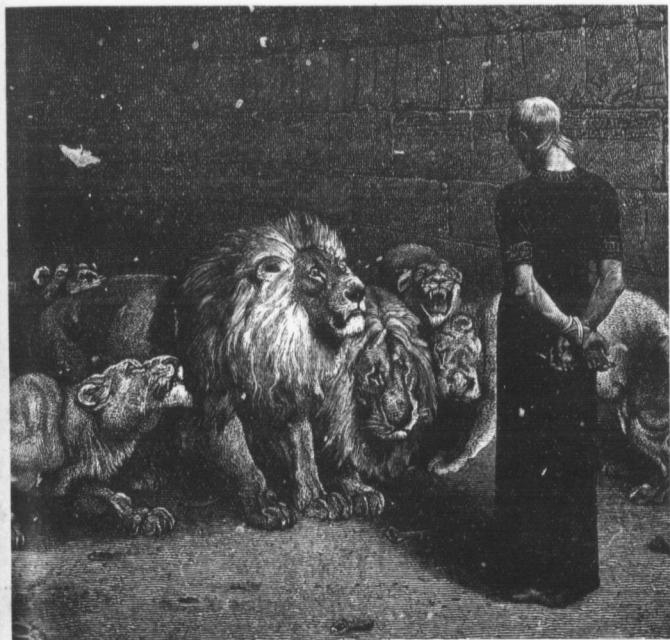


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FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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Vol. 39

From the

Alone! to land
 With no one s
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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 39

OCTOBER, 1905

No. 10

From the Shore of Eternity.

BY F. W. FABER.

Alone ! to land alone upon that shore !
With no one sight that we have seen before,

Things of a different hue,
And the sounds all new,
And fragrances so sweet the soul may faint,

Alone ! Oh, that first hour of being a saint !

Alone ! to land alone upon that shore !
On which no wavelets lisp, no billows roar,

Perhaps no shape of ground,
Perhaps no sight or sound,
No forms of earth our fancies to arrange,
But to begin alone that mighty change !

Alone ! to land alone upon that shore !
Knowing so well we can return no more ;
No voice or face of friend,
None with us to attend
Our disembarking on that awful strand,
But to arrive alone in such a land !

Alone ! to land alone upon that shore !
To begin alone to live for evermore,
To have no one to teach
The manners or the speech
Of that new life, or put us at our ease ;
Oa, that we might die in pairs or companies !

Alone ! the God we know is on that shore,
The God of whose attractions we know more

Than of those who may appear
Nearest and dearest here ;
Oh, is he not the lifelong Friend we know
More privately than any friend below ?

Alone ! the God we trust is on that shore,
The Faithful One whom we have trusted more

In trials and in woes
Than we have trusted those
On whom we leaned most in our earthly strife.

Oh, we shall trust him more in that new life !

Alone ! the God we love is on that shore—
Love not enough, yet whom we love far more,

And whom we loved all through
And with a love more true,
Than other loves—yet now shall love him more—

True love of him begins upon that shore !

So not alone we land upon that shore ;
'Twill be as though we had been there before ;

We shall meet more we know
Than we can meet below,
And find our rest like some returning dove,
And be at home at once with our eternal love !

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Sunday School Banner

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

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1905.

The Boys' Missionary Club, and What Came of It.

BY MISS V. F. PENROSE.

ONE of the best training-schools for boys is a missionary band or club. If a good knowledge of missions is equal to a college education, as one father put it, the boys who are becoming enthusiastic on this world-embracing subject are indeed receiving a university education.

In one club, where twenty boys are enrolled, the big brothers come with the little ones, the older taking a sort of supervision of the seven younger. The entrance fee is a subscription to the little missionary magazine, *Over Sea and Land*.

Originally only one meeting was held a month, but the interest is far greater

now that it meets every two weeks. The first meeting of the year was given to the general survey of the country, the second to written accounts of some missionary hero in that land. On the illustrated missionary postal card (a very much-prized notification of each meeting) each boy would be referred to some particular paragraph or section in the pages of *Over Sea and Land*. This was to be his "fact" for the meeting. Our programme, in use for years, was made by a committee of boys who printed copies of it. It begins with prayer by the leader, at whose house they meet. The boys say: "We do not know what to pray for till you tell us." A large map of the world is the invariable accompaniment of each session, colored by the leader in water-color, yellow for Protestants, red for Roman Catholics, pink for the Greek Church, green for Mohammedan lands, dark gray for regions inhabited by pagans and heathen. It is a perpetual "mute appeal." The work of all denominations is indicated by spangles, sewed on, and their glitter is most effective. This map is the basis of that first prayer, a boy pointing out the country to be studied, the color showing the prevailing religion, the spangles "the petty done, the undone vast." A map of the country to be studied may be fastened beside with our own stations marked, underscored with red, but the map of the world is indispensable, and is, indeed, "the best prayer-book."

There are three periods of prayer. The second, midway to the close, is "Prayer by the boys." Each one offers a very brief prayer for the boys of that land, a mission station, some missionary, his children, the medical work, perhaps a special hospital. Each boy has already given his fact, asked a question if he wishes. Then Bible verses are recited, a number of portions being memorized and one used at a meeting: Psalms 2, 8; 135, 15-18; Malachi 3, 8-10; Matthew 2, 1-6; John 3, 16; 15, 16; Romans 12, 1, 2; 10, 13-15; or each may give a verse beginning with the letter of the country for the month.

The offering next is taken in an incense-burner from China, an African basket, or a Persian bag. Curiosities have been lying in the centre of the table around which the boys are gathered, not to be handled till the programme demands them. They make the land so real, they prove it. The handling of an actual idol, perhaps of unknown antiquity,

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of some queer carving, or a doll of strangest construction, queer sandals or shoes, these are all a very definite portion of the "university education."

Finding the inestimable value of curios early in life, the leader earnestly set herself to secure some object from each mission land. Each was put to perpetual use, loaned in many directions, made to serve God, as a sort of trust fund. How those curios began to pour in after a time! missionaries finding their very active service would contribute a store of those inexpensive yet priceless trifles that make customs real.

One old woman in a little country church once said to the leader: "All my life I have wanted to see a Chinese woman's shoe." It came in that first lot of Chinese 'rifles, the determining factor of a now very remarkable collection. These have also served to start many another useful collection. The little book-marker made by "Miss Turtle," of Japan, never fails to stir to a deeper realization of the energizing power to Christ's love. She was hopelessly paralyzed from birth, and lay like a log for eighteen weary years, unwilling to learn anything. Then she heard of Christ, and at once was roused to a desire to help her family. Only able to move her head, she learned to use her mouth, teeth, and tongue to cut and make book-marks which readily found a sale. One marks the seventy-eighth Psalm: "Can God?" The marvels of his power are still manifesting themselves if one has but learned to recognize them.

The business part of the meeting was kept by the boys for the close, on the ground that "any fellow who comes late deserves to miss the best part." Thus the reports of secretary and treasurer came next, followed by new business. The yearly election of new officers makes the first fall meeting especially important.

The third period of prayer brings the hour to its prompt close. Now all rise and reverently repeat the Lord's Prayer, followed by a pause of silent prayer.

