be our Comforter, to stand by us, uphold us, strengthen us, and fill us with sweet peace.

That which most fills us with wonder is that Jesus said it was really better that he himself should go away, so that the Spirit might come. That must be an unspeakable blessing indeed which is better than the visible, human presence of the Lord Jesus. These wonderful days of Pentecost prove that it was better. Transformations were wrought by the power of the Spirit in the men and women who had been with Jesus in the intimacy of friendship for years. The miracle of conversion and regeneration in millions of souls since that day proves it. There are signs and wonders through the Spirit in missionary lands now, equal to those early days of the church in Jerusalem. The book of the "Acts of the Apostles" is not finished. We are living in the age of the dispensation of the Spirit. Will you open your heart to him so that he may take of the things of Christ and show them to you?

The Teachers' Meeting.

Two good outlines are suggested for this lesson on page 21 of the *Illustrative Notes*. A very simple and effective one is that of "The Lesson Homily:" The Proof; The Promise; The Power. . . Two others will be found, one in the Intermediate Series of Lesson Helps, and one in the Senior. . . What has the Church on earth while its head is in heaven? 1. Knowledge of the Word; 2. The Forgiveness of Sins; 3. Power from on High; 4. The Spirit of Testimony; 5. The Certainty of a Risen Christ; 6. The Expectation of a Returning Christ. . . The ascended Jesus is: 1. The glorious King of heaven, and we are, or ought to be, his servants. 2. He is a gracious intercessor and advocate with the Father. 3. He is a companion and helper. "Lo, I am with you always."

Optional Hymns.

How firm a foundation.
O holy Saviour.
Since Jesus is my friend.
Far out on the desolate billow.
Safe in the arms of Jesus.

Praise the Lord!

Jesus lives.

Lift up your hearts to things above.

When in the tempest he'll hide me.

There's not a ray of sunshine.

Library References.

BY REV. S. G. AYRES, B.D.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.—The best critical commentary on the Acts is by Paton J. Gloag, D.D. The best brief exegetical commentary is by T. M. Lindsay. The best exposition is by G. T. Stokes, D.D., in the *Expositor's Bible*. Other books of value are: Stiffer, *Introduction to the Acts*; Clark, *Harmony of the Acts*; Farrar, *Early Days of Christianity*. With this little library and the *Illustrative Notes* the Bible student will derive much profit from the study of the lessons in the book of Acts.

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.—Milligan's *Ascension of Our Lord* is the latest and most satisfactory book on the subject.

THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.—Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*. Dunn, *Mission of the Spirit*. Scribner, *Pray for the Holy Spirit*. Kuyper, *Work of the Holy Spirit*.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 3.—Tillotson, John, Works, vol. viii, page 308. Barrow, Isaac, Works, vol. ii, page 481. Vaughan, *University Sermons*, page 97. *Homiletic Review*, vol. xxxviii, page 230.

Verse 5.—*Homiletic Monthly*, vol. iv, pages 449, 605. *Free Church Pulpit*, vol. iii, page 23.

Verse 8.—*The Homiletic Review*, vol. xviii, page 429; vol. xxvii, page 334; vol. xxx, page 240. *The Treasury*, vol. iv, page 343. Baker, *Living Waters*, page 146. *People's Church Pulpit*, page 145. Newman, J. H., *Sermons*, vol. ii, page 440. Banks, *Fisherman and His Friends*,

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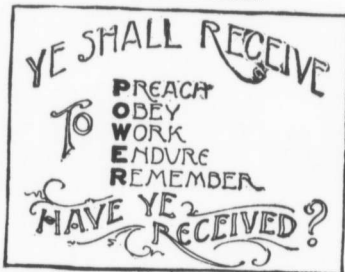
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Verse 10.—*Homiletic Monthly*, vol. vi, page 459. *Farrindon Sermons*, vol. ii, page 447.

Verse 11.—Chalmers, Thomas, *Sermons*, vol. i, page 150.

Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



Against the declaration of Jesus we set the searching question of St. Paul, "Have ye received power?" The privilege is inestimable, and embraces all a follower of the Lord needs to perform his work and do his will; but how many can claim it with unfaltering faith and purpose? Let us remember that if power is received it must be used; power can only be retained when it has an avenue for operation. If we are willing to be doers and pray to be equipped and strengthened the Holy Spirit shall not be long withheld.

Coloring.—Upper and lower line, white and purple; "power," red; remainder, white.

LESSON II. The Promise of Power Fulfilled.

[Jan. 12.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The promise is unto you, and to your children. Acts 2, 39.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Acts 2, 1-36; Joel 2, 21-32.]

Acts 2, 1-11.

[Commit to memory verses 2-4.]

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place.
- 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them

heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Ho'ly Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Je-ru'sa-lem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Gal-i-le'ans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Par'thi-ans, and Medes, and E'lam-ites, and the dwellers in Mes-o-po-ta'mia, and in Ju-de'a, and Cap-pa-do'cia, in Pon'tus, and A'sia,

10 Phryg'i-a, and Pam-phy'l'i-a, in E'gypt, and in the parts of Lib'y-a about Cy-re'ne, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and A-ra'bi-ans, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and 4 it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under

6 heaven. And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them

7 speaking in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying, Be-

8 hold, are not all these which speak Gal-ileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cap-

10 padocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from

11 Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we do hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God.

Home Readings.

M. The Promise of Power Fulfilled. Acts 2. 1-21.

Tu. Peter's testimony. Acts 2. 22-36.

W. The prophecy. Joel 2. 21-32.

Th. Power of the Gospel. Rom. 1. 9-16.

F. Life by the Spirit. Rom. 8. 1-14.

S. The Spirit of Might. Eph. 3. 13-21.

S. Gifts by the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12. 4-13.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 21.

Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire,
Let us thine influence prove;
Source of the old prophetic fire,
Fountain of life and love.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 19.

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 380.

Come, gracious Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With light and comfort from above:
Be thou our guardian, thou our guide!
O'er every thought and step preside!

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

What made this a peculiarly appropriate time for the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

What were the outward manifestations of the Spirit?

What particular gift was bestowed upon them?

For what was this gift evidently given?

2. The Preaching of Peter.

To what extent was the world represented in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost?

What occasioned so much surprise among those who heard and saw the disciples?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. How the power came (verses 1, 2).

For what did the disciples wait?

Was it only for the day to come, or also the proper spiritual condition?

What are some advantages in Christians meeting together?

What is the necessary condition of a successful prayer meeting?

From what place did the Spirit come?

In what measure?

Did the disciples expect him on this day?

2. What the power was like (verses 3, 4).

What was the sound of his coming?

What was seen?

How many of them received the power?

What two mighty forces are here combined in a visible form?

What miraculous power was given?

How is this translation of the Gospel now accomplished?

3. Who were benefited by the power (verses 5-11).

What had brought the Jews scattered in every nation together at Jerusalem?

What was the character of these visiting Jews?

What proof of divine power did they witness?
How many different languages were probably
represented?

Who explained the occurrence and preached to
them?

What prophet had foreseen this?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

How long did the disciples wait for the gift
of the Spirit? *Ten days.*

When did it come? *On the day of Pentecost.*
What is this sometimes called? *The feast of
first fruits.*

What day of ours is it like? *Our Thanksgiv-
ing Day.*

How long after the Passover feast did it come?
Fifty days.

Where were the disciples on the day of Pente-
cost? *In an upper room in Jerusalem.*

What were they doing? *Praying and wait-
ing.*

What did they hear? *A great sound like wind.*
What did they see? *A bright light like tongues
of fire.*

What did they feel? *A strange power within
them.*

What did Peter say of it? *That it was the
Holy Spirit spoken of by Joel the prophet.*

Why is the Holy Spirit like a wind? *He can
be felt, but not seen.*

Why is he like a fire? *Because he burns up
sin.*

Why is he like a tongue? *He gives power to
speak for Jesus.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. On what day did the Spirit descend upon
the disciples? *On the day of Pentecost.*

2. How long was this after Christ's ascen-
sion? *Ten days.*

3. In what form did the Spirit descend? *In
tongues of fire.*

4. What was the effect upon the disciples?
They spoke in other tongues.

5. Who heard them speak in other tongues?
Jews from every land.

6. Who spoke to the people that came togeth-
er? *Simon Peter.*

7. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"The promise
is unto you, and to your children."*

The Church Catechism.

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

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Gift of the Holy Ghost.

I. A GIFT FROM GOD.

From heaven, v. 2.

The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from
the Father. John 15. 26.

Your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit
to them that ask him. Luke 11. 13.

II. THE SIGN OF THE WIND.

A sound as of a rushing mighty wind, v. 2.
When thou hearest the sound, bestir thy-
self. 2 Sam. 5. 24.

The Lord passed by, and a great and strong
wind rent the mountains. 1 Kings 19. 11.

III. THE SIGN OF THE FIRE.

Tongues like as of fire, v. 3.

The spirit of judgment, and the spirit of
burning. Isa. 4. 4.

He is like a refiner's fire. Mal. 3. 2.

IV. THE SIGN OF THE TONGUES.

*They began to speak with other tongues,
v. 3, 4.*

The Holy Ghost came on them, and they
spoke with tongues. Acts 19. 6.

The Holy Ghost shall teach you what ye
ought to say. Luke 12. 12.

V. THE RESULT.

The Spirit gave them utterance, v. 4.

It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of
your Father. Matt. 10. 20.

The Comforter shall teach you all things,
and bring all things to your remembrance.
John 14. 26.

Not by might, nor by power, but by my
Spirit. Zech. 4. 6.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Our lesson to-day is not complete without the "Additional Verses" to be studied. The ten days of
waiting between the ascension and Pentecost suggest a very practical application on the connection of our
prayers with God's promises. What encouraged the disciples to "continue in prayer"? The promise that
Jesus gave to them just before the ascension, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days

hence," which promise they felt surely would be fulfilled. But if its fulfillment was sure, what was the use of praying? If they had been skeptical and half-hearted they would have reasoned thus. But seeing that they were tremendously in earnest, that in all the universe of God there was but one thing they really wanted, to continue in prayer was the easiest thing for them to do. Our Notes call attention to the meaning of Pentecost, and explain peculiarities in the narrative of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. This is a very picturesque lesson; but it will be a *lost* lesson if attention is directed chiefly to the picture. Not the sound of the wind, nor the fiery jets, nor the strange tongues, was the real pentecostal gift; but the fact that the disciples "were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

Verse 1. *The day of pentecost.* An annual religious festival held on the "fiftieth day" after the second day of the Passover feast. The interval between the Passover and Pentecost (seven weeks in length) was the period of the wheat harvest, and the latter festival (called by the earlier Hebrews the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Ingatherings) was celebrated at its close; the first sheaf of the wheat harvest being formally offered to the Lord. "At this festival, as well as at those of the Passover and Tabernacles (each of which, unlike this, was celebrated for a week), all male Jews were expected to gather to the temple. This accounts for the multitude from various parts present at this time at Jerusalem." It has been calculated that in A. D. 30 the feast of Pentecost fell on the first day of the week. *Was fully come.* "Was being fulfilled." "According to the Hebrew mode," writes Dr. M. R. Vincent, "the day is conceived as a measure to be filled up. So long as the day had not yet arrived, the measure was not full." All the followers of Jesus who had remained in Jerusalem after his passion were now assembled *with one accord* (or "together") in *one place*, very probably in the "upper room" of Acts 1. 13—in their stated place of meeting.

2. *A sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind.* "A sound like that of a wind borne along downward from heaven." *It.* The sound. *Filled.* To overflow, for it was heard outside, as we shall presently see. *All the house.* Not merely the upper room. *Were sitting.* "Awaiting the hour of prayer," when they expected to go together to the temple. Already the united devotions of the disciples, following the public tragedy of the Passover week, must have made them conspicuous and much talked about.

3. *There appeared.* There came as in a sudden vision. *Cloven tongues like as of fire.* "Tongues, as it were, of fire, distributed." The tongues did not consist of fire, but seemed to burn and shine. The entire manifestation was supernatural.

4. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* All laymen and women as well as apostles, be-

came conscious of a sudden residence within them of God, in a manner and to a degree such as they had never dreamed of before. Immediately, according to their Lord's promise, they felt *powerful* in many directions, and, as the earliest exercise of their supernatural power, *began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* This gift is to be regarded chiefly as "the sign and symptom of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit." It was an ecstatic outpouring of praise and testimony (verse 11) in foreign languages, or dialects not previously known to the speakers. That the disciples fully understood what they were saying, however, is distinctly implied; and also that they were understood, for their appeals in various languages brought about the conversion of many souls.

5. There was in Jerusalem a large population of foreign-born Hebrews, which was presently to become a powerful factor in the development of Christianity.

6. *When this was noised abroad.* "When this sound was heard," evidently through all the neighborhood. *The multitude* was made up, doubtless, of natives of the capital, of such foreign-born *devout* residents as were mentioned in verse 5, and of pilgrims to the pentecostal festival. It was a crowd of people who all had some understanding of the Hebrew dialect of Jerusalem, but who were much more familiar with the dialects and languages of the countries they had come from.

7, 8. *Are not all these which speak Galileans?* Under Roman rule men of all races and languages were scattered through the empire, without loss of identity; and the features, dialect, and dress of Galileans would be readily identified. *How.* The miracle had accomplished its object, and called attention at once to the power of God.

9-11. By the names that follow allusion is made not to the races which bore those names, but to Hebrews who dwelt among these races; as in a modern Hebrew convention gathered from the wide world reference might be made to Germans, Americans, French, Poles, and Syrians, while Jews only were intended. The enu-

meration proceeds from east to west. The Parthians dwelt near to the Caspian Sea. The Medes and Elamites inhabited neighboring provinces to the west of Parthia. Elam was "the province to which Herodotus gives the name of Cissia, and which is termed Susis, or Susiana, by the geographers." Mesopotamia was the region between the Tigris and the Euphrates. The writer now crosses to Cappadocia, the eastern central region of Asia Minor, including a portion of Armenia. Pontus lay north of Cappadocia, on the shores of the Black Sea. The Roman province of Asia, of which Ephesus was the chief city, occupied the western shore of Asia Minor. Phrygia was an inland region of Asia Minor, east of "Asia" and west of Cappadocia. Pamphylia lay on the southern shore of Asia Minor, to the west of Cilicia. Cyrene, on the coast of Africa, to the west of Egypt, had many Jewish inhabitants who were represented by a synagogue at Jerusalem (Acts 6. 9). Strangers at Rome. Sojourners from Rome, Jews and proselytes. Rather, "both Jews and proselytes," some born Jews, and some converted to Judaism. "All the persons enu-

merated are here divided into these two classes." —Churton. Cretes and Arabians belong to the list already given, and doubtless they, as well as the others, were both hereditary Jews and proselytes. Tongues, Dialects, languages. The wonderful works of God. The fulfillment in such extraordinary and unexpected fashion of ancient prophecy.

CONNECTED VERSES.

12-21. The first result of the miracle was utter amazement; and while some prolonged unanswerable questionings, others came to the scornful conclusion, *These men are full of new wine*. When Peter stood up to reply, with the eleven, he first showed the absurdity of this charge, which was sufficiently set aside by reference to the hour (the third; about nine); for Jews drank wine only when they ate their chief meal, in the evening; and then boldly declared all the unusual phenomena of this pentecostal period to be the fulfillment of the words of Joel (Joel 2. 28-32), which are quoted here not from our Hebrew Bible, but from the famous Greek version known as the Septuagint.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

THE FAVORABLE CONDITIONS.