The second meeting of the year took up "Heroes of the Mission Field," a most stimulating topic. At the preceding meeting one was assigned, and some small curio was offered as a reward for the best written account. If information was not easy to find, a leaflet about the hero would be given to each boy, or if like Livingstone each might search for himself. The little "Hero Series" were often of service. The president was

starting for England when we were to have Livingstone, so a letter informed him he was appointed to visit his grave at Westminster Abbey and tell us about it. This was a wonderful errand. A note from him reported the commission fulfilled, and the first fall meeting had as "new business" Herbert's reading of the full epitaph which he had copied. This was placed in the portfolio of the band, where are kept the sketches of heroes, the maps the boys have made, and other memorabilia.

At the Livingstone meeting the large map had an unusual decoration: lines made by red ribbon marked his journeys, thus forming a crude cross in the interior. At the spot where his heart was buried there was a special mark.

For many years this band has been training boys, and two former members are Student Volunteers. Visiting at the boys' homes has always given an advantage in knowing the mothers. These mothers are mostly church-members who should be interested contributors to missions, but all are not. Could a double work be done? Why not try to draw in the mothers, too? They were visited, or, when this was not possible, letters were written to them. The boys had previously, at one of their own enthusiastic meetings, been told to present the plan to their mothers that they were to become possessors of Dr. Arthur Smith's book on China. The boys meanwhile took up the delightful little companion volume, "China for Juniors," and if any of the questions in it could not be answered from its pages, the mother's book was to be used. The mothers responded with delightful alacrity till nearly every home had a copy of "Rex Christus," and several sets of the illustrative pictures were also purchased. Thus for forty cents a "missionary library" was started.

When the plan was further explained, the mothers seemed very grateful for the training their boys were receiving in the mission band. They had felt that the "heroes"—Livingstone, Nevius, and others—about whom the boys had been writing, had not only given them lessons in composition, but lessons in the greatness which merits the "crown that fadeth not away." The little prizes of some trifle from China or elsewhere showed the mother how each boy, little and big, was appreciated, and every one who came to that house would be shown the piece of palm leaf on which the Lord's Prayer

was written in Laos, or whatever the prize might be.

But there was one thing more for the mothers. After the books for mothers and boys had been placed a few weeks, the mothers were one afternoon invited "to meet a lady from China." A number came and had a most interesting hour talking with the travelled guest, who had had so many interesting experiences beyond the Great Wall. They all expressed themselves anew about the benefits of the band, and perhaps some were a little amazed to learn that their boys were accustomed to pray so naturally at the meetings. The mothers seemed impressed as never before with the way their lads were working with Christ. The boys had felt a little jealous at first that the mothers were invited to a missionary entertainment to which they were uninvited, but it was pretty to hear how some had taken such pains that the home-staying mother should not miss the unusual occasion, and Tom's and Ed's mothers took great pleasure in telling how eager their boys had been for them to come.

The boys had their own little garden-party later on, but perhaps this year, instead of merely good times, they also will want to meet the lady from China. They are enthusiasts, and recognize that their work is the most inspiring, the most delightful, the biggest, the most worth while of anything. They simply insist that the boys shall come regularly and behave properly.

Of course, the leader of the club loves boys, and is willing that they should know it. She also prays continually for guidance, and is never satisfied, but constantly looks for better things. She does not believe in perpetual novelties of all sorts. The contagion of burning enthusiasm in work with Christ and for Christ supplies motive power, interest, attraction, and invests the whole range of the work with greatest dignity.

The summer vacation being unduly prolonged, owing to severe illness, each boy received a note last autumn asking him to come to the accustomed place and return the little birth-day bag that accompanied each note. In these bags a slip of paper asked in rhyme for as many pennies as each one had lived years. All the family were to help fill these dainty little silk bags. (One rule of the leader has been to always be as careful for dainty, artistic touches with the boys as with girls or older persons, and this is

much appreciated.) We did not want our offering for our bed in a little African hospital to fall short because of no meetings. Over \$10 were brought in, though some bags were forgotten.

The notes also told the boys that the next land in which they would travel was to be Japan. In the meantime, while "Japan for Juniors" was not yet published, each mother was to have "Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom," and the boys were to read the first two chapters, that when they met they might be properly started on a good foundation. There will be a Japan meeting or tea for the mothers later on.

This band has again and again proved the truth of the words of John Elliot, after whom they are named: "Let us not sit down and wait for miracle. Up and be doing, and the Lord be with thee. Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, can do anything."—Missionary Review.

Methodist Magazine and Review for September.

The opening article of the September number of this magazine is a continuation of the Editor's account of personal travel in Labrador, well illustrated, as is also the following paper, "Korea, With the Mind's Eye." Other illustrated articles are "Camp Education Extension," by Alfred Fitzpatrick, and "The Kingdom of Roumania," by Queen Elizabeth, of that country. Rev. S. Hall Young, D.D., writes on "Missionary Experiences in the Yukon," and Rev. O. Darwin on "The Crisis in the North-West." "The Miracle Maker of Gardens" is an account of the truly wonderful achievements of the celebrated horticulturist, Luther Burbank, in the way of developing new fruits and flowers. An article on "Canadian Journalism," by H. P. Moore, and a review of Morley's "Life of Cobden," by Rev. Selby Jefferson, are followed by the serial story, "Summer-wild," and a clever Japanese story, by E. A. Taylor, and "A Story of Indian Life on the Pacific Coast," with the regular departments of general interest, completing a very satisfactory number.

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FOUR

GOLDEN

AUT

[Study the chap
Dan. 5. 17-30

17 Then Dan' the king, Let thy thy rewards to the writing unto the the interpretation
18 O thou king Neb-ub-chad-nez-za majesty, and glory

19 And for the people, nations, feared before him and whom he wou he would he set up down.

20 But when p his mind hardened from his kingly th from him;

21 And he was and his heart wa his dwelling was him with grass lik with the dew of h most high God ru and that he appoi will.

22 And thou hi not humbled thine all this;

23 But hast li Lord of heaven; vessels of his hou thy lords, thy wive drunk wine in then gods of silver, and stone, which s and the God in wh whose are all thy w

24 Then was the him; and this writ ME'NE, ME'NE, ME'NE, ME'NE,

25 And this is the ME'NE, ME'NE, ME'NE; God hat and finished it.

27 TE'KEL; Th nces, and art foun

28 PE'RES; Th given to the Medes

29 Then comman meth Dan'el with



INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS

FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON I. Daniel and Belshazzar

[Oct. 1

GOLDEN TEXT. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Psa. 34. 16.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Study the chapter. Read Dan. chapters 3, 4]

Dan. 5. 17-30 [Commit to memory verses 29, 30]

17 Then Dan'iel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

18 O thou king, the most high God gave Neb-u-chad-nez'zar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor:

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

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

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

22 And thou his son, O Bel-shaz'zar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this:

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

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

25 And this is the writing that was written, MENE, ME'NE, TE'KEL, U-PHAR'SIN.

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

27 TE'KEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

28 PE'RES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

29 Then commanded Bel-shaz'zar, and they clothed Dan'iel with scarlet, and put a chain of

REVISED VERSION.*

17 Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. 18 O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty; 19 and because of the greatness that he gave him, all the peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down. 20 But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: 21 and he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will. 22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knewest all this, 23 but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine from them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified. 24 Then was the part of the hand sent from before him, and this writing was inscribed.

25 And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

26 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end. 27 TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. 28 PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with purple, and put a chain of

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

gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.
30 In that night was Bel-shaz'zar the king of the Chal-de'ans slain.

Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

- M.** An impious feast. Dan. 5. 1-9.
Tu. Daniel called. Dan. 5. 10-16.
W. Daniel and Belshazzar. Dan. 5. 17-30.

gold about his neck, and made proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.
30 In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain.

- Th.** The holy vessels. Jer. 52. 12-19.
F. God forgotten. Luke 12. 15-21.
S. Herod's punishment. Acts 12. 18-23.
S. Fate of the wicked. Psa. 37. 8-22.

Time.—Probably 538 B. C. **Place.**—Babylon, on the Euphrates.

The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 34.

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

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 35.

I need thee, precious Jesus!
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 35.

I need thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like thine.

Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *The Crime* (v. 17-23).—Who was the king spoken of in the lesson? What had God given his ancestor? Describe the power of the ancient kings. To what sins did their great power expose them? What dangers may come to those upon a throne? What punishment came to this king of Babylon? Why was he punished?

2. *The Sentence* (v. 24-29).—What were the

words written? What is the interpretation of each word? What is meant by "numbered thy kingdom"? How was the king "weighed in the balances"? In what way was the kingdom divided? What did the scarlet and chain of gold signify?

3. *The Execution* (v. 30).—What happened to the king? Was there human agency in slaying the king? Why was he slain?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *Nebuchadnezzar's Failure and Punishment* (v. 17-21).—Why did Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, send for Daniel? What had God given to Nebuchadnezzar? Why was Nebuchadnezzar forced to give up his throne? What affliction was put upon him? What had he to learn before he could be restored to his right mind?

2. *A Doomed King and Kingdom* (v. 22-30).—What ought Belshazzar to have learned from the fate of Nebuchadnezzar? Of what three great sins was Belshazzar guilty? What do the words mean which were written on the wall? Did Daniel care for the honors which the king put upon him? How long after the king saw the writing did he live?

Questions for Younger Scholars

Who was the new king of Babylon? Whose son was he? What kind of a feast did he make? How many were invited to the feast? Why was it foolish to hold this feast at this time? Because a great army was just outside the gates. What appeared on the wall to Belshazzar? Who was sent for to read this writ-

ing? Where did Daniel get his wisdom? From God. What reward was offered to the one who read the writing? Did Daniel read it to get the reward? No. Who had weighed Belshazzar in his balances? God. What happened that night to Belshazzar? He was slain, and his kingdom was taken away.

The Lesson Analysis

I. *Introductory: Belshazzar's Feast* (verses 1-16).

(a) Belshazzar, king of Babylon, made a feast to his lords, (b) and drank wine with them from vessels consecrated to Jehovah—a shockingly profane act from even the pagan point of view. (c) As they drank they praised the false gods and worshipped their images

(verses 1-4). (d) In the midst of the feast the severed fingers of a human hand wrote on the wall before them a message that none could read. (e) King Belshazzar in his terror called aloud for interpreters and made extravagant offers of reward. (f) None of the professional "wise men" of the kingdom could read the writing. (g) King Belshazzar's desperate

turned to despair (verses 17-23). Daniel could read the writing and asked him to read the writing and promised of reward. (h) *The Arrivals* (verses 24-29).

(a) Daniel received the king's honors, (b) but pret the writing showing how he had been Nebuchadnezzar (verses 18, 19) spoiled by his deposition and in his thought he was sanity came reverent gifts (verses 20,

DECLINE AND FALL OF BABYLON
Marduk (Evl-merod) Jehoiachin king of Judah and succeeded by his son, who succeeded Nabonidus, was placed in the temple, though not perished he left the affairs of the kingdom did not appear from called king. During the boundaries of an object of his ambition earlier Media had Persians in subsequent Gobryas, a trusted god another name among same person as Darius conquered nations by the Hebrew exiles w

Verse 17. This will be necessary chapter to get the At a great feast w honor of "a thousand vessels which had at Jerusalem were the company in the same hour came f hand, and wrote upon the plaster palace." In fear t the hand and w named the wise m the writing. This at the suggestion captive Daniel, w standing and wis Belshazzar promi

turned to despair. (h) The queen-mother entered the banquet house, and suggested that Daniel could read the writing. (i) Belshazzar asked him to try to read it and repeated his promise of rewards.

II. *The Arraignment of Belshazzar* (verses 17-23).

(a) Daniel declined the king's proffered honors, (b) but undertook to read and interpret the writing (verse 17). (c) He began by showing how indebted to the Most High God had been Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar's ancestor (verses 18, 19), (d) and how he had been spoiled by his honors; (e) how he had been deposed and in his insanity treated as the beast he thought he was, (f) until with returning sanity came reverence and recognition of God's gifts (verses 20, 21). (g) Daniel tells Bel-

shazzar that his knowledge of all this should have made him humble; (h) but instead he had insulted the Lord of heaven by drinking wine from consecrated vessels. (i) Daniel identifies the Most High God (verse 18) with the Lord of heaven (verse 23), and both with Jehovah; (j) and calls him "the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways."

III. *The Sentence* (verses 24-29).

(a) It was God who sent the fingers to write this message—God's message (verse 24). (b) The writing (verse 25). (c) The interpretation (verses 26-28). (d) Parenthetically Belshazzar kept his promise and loaded Daniel with honors.

IV. *The Execution* (verse 30).

God's sentence was that night carried out.

The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies are based on the text of the Revised Version.

DECLINE AND FALL OF THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE—The son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar was Amil-Marduk (Evl-merodach, 2 Kings 25. 27), who reigned from 561 to 560 B. C. It was during his reign that Jehoiachin, king of Judah, was released from prison (2 Kings 25. 27). After a brief reign he was murdered and succeeded by his own brother-in-law, Nergalshar-uzur (Neriglissar). Neriglissar died in 556, and his son, who succeeded him to the throne, was immediately deposed by the priesthood, and Nabu-Na'id, or Nabonidus, was placed on the throne in his stead. Nabonidus was a lover of research and a builder of temples, though not an energetic ruler. He dwelt little in Babylon, and at the time of the city's greatest peril he left the affairs of the capital in charge of his son Bel-shar-uzur, the Belshazzar of our lesson. It does not appear from Babylonian inscriptions that Belshazzar was actually entitled to the honor of being called king. During the reign of Nabonidus (555-539 B. C.), Cyrus, king of Persia, was gradually extending the boundaries of his empire. Babylonia, which with Egypt had joined a league against Cyrus, became an object of his ambition, and in 538 B. C. Babylon fell into the hands of the Persian king. Eleven years earlier Media had been conquered and incorporated into the empire, the Medes thereupon assisting the Persians in subsequent wars and conquests. The actual siege and capture of Babylon was accomplished by Gobryas, a trusted general in the army of Cyrus, and it is this Gobryas, of whom Josephus tells us he "had another name among the Greeks," and who may have been a Median by birth, that many consider to be the same person as Darius, the Median mentioned in the book of Daniel. The policy of Cyrus was to conciliate conquered nations by granting to them the largest possible amount of freedom, and under his mild rule the Hebrew exiles were permitted to return to Jerusalem.