The time chosen for the fulfillment of the promise was most auspicious. Within the body of believers there was perfect harmony. "They were all with one accord in one place," with spirits uplifted in prayer and with hearts open toward heaven. God's Spirit never fails to enter when these conditions prevail. The circumstances without the body of believers were equally favorable. It was one of the festival days of the Jewish calendar when Jerusalem was filled with representatives of the nation from all parts of the then known world. This fact afforded a rare opportunity for the display of the Spirit's power. It is also very important in that it secures to the Christian Church an historic beginning. The Church was not born in an obscure corner. Its first and great day was marked by an event to which thousands bore witness.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DAY.

Neander declares that "on account of the baptism of the Spirit the Pentecost, which the disciples celebrated soon after the Saviour's departure, is of such great importance as marking the commencement of the apostolic Church, for here it first publicly displayed its essential character. Next to the appearance of the Son of God himself on earth, this was the greatest event

as the commencing point of the new divine life proceeding from him to the human race" (*History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, vol. i, page 3).

"It was," says Schaff, "the fountain of a new river of life which flows with unbounded current through all time till it merge in eternity. The Holy Ghost had thus far only temporarily and sporadically visited the world to enlighten certain specially favored individuals, the bearers of the Old Testament revelation. Now he took up his permanent abode on earth to reside and work in the community of believers as the principle of divine life and light; to apply more deeply and extensively to the souls of men the redemption objectively wrought by Christ" (*History of the Apostolic Church*, page 191).

THE MIRACULOUS ACCOMPANIMENTS.

"These indicated the divine origin of Christianity on its subjective side, and the Church was then endowed for its future work. The suddenness of the manifestation indicated the supernaturalness of the endowment; the 'sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind' was the natural emblem of the Almighty Spirit; the tongues 'parting asunder or distributing themselves' on the disciples symbolized the universal gift of power to proclaim the Gospel; the semblance of

fire indicated the purified zeal, born of faith and love, which was to characterize the proclamation while the polyglot utterances of the believers were a sign of the world-wide destination of the truth which filled their lips with praise" (George T. Purves, D.D., LL.D., *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii, page 742).

WHAT WAS THIS POWER?

We are now interested to ascertain definitely, if possible, what this power was; what the gift meant to the disciples; what it means for us. Certainly we must not yield to the too apparent tendency to drop this word "Power" from the vocabulary of Christian experience. Many have held to a conception of this power utterly unintelligible. Is it possible to find an intelligent explanation of its meaning? Again and again the promise of the gift of power was linked with the promise of the gift of the Spirit. Whatever the power was, it is perfectly evident that it was the result of the Spirit's baptism. Now it will be helpful to note clearly the Spirit's function and office as defined by our Lord. "For he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. . . . He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John 16, 13, 14). The chief function of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, and this he does by revealing Christ's personality to the heart of the believer. He makes no revelation of his own personality distinct from Christ's personality. His revelation of Christ's presence to the disciples on the day of Pentecost made that day memorable as a day of wondrous power.

How much that presence had come to mean to them during their earthly association! It was the guarantee of victory over every foe, the fury of the storm, disease, death, devils. Martha put it well at the time of the death of Lazarus: "Lord, if thou *hadst been here*, my brother had not died." Only his presence was needed then to defeat death. But the presence which the Holy Spirit certified to them on the day of Pentecost was far more than this. It was the certification of the Lord's presence in his risen and triumphant estate. What wonder, then, that suddenly and as if by magic they became men of power? God was with them in the person of the all-victorious Lord. They were vividly aware of his presence, and so they had no fear. The lesson holds good for us of to-day. Power in Christian life is the same now as then. It comes by a clear and distinct realization of our Lord's presence as secured by the Spirit's indwelling. He has learned very little who does not know that the Lord's presence consciously known and felt

is vital in holy living. Without it the soul is adrift; with it the soul is anchored. It is a perfectly intelligent thing. There are men who possess it; they live a life so heavenly that they carry with them the flavor of eternal things and create about them on every side an atmosphere of reality. Their very presence is like a breath of fresh air from some lofty mountain top, and brings us face to face with the things that are vital. They are forever unconsciously introducing us anew to duty and to destiny, to immortality and to God. To weave a charm like this about the hearts of men is far more than to make a million or to found an empire.

"Some men live near to God, as my right arm
Is near to me; and then they walk about
Mailed in full proof of faith, and bear a charm
That mocks at fear and bars the door on doubt
And dares the impossible."

The revival of this power has in it the possibilities of a universal Pentecost.

Thoughts for Young People.

LESSONS FROM THE FIRST PENTECOST.

1. *Intense piety is necessarily diffusive.* No human heart can be endued with power from on high and not immediately affect others. Light must shine; love must give. God himself, as some one has beautifully said, is not to be figured as a great organ set in the center of the universe, from the keys of whose emotions, if some deft player can only finger them, music will sound forth. God has described himself as a "sun," forth from whom forever proceed in all directions rays of life-giving love. He gives perpetually. He is Creator, Provider, and Saviour. He "gave his only begotten Son;" he gave the Holy Ghost. This wonderful gift of God was immediately given by the apostles to others. No person can keep love to himself; it will die if restricted. The Christian who thinks it his privilege to receive and not to give makes a fatal mistake. That is the way to be endued with weakness, not with power.

2. *The gift of power.* If two or three weeks after his reception of the Holy Ghost Peter had been asked, "What are you doing now that you did not do before the Holy Spirit came?" he might have gone over every appointment and activity of the day, and said, "Not one of these things would I have done were it not for the Holy Spirit." He would never have written an epistle; he would not have preached the great sermon that follows this lesson; he would not have defied the Sanhedrin; he would not have

carried the Gospel to the Gentiles; he would not have lived a holy life whose record thrills the heart of the Church to-day; he would not have died a martyr's death. So that question addressed to Peter would have been perfectly fair. To ourselves it is equally fair. Let us try it. What are we doing to-day that we would not do if we had not received the Holy Spirit?

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

Our lesson is connected historically with Pentecost, one of the three greater feasts of the Israelites.* Ask the pupils what they have learned concerning this feast; correct all mistakes and supply all deficiencies in the answers.

INTRODUCTION.

If any have brought in maps, as suggested in last week's Hints, examine them quickly; and should there be any disposition on the part of the pupils to go minutely into a consideration of the geography of the lesson, tell them that it will have to be deferred until after the school hour.

The teacher should be prepared to answer quickly any reasonable question concerning the speaking with tongues or the doctrine of the Trinity, but the really important teachings of the lesson should not be put into the background in an attempt to explain those things which intermediates must take on faith.

NARRATIVE.

Young people are always interested in persons. They are doubly interested in persons in action. Let the teacher, therefore, read, pray about, and brood over the Scripture narrative until the persons named therein become real to him, and then he will have but little difficulty in making them real to his pupils. Let us look at the *Persons* of the lesson under these heads:

1. *The disciples* (verse 1). How many of them were there? Where were they? What were they doing? (See Acts 1. 1-3.)
2. *The multitude* (verses 5-11). In what city were they? Whence had they come? Why? What was their religion? (verse 5.)
3. *The Holy Spirit* (verses 2-4). Whence did he come? Accompanied with what sound? With what sign? Whom did he fill? What did he give them power to do? What effect had this on the multitude? What did they say to one another? What did they afterward ask?

*For an outline of the sacred year of the Israelites see *Revised Normal Lessons*.

What did some say had happened to the disciples?

TRUTH EMPHASIZED.

Next to Jesus Christ, the most important subject for the Christian's consideration is the Holy Spirit. To no teaching is the Church of to-day paying more attention than to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The teacher should first strive to crystallize his knowledge of the Holy Spirit around a few fundamental facts, and then should pray for power to present those facts clearly and forcibly to his pupils.† There is certainly nothing to be hoped for in talking about the *power* of the Holy Spirit to those who have but vague conceptions of his existence and work. At the same time, the teacher should not fear to present the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, provided it is done in language which the pupils can understand. Let the teacher ask the following questions:

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. Where is he?
3. What is his work?
4. To whom is he promised?
5. How may he be obtained?
6. How may he be kept away?
7. How may one know that one has received him? (See Gal. 5. 22, 23.)

As the various answers are given, let the teacher by Scripture quotation and illustration emphasize those that are correct, and amend those that are wrong. In this case, as in so many others, it is far better for the pupils to master a few truths than to have a hazy conception of many.

In conclusion, have the Golden Text repeated several times, and endeavor to have the members of the class realize that the Holy Spirit is promised to everyone that is willing to receive him and ready to be used by him. Then sum up as follows:

**THE HOLY SPIRIT
WILL USE ME,
AS HE USED PETER,
WHEN I AM READY.**

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to read carefully that part of Peter's sermon that we have recorded in Acts 2. 22-36, and to write an outline of what is said therein about Jesus. Request them also to be able to tell from next Sunday's lesson text in what things the new converts remained steadfast.

† See *The Tongue of Fire*, by William Arthur.

By Way of Illustration.

Vers 1. "They were all with one accord in one place." Peter was not absent because he could not exactly fellowship the previous doubtfulness of Thomas. John was not away because Peter had once fallen into a base denial. Mary did not refuse to come because the Galilean brogue of some of them grated a little on her refinement. None of them were out of their places because it was sunny or rainy or inconvenient, or because the turban was a little worn or the tunic had become a little shabby, or because Andrew or Simon would occupy so much time. How much blessing absentees miss! If any had been away they had surely forfeited the enduement of the Spirit, and the whole Church would have been so much the weaker. What wonders a church, young people's society, Sunday school, can work, "all together in one place!" Straggling stayers-away are a perpetual weakness.—*Wayland Hoyt.*

Vers 4. "They were all filled." "The Holy Spirit had been given before this, for we read that 'men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;' and what is the significance of the gift here?" was asked in a Bible class. It was in this—that they were all filled. Before this it had come like the dew, now it was like the abundant rain; before it had been like the first-fruits, now it was like the harvest; before he had been a transient Guest, now he was an abiding Presence; before he had come like the sunrise illuminating only the highest peaks—prophets and kings and psalmists, now he came like the noonday flooding with light the lowest depths of the valleys.

The gift of tongues. We see in the effect of the Spirit a prophecy of what the Gospel will yet do and has already largely done. It will speak to every man in this world in his own tongue. Let the three hundred tongues in which the Gospel is now translated and printed testify to the continuation of the pentecostal gift.—*Pentecost.*

"They began to speak." As soon as the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit they began to speak. The gospels show us that they asked many questions, but do not report a single sermon. Now they began to speak, and when the magistrates ordered them to be silent they said, "We cannot but speak." As surely as the plant having life bursts into leaf and flower, as surely as light radiates, so surely will a soul filled with the Spirit be forced into speech.

Tongues of fire. The speech that publishes the glad tidings should be a tongue of fire. He

who speaks the Gospel coldly has not himself felt its power. "The difference between one man and another is the difference of fire. The difference between one musician and another is that one man is all fire, and the other all ice," says Joseph Parker. A Chinese convert once said, "What we want is men with glowing hot hearts to tell us of the love of Christ." Richard Sheridan said he went to hear Rowland Hill preach because his words flowed hissing hot from his heart.

Verses 9-11. A foreshadowing of the time when all nations shall unite in a common faith. As a result of the revival of 1858 a company of converted sailors found themselves brought into companionship on board a ship in the United States navy. When they compared nationalities they found that they came from ten different countries, and when the last man said that he had been born in Greenland one of the company started the hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," in which these men, who represented the clamorous tongues of Babel, joined heartily, brought into harmony through the spirit of Christianity.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The cloven tongues like as of fire, the rushing mighty wind, are to our thought a miracle. Yet no more a miracle than many manifestations of God which we see, without comprehending or even realizing that they are manifestations of him. Seasons come and go, seedtime and harvest fail not; all the processes of nature are a miracle, beyond our explanation or understanding. Yet we accept them, enjoy them, live by them. So, without trying to explain or comprehend in even a faint degree this scene in the upper chamber in Jerusalem, we believe the record, rejoice in the fact, and live by it. Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you"—help; ability to do, capacity to endure, and strength to suffer. How literally the promise was fulfilled in these men whose life and work are portrayed in these chapters! Was the promise only for them? No, I am glad it takes in you and me. "The promise is unto you and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call." I am sure he has called you; I am sure he has called me; for we have heard the blessed message right here, again and again, as we have talked together in our class; we have heard it, too, in other ways, and the sweet whisper of the loving Spirit has moved our hearts many times. Yes, we are called. Let us take the promise for our very own.

What is the promise? Why, that the very best that the holy, mighty, faithful, loving God can give shall be ours on the simple condition that we turn away from sin, accept Jesus as our Saviour, and open our hearts to be filled with the Holy Spirit. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him." I know that many persons, especially young persons, are afraid to be "filled with the Spirit." They imagine it means something so unnatural as to make them scarcely fit to live with ordinary folk. They are afraid of being "queer." Perhaps they have been misled by what they have seen and heard from some who speak unadvisedly. The fullness of the Spirit is too rich a blessing for us to lose through misunderstanding. The Holy Spirit is God. Can you think of anything more blessed than to have the God who made every beautiful thing, who knows all things, who is infinitely holy, whose name is Love, take possession of you so fully as to enlighten, strengthen, guide, and use every faculty of your mind and soul and body? Are you afraid of God? Would he not make the most of you in every beautiful, gracious, happy way, if you would suffer him to do his own will in you and through you? The angels in heaven do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word. They are filled with his Spirit. Would it make you "queer" or disagreeable to live with to be like, the angels? Let us try to be rid of false ideas about the blessed Holy Spirit; let us study what the word says of his work, and his power in us, until we long above all things to throw wide open every avenue of our being to him.

"For every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are his alone."

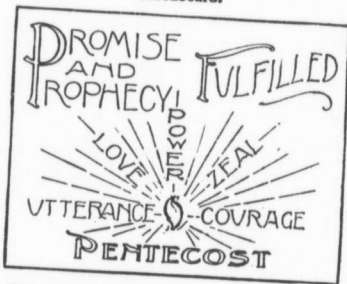
"Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions." Very different, indeed, is the use of the tongue when the soul is filled with the Spirit. Prophecy is not frivolous or uncharitable conversation. You will speak "with other tongues" when the Spirit gives you utterance; but that will not necessarily exclude innocent mirth. It will take the sinful sting from the jest, and leave only its exhilarating cheer. The visions the Spirit gives are not those of wealth or fame for personal ambition; they are the broader, more inspiring visions of what wealth and influence can do to make the world better and happier.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance. Are these to be feared? Let it not be said of us in reference to the Holy Spirit, as was said of Jesus, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

The Teachers' Meeting.