Verse 17. Then Daniel answered—It will be necessary to read verses 1-16 of this chapter to get the setting of our lesson story. At a great feast which Belshazzar had made in honor of "a thousand of his lords," the golden vessels which had been taken from the temple at Jerusalem were brought forth and used by the company in their drunken revelry. "In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace." In fear and trembling at the sight of the hand and writing, Belshazzar had summoned the wise men of his realm to interpret the writing. This they were unable to do, and at the suggestion of the queen the Hebrew captive Daniel, who was noted for his understanding and wisdom, was sent for. To him Belshazzar promised that he should be clothed

in purple and proclaimed third ruler in the kingdom in case he should be able to interpret the writing. To these words of Belshazzar Daniel replied. He rejects the proffered honors, but agrees to read the writing for Belshazzar nevertheless.

18. Before interpreting the handwriting on the wall Daniel points out to Belshazzar in strong terms the wickedness and folly of his own pride and haughty spirit.

Nebuchadnezzar thy father—It is not apparent from other records that Belshazzar was actually related to Nebuchadnezzar, and hence the term "thy father" must be understood in the more general sense of predecessor, which was not an uncommon usage of the term.

19. Trembled and feared before him—Stood in awe of him, dreading what he might do next.

Whom he would he slew—By so doing, acting as though he possessed the attributes and the authority of Deity. Similar expressions are used elsewhere of the action of Jehovah (comp. 1 Sam. 2, 6, 7; Psa. 75, 7).

Raised up—Exalted. The same word as in Psa. 89, 19: "I have exalted one chosen out of the people."

20. Heart . . . lifted up—Proud, forgetful of God: "(If thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God" (Deut. 8, 14).

Hardened—Literally, *was strong*, that is, stubborn, unyielding. In this sense Pharaoh is said to have "hardened his heart" (Exod. 9, 12).

21. Made like the beasts—Madness accompanied by symptoms such as Nebuchadnezzar is said to have manifested was not unknown among the ancients. Persons thus afflicted imagined themselves changed into some animal and acted to a greater or less extent in conformity with that persuasion, while at the same time not entirely or continually bereft of reason. Hence, the record of Nebuchadnezzar's malady, though not mentioned in any other known source, is not improbable.

22. Belshazzar had not profited by the warning recorded by Nebuchadnezzar's fate, but had sinned still more deeply and especially by his wanton sacrilege in using the sacred vessels from Jehovah's temple as he had done.

23. Thy ways—Thy destinies.

24. Then was the part of the hand—"Then" is here equivalent to *hence, therefore*.

25. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin—The names of three weights, *Mene* being the Aramaic form of the Hebrew "Maneh," and *Tekel* being the Aramaic form of the Hebrew "Shekel." *U-pharsin* is the plural of *Peres* (more correctly *Paras*—comp. verse 28), with the conjunction "and" (*U*) prefixed. *Paras* properly means division, but was used as an equivalent for a divided or *half-Maneh*. Hence the four words used together, "A Maneh, a Maneh, a Shekel, a half-Maneh," are an epigrammatic riddle in the form of a play on words, representing the names of three weights, and hence having a hidden significance. Daniel's skill in "declaring riddles" (comp. verse 12) enabled him to interpret the enigma. Since *Mene* also means "numbered," and *Tekel* (*Shekel*) suggests *Tekil*, the word for "weighed," and *Pharsin* (*half-Maneh*) means also "divided" and in addition suggests *Paras* (Persians), the meaning of the whole suggests itself to the inspired interpreter as given (verses 26-28).

28. Medes and Persians—Cyrus, king of Persia, had incorporated Media into his empire in the year 550 B. C.

Darius the Mede—Profane history throws no light on the identity of this person. He may be Gobryas (comp. Introductory Note), who in the inscriptions of Cyrus is called Ugbaru, and who was appointed governor of Babylon after his conquest of the city. This seems to be the most plausible of the possible explanations.

The Lesson Exposition

THE DISCIPLINE OF KINGS

In the history of the Israelites, both of the southern and the northern kingdoms, from the time of the division to the time of the final captivity, we were shown how God disciplined the rulers of his own chosen people. The books of Kings and Chronicles, and several of the books of prophecy which belong to the times which they describe, have their chief value in their exhibition of the truth that God holds rulers sternly responsible for their administration. God deals with a king not only in his personal but his official capacity. Nations will not have existence in the world to come, and kings will have no dynasties beyond the grave. They must be reckoned with in time. And the kings and rulers of to-day are held to just as strict accountability as were those of antiquity.

"LEST WE FORGET"

When, after the captivity, the history of the Israelites is merged for the time with that of the Babylonians, it is still made clear that the sovereignty of Jehovah extended over heathen as well as Jewish kings. He was not the God

of one nation, but of all nations; he was not the King of one line of kings, but of all kings. So, as he had spoken by Isaiah and Jeremiah to the Jewish kings, now through Daniel he spoke to the kings of Babylon.

Two examples of God's assertion of his authority over the proudest of kings are given in these early chapters of Daniel. First there was the humbling of Nebuchadnezzar (chap. 4), until he was made to know "that the heavens do rule." And second, the destruction of Belshazzar, as described in the lesson, who had "lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven" (verse 23). Kipling's Recessional, than which nothing more appropriate could be read or sung in connection with this lesson, was given response from the heart of the world because it expressed the great danger to which great rulers and great nations are exposed, that they should glory in their own power and wealth. "Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget."

"THE SECRET OF THE LORD"

The thing which gave to Daniel position of influence and authority in the court of Babylon

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was the fact that "the secret of the Lord" was revealed to him. This distinguished him from all the "wise men" of Nebuchadnezzar, who were unable to tell the king his dream (2. 19). And to Daniel the same king turned for the interpretation of his vision after all the magicians had failed (4. 4-9). Three other kings reigned between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, and with the changing administration Daniel fell into obscurity, and the reckless king of the lesson did not know him. But the queen mother, or grandmother, had not forgotten him; and, when she saw the consternation produced by the appearance of the hand with its mysterious writing on the wall, she spoke to the king concerning him as one in whom was "understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods." Daniel became again the highest court of appeal because God spoke through him. In the great crises, when questions of destiny arose, kings were impotent and wise men were dumb. The call was for some man who could interpret the messages of God to men. Daniel alone could do this, and that gave him preeminence.

THE PRESENT TENSE OF PROPHECY

We are liable to think of prophecy in the past tense, in the tense, indeed, of remote antiquity. But prophecy is a matter of to-day, not simply of antiquity. King Edward and Emperor William, the Mikado and the Czar, and all the rulers whose names are familiar to us, are just as important in God's sight and as much subject to his laws as the kings of which we read in these ancient annals. And the thing of supreme importance to rulers and peoples now as of old is the will and the purpose of God. We read of treaties between nations, and we wonder under certain conditions what certain rulers intend to do. But the great question which occasionally arises, which makes all other questions insignificant, is, "What does God intend to do? In which direction do the divine purposes run?" The wisest man is he who can

answer that question. The affairs of the world are not at the disposal of diplomats, and are not settled by armies and navies; and hours still come when the greatest and wisest are conscious that there is nothing to do but wait for an interpreter of what God has written.