The Lesson Homily in the *Illustrative Lesson Notes* suggestively elaborates the fulfillment of the promise: 1. When? 2. Why? 3. How? 4. What? 5. What the power enabled them to do. 6. The proof of the power. . . . A study of the Holy Ghost may be pursued textually on the following plan: 1. His Names. John 14, 26; 1 Cor. 12, 3, 11; Eph. 1, 13; Heb. 9, 14. 2. His Work. Gen. 1, 2; 6, 3; Psa. 139, 7; Isa. 11, 2; Ezek. 37, 1, 3. His Baptism. John 20, 22; Acts 2, 4; 4, 31; 10, 44; 19, 6. 4. His Fruits. Acts 1, 8; 11, 24; Rom. 5, 5; 1 Cor. 12, 8-10; Gal. 5, 22, 23. . . . Note the outlines given in the First and second Studies of the *Illustrative Notes*, and in the three lesson books—*The First, The Young People's*, and *The Lesson Handbook*. . . . The symbols of this lesson are worthy of study—why "tongues;" why "cloven;" why "as of fire;" why the day of Pentecost chosen for this display of divine power; why the "sound;" why the "mighty wind."

Blackboard.



The tongue of flame was a symbol of that holy anointing which each apostle received. What it meant of utterance, power and courage, love and zeal, their immediate success and after lives bear ample evidence. The result of the revelation given on that momentous day was but the fulfillment of long-uttered prophecy, and betokens the experience each of us

can in some sense make his own. Have I known my Pentecost?

Coloring.—Upper words, dark blue lined with yellow; flame, yellow tinged with red; rays, yellow; lower words, purple and white.

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THE GIFT OF TONGUES.—Farrar, *Life of Paul*, page 53, sq. Fouard, *St. Paul and His Missions*. Abercrombie, *Intellectual Powers*, pages 140-143. Ewald, *History of Israel*, vol. vii, page 94, sq.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 1.—MacArthur, *The Attractive Christ*, page 298. *Free Church Pulpit*, vol. iii, page 421. Pitman, J. R., *Sermons*, vol. ii, page 1. *The Homiletic Review*, vol. xxvii, page 433; vol. xxix, page 528. *Preacher's Magazine*, 1895,

page 453. Tillotson, Works, vol. viii, page 377. Edmondson, *Short Sermons*, page 243.

Verse 2.—Banks, *Fisherman and His Friends*, page 195.

Verse 3.—Johnston, J. W., *Baptism of Fire*, page 9.

Verse 4.—Johnston, *Baptism of Fire*, page 23. Burder, *Village Sermons*, page 215. *The Homiletic Review*, vol. xix, page 230.

Optional Hymns.

O day of rest and gladness.
Come, Holy Ghost.
Holy Spirit, faithful guide.
Lord, I hear of showers of blessing.
O, could I speak the matchless worth.

Heavenly Father, grant thy blessing.
Come, Holy Spirit, come.
Come, Holy Spirit.
Hark, my soul!
He has come! he has come!

LESSON III. The Early Christian Church.

[Jan. 19.

GOLDEN TEXT. The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Acts 2. 47.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

Acts 2. 37-47. [Commit to memory verses 37-39.]

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Pe'ter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Pe'ter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Je'sus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Ho'ly Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

REVISED VERSION.

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter *said* unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For to you; is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him. And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from 41 this crooked generation. They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added *unto them* in that day about 42 three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common: and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all.

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

46 according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.

Home Readings.

M. The Early Christian Church. Acts 2. 37-47.

Tu. What must I do? Acts 16. 16-34.

W. How to be saved. Rom. 10. 1-13.

Th. Proofs of conversion. Acts 19. 13-20.

F. Life by faith. John 3. 14-21.

S. Unity of the Church. Eph. 4. 1-15.

S. A vision of the Church. Isa. 60. 1-10.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 130.

Come, ye that love the Lord,
And let your joys be known,
Join in a song with sweet accord,
While ye surround his throne.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 132.

All praise to our redeeming Lord,
Who joins us by his grace,
And bids us, each to each restored,
Together seek his face.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 131.

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. Results of the First Preaching of Christ Crucified.

What was the theme of Peter's sermon?
How did it affect the hearts of his hearers?
In what terms did they address the apostle?
What did Peter tell them to do?
What is repentance?
What assurance did Peter give them?
Who were included in the promise of the prophecy?

2. The Church Organized.

Who were baptized?
What did their baptism indicate to those who had not believed?
How many were added to the Church that day?
What is meant by the terms "doctrine" and "fellowship"?
What is meant by "breaking bread"?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

- How they were saved (verses 37-39).
What question did they ask Peter?
What does this question show they felt?
What is it to repent?
Did these penitents express their faith in words or in deeds?
What gift was offered to them also?
Who are included in the promise Peter gave to them?
- How many were saved (verses 40, 41).
What was the number that came on one day?
Did the revival stop with that number?
Is it likely that these people from distant countries would begin work on their return home?
What three grand divisions of the earth were included?
Who, then, may have first preached Christ in Rome?

- How fully they were saved (verses 42-47).
What proofs have we of a wonderful change in these Jews?
In what four things did they continue?
What strange condition of things grew out of their love for each other?
Could this continue long?
Would such breaking up of homes be best for character building?
If not a model, what blessed things may we learn from the early disciples' community?
How did the great revival continue?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

- Who preached on the day of Pentecost?
Peter.
Who gave him power? *The Holy Spirit*.
What did the people cry out? "*What shall we do?*"
What did Peter tell them? *To repent and be baptized*.
What did he say they might have? *The gift of the Holy Spirit*.
How many were baptized that day? *Three thousand*.
Who was their Teacher? *The Holy Spirit*.

Why did they need him? *Because Jesus had gone away.*

What did Jesus promise before he went? *To send the Spirit to "teach" them all things.*

To whom was this promise made? (See verse 39.)

What did the new believers do? *They lived together like a great loving family.*

What did the rich do? *They helped the poor.*

What had the poor to give? *Faith and love.*

Why did they have great gladness of heart?

Because the Lord Jesus had come back to them.

To whom will he come to-day? *To all who want him enough to ask for him.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did Peter tell the people to do on the day of Pentecost? *To repent and be baptized.*

2. To whom did he say that God had given the promise of salvation? *To them and their children.*

3. How did the people receive Peter's words? *With joy and gladness.*

4. How many were on that day added to the Church? *Three thousand people.*

5. How did the believers show their love for each other? *By giving as each needed.*

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

The Church Catechism.

43. What are the duties to our fellow-men enjoined in the second table of the Ten Commandments? The duties enjoined in the second table are filial affection and obedience; and respect for our neighbor's rights in life, family, property and reputation, extended to the thoughts and desires of the heart.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Growth in Grace.

I. CONVICTION AND REPENTANCE.

Pricked in their heart. v. 37, 38.

Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions. Ezek. 18, 30.

Forsake the foolish, and live. Prov. 9, 6.
Godly sorrow worketh repentance. 2 Cor. 7, 10.

II. CONVERSION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

Be baptized. . . save yourselves. v. 38, 40, 41.

Separate yourselves from the people of the land. Ezra 10, 11.

Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate. 2 Cor. 6, 17.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Mark 16, 16.

III. STUDY OF THE TRUTH.

Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. v. 42.

If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples. John 8, 31.

Be ye steadfast, unmovable. 1 Cor. 15, 58.
Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge. 2 Pet. 1, 5.

IV. BROTHERLY LOVE.

Sold their possessions. . . parted them to all men. v. 45.

Touching brotherly love, ye are taught of God. 1 Thess. 4, 9.

Love one another as I have loved you. John 13, 34.

We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 1 John 3, 16.

V. PROSPERITY.

Having favor with all the people. v. 47.

He that serveth Christ is approved of men. Rom. 14, 18.

They shall obtain joy and gladness. Isa. 35, 10.

Believers were the more added to the Lord. Acts 5, 14.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Our lesson to-day continues closely the narrative begun last Sunday. Verses 22-36 contain an abstract of Peter's sermon, which was founded on the extended quotation from Joel studied a week ago. He first made a frank statement of the life of "Jesus of Nazareth;" his "miracles and wonders and signs," which showed him to be "a man approved of God;" and his murder by the Jews—authorities and populace. He evades nothing; acknowledges that God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge had delivered Jesus into their hands; acknowledges that it was by "wicked" (that is, Gentile) hands he had been crucified and slain; but presses home the charge that the guilt of the forfeiture of his innocent life rested on the auditors. Peter turns from the death of our Lord to his resurrection.

Verse 37. *When they heard Peter's sermon they were pricked in their heart*—that is, vexed, grieved, and conscience-smitten. *Said unto Peter and to the rest.* We have repeatedly in these notes called attention to the true and natural primacy of Peter, his moral and intellectual leadership. He is always the first to speak, the first to decide, the first to act, the first to challenge; but it is apparently the primacy of intellectual and emotional force. There is not the slightest indication that he had any such precedence over the rest as the pope now claims over cardinals and bishops; indeed, if one were searching for the most striking contrast possible to the artless simplicity of the primitive Church he would find it in the Vatican. *Men and brethren.* Better, "Men who are my brethren." A phrase not unlike our "fellow-citizens," but with far more meaning to an ancient Jew. Not improbably some of the very men who thus, with penitent affection, asked the apostles what they should do had only a little while before mockingly accused them of drunkenness. The wonderful effectiveness of Peter's sermon was due to the presence and power of the Spirit of God. *What shall we do?* So soon as God's Spirit impresses a human heart with a deep sense of sin, that heart at once sets about changing its course of thought and action. Repentance, turning around, closely follows penitence.

38. Notice in this verse five steps in salvation. *Repent, and be baptized.* First, do your utmost to change your life, inside and out. Second, connect yourself with the Church of Christ on earth. *In the name of Jesus Christ.* Third, exercise faith in God through Christ his Son. *For the remission of sins.* For salvation from the guilt and power of sin. This is the fourth step in the process; it is what the theologians call justification. *Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* This is the fifth and final step—sanctification.

39. *The promise is unto you, and to your children.* (See Acts 1. 4; 2. 33.) *To all that are afar off.* The Gentiles. (See Eph. 2. 17.) *As many as the Lord our God shall call.* (See Rom. 1. 6; 8. 28, 30; 9. 24; 1 Cor. 1. 2; Gal. 1. 6.)

40. *Save yourselves from this ungodly generation.* Better, "crooked generation." Very crooked it was. It had tolerated the unspeakable iniquities of the Herods; it had run in a frenzy of penitence to be baptized by John, and then had supinely watched his murder; it had permitted the scribes and Pharisees to fatten on its superstitions, and had applauded when

our Lord denounced them; within five days it had sung, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" and "Crucify him!" its daily habits were "sensual and devilish;" its patriotic outbursts were as fitful and ineffective as its religious impulses; a few years later it was destroyed by a catastrophe so awful that the "fall of Jerusalem" has ever since pointed a proverb. Everywhere the apostles—Paul as much as Peter—repeat this exhortation with quivering nerves and tremendous spiritual conviction, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate!"

42. *Apostles' doctrine.* Better, "teaching." *Fellowship.* That is, the close brotherhood of the Church, in which for a while all property was held for all, and they were all actuated by one holy purpose. *Breaking of bread.* Doubtless in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as well as in love feasts. *In prayers.* The Greek is noticeable here, the prayers.

44. *Were together.* Lived in the closest possible association. *Had all things common.* Doubtless this would be the natural way to live if Christian love and unity were perfected, but even in Jerusalem it seems soon to have been found impracticable; and that in the apostolic Church there were distressing cases of laziness, of fraud, of riotous living, and of sin against the Holy Ghost, is one of the saddest and most practical lessons Christian history gives us.

45. *Parted them to all men, as every man had need.* At the first, apparently, this was done from holy impulse and with very little system.

46. *In the temple.* There was not yet in any Christian mind (so far as we can see) the slightest idea that the Church would ever separate itself from the Jewish temple. This little group of disciples very probably formed a Galilean synagogue by themselves. Certainly they had no temple to themselves, not any church in the modern sense of that phrase. In place of *from house to house* read "at home;" probably in that upper room, that "one place," already repeatedly mentioned (Acts 1. 13; 2. 1, 2, etc.). *Eat their meat.* Take their food. *Gladness and singleness of heart.* This side of heaven nothing so beautiful as this has ever been seen.

47. *Added to the church daily.* Better, "added to them day by day." *Better, "those that are being saved."* This has direct reference to the exhortation of verse 40. Peter said, "Save yourselves." Three thousand began at once to do so, and day by day, as they came, they were promptly received to the heart's love of the little company.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

A REMARKABLE SERMON.

With the single exception of our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, no sermon in all the history of preaching deserves to be ranked above that preached by Peter on the day of the Church's birth. It was a most marvelous utterance from whatever point of view considered. It was remarkable: (1) In its clear comprehension of Old Testament prophecy. (2) In its direct application of this to the immediate situation. Prophecy crystallized at this very point. "These men are not drunken, as ye suppose. . . . But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." (3) In its vivid realization and portrayal of the place Christ was to occupy in the new order of things—"God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (4) In the conscious authority and power with which Peter proceeded from beginning to end. It seems impossible that this was the same man who out of fear of ridicule had so recently thrice denied his Lord. The first incident affords us an illustration of a man's weakness without the conscious presence of his Lord; the second incident gives us a picture of a man's strength when that presence is known and felt. (5) In the pitiless power with which it drove home the guilt for the crime of the Saviour's crucifixion. There was no mincing of matters, no chance for the shifting of the responsibility. Men did not go away wondering whether or not the preacher's message contained anything for them—"Whom ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (6) In its immediate results. If authority were needed for the Methodist fashion of aiming for immediate results certainly nothing more is to be desired than is here found. "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (7) In the swift conviction which resulted. We found in the last lesson that the baptism of the Spirit clothed the disciples with power for their work. Now we see the work of the Spirit upon the unbelieving. The Spirit's quickening in the hearer responded to the Spirit's life in the speaker, and so they were pricked in their hearts and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (8) In its prescription of the course necessary to be taken. To their question, "What shall we do?" Peter answered promptly, "Repent." It is the Greek word *Metanoia*, which means, literally, "to change one's mind for the better; heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins."

Finally, behind the sermon was the man throbbing with intense moral earnestness, and within the man was the Spirit of God, the pulsating, quickening, electrifying agent of the entire occasion.

THE DAILY LIFE.

"They continued steadfastly." The Greek word used signifies great intensity of purpose. They gave earnest attention to careful training for service in the cause. Their training was fourfold: (1) "In the apostles' doctrine," in the truths of religion, in the teachings and example of Jesus and his relation to the Old Testament, and in the practical duties of their new faith. (2) "And in fellowship." The original Greek word signifies literally a sharing in common. It implies a fellowship in spiritual things, a common sympathy in life's experiences and practical charity as well. (3) "And in breaking of bread." "Daily in the temple observing carefully the old Jewish ritual, and then meeting together in the eventide, they would eat in common the solemn act of breaking bread he had instituted in memory of his death." "The holy communion was at first and for some time inseparably connected with the love feasts of the Christians and unknown as a separate ordinance. It was called *breaking of bread* from the custom of the master of the feast breaking bread in asking a blessing." (4) "And in prayers." Probably social, not merely individual, prayers. How essential all these means of grace to those who seek to grow strong in Christian life and character! "And the Lord added to the Church *daily*." Religion became the all-absorbing business of life—not a mere sporadic effort touching certain phases and interests, but the one all-inclusive, all-pervasive movement.

THE COMMUNITY OF GOODS.

Touching this controverted question perhaps the discussion of Neander is as satisfactory as can be found. He says, "This practice of the apostolic Church ought not to be considered as in a literal sense the ideal for imitation in all succeeding ages; it must have been a deviation from the natural course of social development such as could agree only with the extraordinary manifestation of the divine life in the human race at that particular period. Only the *spirit* and *disposition* here manifested in thus amalgamating the earthly possession of numbers into one fund are the models for the Church in its development through the ages.