A FEAST OF MADNESS

Belshazzar's feast stands forever as an example of madness and folly. Babylon was even then invested by a great army and closely besieged. Cyrus was thundering at its gates. But the king and his lords were so confident of the impregnable strength of the great walls of the city that they treated the attack with contempt, and gave themselves up to a night of debauchery. He feasted as if he were celebrating a victory. It was the custom of the kings of Babylon to hold their feasts apart from their nobles, and women were usually excluded from them. But Belshazzar, in the excess of his spirit of riot, summoned his whole court and all the women of his harem. And, casting away all sense of the sacred, he sent for the vessels taken by his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, from the temple at Jerusalem, and used them for the drinking cups of his orgy; and drunken with wine from those holy vessels he and his rioters "praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." Surely, if some Israelite were permitted to look on, it must have seemed a melancholy sight, in which the glory of Jehovah and his people was brought to deepest and most hopeless shame. But even then the impious feast was about to strike. While the gods of gold and silver and brass and iron and wood and stone were being given highest praise, a hand appeared swiftly writing on the wall the decree of Jehovah for the destruction of the king and the passing of his kingdom to another. One breath from God and all the pomp and pride and vauntings of men fade as a dream.

THE LESSON PRAYER

Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy reign is over all times and all peoples. Jerusalem, Nineveh, Babylon, London, Paris, and Washington—a thousand years in thy sight are as one day, and one day as a thousand years; and still thou raisest up and castest down, humbling the proud and exalting the meek. We rejoice to know that thou art still in the world, weighing the hearts of rulers in thy balances, and witnessing for truth in the sight of all nations. In the events of to-day thou art sifting out the hearts of men before thy judgment seat. Give us to know the meaning of thy providences in the world, and may we in all issues of righteousness be found upon thy side. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

God could not be good and favor evil.
A man is never losing while he is gaining with God.

No man can gain by losing God.
Daniel saved everything by being willing to lose everything for God.

Belshazzar lost everything by trying to save himself selfishly.

Doom and death are written on the tablet of every heart that breaks with duty.

No man can be wrong with God and right with man.

Sin hoodwinks the soul.

II

A man may famish with the ocean at his feet.
The truest leadership does not always have the largest following.

Only what is heavenly will get to heaven.
Bad hearts feel little better in good places.
Good hearts feel little worse in bad places.
No man can sow the seeds of death and reap a harvest of life.

Virtue grows from within outward, not from without inward.

Chastity is to the soul what sunshine is to the soil.

Frauds breed feuds.

It is easier to start wrong than it is to stop.

III

A man may feast himself to death.
Peace does not always pair with plenty.
One may sow grief in a garden of glory.
Only greatness of spirit is true greatness.
God's arrows of truth can pierce any man-made shield.

The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

It was a Salvation Army girl singing. The tones were tender, and the words went to my heart. I often pray as I pass them kneeling in the dust of the street that the Holy Spirit may use what they say to arrest the thought of some one going by. These were the words she sung:

"Weighed in the balance, and wanting;
Weighed, but no Jesus is there;
Weighed in the balance, and wanting,
Weighed, and found lighter than air!"

I thought what if I were weighed to-day? Would my real self balance true? A precious price has been paid for me, am I giving to God the full value of what he has given for me? Then indeed was I glad to remember, "Christ Jesus is made unto us wisdom, righteousness,

The shadows of sin hide truth from the heart.

The sirens of the senses may sing the soul to insensibility.

Sometimes the bitterest drafts are drained from the brightest chalices.

IV

No soul is ever wholly true till it believes the whole truth.

It is the lesson of all history that where the animal nature has ruled man the animal nature has ruined man.

The natural must be dominated by the supernatural: my natural must have God's supernatural.

If thou wouldst be sure of others consider thyself.

Other people's windows will look brighter when our own are clean.

Temptation is a challenge to conquest.

V

He is sure to be wrong who is never sure that he is right.

The faultless find the least fault.

Sequence in character is of the greatest consequence.

Some day the riotous sower will be the ruined reaper.

The least things always seem better to the best man than the greatest things do to the worst man.

The Midas touch gets into human experience.

The tide will come in with larger volume than it went out.

Crime accumulates till it kills.

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out and the boy got a little over his fright. "Yes, but I thought I could do it all right," he said, looking rather foolish.

Belshazzar's father had learned by a terrible experience the folly of a heart lifted in pride against God. While he was on the top of prosperity, saying, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?" he lost his mind, became an imbecile, and for years was an object of pity and scorn in the eyes of the people he had ruled with the hand of a despot. All this he suffered to learn that God, not man with his proud self-will, rules in the kingdom of men. How hard we make it for ourselves when we set up self in the place of God. Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, but the road by which we find wisdom is often necessarily rough. Belshazzar, though he knew all this about his father, learned only by the same way of hard experience that God holds every human life in the grasp of almighty power. Will you not learn this truth with a meek and quiet spirit? His grasp of power is a hand of love. It is a wise and happy thing to submit one's life to his control. It is terrible to learn submission by defeat. But it seems the only way for many of us.

Daniel did not set before Belshazzar a list of crimes as the reason for the mysterious writing on the wall against him. Only one charge he made, and that included all. "Thou hast not humbled thine heart, . . . but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; . . . and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and

whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."

Is this charge against Belshazzar only? What of me? What of you? The balances are God's justice. On one side is his holiness, righteousness, mercy, and love; on the other side, you. Not what you have done or not done in specific acts, but your character, yourself. How does it weigh? What can you put in the scale against his holiness? Ah, that sinful heart—it cannot tip the scale one hair's weight! What against his righteousness, the integrity and truth by which he gives to every soul exactly what it deserves, dealing justly with all without respect of persons. Can you balance his righteousness with your own? What can you put against the mercy that has forgiven, shielded, held back just punishment for sin, and given you grace and hope of salvation? And his love—love that suffered for you, died for you, bears with you, cares for you, never fails you; love beyond the strongest, sweetest human love you ever knew—unselfish, redeeming love! How can you even the balance weighted with all the mercies and the love of God?

The best of us are found wanting. Christ in us is our only hope. "Ye are complete in him." The balances swing even with Christ in the scale on our side, "blotting out the handwriting against us, which was contrary to us, taking it out of the way and nailing it to his cross." But without him we shall be forever found wanting.

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1.

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart;
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away—
On dune and headlands sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,

And guarding calls not thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!

—Rudyard Kipling.

2. Verses 18-20.

. . . but man, proud man!
Drest in a little brief authority—
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence—like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As makes the angels weep; who, with our
spleens,

Would all themselves laugh mortal.

—Shakespeare.