The first Christians formed themselves into no monkish fraternities, nor lived as hermits secluded from the rest of the world. but, as history shows us, continued in the same civil relations as before their conversion. Nor have we any proofs that a community of goods was universal for a time and was then followed by a return to the usual arrangements of society. On the contrary, several circumstances mentioned in Acts are at variance with the notion of such a relinquishment of private property. Peter said expressly to Ananias that it depended on himself to sell or to keep his land, and that even after the sale the sum received for it was at his own disposal (Acts 5. 4). We find in Acts 12. 12 that Mary possessed a house at Jerusalem which we cannot suppose to have been purchased at the general cost. These facts plainly show that we are not to imagine even in this first Christian society a renunciation of all private property. Therefore, when we are told, "The whole multitude of believers were of one heart and of one soul, and had all things in common," etc., it is not to be understood literally, but as a description of that brotherly love which repressed all selfish feelings and caused the wealthier believers to regard their property as belonging to their needy brethren, so ready were they to share it with them. A common chest was established from which the necessities of the poorer members of the church were supplied" (*History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, vol. i, chapter ii).

We must not miss the spiritual significance of this very interesting incident, however. We protest upon the best grounds against its too literal application as urged by the representatives of an irrational socialism. But we can afford to retain even the very words themselves in our modern Christian teaching. A right understanding of the obligations of Christian stewardship carries with it the idea that every Christian man shall hold all his possessions "in common" with his fellows, in common for his fellow's need and his fellow's welfare. He is not to abandon the right of possession or of administration. This would result in chaos. Dr. Crooks has well said, "It was a community of use rather than of possession." We must not fail, either, to note what a splendid realization it was of Christ's ideal of brotherhood. Brotherhood was the passion of the Church on that day. The right of property was held, but it was held subordinate to the spirit of brotherliness. Love permeated, dominated everything. The cry of our day that the social ideal is im-

practicable and inimical to a true individualism is nonsense. Instead of the social ideal being antagonistic to a true individualism, it furnishes the sphere of its realization. We are glad to believe that the world is moving toward its essential features. We may truly thank God that it seems to be characteristic of the spirit of our times, its practical manifestation sometimes being quite as remarkable outside as inside the pale of orthodox Christianity. Of this fact the following lines from the pen of Markham afford a fine illustration:

"The crest and crowning of all good,
Life's final star, is Brotherhood;
For it will bring again to Earth
Her long-lost Poesy and Mirth;
Will send new light on every face,
A kingly power upon the race.
And till it come, we men are slaves,
And travel downward to the dust of graves.

"Come, clear the way, clear the way:
Blind creeds and kings have had their day.
Break the dead branches from the path;
Our hope is in the aftermath—
Our hope is in heroic men,
Star-led to build the world again.
To this event the ages ran:
Make way for Brotherhood—make way for
man."

Thoughts for Young People.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. PETER.

1. *Peter's Gospel reaches to the end of the earth and to the end of time.* It is "to all that are afar off" in the remotest regions on which the sun shines. It is "unto you and to your children" from generation to generation until the sun shall cease to shine. It is to everyone who hears the summons, "Whosoever will may come;" "to as many as the Lord our God shall call"—that is, to every creature.

2. *Peter's Gospel is first revivificative, philosophic afterward.* For Peter was not without philosophy. Paul found that out, and all the churches of Christendom, and some agreed with it, and some did not. But when a soul was to be saved he laid his philosophy on the shelf and said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He talked in the power of the Spirit of God until his hearers were pricked in their hearts. He told them what they had done until they were constrained to cry out, "What shall we do?" He told them what to

do to "save themselves from this untoward generation," and how.

3. *Peter's Gospel preaches the necessity and privilege of spiritual life.* First, sins will be remitted; second, the Holy Spirit will dwell in the hearts of those whose sins are remitted, cleansing the thoughts of our hearts by his inspiration, empowering us for the burden and battle of life, sanctifying our nature, preparing us for heaven.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

This lesson is closely connected with our last one. The place is Jerusalem, and the time is still the day of Pentecost—Sunday, May 28, A. D. 30. Note the fact that we are to study *how* the one hundred and twenty believers had three thousand added to their number in one day.

INTRODUCTION.

For the purpose of having the pupils remember some fundamental truths concerning Jesus, ask them to show the outlines that they have written, as suggested in last week's Hints, and after correcting them have all write as follows:

JESUS—

1. Worked miracles.
2. Was crucified.
3. Rose from the dead.
4. Sent the Holy Spirit.
5. Is Lord and Christ.

NARRATIVE.

Let us try to make the three thousand converts very real to ourselves, and then we shall get our pupils interested in them. In order to do this, we will study them as follows:

3000 BELIEVING, BAPTIZED, BEARING FRUITAGE.

1. *Believing* (verse 37). Ask: By what means were the three thousand led to believe? (By the Holy Spirit speaking through Peter, as he preached to them.) How did they feel? (Explain the meaning of "pricked," and show why the three thousand felt as they did.) By what question did they indicate their belief? What was Peter's answer? (Have some one read aloud verses 38-40 and explain the meaning of "remission," "testify," "exhort," and "untoward." See "crooked" of the R. V. and Phil. 2, 15.) Did all who heard Peter's sermon believe? Why not?

2. *Baptized* (verse 41). Who were baptized? What did this baptism signify?

3. *Bearing fruitage* (verses 42-47). For convenience, let us group this fruitage under three headings:

(1) Steadfastness (verse 42). Call attention to the word "steadfastly," and ask the pupils to find in the text in how many ways the new converts were steadfast. The following are the points, the explanations of which are found in the NOTES:

- (a) Doctrine (that is, teaching).
- (b) Fellowship.
- (c) Breaking of bread.
- (d) Prayers.

Show how necessary all these things are for progress in the Christian life, and then consider the next fruit of true belief. (2) Self-sacrifice (verses 43, 44). Do not undertake for the young pupils any explanation of the community of goods, but simply state that "this was an attempt to live as nearly as possible the life lived by Jesus and his disciples during his ministry on earth, when literally they had all things common." Show that the "singleness of heart" of verse 46 is an indication of this self-sacrifice. The supreme desire of the three thousand was to honor Christ. Jealousy and pride had no place in their thoughts.

(3) Gladness (verse 46). God intends that Christians should be filled with peace and joy. That more of them are not so is due to the fact that they do not continue steadfast in the things named in verse 42.

TRUTHS EMPHASIZED.

The Church to-day needs steadfastness in its membership. There are about twenty-five million professed Christians in the United States. Why do they not exert more influence? May it not be because so many are lacking in steadfastness—that is, in fixedness in faith and devotion to duty? Let us impress our pupils with the blessedness as well as the great need of this important trait of character. Some of them are dreaming about and longing for the opportunity to do something wonderful for Christ and his kingdom. Show them that the very best, most helpful, and most fruitful thing they can do is to be steadfast, every day, to those things which are right. Sum up with this prayer to be prayed by each one daily:

LORD! HELP ME TO BE

STEADFAST

IN WHAT IS RIGHT.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to learn all they can about the temple, so as to be able to understand the references to it in next week's lesson.

Each week have something to say about the review at the end of the quarter. Now is the time to begin to prepare for it. Do so, by telling the pupils that the review will be a recalling of the persons of the various lessons with the truths learned in connection with each one. Ask them to make and keep a list of the persons studied about, and to add to it one name each Sunday. Our list to date is:

JESUS.
THE HOLY SPIRIT.
3000.

By Way of Illustration.

"They were pricked in their heart." If a man is able to produce beautiful roses and delight his congregation with them Sunday after Sunday, by all means let him produce them; only let him take care to make his roses as God makes his—with thorns to prick the conscience of the hearer. The most cultivated roses often lose their power to bear seeds, and have very little fragrance because the aim of the cultivation has been mere beauty.—*Dr. A. T. Pierson.*

"What shall we do?" These were good listeners who asked at the close of the sermon. "What shall we do?" They were doers as well as hearers. This is surely a better question than, "How do you like our preacher's manner?" or "Don't you think Mrs. Blank should take this sermon home to herself?" "Pentecostal preaching" is a favorite theme with Church members," says Dr. Trumbull; "but there is not so much said as might be about pentecostal hearing. Pentecostal hearing prompts the hearers to say with great earnestness, 'What shall we do?'"

Verse 41. Carlyle, speaking of the Reformation, says: "Once risen into this divine white heat of temper, were it only for a season and not again, it is henceforth considerable through all its remaining history. Nations are benefited for ages by being thrown once into divine white heat in this manner. And no nation that has not had such divine paroxysms at any time is apt to come to much." Revival blessings do not cease with the special meetings; they bring us to a higher level of life and conduct.

"They continued steadfastly." All the new vehicles are having what is called the "endur-

ance test." "Will it wear?" "Will it last?" are the questions we are constantly asking. Upon the endurance test of Christians depends the success of Christianity. A pastor was securing an assistant. Two young men applied. Of one it was said, "He is brilliant and efficient, but subject to variations in his zeal. You are never quite sure whether he will meet any given obligation." Of the other it was said, "He is noted not for great gifts, but for great faithfulness." The pastor knew at once which man he wanted.

Verse 47. One great source of the strength of the Salvation Army in these days is that they make every convert a worker; and though some of them make mistakes, it is a far better way than that of many Churches, which shut up the mouth of the convert for so long, lest he should make a mistake, that he presently forgets how to open it at all in things that are religious. Let the teacher teach that as soon as we believe that we have given our hearts to the Master we ought at once to begin to do something for him.—*A. F. Schaeffer.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

While it is true that the Holy Spirit has been in the world actively engaged in the affairs of men, and that there was a day when he came in a new sense to abide and to do a special work in human hearts; so it is true that he is always present with every human soul to restrain and guide and teach, and there is a definite day in the soul's experience when he comes in a new sense to abide and to transform the life. This is what Jesus spoke of when he said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again; except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Never forget that the "must" of the Lord Jesus has vital significance. The new birth through the power of the Spirit is not a matter of opinion or of choice; it is a spiritual necessity which the Creator of the human soul understands and affirms. We inherit the kingdom only by birth-right.

These persons who heard Peter's great sermon entered into a new experience suddenly. Their mental attitude was changed, and their hearts were filled with new emotions. They believed what had before seemed incredible; they were glad in the new belief; they lost their old selfishness and shared whatever they had with their less fortunate neighbors; they forgot to complain and worry about temporal things, being full of praise and thanksgiving; and the

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transformation was so complete and so genuine—no mere "profession," but real possession—that they had favor with all the people. These facts are surprising chiefly because so many persons experienced this change on the same day. Day by day, every year, in all lands where Jesus is preached in the power of the Spirit as Peter preached, or where anyone receives the word gladly as these persons received it, the same transformation is wrought. It is an experience to which thousands give definite testimony. It is the experience which has inspired the hymns which thrill the hearts of men wherever sung; the experience which sends men and women into distant lands braving danger and suffering to make the name of Jesus known. It is the experience of passing from death unto life, and is as different from a cold belief in God and an intellectual acceptance of the truth of his word as the close-shut bud is different from the open, fragrant flower.

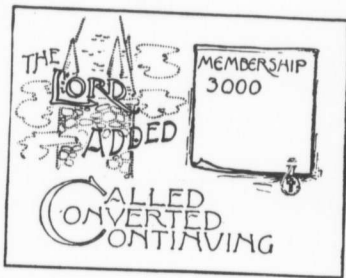
I think as a rule the time of this new birth can be definitely told; most persons who have the experience recall a day, a moment, a circumstance, when they entered into the new life. The approach to it may be gradual; education, thought, association, sorrow, discipline, may prepare the soul for that moment of surrender to the work of the Spirit; but the moment is definite, and the work is known in the soul's consciousness. It is a new birth. I have watched the opening of some beautiful flowers—very slowly they unfold, until suddenly they break out in perfect bloom. Mushrooms grow under the ground unseen, and after a rain they spring up in perfection, as we say, "in a night." So the truth may be growing in the heart, and under the rain of the blessed Spirit it will spring into the beautiful bloom of a changed heart, a new nature, a happy experience of knowing God in a new relationship. A birth is a beginning. We begin to live when we are born of the Spirit, and, living, we grow. Jesus said the Spirit would be our guide, and our teacher. To what rich and high experiences, to what broad and inspiring knowledge, he will guide, who can say? "The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Do not grieve this heavenly teacher and guide. Listen when he speaks in your heart. It is his voice that says, "Give me thine heart." It is his voice that tells you when you do wrong. Just open your heart to him, let him have his own way in you; then you will live and grow in goodness as flowers live and grow in the rain and the sun.

The Teachers' Meeting.

The Means, Fruits, and Source of Grace:
1. The Means: Convicting souls, repentance, baptism, the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and separation from the world.
2. The Fruits: Accepting instruction, submitting to baptism, steadfastly working for God, keeping close together, manifesting mutual love, rejoicing in God, influence with the people.
3. The Source: God....1. The Effects of the Sermon, verses 37-42; 2. The Characteristics of the Early Church, verses 43-47....How to Be Christians; How Christians Should Be.... The Lesson Homily of our *Illustrative Notes* presents this lesson as a study of the Church: It was composed of believers; it was an organized body; an organization with government; a preaching church; it had the sacraments; it was a united church, sincere, spiritual, devout, courageous, steadfast; it was mutually helpful, happy, active, influential; hence it was successful. Each of these thoughts elaborated in the Homily spring naturally from the verses of our lesson.

Blackboard.



To the small congregation who formed the early Church of Christ, the Lord himself added such as should be eternally saved. Their number grew by divine addition, the reckoning being not of man, but of God. Then each true convert was one whom the Spirit called, and therefore in fellowship with others he "continued." The number of those who thus allied themselves with the Church in heart and life has constantly multiplied, until to-day the "real" Christians number ???,???,??? souls.

Coloring.—Building, brown; words, white; scroll, pale blue; seal, red; lettering, yellow; lower words, blue lined in yellow.

Optional Hymns.

Come with thy sins to the fountain.
The Spirit and the Bride say "Come!"
Jesus, my Lord, to thee I cry.
Love divine, all love excelling.
Saviour, let me still abide.

I bring my sins to thee.
To-day the Saviour calls.
The Saviour is calling.
Come, every soul by sin oppressed.
Jesus Christ is passing by.

Library References.

PETER.—Taylor, *Peter the Apostlc*. Robinson, *Simon Peter*. Hodder, *Simon Peter: His Life, Times, and Friends*. Fouard, *Saint Peter*.

Macduff, *Footsteps of St. Peter*. Sooy, *Individuality*, page 35. Vance, *College of the Apostles*. Candlish, *Scripture Characters*, page 187. Reed, *Companions of the Lord*, page 187. Duff, *Early Church*, page 57. Cox, *Expositor's Note Book*, page 361.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 37.—*The Treasury*, vol. viii, page 143. Banks, *Fisherman and His Friends*, page 206. *The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. v, page 458; vol. vii, page 17. *The Homiletic Review*, vol. xvi, page 539. Saurin, J., *Sermons*, vol. ii, page 281.

Verse 39.—*The Homiletic Review*, vol. xxiv, page 348.