3. Verses 20, 21. "A tortoise, dissatisfied with his lowly life, when he beheld so many of the birds, his neighbors, disporting themselves in the clouds, and thinking that, if he could but once get up into the air, he could soar with the best of them, called one day upon an eagle, and offered him all the treasures of ocean if he could only teach him to fly. The eagle would have declined the task, assuring him that the thing was not only absurd but impossible; but, being further pressed by the entreaties and promises

of the tortoise, he at length consented to do for him the best he could. So taking him up to a great height in the air and loosing his hold upon him, 'Now then!' cried the eagle; but the tortoise, before he could answer him a word, fell plump upon a rock, and was dashed to pieces."

—*Æsop.*

4. Verse 20. When flowers are full of heaven-descended dews they always hang their heads; but men hold theirs the higher the more they receive, getting proud as they get full.—*Beecher.*

5. Verses 22-30.

In the monarch's cheeks a wild fire glowed,
And the wine awoke his daring mood,
And onward still by madness spurred,
He blasphemeth the Lord with a sinful word;
He and brazenly boasts, blaspheming wild,
While the servile courtiers cheered and smiled,
Quick the king spoke, while his proud glance
burned,
Quickly the servant went and returned.
He bore on his head the vessels of gold
Of Jehovah's temple the plunder bold.
With daring hand, in his frenzy grim
The king seized a beaker and filled to the brim,
And drained to the dregs the sacred cup,
And foaming he cried, as he drank it up,
"Jehovah, eternal scorn I own
To thee. I am monarch of Babylon."

But that same night, in all his pride,
By the hand of his servants Belshazzar died.
—*From Heine, translated by C. G. Leland.*

6. Verse 27. Upon laying a weight into one of the scales, inscribed Eternity, though I threw in that of time, prosperity, affliction, wealth, and poverty, which seemed very ponderous, they were not able to stir the opposite balance.—*Addison.*

7. Chosroes, king of Persia, in conversation with two philosophers and his vizier, asked, "What situation of man is most to be deplored?" One of the philosophers maintained that it was old age, accompanied with extreme poverty; the other, that it was to have the body oppressed by infirmities, the mind worn out, and the heart broken by a heavy series of misfortunes. "I know a condition more to be pitied," said the vizier, "and it is that of him who has passed through life without doing good, and who, unexpectedly surprised by death, is sent to appear before the tribunal of the sovereign Judge."—*Whitecross.*

8. Verse 30.

That night they slew him on his father's throne
He died unnoticed, and the hand unknown:
Crownless and scepterless Belshazzar lay,
A robe of purple round a form of clay.

—*Sir Edwin Arnold.*

Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

1. Feasting on the Verge of Ruin. British and other correspondents who were with the Russian forces at Port Arthur, Harbin, and many points in the early part of the recent struggle between Russia and Japan wrote graphic accounts of the demoralization wrought among the czar's officers and men through liquor and other forms of dissipation. They declared that the vast amounts of expensive wines consumed, the feasts, the revelries, the destruction of discipline, and other tokens of social and moral laxity, occasioned the gravest grounds for anticipating that when the actual engagements came between the rival armies and navies the Russian troops would be overwhelmed, simply on the ground of the physical and moral breakdown that had been wrought by excesses, among commanders and soldiers alike. The outcome has more than justified the fears then expressed. On the other hand, the temperate habits, the self-restraint, the moderation in every respect except in the actual work of the soldier or sailor, shown by the Japanese have awakened the admiration of the world.

2. At Versailles in 1789. A similar situation is furnished by those who describe the horrors of the French Revolution. At its outbreak in 1789 the nobility and the court at Versailles

were absorbed in gayeties, festivities, excesses, of an extraordinary character. Justin H. McCarthy says in his account of the era: "The court wore its gayest aspect. Wine, music, and dancing cheered the courtiers and stimulated the troops." And this was at the very time when the Bastille had just been destroyed, and when Paris was in the throes of the beginnings of the Reign of Terror. Even so Belshazzar was deaf and dumb and blind to all the omens of the hour, and occupied with revelry the time which should have been given to planning defenses for the city, guarding the safety of his forts, and watching his gates.

3. The Handwriting on the Wall. Dean Milman, in his tragedy of Belshazzar has many stirring lines descriptive of the scenes associated with the lesson. For instance, he thus pictures Belshazzar in the climax of his feasting:

"Bring wine!
I see your souls as jocund as mine own:
Pour in yon vessels of the Hebrews' God
Belshazzar's beverage—pour it high. Hear,
earth!
Hear heaven, my proud defiance!—O, what
man.
What God—"

At this point
the appearance
stunned, spec
his courtiers
them says:

"The king
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At this point Belshazzar's eye is arrested by the appearance of the hand, and he sits, stunned, speechless, while the guests stare, and his courtiers cry out in amazement. One of them says:

"The king! the king! look to the king! . . . See, his shuddering joints are loosened, And his knees smite each other: such a face Is seen in tombs:—what means it?"

By this time Belshazzar has recovered his speech, and he stammers forth:

"O, dark and bodiless hand,
What art thou—thus upon my palace wall
Gliding in shadow, slow, gigantic blackness?
Lo! fiery letters, where it moves, break out!

'Tis there—'tis gone—'tis there again; no,
naught
But those strange characters of flame, that
burn
Upon the unkindled wall:—I cannot read
them—
Can ye?

I see your quivering lips that speak not—
Sabaris,—Arioch—Captains—Elders—all
As pale and horror-stricken as myself!
Are there no wiser? Call ye forth the dream-
ers,

And those that read the stars, and every print,
And he that shall interpret best shall wear
The scarlet robe and chain of gold, and sit
Third ruler of my realm!"

4. *Modern Instances.* Types of men like Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar are not lacking in our own time. The arrogance, the impious and blasphemous spirit, the desperate audacity of the Tweed Ring, which, in a few years after it was by the corrupt complicity of the New York Legislature enthroned in New York city, robbed the people of countless millions of dollars—these qualities of the villains of that era, 1870, and following, are fair parallels of those

which we have been studying. "What are you going to do about it?" was the sneering and insolent question of "Boss" Tweed when confronted by accusations and proofs of his matchless villainy. Recent similar exposures of corruption in other cities, which will come to the mind of anyone who reads the public prints, are also cases in point. Some political bosses of our time have ruled as haughtily, as tyrannically, and as blasphemously as did Belshazzar in his day.

5. *Weighed Every Day.* "We are going through testing processes every day. The student in his recitation, behavior, spirit, and conduct, as well as in his examinations, is being tested from time to time; the net result is shown at the end of the term, or year, or course, by his final report; perhaps, in view of his neglect, his lack of application, his ignorance, his misconduct, he will be "found wanting." The principle holds good in all other relations. Estimates are being formed, ratified, and confirmed concerning our character and worth and work by all about us; every day is to some extent a weighing day—a day of judgment. We are getting "our grades" from time to time, and in the judgment of those who are associated with us, or by whom we are employed, as well as in the providential order of the world, we are having our due place assigned to us.

6. *Found Wanting at Last!* "But, O, to be wanting when God weighs motive, character, life, soul; to be wanting in the fruits and joys of a holy life, when God bestowed ten thousand gifts and instructions to help us gain that great reward; to be wanting in a hope sure and steadfast when God takes away the soul; to be wanting when the book of life is opened and the eye of the final Judge turns to see whose name is written therein—who would not see to it earnestly that no such fatal deficiency shall be found against him when the last account of his life is balanced before God?"—*Rev. Daniel March, D.D.*

The School of Practice

1. The interpretation of the writing on the wall was a test of Daniel's courage, as it was a very unpleasant message to the king. But Daniel spoke the truth as God revealed it to him. I will also, by word and by act, bear witness to any truth or principle, however unpleasant or unpopular it may be to those before whom I witness.