Verse 40.—Beck, *Pastoral Theology*, page 267.

Verse 42.—Arnold, *School Sermons*, page 33. *The Treasury*, vol. i, page 379.

LESSON IV. The Lame Man Healed.

[Jan. 26.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation. Exod. 15. 2.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Acts 3.]

Acts 3. 1-10.

[Commit to memory verses 6-8.]

- 1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour.
- 2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;
- 3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.
- 4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.
- 5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.
- 6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Naz'a-reth rise up and walk.
- 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.
- 8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.
- 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:
- 10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the
- 2 ninth hour. And a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms
- 3 of them that entered into the temple; who seeing Peter and John about to go into the
- 4 temple, asked to receive an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said,
- 5 Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something from them.
- 6 But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.
- 7 And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up; and immediately his feet and
- 8 his ankle bones received strength. And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising
- 9 God; and they took knowledge of him, that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

Home Readings.

- M. The Lame Man Healed. Acts 3, 1-16.
 Th. Peter's exhortation. Acts 3, 17-26.
 W. Command with power. Matt. 9, 1-8.
 Th. Healing power. Luke 10, 1-9, 17-20.
 F. Christ's healing Word. John 5, 1-9.
 S. The exalted name. Phil. 2, 1-11.
 S. Life through his name. John 20, 24-31.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 62.

I was once far away from the Saviour,
 And as vile as a sinner could be,
 I wondered if Christ the Redeemer
 Could save a poor sinner like me.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 109.

She only touched the hem of his garment,
 As to his side she stole,
 Amid the crowd that gathered around him;
 And straightway she was whole.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 217.

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
 All our sins and griefs to bear!
 What a privilege to carry
 Everything to God in prayer.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Lame Man Restored.*

Which of the disciples figure in the lesson?
 Why were they going to the temple?
 What was peculiar in the condition of the lame man?

Why was he at the gate of the temple?
 What was Peter's first response to his appeal?
 How did Peter assist his faith?
 Whose representative did Peter declare himself to be?

How did the lame man express his gratitude?
 What fact magnified the miracle in the eyes of the people?

How did they show their interest?

2. *Peter Preaches Jesus.*

Why did Peter address his hearers as "Ye men of Israel"?

How did the apostle turn the attention from himself to Christ?

With what did he charge his hearers?
 Of what did he declare himself to be a witness?

How did he make this miracle an evidence of the resurrection of Christ?

What place did he give in his discourse to the faith of the man?

How does this miracle appear to be a parable of the redemption of a penitent sinner?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Asking alms of Peter* (verses 1-3).

Why was this lame man laid at the temple gate?

What were the hours of temple prayer?

At which hour did Peter and John go?

What facts show how severe was this lameness?

Did he know Peter and John as disciples of Jesus?

2. *Receiving strength from Christ* (verses 4-7).

Was Peter able to give alms?

What could he do better than that?

Why was giving strength better than alms?

Whose faith in Jesus healed the lame man?

How long did it require to cure?

3. *Leaping and praising God* (verses 8, 9).

How does this show his faith in Jesus?

Did he mean Jesus in praising God?

Was he willing to leave the apostles?

Was this man a beggar in character, or only by necessity?

4. *Explained by faith in Jesus* (verses 10-16).

Who explained the miracle to the people?

Does Peter want any credit for himself?

Were any crucifiers of Jesus in this company that now heard Peter?

Did not all accept Jesus at Pentecost?

What was done with Peter for this bold speech?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

How did Jesus still live on earth? *In his disciples.*

What could the disciples do in his name? *His own works.*

Where did Peter and John go one day? *To the temple to worship.*

Whom did they see lying at the gate Beautiful? *A lame beggar.*

What did he ask of them? *Money.*

What did they give him? *Strength to walk.*

Was it *their* gift? *No; it was the gift of God.*
 In whose name was the gift made? *In the name of Jesus of Nazareth.*

Must the beggar have believed in that name? *Yes.*

What did the people think? *That the power belonged to Peter and John.*

How did this make the apostles feel? *Very sorry.*

Why? *Because they loved and honored Jesus.*
 What great gift has God for each of us? *The gift of salvation.*

What is our part? *To reach out and take it.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. Whom did Peter and John meet at the Beautiful gate of the temple? *A lame man.*
2. What did Peter say to him? *"Rise up and walk."*
3. In whose name did he say this? *In the name of Jesus Christ.*
4. What did the lame man do? *"He, leaping up, stood and walked."*
5. What did this miracle show? *The power of Jesus's name.*

6. By what name did Peter call Jesus? *The Prince of Life.*7. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"The Lord is my strength and song," etc.***The Church Catechism.**

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

THE LESSON OUTLINE.**Conditions of Revival Effort.****I. CHRISTIANS UNITE IN EARNEST PRAYER.***Went up together into the temple. v. 1.*

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

Be perfectly joined together in the same mind. 1 Cor. 1. 10.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. Psa. 84. 4.

II. THE UNSAVED FAIL TO RECOGNIZE THEIR SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES.*Who seeing Peter and John... asked an alms. v. 3.*

If thou knewest the gift, thou wouldest have asked of me living water. John 4. 10.

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss. James 4. 3.

Set your affection on things that are above. Col. 3. 2.

III. THE CHRISTIAN OFFERS TREASURES OF GRACE TO THE UNSAVED.*Such as I have give I thee. v. 6.*

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. Matt. 6. 33.

As every man hath received, so let him minister. 1 Pet. 4. 10.

Give to him that asketh thee. Matt. 5. 42.

IV. THE CONVERTED MAN IS A NEW CREATURE.*His feet... received strength. v. 7.*

Put on the new man. Eph. 4. 24.

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power. Col. 1. 11.

It is God that girdeth me with strength. Psa. 18. 32.

V. CONVERSION BRINGS HAPPINESS.*Leaping, and praising God. v. 8.*

O magnify the Lord with me. Psa. 34. 3.

Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance. Col. 1. 12.

Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Eph. 5. 19.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The excitement of the Pentecost has subsided, and the Church has settled down in quiet. Public interest has for the time being turned in other directions. The disciples are yet as thorough Hebrews in creed as they are Christians, and so they steadily attend the services of the temple, while they see probably a new meaning in the offered lamb, and feel a new power in the choral song. One afternoon as Peter and John, typical leaders, are about to enter the temple for "daily prayers," they see, close to the Beautiful Gate, a wretched man, crippled from birth, laid there to beg. He cannot enter, for he cannot move, and if he could ritual regulations might exclude him. He asks help, and Peter gives it in a fashion he had not expected. Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, Peter declares to be the royal Messiah of Israel—dead, as all the nation knew, but alive for evermore, and wielding power to heal the blasted body and save the sinful soul. The beggar hears, believes, and new life thrills through his feeble limbs. He leaps for the first time in all his life, and, rushing up the marble steps, enters the temple from which till now he had been excluded, and praises God, while crowds around gaze in blank astonishment. Peter, taking advantage of the curiosity, preaches to hundreds the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 1. Peter and John. These two leaders of the apostolic company were evidently warmly attached to each other. They had both been fishermen and both disciples of John the Baptist. The incident we are about to study occurred probably soon after the day of Pentecost. *The temple.* We may suppose that they had crossed the bridge from Zion into the court of the Gentiles and were passing into the court of the women. *Hour of prayer.* Thrice each day every pious Jew prayed either in the temple or turning his face toward it (Psa. 55. 17; Dan. 6. 10). God's people have need of both private and public worship. Regularity in habits of devotion is a notable means of grace. *The ninth hour.* About three o'clock in the afternoon; the hours were counted from sunrise. It was "the time of the evening sacrifice."

2. A certain man. Only a miracle could reach this case. He was over forty years old, had been crippled from birth, was too weak even to use crutches, and, added to all other sorrows, was wretchedly poor. His only means of livelihood was to display his miseries outside the temple gate; inside he must not be carried, for the Mosaic ritual was not tender to cripples. Our Lord was the first religious teacher who was attracted by wretchedness, and loved most those who needed him most. *They laid daily.* Just as in the East to-day the deformed and poor throng about the doors of mosques and churches. Always those who are most worshipful to God are kindest to their fellow-men. *At the gate.* We see in this man a picture of the sinner shut out from fellowship with God. Almost all the alms of the world are administered at the gates of God's temple. *Called Beautiful.* Which of several gates is thus alluded to is not certain; but it was probably the "Gate Nicanor," which led from the outer to the inner court—a magnificent gate fifty cubits high and forty cubits wide.

3. 4. Alms, originally spelled "almesse," is not a plural noun, as its present form might suggest. It means first "mercy," "compassion;" and, consequently, "an act of mercy." *Fastening his eyes upon him.* There was no attempt at hypnotism here. Christianity always fixes its eyes with pity on physical and moral wretchedness. *Look on us.* "God helps those who help themselves." Nearly all this poor man's muscles are paralyzed; but his mouth and eyes, at least, are active, and if he would be well he must use what he has; "ask an alms" and "look" on his miraculous benefactors.

5, 6. Expecting to receive. What he expected was a coin or two. *Silver and gold.* Peter had literally forsaken all to follow Christ, and was

probably one of the poorest men who that day passed the temple portals; but how rich was he as an heir of God! *Such as I have give I thee.* No man can have divine power and be ignorant of it. Unpromising circumstances turn into advantages when consecrated to God. Sometimes the poor can do for their fellow-men more than the rich. *In the name of Jesus.* Peter speaks by the authority of Jesus; Jesus, however, wrought his miracles by his own authority.

7. Lifted him. Peter believes thoroughly that his effort to work a cure will be successful, and so lends his confidence to the cripple, and "lifts" him. So the Church must lift the sin-stricken world toward Christ. Notice that this verse, written by Luke, the physician, describes the case just as we might expect a physician to describe it.

8. Entered with them into the temple. This, with his *praising God*, showed the religious temper of the man. His gratitude to Peter and John would be an additional reason for his accompanying them into the temple courts. The striking differences between this narrative and a similar miracle wrought at Lystra by Paul, and recorded in the fourteenth chapter of Acts, have been frequently pointed to. Luke was an historian whose materials were received from "eyewitnesses," and there is evidence in the contrast between the picturesque scene we are now studying and the dry and chippy narrative in the fourteenth chapter that Luke "left his narratives as they came to his hand, without any attempt to stamp on them his own individuality."

9. All the people saw him. The Jewish authorities admit the abundance of testimony to the reality of this cure. The cripple had been well known.

11. Held Peter and John. His first wild ebullition of joy was over; he had "walked" to test his strength, "leaped" in gladness for the first time in his life, and "praised God" with devout heart. Now he turns back to his benefactors, and clings to them in simple gratitude. *The porch that is called Solomon's.* This was an imposing marble colonnade six hundred feet long. Each pillar was six feet in diameter, and its splendid roof was nearly forty feet high.

12. Peter saw it. The gathering of the people. *He answered.* This expression is used of beginning any discourse. *Why marvel ye.* As though such an event had never occurred before; since Jesus had wrought many similar miracles in that place (Matt. 21. 14). *Why look ye so earnestly.* Every good preacher should hide himself behind his Master. *Our own power.*

As if the miracle had been wrought by some magical craft. *Or holiness.* As if their piety was so great as to obtain this miraculous token of the divine favor. The miracle had been wrought not for their sakes, but to call the attention of the people to the Gospel. Humility is an excellent virtue in one endowed with the Spirit of God.

13. The God of our fathers. No false God, therefore, and no new God. *Hath glorified.* Peter now shows the contrast between their treatment of Jesus and God's honor of him; while his own people had rejected, delivered, slain him, God had owned him by mighty works. *His son Jesus.* Rather, as in the Revised Version, "his Servant Jesus." His aim is to show that Jesus had obeyed God and fulfilled his will and for that very faithfulness had suffered death.

14. A murderer. Barabbas. They sent the innocent to the cross, and required the freedom of the guilty.

15. Killed the Prince of life. The word

"prince" here means not only "ruler," but "originator," "leader," the one who brings us into eternal life bought with his death. The same word is translated "captain" in Heb. 2. 10. *God hath raised.* The fact that Jesus had been raised from the dead was the great truth upon which the Gospel rested. Hence it is asserted in every discourse of the New Testament. *We are witnesses.* Not only Peter and John, but all the twelve. The great work of every Christian is to bear testimony to a risen and living Saviour.

16. Ye see and know. God's work in grace may be a mystery, but its results may be seen by all. No one can comprehend growth, but all can see that trees grow; no one can fathom a soul's salvation, but the change in character which it brings all can perceive. *The faith which is by him.* "Through him" (Rev. Ver.), the faith which Christ alone can impart, establish, and reward, the true faith of the Gospel. Both apostles and lame man had exercised this faith, each in his own measure. Faith is the link between our weakness and Christ's power.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

THE MIRACLE.

In his sermon on the day of Pentecost Peter made use of these words: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." This divine attestation so often given during the life of Jesus was continued under the apostles' administration. The miracle here recorded was a notable one and produced a most profound impression. The man upon whom it was wrought was "above forty years old" and "lame from his mother's womb." The answer to the oft-repeated inquiry as to why such miracles are not more frequent to-day is not very difficult. In the realm of the physical the achievements of the medical science are truly marvelous when brought into comparison with the stage of its development at the time of the working of this miracle. The advance has been very gradual, and has come about by the discovery and mastery of the laws of our being. And because these modern achievements are wrought in accordance with law they do not seem to possess the miraculous element. But they are certainly very wonderful. Could the man of the first century witness them from the point of view which he then occupied they would be almost as miraculous as the event here recorded. It requires man many centuries of pa-

tient toil to achieve that which our Lord was able to achieve in an instant by the fiat of his word. But in the achieving of it man has been greatly blessed.

Moreover, the demand made by many in our own times for supernatural physical miracles is unreasonable, if not, indeed, childish. They were necessary in the first century as a credential of the new faith. But the Church ought to have outgrown the necessity, aye, the demand, for them long ago. It was the kindergarten method adapted to the period of the childhood of the Church—object lessons of divine power. The miraculous element of the life of Christianity to-day is far greater. Its results are achieved in the realm of the spiritual. The age of miracles is not past. It has only fairly begun. But they are on a far higher plane than in the first century. The return of the Church to the working of miracles in the realm of the physical, were such a thing possible, would be very clearly a retrogression.

THREE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES SUGGESTED BY THIS EVENT.

I. No man can give that which he himself does not possess. Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none." Hence he could not meet the request even for an alms. It is a good thing to remember this principle as a fundamental law

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of life. In order to give forth we ourselves must first possess. We are so anxious to *do* that we sometimes forget that the first business of life is to *be*. Self-realization according to the Christ type of life is the first duty of every Christian. The surest and quickest way to serve others is by the attainment of a rich, deep personality of our own. The relation of character to service is most vital. What we really *do* in life is determined almost entirely by what we *are*. The teaching of Scripture confirms this principle again and again. The disciples were carefully instructed to *tarry* at Jerusalem before they went forth. They were to *attain* before they were to *achieve*. "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts 20, 28). So Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" (1 Tim. 4, 16).

"Teach me, Father, how to be
Kind and patient as a tree.
Joyfully the crickets croon
Under shady oak at noon;
Beetle on his mission bent
Tarrys in that cooling tent.
Let me, also, cheer a spot,
Hidden field or garden grove—
Place where passing souls can rest
On the way and be their best."