2. God not only judges kings and nations, but individuals also. This week I will try to remember that life is weighing my life in his balances, and will try so to live according to the knowledge of duty given to me that I may not be found unfaithful.

The Lesson Digest and Teachers' Guide

The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Intermediate Quarterly.]

Preparing the Lesson.

This is the age of childhood when narratives of striking events make deepest impression, and when maps, charts, and pictures of contem-

porary objects, buildings, and people are regarded with greatest interest.

Pictures and Illustrative Objects to be used in the class. 1. Babylon and its Three Towers, Senior Quarterly, page 191; the Ruins of Babylon, page 194. 2. Belshazzar's name as it appears in ancient inscriptions, page 194. 3. The Great Festival of King Belshazzar, and the Handwriting on the Wall, page 197. 4. A pair of tiny scales or balances will illustrate TEKEL. 5. The sacramental service of the church is similar to the holy vessels that Belshazzar profaned. 6. An idol "of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood, or stone." 7. The necklaces now so fashionable will help the pupil to understand the chain of gold. 8. Show that PHARSIN and PERES are similar in meaning; the "U" at the beginning means AND. 9. Show the position of Babylon on the map.

Connecting Links.

Review: Give a very brief review of the last lesson, and emphasize what Daniel stood for in the corrupt Babylonian court.

Intervening Events: 1. King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that troubled him greatly and he was still more troubled when he forgot it. When none of the wise men of his court could reconstruct the dream for him he became furious and was about to destroy them all. But in answer to the prayer of Daniel and his three friends Jehovah repeated Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel and made him understand it also. This greatly pleased the king, who advanced Daniel. 2. The story of the golden image and the three Hebrew children. Nebuchadnezzar's pride, his strange punishment, and his restoration to the throne.

Narrative Outline. (For the teacher. Language and detail to be adapted to the pupils.)

1. The wicked feast. The introductory story of verses 1-16 will interest all. Put emphasis on the wickedness of using consecrated cups, the wicked folly of drinking wine, the wickedness of idolatry, and the guilty terror of the king.

2. Daniel declines the king's gift, but without reward reads the writing and makes it plain.

3. Daniel shows Belshazzar how wicked he has been (verses 18-23). (a) If he was great it was because King Nebuchadnezzar had left some of his greatness to him. (b) But it was God who had given Nebuchadnezzar all he had. (c) And when Nebuchadnezzar became proud God took it away again. (d) God made him no better than a beast. (e) But afterward Nebuchadnezzar repented and God restored him to his kingdom. (f) Belshazzar knew all this, and yet he had profaned the holy vessels, wasted his life in wine-drinking, and worshipped false gods, and turned away from the true God.

4. The writing that was written. It really means, "Number, Number, Weigh, and Divide."

Pharsin and Peres both mean "divide." See note above.

5. Daniel's reward; Belshazzar's ruin.

Suggested Generalization and Application. (Adapted form of statement to pupils.)

1. What could God write about us? (Comp. Col. 2. 14.) Are we ungrateful, willful, selfish, sinful in our nature?

2. Belshazzar sinned by his revelry and drunkenness; by his idolatry; by his sacrilegious misuse of God's sacred vessels; but his sins are all brought into one by verse 23—he had "come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3. 23).

3. How we can be brought into harmony with God.

Memory Verse.

Golden Text: "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (Psa. 34. 16).

Scholars' Home Work.

Advance Work: Urge the Little Readings for Each Day during the coming week.

Review and Constructive Work: Ask each pupil to bring next Sunday to-day's Golden Text carefully written out, from memory if possible.

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: See paragraph above, on Pictures and Illustrative Objects, THE JUNIOR GRADE; especially the "objects" there suggested: balances, the sacramental service, an idol (if one is within reach), a necklace.

Constructing the Lesson.

This is the age of lively imagination, of ready suggestibility, of hero-worship. The pupil is entering the realm of philosophy, beginning to be an independent thinker, preparing for himself, however unconsciously, a regimen of life. Already he is falling into his place in the social organization, either as leader or as follower; and properly to teach this lesson the pupil needs even closer study than the Bible. The education of the boy and girl should at this stage especially be regarded as an outlet for action. It would be difficult to select a passage of Scripture more suitable for the Intermediate Department than the one we study to-day. Observe in each of your pupils development along four lines: the power of verbal memory, readiness to classify facts and thoughts, quickness of inference, and suggestibility. Construct your lesson along those four lines.

1. Ask for the memorization of the Golden Text and the selected verses, besides the passage from Romans mentioned later.

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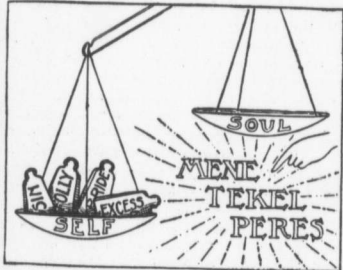
1. What did 2. What did Dan effect had these him? His thron getting the goodn weighed in the bal

2. Make the lesson story a picture full of motion and color.

3. Make your divisions clear: 1. Nebuchadnezzar's Failure and Punishment, verses 17-21; 2. The Doomed King and Kingdom, verses 22-30; and connect as closely as you can each incident with some fact familiar to the scholar. Draw from the pupils, with as little formal questioning and as much conversational persuasiveness as possible, the moral and spiritual inferences of this lesson.

5. Remember their suggestibility. You have made them love you? Then they will be susceptible to almost any suggestion you make.

Teaching the Lesson.



The Golden Text for this lesson has been well selected. Emphasize the first five words. That Face is watching us. It is against them that do evil, but if we are striving to please the Lord his joy is our strength. It is that face that smiles upon us when the sweet words are spoken, "Come unto me."

Belshazzar is not the only one who merits such severe words as Daniel spoke. We have not sinned as he sinned, for we have not been tempted as he was tempted. But we have sinned. Turn to Rom. 3, 23, and ask your pupils to write it upon their pads. But there is a means of pardon and of cure, so that we shall not only be punished, but we shall be free from the sin that merits the punishment. The answer is in Rom. 3, 24. Ask them to write that also. Then ask each to print on his pad.

THE FACE OF THE LORD.

On the left side write,

COME SHORT OF GOD'S GLORY.

The Responsive Review

1. What did Daniel say to King Belshazzar? *Keep thy gifts, but I will read the writing and interpret it.*
2. What did Daniel say God had given Nebuchadnezzar? *Kingdom, majesty, glory, and honor.*
3. What effect had these blessings on Nebuchadnezzar? *He grew hard-hearted and proud.*
4. What then happened to him? *His throne and kingdom were taken away from him.*
5. Of what did Daniel accuse Belshazzar? *Of forgetting the goodness and justice of God and of idolatry.*
6. What is the meaning of "Tekel"? *"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."*
7. Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT: "The face of the Lord," etc.