II. No man can help giving that which he himself possesses. "Such as I have give I thee." Our external possessions are subject to the control of our volition. We may give or not of money and such things as we wish. Not so with the spiritual qualities of the soul. In the sequel of the event here recorded we hear Peter and John say, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Conviction is sometimes so strong as to compel audible utterance. But the soul has other means of expression than by spoken language. It is under the law of necessity thus far at least that it *must* express itself. It does so as naturally and as inevitably as the sun gives forth the warmth of his rays. By the silent, subtle law of his being every man creates about him a miasma or an Eden. Which, is determined by the quality of his own soul—by his inner, secret character. The effluence of some personalities stifles us, while that of others makes us breathe a freer atmosphere. Nothing in this world is so contagious, so potential, so dynamic as strong Christian character. We give what we are always and inevitably.

Dr. Hugh MacMillan in a very suggestive ser-

mon on "The Action of Presence" says: "Not more constantly is the sun pouring forth its beams or a flower exhaling its fragrance than the Christian is radiating or exhaling influence from his character upon those around him. Wherever he is, whatever he does, this influence never ceases. It underlies all his actions; it runs side by side with all his words; it goes on when action ceases and words fail. What a man voluntarily chooses, says, or does is only occasional. He does not always think or always act. From pure fatigue he must, perform, be silent and inactive at times. But what he *is*—that is necessarily perpetual, and coextensive with his being. The voluntary language of what I say or do is spasmodic, and liable to continual interruption; but the language of my character, of what I really am, is as continuous as my life itself, and suffers no more interruption than the beating of my heart or the breathing of my lungs. I cannot live at all without radiating this influence. Simply *to be* in this world is to exert an influence, compared with which mere words and acts are feeble."

III. The best gifts to our fellow-men are not material, but spiritual. If a man make this the occasion of an excuse for penuriousness he may very safely conclude that he has none of those larger and richer gifts herein referred to. Money is a great means of doing good, especially when the giver gives himself with his gift. But a man may render a high and holy service to his race who has not large means to use for the welfare of others. What, then, are some of these gifts?

(1) Truth. A new idea lodged in a mind may so broaden its horizon as to prove a blessing most valuable. A "knowledge which grows from more to more" saves life from its narrowness and brings the soul out into a larger plane.

(2) A high ideal commended both by precept and example. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said Jesus. Moral inspiration is one of the great needs of the world. He is great in the true sense of the word who can impart it to his fellows.

(3) Sympathy. What a depth of meaning in the very word itself—*συμ* and *πασινα*, to suffer with! And no man ever really sympathizes with another unless he stands close enough by that other's side to feel the weight of a part of that other man's burden. What a practical expression of sympathy was this of Peter's, "and he took him by the right hand"! He did not merely touch his finger tips. But heartily and earnestly grasping his hand, "he lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones

received strength. And he leaping up stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God."

(4) A clear, strong witness to the help that God brings to men in life's battle. What a benediction it is to point men to the true source of strength. The little Hebrew maiden was so humble that she could not approach the great Syrian. She only dares tell his wife. "Would God my Lord were with the prophet." And Naaman goes and is restored. Thus is it given to every Christian to say to earth's poor, sick, suffering souls, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

Thoughts for Young People.

CONCERNING SIN AND SALVATION.

1. *The sinner is a cripple*, paralyzed by his sins, unable to move toward God, "outside the gate," and excluded from the highest and deepest spiritual privileges. He is "born in sin."
2. *The sinner is in poverty and need*, an object of pity to all who realize his condition. He is utterly unable to help himself.
3. *Salvation comes to the sinner while he is unconscious of it*, or seeking the commoner and lower gifts of life. All he thinks of is "silver and gold," or some other inadequate form of relief.
4. *Salvation comes to the sinner through human instrumentality*. There is always a Peter to extend to him the power of God, and to lift him up.
5. *The sinner who would be saved must exert himself*, and by God's help strive to do what he cannot do by nature.
6. *The sinner who would be saved must have faith* when the opportunity of salvation is presented. If he responds to the divine call, and acts with faith, new power will be given to him, and a transformation wrought in him.
7. *The first impulse of the saved sinner is to enter God's house and offer praise to God*. His next is to cling to good men.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

In the history of the development of the Christian Church we find that at the date of our lesson, and for some time afterward, the apostles, and perhaps most of the other Christians, attended the services of the temple and of the synagogue. This was because Christianity was the natural outgrowth of Judaism. It is helpful for the teacher to have this in mind, so as to be able to answer satisfactorily the natural

inquiries of the brighter pupils, but little time need be devoted to the subject in classes of intermediates.

INTRODUCTION.

Call attention to the fact that Peter and John were companions. (See John 18. 15, 16; 20. 3-8; Luke 22. 8; Acts 8. 14; Gal. 2. 9.) Let the teacher note the value of Christian friendship and of union in Christian effort, and urge the pupils to form companionships only with those who are Christians.

Question the pupils as to what they know about the temple, and, having given such information as may be necessary for a proper understanding of the text, take up the

NARRATIVE.

which may be considered in a series of four pictures:

1. *A man on the ground* (verse 2). How old is he? What is the trouble with him? How long has he been in this condition? Where is he lying? For what purpose? How did he get there? How often does he lie there? Did you ever see anyone like him? Where?
2. *Two men at the temple gate* (verses 4-6). What is the name of the gate? What are the names of the men? Where are they going? For what purpose? What does the man on the ground ask of them? What do the two men tell him to do? What does he do? What does he expect? What does Peter say? What does he do?
3. *A man exulting* (verses 7, 8). What three things is he doing? (verse 8.) Where was he just a moment ago? What has made this great change? The teacher should strive to make very clear the fact that it was the power of Jesus operating through Peter that made the man whole. (Compare verses 6 and 16 with Acts 4. 10 and 14. 8-18.)
4. *A crowd of people* (verses 9, 10). What do the people see a man do? What change do they behold in him? How do they feel? Why? What would you have done had you seen this miracle?

TRUTH EMPHASIZED.

Have the Golden Text repeated. Speak to the class of the power of God and of his willingness to help. Get and give illustrations of this from the Bible, from history, and from everyday life. Ask the class to tell what the Lord is able, ready, and willing to give to his children to-day. After as full an expression of opinion as time will permit group and impress the points under three headings as suggested by the Golden Text:

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Gal. 2. 9.)

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The Lord will give—

1. Salvation.
2. Strength.
3. A song.

Explain the meaning of these words, and tell what blessings are included in the thought of each of them, and then sum up as follows:

I WILL TAKE THE LORD
FOR MY **S**ALVATION,
TRENGTH,
SONG.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Have the pupils read Acts 3. 12-26 for the twofold object of understanding—

1. The kind of preaching that turned the world upside down.
2. The cause of the anger of the leaders of the Jews.

By Way of Illustration.

"At the gate of the temple." Almost all the alms of the world are administered at the gates of God's temples. Nearly all the charitable institutions of the world and the benevolent movements of society depend on those who go to the temple at the hour of prayer. When money is needed to relieve the world's distress men go straight to the gate of the temple to beg. It is a testimony to the worth of Christianity.—*R. R. Doherty.*

"Expecting to receive something from them."

One of Mr. Spurgeon's preachers was discouraged. He seemed to be effecting nothing. He came to tell his discouragement, saying, "I have been preaching and preaching, and apparently it does no good." Mr. Spurgeon replied, "You do not believe God will bless every truth you declare, do you?" "O, certainly not," said the discouraged man. "And that is just the reason why he does not," was the answer. God would have us turn toward him expectantly when we work for him, just as the lame man did toward the apostles.

"What I have, that give I thee." When you preach Christ you are giving the people something better than silver or gold. I was preaching on my first charge one Sunday evening when a young man came in and sat down by the door. There was an earnestness in his face which attracted me. He left before the service closed, but by inquiry I found that he was a hired man living on a farm a mile away. I drove out that night and called for him, saying to him, "You are convicted of sin and need Jesus Christ. Shall I pray for you?" "Yes," he said. He was converted that night. Suppose

that instead of bringing him to Christ I had given him fifty dollars. People would have said, "That's the way to help a young man on in the world." But I did for him that which was better. Years afterward I visited that place. The young man had become a steward in the church, and I was a guest in his home. He said to me, "I own this farm, am a director in the bank, and hold a position of influence and honor in the community. It all began with my conversion. I was just then vacillating between good and evil."—*Bishop C. C. McCabe.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

There are compensations in suffering. The blessings and the ills of life are more evenly distributed than we think. We will see this more clearly when we gain spiritual vision in a world of purer atmosphere. Here was this man helpless from his birth. A part of his compensation was the fact that his condition awakened sympathy and brought him friends. Somebody cared for him and carried him every day to the temple gate that he might get help from the passers-by. Can we not trust God that, in the larger realm of being which he sees, but we do not see, his gracious law of compensation will bring, through divine love and wisdom, out of sickness, sorrow, and sin, greater good for redeemed humanity? I surely believe it. There are compensations even in this life; trust him to reveal fully his plan of love for all who suffer, in the broad, open plain of his own eternity.

The great work in which God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is now engaged, in which he asks our cooperation, is to bring the needy and helpless within reach of the help. If this can be done perfect soundness will result.

This man, lame from his birth, helpless, in pitiful need at the gate of the temple, is a picture of this sinful, sorrowful world. We may make it a personal matter, and say it is a picture of ourselves if we have not been restored to spiritual health through the power of Jesus's name; so near the temple, symbol of all that is pure, noble, worth possessing—the place where God manifests himself, where the aspirations of the immortal soul are satisfied—and yet outside, helpless to enter, until through faith in the wonderful Name we are made strong. But—happy thought!—it is beside the Beautiful gate that the helpless are lying. He who said, "I am the way," makes it possible for all to enter; the beautiful gate of his love is always open, and he gives us strength to leap up, stand,

and walk," so that we may take possession of every good gift with joyful praise.

This man, unable to help himself, looked at Peter and John expecting to receive something of them. So the sinful, sorrowful world looks at a Christian, at you and me, expecting to receive something from us, and they have a right to expect it. All blessings that flow to us should flow through us. We are God's channels; let us keep the channel wide and free. Peter was conscious of possessing power, and felt the responsibility of using it. He was full of the Holy Spirit, and he knew he had something to give. If every Christian were awake to the power we have in Jesus Christ, and to the privilege of using it for others, what joy and help and healing would flow through each one to the needy and helpless!

There are better things than silver and gold to give. "Such as I have give I thee" is a beautiful saying for us to adopt as we pass along life's crowded thoroughfare. "As every one hath received the gift, even so let him minister as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." What manifold grace is ours! Are you giving such as you have? Can you sing? The singing of a hymn by one who had consecrated her voice to Jesus brought a soul into the light of faith and peace. A flower placed in the window of a dark, dirty room made the woman wash one pane of glass, then the whole window, then the house, then her children, and sent them to Sunday school, where their dark soul-windows were opened to the light. "The Christian for the times is one who *knows* something, *believes* something, *feels* something, and *does* something."

The Teachers' Meeting.

Here was a great opportunity, verses 1-3: Show its constituents—the time, the place, the believers, the apostles. Here was a wonderful work, verses 5-10: Attention, command, assistance, cure, conviction. Here was a powerful name, verses 11-16: Not by human power, but by the name of Jesus. . . . The lesson may be interestingly studied from the point of view of Peter or from the point of view of the lame man. Here was a helpless man, as helpless physically as the sinner is spiritually. Wretchedly poor and outcast, he nevertheless had some friends. Let us thank God for friends; let us value our spiritual friends. What are we as Christians doing for our poor friends who are spiritually crippled? The friends of the helpless man brought him to the best of all places—"the gate of the temple." . . . The poverty and the wealth of apostles may well be contrasted.

Optional Hymns.

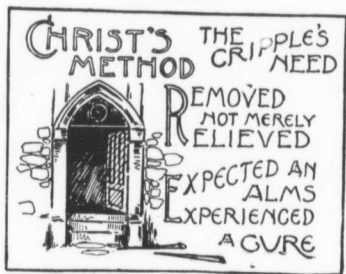
To the Name of our salvation,
There is no name so sweet on earth,
How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
Father, I stretch my hands to thee,
All my doubts I give to Jesus.

I love the name of Jesus,
There is a name I love to hear,
When in the tempest he'll hide me,
Once for all the Saviour died,
The Great Physician now is near.

Library References.

EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.—Storrs, *Divine Origin of Christianity*. Dennis, *Missions and Social Progress*. Williamson, *Healing of the Nations*. Stuckenburger, *Christian Sociology*. Brace, *Gesta Christa*. Dorchester, *Problem of Religious Progress*. Carroll, *Religious Forces of the United States*.

Blackboard.



This first miracle wrought by the apostle's hands was significant of Christ's attitude toward the world's misery and disease. It was his aim rather to remove than to ameliorate; to make unnecessary the means of relief we so constantly employ by banishing the conditions under which such evils strive. On the other hand, the pittance craved by this beggar represents the position we too often take toward one to whom all power is given, and who doeth all things well.

Coloring.—Entrance, brown, lightened in yellow; the phrases in alternate deep blue and purple, retraced with light blue.

Primary Teachers' Department.

Thought's for the New Year.

WITH heartiest New Year greetings to all primary teachers who read the BANNER, we ask especial attention to this truth concerning the entrance upon Christian life and opportunity. "Childhood is the open gateway; youth, the closing door; age, the barred entrance." And also in this suggestive word spoken by a little child in Sunday school: "When I get to heaven I am going to reach down and draw my papa up."

WE take great pleasure in presenting to our readers at this time some helpful words on Primary Lesson Construction, by Miss Johnston, who is a teacher of much experience, and with a heart full of love for the work.

Miss Baldwin also furnishes us with an admirable "Preview of the Quarter's Lessons," which will be eagerly welcomed by many teachers.

Points.

IN one hour the Sunday school teacher must correct errors that have come to the child's notice for six days, and help to lay the foundation of Christian character. It is therefore very necessary that the teacher should be in touch with God! One once asked a little boy how he liked his Sunday school teacher. He replied that he did not like her. When asked why, he answered, "Because she never cries." He had seen tears in the eyes of a former teacher, and the Spirit of God, which had filled her eyes with tears, had also moved the hearts of her scholars.

The next point to be taken into account is the manner in which you come before your class. You should come fresh in body, having on previous days made all necessary preparation for the teaching of the lesson. You should come from your knees—from a humble talk with God.

Other suggestions to be borne in mind are the following: Teach the lesson to yourself before you attempt to teach it to your pupils. Secure the attention of your class before you teach the lesson. Always have your scholars tell you what you have told them. Review every lesson. Never forget to make prominent the application of the lesson—the bringing of the central truth to bear upon the life of the scholars.

Take a few moments occasionally to teach the members of your class the peculiar denom-

inational doctrines of your Church. Some schools that are graded make such knowledge a point of promotion. Be encouraged when the way seems dark. You little know how your words are treasured by your scholars.

A man once found himself in the hands of the law. "If I only had done as my Sunday school teacher told me," he said, "I should not be here." Does not this show that a teacher's words follow his scholars?

A Preview of the Quarter's Lessons.

It is generally acknowledged in all grades of Sunday school teaching that the only way to have a successful review at the end of the quarter is to take a comprehensive *preview* of the work before it begins, and find an axis about which the whole may revolve; and nowhere is this more essential than with children of the primary age.

Usually the quarter's Golden Text may be used as a central thought, but the one given for this quarter is difficult for little children. There is an alternative, however, in the Easter text, and that is much better. The lessons of the quarter show how the Church of Jesus Christ grew. A tree might be used as an emblem of growth, and as it is kept before the class week after week something to suggest the various lessons added. Begin with the text, "Jesus said, . . . I am the resurrection and the life," written underneath the tree. Only a *living* Saviour could help the Church to grow. (A suggestion of this kind will be sufficient at the beginning: the truth can be further emphasized in teaching the Easter Lesson.) The lessons on the promise and its fulfillment are followed by the great results told of in Lesson III. How fast the Church grew that day! Jesus gave his friends power to heal sick people, and a lame man who had never walked was helped (IV). The rulers tried to make the Church stop growing (V), but they could not. Then came something that would—and the only thing that could—destroy the Church of Jesus Christ: sin in the lives of those who belonged to it (VI). Just as worms that would kill trees must be destroyed, so that sin had to be blotted out of the Church. (Have nothing referring to that lesson in the preview chart. Its absence will impressively emphasize the truth.) Again the rulers tried to hurt the Church (VII, VIII, and IX).

Stephen went to his heavenly home, but the work of preaching and helping people went right on. Then Saul determined to stop all preaching about Jesus (X), but what happened? The Church only grew the faster (Acts 8, 4, Lesson XI). Can anything ever hurt the Church? The children will undoubtedly remember Lesson VI in this connection, and Lesson XII may be taught with that thought as its foundation. Here is something we must all keep away from—"touch not, taste not, handle not"—because it can so harm people and make them unfit to serve God. The Easter Lesson will round out the quarter's teaching, showing the living Saviour helping his people now as he did then, and leading his Church, which is always and steadily growing.

Primary Lesson Construction.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

LESSON study should be comprehensive, but lesson building should be selective. To the material of Scripture truth or story must be added its connection, the exact meanings of words, the thoughts of others, our own reflections, and the illustrations that will make all lustrous. But an effort to build in all that is gathered up will result in confusion. The embarrassment of riches will overtake teacher and scholar. To construct wisely and compactly we must make a choice and hold ourselves to it. Then we must arrange material in an orderly and harmonious way. If we simply get all we can and give out as much as we can, in a "miscellaneous" manner, is any child likely to receive and retain it?

In the plan of lesson construction evolved from my own past there are three vital parts: The Point of Contact, the Lesson Story, the Lesson Truth.

The whole Sunday school world is indebted to Mr. Du Bois for his book *The Point of Contact*. It has become a classic in its realm. He has called attention to the law that we must proceed from the known to the unknown; but the experience of countless teachers responds to this and indorses it as among the absolute things, and others must realize it and "perform the doing of it," or the rule will be lost to them.

In order to teach or "cause to know" we must arrest thought and secure attention, but it must be upon the vantage ground of child knowledge. We must touch first of all the experience of the child world. Let us, then, construct lessons with direct intention to adjust them to the right starting point.

Many teachers introduce the lesson with a story which appeals to the little scholar's knowledge, curiosity, imagination, or senses. This is admirable. But we must be on guard against anything so unfamiliar and striking as to overtax the child mind in seeing the connection, or to forestall the lesson and leave no room for the truth. I heard lately of a teacher who used a tale of an escape from a bear as the point of contact for a lesson on the cities of refuge. She found afterward that all remembered the bear story, and not one the Bible story it was meant to introduce and impress.

The point of contact need not necessarily be a story. It may be an illustration or bit of experience in child life, drawn out by question. We may "suppose" that this or that happened, and the children may be induced to tell what they would do under certain circumstances. It will not do to try this, haphazard, on coming to the class. We must think down to the child level beforehand, and construct the introduction so that it will touch the little one at the point of his own experience or knowledge.

The next thing to be considered in lesson construction is the Bible story or portion, which must be presented clearly. Be minute enough in the recital to satisfy childish craving for details, but do not overload with them. Be sure that you know them all perfectly yourself, but select wisely, and rehearse in your own mind, or practice upon a child if you can, till your word pictures have a glow, a form, and color not to be forgotten. To tell a story well, especially a Bible story, is an almost indispensable art. It may be cultivated, and should be. Feel the story, live it, love it, and then tell it.

The third division of the plan of preparation is the Lesson Truth. Choose it well, word it simply, fix it in the mind, and then let all the light of the lesson play upon it. Although this division is naturally mentioned last, it should indeed come first, in a sense, and should penetrate all the rest. Decide upon the truth (just *one*) after careful examination of material, then build around it, embody it in the introduction, or point of contact, let it color the Bible story, and culminate at the close of the lesson. Repeat, illustrate, impress it, draw from the class again and again, till it is so associated with the story that recalling the lesson will recall the truth taught.

So let us hold ourselves to systematic preparation. Let us so build up the lesson as we study that we shall build in the truth as we teach; for only thus shall we become workmen that need not to be ashamed.

Five-Minute Additional Lessons.

[It is suggested that these lessons be given following the opening exercises, and be set apart from the lesson teaching by song or other exercises.]

Lesson I.

THE BLESSINGS.

Memory verse: "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich" (Prov. 10. 22).

The Lord Jesus in his word calls some people blessed. What is it to be blessed? Happy? Yes, more than happy. Blessedness comes from heaven, and will last forever. Let us see who are the blessed. "*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*"

Money cannot make us rich in spirit, and the lack of it cannot make us poor in spirit. What, then, does Jesus mean?

He means that in our own spirits we may grow so proud of ourselves, and so satisfied with what we are and what we have that we feel no need of God. Some people feel happy because they are beautiful; others because they have money and fine clothes; and others because they have bright minds, and can talk or write or sing or act better than others. These things are their riches, and yet to have them all would not make them blessed. Would you be happy in a beautiful house full of gifts if there was no mother or father there? No, you would be pleased for a little while, but at night you would feel lonely—poor in spirit—without them. So are we poor in spirit when we long for our heavenly Father. Then he comes into our hearts, and we are blessed, for ours is the kingdom of heaven.

Lesson II.

"*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*"

What! happy, blessed, when one is sorrowful? How can that be? It must be, for Paul once said he was "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." If all who mourn may be comforted and blessed why should there be anything but peace and gladness in all the world?

Because Jesus did not mean the kind of mourning that is sorry for itself, and mourns the loss of worldly things. He is speaking of those who do not wish for anything so much as the forgiveness of their sins, and are sorry that they have ever grieved a loving Saviour. He knows when the first feeling of sorrow for sin rises in the heart of one of his children, and he says, "They shall be comforted," for he loves to forgive and bless. He knows, too, all those who suffer for the sins of others, and for the loss of their loved ones, and he says, "They shall be

comforted." If you hide this sweet blessing away in your heart, it will come up to comfort you when you need it.

Lesson III.

"*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*"

What great gifts the Lord gives his children whom he calls "blessed!" To the "poor in spirit" he gives a kingdom—the kingdom of heaven; to those who mourn he gives comfort; and to the meek he gives the earth! Who are the meek? Just the gentle who are gentle because it is Christlike. Jesus did not try to become a king over the little country of the Jews; he just wanted to make people good, and he taught them to be gentle; never to fight for honors, or wealth, or fame, but to deserve them, and take them as the gift of God. He told his disciples—and he tells us—to love all men, and pray for those who are unkind and cruel. When he was taken by wicked men and put to death he might have destroyed them, but he came to save instead of to destroy, so he showed only love and pity toward his enemies.

A Christian gentleman or gentlewoman is "blessed" indeed, and every child may become one. It is better to "inherit the earth" than to fight for it.

Lesson IV.

"*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*"

There are a great many hungry and thirsty people in the world, and thousands of them are unhappy because they are not filled. When the women of Samaria came to draw water Jesus said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And when his disciples brought food and begged him to eat he said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

The "bread of heaven," the "water of life," is the Lord himself who comes to dwell in our hearts, and to be the strength and the joy of our life. A bit of bread and a glass of water with his love in our hearts is a feast, but kings and millionaires cannot buy the blessing that comes to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, until they also come with the "poor in spirit" and the "meek" to be fed from the Lord's table. Every little child has a place at that table, and it is very near to the Lord.

Are you hungry for goodness? Do you thirst to know what is right? Then you are one of the blessed, for God will fill you!

International Bible Lessons.

FIRST QUARTER.

LESSON I. (January 5.)

THE PROMISE OF POWER. Acts 1, 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Acts 1. 8.

Primary Notes.

BY JOSEPHINE L. BALDWIN.



Truth. Jesus has power to help.

Impression. Jesus promises to help me.

Expression. Readiness to ask for and expect help.

Point of contact. The power of steam or electricity.

Approach. Review of Christmas story.

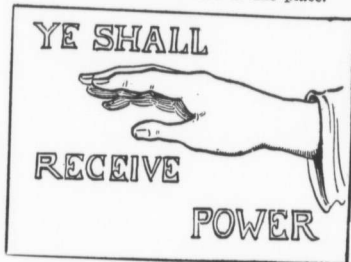
Lesson story. This lesson is one of three which are so closely connected that it is difficult not to infringe on the second when teaching the first; but by keeping the three distinctly in mind—the promise, the fulfillment, and the results—we will be able to give each due emphasis.

With children who are familiar with the running of trolley cars it might be well to open this lesson with a talk about those cars, and what it is that makes them go. It will be easy to develop the thought and acquaint the children with the meaning of the word "power." We cannot see the power which moves the car, but without it the car can never do the work for which it was made. In almost every country place the children have seen railroad trains, or steam engines of some kind, and from these the fact can be impressed that the power is a necessity if the engine is to do anything.

Recall the Christmas Lesson, and then continue something in this way: Yes, Jesus left his beautiful home in heaven, and came to this earth to live because he wished to give us power—power to do right; to say kind words and do helpful deeds. While he was here he taught many people, but you know that some would not listen or let him help them, and even hated him so much that they put him to death. But the power of Jesus was so great that death could not hold him. He rose from the dead and talked with his friends many times before he went back to his home in heaven. He had taught them how to do right, and how to help others, but he knew that they could not do these things alone; so

he said to them: "You are to tell others about me—go into all the world and preach; but you have not strength to do this by yourselves. I will send my Spirit to give you power to preach in the best way, and to be brave to bear hard things for my sake. Go to Jerusalem and wait there, and ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

The last time that Jesus talked with his friends in this way he led them out from Jerusalem over the Mount of Olives, and while he was talking he stretched out his hands and blessed them, and they saw as he did so that he was going up from the earth. Soon a cloud hid him from their sight, but they kept looking at the place where they had seen him last, perhaps hoping that they might see him again, until two angels spoke to them, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Then the disciples knew that Jesus had gone back to his home, and that they were to go on with his work on the earth; but the first thing they had to do was to wait until Jesus should send his Spirit to give them power to do that work. So they went back to Jerusalem and, together with many other friends of Jesus, praying and talking and singing hymns of praise, they stayed with one accord in one place.



Special Primary Suggestions.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Acts 1. 8.

Introductory. Thought to impress: How children get what they need. Talk about some childish needs—food, clothes, books to study from—and impress dependence upon parents. When any special need is felt, how natural to run and ask mother or father. Parents often say, "When you want such and such a thing come to me for it." The way to get such things is to ask for what has been promised. Illustrate farther

by a note or promise to pay, which one man gives another. Such note often reads, "On demand," which means, "When asked for." One who has received a note like this may ask for the money at any time. It has been promised.

This quarter we take up a book called Acts of the Apostles. (Explain why so called, by whom written, and to whom.) These wonderful stories of what Jesus's apostles did show how his last prayer was answered. Refer to what Jesus asked for his own. All through this book we will find how God listens to prayer and answers it. We will have this golden thread running through the quarter's lessons: *God answers prayer*. If Jesus prayed and his Father answered, we should pray, and we may be sure of an answer. Each week we will have a prayer thought to slip on our golden lesson thread, showing what we ought to do.

Lesson story. There are hundreds of promises in God's book. This lesson tells about one of them. Lesson points to make clear: Jesus showing himself to disciples after resurrection; the good-bye meeting; his command—to wait; his promise—power, or strength, to work for him; his going up in cloud; the angels' message; the going back of disciples to wait and pray. Story parts may be grouped around persons—Jesus, disciples, angels. What did each do?

Dwell upon disciples' need: so much to learn—to do. They were weak, and needed power, which the Father would give in the coming of the Holy Spirit, the great Teacher and Helper. They were to ask for what was promised. Impress fact that they were to pray to the One who had promised and was able to give power, waiting as they were told, and then lead to this day's

Prayer thought: Pray to God. Why? He is our loving Father, who listens, understands, answers. Dearest friends can only do for us what God helps them to do, but he can do all things. Contrast his power to help with that of idol gods, and even of strongest friends. We ask many things of others, but pray to God only. He has all power. We have something to do; he will help us, as he said. Emphasize certainty of the answer according to God's promise, and that he alone can do all things.

Lesson hymn verse for quarter (tune, "Pleyel's Hymn") may be sung after instead of before the lesson:

Lord, we thank thee for thy word;
Bless the lesson we have heard,
Teach us, Father, how to pray;
Hear and help us day by day.

Thought for teachers. Teaching little ones to

pray is among our most practical duties and most solemn responsibilities. If we make the dominant thought of this quarter *Prayer*, we may well spend the weeks in impressing it continuously. Let us try to make the real existence and nearness of our Father, God, very clear, and lead hearts that trust easily to pray to him confidently, freely, lovingly, constantly, reverently. Offer very simple petitions in class, and have children repeat them. Teach such forms of prayer as seem helpful, but encourage the use of one's own words. Guard against expecting the answer always to be "Yes." We may tell our Father what we wish, but let him answer as he pleases, for he knows best.

Let us learn the lesson of prayer as never before, and then teach it.

LESSON II. (January 12.)

THE PROMISE OF POWER FULFILLED.

Acts 2, 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The promise is unto you, and to your children." Acts 2, 39.

Primary Notes.

Truth. God's promises are sure.

Impression. Jesus will surely keep his promises to me.

Expression. Absolute confidence in God's word.

Point of contact. Promises of different kinds made to little children.



Approach. Review of main points in last Sunday's lesson.

Lesson story. The account is vivid in itself, and should be largely an expansion of the first four verses, as next Sunday's lesson deals with the sermon of Peter and its results.

How many of you have ever had a promise made to you? What was promised to you, Walter? Something you wanted very much? Did you feel sure you would get it? Why? [Let the children talk freely along this line, but guide the talk so that they will see clearly that it is the character of the one making the promise that renders its fulfillment sure or otherwise.] I knew a boy named Edgar who went away to school in the fall, and when he went his father said, "Sometime this year I will send you a bicycle." Every day Edgar was looking for that wheel, but it did not come. Some boys who knew about it said, "I don't believe he is going

to send it at all." But Edgar said, "Yes, he is. You don't know my father. He promised that he would send it, and he always keeps his word." You see, Edgar was very sure his father would keep his promise, and he did.

Sometimes people cannot keep the promises they make, even though they wish very much to do so; but there is some One who has all power and wisdom and love, and he can and does always keep the promises that he makes. [Review briefly, impressing the truth that Jesus has promised to send his Spirit to help us also, that we may teach others about Jesus, not by words alone, but by the things that we do.] Of course the friends of Jesus knew that his promise would come true, and they waited day after day, meeting in an upper room together, not knowing when the Holy Spirit would come to them, but ready to wait till he came, however long it might be. While they were together in this way they chose another disciple to take the place of Judas, so that once more there were twelve.

One Sunday had gone by since Jesus went back to his home in heaven, and now another had come. On that morning, as the friends of Jesus were together in their upper room, they heard a sound like a mighty rushing wind, which filled all the house where they were sitting. They knew it was not a wind, but the sound was like that. Then they saw a beautiful light everywhere in the room. It was not like any light they had ever seen before, and some of it seemed to rest on each one of them. They knew then that this meant the coming of the Holy Spirit, not because of what they heard and saw, but because of the feeling in their hearts which made them know that they could speak for Jesus as they never had done before. Other people had heard the sound and came from all parts of the



city to find out what it meant. They were from many different countries, and spoke in different languages, and yet when the friends of Jesus went among them, to tell the wonderful story of

the Gospel, each one listening heard his own language. And they were all amazed, and said to one another, "What does this mean?" You and I know that it meant that the promise of Jesus had come true.

Special Primary Suggestions.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The promise is unto you, and to your children." Acts 2. 39.

Introductory. Point to impress, by way of approach: The thought of power. Illustrate by electric power. Most children know something about electric lights and cars; they are familiar with electric wires, even in the country. All have seen lightning. Explain that what is called electricity is really a great power, which sends messages along the telegraph wires, makes lights burn, and sends cars along the track. No one quite understands this wonderful power, but all believe in it. Cars cannot run along the track by themselves; they are powerless. When that long arm reaches up to the wire and brings the car and the power together the car goes. When a car is off the track, or has no hold on the wire, we say it is dead, or that the power is gone. Our hearts need power to do right and please our Father. We need help and strength to do his will, and he gives it, if we will take it. He promises it, but we must ask for it and believe that he will give it. Prayer brings us close to God, and he gives the help and strength. Our hearts need help and strength, just as cars need power, and we must go to the One who can give what we want and has promised it: for he keeps his word, or fulfills—that is, fills full—his promise, as the title of the lesson teaches us. To whom did God promise strength, or power? What were they to do to get it? Did they wait and trust and pray? [Review last lesson.]

Lesson story. Points to make clear: Obedience of disciples; one accord in one place, as we meet together and have the same wish, just as people who sing together sing the same words and tune; also, the way the answer came, with outward sound and sign, that all might know it, and what the disciples were able to do afterward. Group this lesson about the doings: What did the disciples do? Waited, prayed, trusted, then used the help that came and preached to all those thousands. What did God do? Promised, kept his word, sent the Holy Spirit and the help, gave wonderful signs, made the men able to preach in other languages. What did the thousands of strangers in the city do? Came together, listened, believed. If scholars are too small to be drilled in giving answers to

these questions, still let the teacher keep in mind the events of the lesson and give them with emphasis upon these important points in telling with graphic words the story of that great day. Tell how Peter preached, and how sorry for sin were those who heard. Then drill on Golden Text, the words Peter spoke about the promise to them all. Lead on from the thought of God's promise even to children to this day's

Prayer thought: Pray for power. Children need power to do right, and must ask for it of the One who promises it. On the golden thread "God answers prayer" let us slip this golden thought: Pray for power. It is a precious thought because we may pray for help, and the answer will surely come. We do not need to know other languages now, but we need to know how to speak lovingly, gently, and sweetly, as Jesus would talk.

Thought for teachers. We need power and the gift of tongues, that we may speak the child language and reach little hearts and minds. Simplicity must be our aim. We must think down to the child level of thought and speech. Find out from the mothers how much the children understand or misunderstand; find out by questioning in the class, dear teachers, and profit by the knowledge. The Holy Spirit is able and willing to give us this gift of simple speech.

LESSON III. (January 19.)

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Acts 2, 37-47.

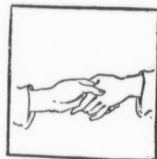
GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2, 47.

Primary Notes.

Truth. People who love Jesus will help others to serve him.

Impression. I can show by my words and deeds that I love Jesus.

Expression. Deepened desire to tell of Jesus by everyday acts and "kind-



ly words and virtuous life."
Point of contact. Church service and sermons. Two kinds of preaching.

Approach. The friends of Jesus preached in both ways.

Lesson story. Peter's wonderful sermon and its results must be simply but vividly told, so that the truth will shine out through it.

Begin by talking about church. How many

have been? What is done there? Why does the minister preach a sermon? About whom does he wish to tell the people? I heard a little boy preach a sermon one day, and yet he did not say a word to me. Would you like to know how that could be? He was a newsboy and had an armful of papers. Another newsboy who was a cripple came along and tried to get on a trolley, but slipped from the step and fell, and his papers were scattered in the muddy street. He cried, not so much because he was hurt as because his papers were spoiled; but before anyone else could get to him the other newsboy was at his side, helping him up and wiping the dirt from his face; and as he led him to the sidewalk he said, "Here, you take my papers and sell them; I can get some more." The sermon that he preached had this text, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Have you ever heard any sermons of that kind? [Encourage talk along this line as it will help to cultivate a habit of looking for kindly and Christlike things in other people, and that will lead to the emulation of such deeds.] That is the very best way that you and I can tell about Jesus, and he has promised to give us his Spirit to help us to do such things.

The friends of Jesus preached about him by the things they did all the time, but they also preached as our minister does in the church on Sunday, and Jesus wished them to do both. When the great crowd gathered about the house where the disciples were that Sunday morning Peter went out to preach to them, and these are some of the things that he said to them: "Ye men of Israel, I am going to tell you to-day about Jesus of Nazareth. You know about him, for you saw many of the wonderful things which he did. He is God's Son, and the things which he



did showed that he is, and yet you would not believe in him, and yet you even with wicked hands crucified him. This Jesus hath God raised from the dead, as we know because we saw and talked

with him afterward. So we are witnesses for him. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ."

When they heard Peter's words many of them were very sorry for what they had done, and said: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said if they were truly sorry and would be baptized that God would forgive them and send his Spirit to help them. A great many were glad to do what Peter said, so that on that one day [give the number according to the size of your church] times as many people as our church will hold became followers of Jesus.

Special Primary Suggestions.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2. 47.

Introductory. Point to emphasize: The thought of beginnings. Children are interested in seeds and growths. Show some tiny seeds, and draw out what needs to be done with them, and what will come from them if rightly treated. Tell how Jesus taught that great things could grow from little seeds. A mustard seed was the tiniest of all, yet it grew, when planted, to be a tree, and birds built nests in it. But seeds are not the only things that grow from little beginnings. A child gave a penny, which bought a little leaflet—a few pages of printing—which told of Jesus, and this led a heathen chief to Christ. He built a church, and many came there to pray. Was not that a great thing to grow from a little one? To-day we learn about some beginnings and how they grew.

Lesson story. Gather this story about the lesson title. Explain that "Early" means at the beginning, that "Christian" means belonging to Christ, and that "Church" is not only the place where people pray, sing, and listen to preaching, but that the people who belong to Christ are called his Church. If all the buildings were to burn there would still be a Church made up of people. At first, when Jesus was on earth, his twelve friends were all who belonged to his Church, but he prayed for more, and prayed for all who should believe what his friends should teach. We see how his prayer was answered. Points to impress: Peter's sermon, the number of those who believed, how they shared all they had, how happy they were, and how the Church grew. [Drill upon Golden Text in this last connection.]

Make clear that repentance is being sorry enough for sin to give it up, and that people must do something to show that they wish to belong to Christ's Church, and to show that their sins

are taken away. Explain baptism, which shows, as a picture makes things plain, that Jesus makes our hearts clean, as water makes our bodies clean. Grown persons who can make promises for themselves come and stand before the church people and are baptized, and promise to do as Jesus would have them. Parents who want to give their children to God very early bring them to be baptized, and so give them to him. These children are *baby members of the church*. Their names are written down in the church books. As soon as old enough to understand, and to show that they know what it means, they should come and make promises for themselves. As children so often see infant baptism, it should be explained to them.

Lead on from the beginning of the early Church, and the need of many more Christians now, to the

Prayer thought: *Pray for the church.* Teach the children to pray for their own pastor and the people who meet in God's house, also for those who do not come, that they may be saved—made free from sin and learn to love Christ. Carefully appeal to those whose near friends may not be Christians or churchgoers, to bring them to church as well as pray for them.

Thought for teachers. Ought we not to teach the baptized children of the church that they have been given to God in a special way, and should remember promises made for them? We must be very wise, and not seem to leave out those not baptized, but lead them to give themselves to Jesus, guarding against making either too much or too little of the ordinance.

LESSON IV. (January 26.)

THE LAME MAN HEALED. Acts 3. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." Exod. 15. 2.

Primary Notes.

Truth. Those who love Jesus will be kind to sick people.

Impression. I can do something for people who need help.

Expression. Loving deeds.

Point of contact. Boys helping an old lady who is in trouble.

Approach. Recalling the way in which Jesus helped the sick. His miraculous power.

Lesson story. Can be told almost in the Bible language and made very impressive.



Miss Johnson had a Sunday school class of six boys, and one Sunday she said, "Boys, what do you think has happened? Grandma Williamson has hurt her arm so that she cannot use it at all. She is so poor that she cannot hire anyone to help her, and I hardly know what she is going to do." The boys looked very sorry, but they had no money to give her, and did not know how to get any. Miss Johnson went on, "You see she has to have wood chopped for her fire." "O, I can do that!" said Harry. "Can you? Well, if you will that will be a great help. Then fresh water must be brought from the well." "I can do that," said John; and before they got through every boy in the class found there was something he could do, and each one was glad, because they all loved Jesus, and everyone who really loves Jesus always wishes to help those who are sick or in trouble of any kind.

What did Jesus do for sick people when he was here on the earth? Yes, he had so much power that he could make sick people well, and he gave his disciples power to do such things too. One day Peter and John went to the temple to pray. There at one of the gates was a lame man who had never walked in his life, but each day some friends of his would carry him to the temple so that he could beg of the people going in and out. When he saw Peter and John he asked them for money. Peter said to him, "Look on us." He looked, expecting to receive money, but Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Then Peter took the man by the right hand, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength, and he stood up and walked and went with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. All the people saw him, and they were amazed, for they knew that this was the same

you think the man himself would feel? How happy he must have been to be able to use his own feet! To whom would he give thanks? To Peter, but more than all to Jesus, from whom came the power to make the weak bones strong. Our Golden Text is part of a song of praise that God's people once sang to him. I am sure the lame man who was cured would feel like praising God in some such way as that; anyway, we know that he was thankful, and that Peter and John were glad and happy too.

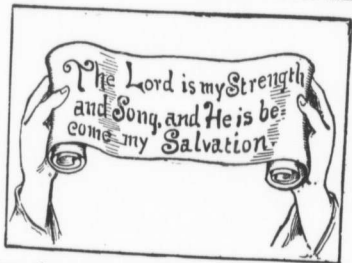
Special Primary Suggestions.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." Exod. 15. 2.

Introductory. Let point of contact be asking for what is wanted, but lead on to thought that asking and getting must not be all. We lift up folded hands to God in prayer, and he gives an answer. Remember the golden thread, "God answers prayer." But then we should open our hearts to give out. We should give as freely as we get. Tell story in Matt. 18. 23-33, of the man who begged his master to let him go free from his debt, and his wish was given him, which was the same as if his master had given him ten thousand talents. Then this man refused to give anything to his fellow-servant. Hands that hold fast everything given are stingy hands, and so are hearts that never give out love and kindness, but only wish to get what is good. Jesus's friends of the early Christian Church were not like this, but after they had received power they longed to give to others.

Lesson story. First thought: Peter and John went up to the temple at the hour of prayer. How much praying was done in these days. Disciples waited and prayed till the Spirit came, then kept on in prayers, in the early Church, and now these friends go to the temple at the hour of prayer. Other points: The lame man's need; what he asked for, what he got; what the disciples had to give. Group lesson around the three persons, but put God over all. He gave disciples the power to give what they did, and they gave what he gave to them. Emphasize joy over this asking, giving, and receiving, and drill upon Golden Text. What is our duty? Lead on to the

Prayer thought: Pray and give. We must first ask for what we need and for what we want, but not keep every blessing for ourselves. Dwell upon giving of such things as we have, and enumerate the opportunities a child has to give help and pleasure not only with money, but with



man that had been carried to the temple every day, and whose feet and ankles were so weak that no doctor could make him able to walk. How do

words and deeds, in little thoughtful ways at home and everywhere.

Be sure to place upon blackboard the line (preferably in yellow chalk) which we call the golden thread, "God answers prayer." Write across it weekly the prayer thought for the day's lesson, and review constantly from beginning. Or, a cord or gold-colored wire may be stretched in some convenient place, and little circles bearing words of thought for the day may be slipped upon it from week to week. Recur frequently to the thread running through the lessons, and the fact that the book of Acts tells us of the answer to Jesus's prayers. New scholars need to be told of the quarter's plan, and others reminded of it.

Thought for teachers. To teach is to "cause to know." As Dr. Trumbull says, "Telling is not teaching." Let us remember that we are to cause the children to know not only the doings but the duties included in the lesson story. The duty of systematic and continual giving in connection with praying and churchgoing should be taught, so that the child will know the obligation and privilege. Let us guard against wrong motives, which the display of even a giving exercise in class may induce, but teach giving in the name of Jesus—that is, as he would and does give.

Whisper Songs for January.

FIRST LESSON.

Beautiful promise!
Heavenly Dove!
Eyes of the children
Lifted above,
Look for thy coming—
The coming of love.

SECOND LESSON.

Blessed Lord Jesus,
Holy and true,
Heaven is open,
Love shineth through;
Old things are passing,
And all things are new.

THIRD LESSON.

Loving Lord Jesus,
Ever the same,
We are thy children,
Called by thy name;
On our heart's altar,
O kindle thy flame!

FOURTH LESSON.

Lord of the living,
Life is from thee;
Strong through thy Spirit,
Lord, we would be
Lift us, and bring us
Thy glory to see.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

First Quarter.

Teacher. Praise ye the Lord.

Class. Sing unto the Lord a new song.

All. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.

SONG. "Praise him for the Sabbath day,
Sabbath day, Sabbath day,
Praise him for the Sabbath day,
Praise ye the Lord."

GOD'S WORDS FOR CHILDREN:

T. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

C. Little children, keep yourselves from idols.
SONG. (Preferably one on the theme of the lesson.)

Boys. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

Girls. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

Teacher. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

PRAYER. (Closing with the Lord's Prayer repeated by all.)

GIVING SONG.

WORDS ABOUT GIVING:

Teacher. Freely ye have received; freely give.
Girls. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Boys. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.

OFFERING. (Followed by brief prayer giving the offering to God.)

ADDITIONAL LESSON.

MOTION SONG OR EXERCISE.

LESSON TEACHING. (It is well to introduce this with a brief, bright review. If the children expect this they will for the most part try to carry some of the facts of the last lesson in mind "to tell teacher.")

ECHO PRAYER.

CLOSING EXERCISE.

T. The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear?

C. The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

ECHO PRAYER.

"O Lord and Saviour, hear my prayer,

Keep my spirit undefiled;

Guard and lead me everywhere—

I am but a little child."

Amen.

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