On the right side write,

JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE.

And neglect not to emphasize The REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.

Scholars' Home Work.

Advance Work: Is it right to execute a wicked law?

Give causes for the enmity of the men who made charges against Daniel.

Review Work: What was the real sinfulness in the use of the "vessels" mentioned in verse 23?

Write down at least one text which shows the grace of humility or the sinfulness of pride.

The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

The Crime (verses 17-23). Spend some time, introductory, on the first sixteen verses of the chapter. Belshazzar had been granted by Jehovah as notable privileges as ever were granted to a son of man, and had inherited what God enabled Nebuchadnezzar to acquire. To have been blind and deaf to the lessons contained in Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation; to have defied the Lord of heaven, and degraded the vessels of his temple, and turned into revelry the objects of his worship, and to have praised the gods of silver, gold, iron, wood, and stone, turning away from his Creator and Preserver—this was the crime of Belshazzar.

The Sentence (verses 24-29). 1. God figures up the sum of Belshazzar's life; the account is closed, and his kingdom is at an end. 2. God has weighed his acts, his methods, his opportunities; and the record is all bad. 3. God has divided his kingdom, and it shall pass over to others. Some things that you buy in a grocery are weighed, like number, like eggs; some things are weighed, like pounds of sugar. If you find short of the dozen, that will finish your business with him. If you find that his goods weigh too little you will not trade with him any more. God had tried Belshazzar, and had given him a chance to become a good governor, had numbered him and weighed him, and he was found wanting. So God weighs us one by one.

The Execution (verse 30). God's words were fulfilled, as always they are fulfilled.

The Church Catechism

56. How doth the Word read and heard become effectual unto salvation! That the Word may become effectual unto salvation we must attend thereto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love; lay it up in our hearts; and practise it in our lives.

LESSON II. Daniel in the Lions' Den

[Oct. 8

GOLDEN TEXT. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Psa. 34. 7.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Study the chapter]

Dan. 6. 10-23 [Commit to memory verses 21-23]

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

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

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

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

14 Then the king, when he heard *these* words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Dan'iel to deliver him: and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

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

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Dan'iel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Dan'iel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

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

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

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

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Dan'iel; and the king spake and said to Dan'iel, O Dan'iel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou

REVISED VERSION.*

10 And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem); and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. 11 Then these men assembled together, and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. 12 Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's interdict: Hast thou not signed an interdict, that every man that shall make petition unto any god or man within thirty days, save unto thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. 13 Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, who is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the interdict that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. 14 Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to rescue him. 15 Then these men assembled together unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians, that no interdict nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

16 Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. 17 And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. 20 And when he came near unto the den to Daniel, he cried with a lamentable voice: the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom

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

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21 Then said Dan'iel unto the king, O king, live forever.

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

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

thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. 22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

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

Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

M. An unwise decree. Dan. 6. 1-9.

Tu. Daniel in the Lions' Den. Dan. 6. 10-17.

W. Daniel in the Lions' Den. Dan. 6. 18-23.

Th. Daniel honored. Dan. 6. 24-28.

F. Obedience to God. Acts 4. 13-20.

S. Rejoicing in suffering. 1 Pet. 4. 12-19.

S. A good report. Heb. 11. 32-40.

The Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 143.

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe!
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 144.

Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be!
Lead me by thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 41.

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

Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *The Chamber of Prayer* (v. 10-13).—How had Darius divided his newly formed kingdom? What position did he give to Daniel? What law had been made by Darius? Who persuaded him to make this law? How did Daniel disobey it? What accusation was brought against him? How was Daniel's fate made sure? (Verse 16.) What does this show concerning had counsels? What did the king say to Daniel? How was the mouth of the den closed? Mention a peculiarity of the laws of the Medes and the Persians.

2. *The Royal Palace* (v. 14-19).—Whom should we expect to find near us in our hours of distress? Which was the more distressed, Daniel or Darius?

3. *The Den of Lions* (v. 20-23).—What did the king do in the morning? What did he say to Daniel? Had Darius true faith in God? What says Peter about God's power to deliver? (2 Pet. 2. 9.) Was there any answer to the king from the lions' den? What had God done for Daniel? Why did God preserve him? (Verse 23.)

Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *The Plot of Jealousy* (v. 10-18).—What was the decree which Darius signed? What was the custom of Daniel when he went to pray? How many times was it his custom to pray? Did he pay any attention to the decree of the king? Who saw Daniel in the act of prayer? What did they tell the king about Daniel? How did the king receive the report? What did he try to do for Daniel? What time of the day was it when they put Daniel into

the den of lions? How did they shut him in? How did the king spend that night?

2. *Daniel in God's Keeping* (v. 19-23).—When did the king come to the den? What shows that he had some faith in the God of Daniel? How was Daniel saved from death? What reason did Daniel give for God's care over him? What order did the king then give? Why was no manner of hurt found upon Daniel?

Questions for Younger Scholars

Who was the king of Babylon? Why did he give Daniel a high place in his kingdom? *Because he trusted him.* How did the other nobles

feel toward Daniel? What did they get the king to make? *A law against praying, except to the king, for thirty days.* What was this

for? *To get Daniel into trouble. What did they know? That Daniel would keep on praying. How did the king feel about this? What gave him comfort? To believe that Daniel's God would save him. Why could not the king*

save him? Where was Daniel thrown? *Into the lions' den. What did the king do the first thing in the morning? What did he find? What did the king tell his people to do after this?*

The Lesson Analysis

I. Introductory (verses 1-9).

(a) The organization of the kingdom: one hundred and twenty satraps, presided over by three presidents, of whom Daniel was the principal one. (b) The jealous presidents and satraps first sought to find some fault in Daniel to report to the king. (c) They found that he broke no law of the king, but revered the law of his God above all. (d) They persuaded the king to forbid all petitions for thirty days except to himself. (e) The penalty was death by the lions. (f) When such a decree was signed by the king according to the law of the Medes and Persians it could not be altered. (g) King Darius without proper consideration signed the decree (verses 4-8).

II. Daniel's Faithfulness to God (verses 10, 11).

(a) Daniel was promptly informed of the decree. (b) He went into his house and prayed to Jehovah three times a day, as usual. (c) He kept his windows open, as usual.

III. The Satraps' Complaint to the King (verses 12, 13).

(a) The satraps first watch Daniel to see that he disobeys the king. (b) They approach the king and call his attention to the decree.

(c) The king agrees that it cannot be altered. (d) The satraps allege Daniel's disobedience.

IV. The Enforcement of the Decree (verses 14-17).

(a) The king was "sore displeased" with himself, and tried to evade his own law. (b) At sundown the satraps insisted on the carrying out of the decree. (c) The king ordered Daniel to be cast into the den of lions. (d) The king expressed hope to Daniel that God would deliver him. (e) The den was closed by a stone and sealed by the signet of the king and of his lords.

V. The Remorse of the King (verses 18, 19).

(a) The king was troubled by remorse and insomnia. (b) Very early in the morning he went to the den of lions.

VI. The Delivery of Daniel (verses 20-23).

(a) The king asked Daniel if God had preserved his life. (b) His "lamentable" voice showed his anxiety. (c) Daniel observes the rules of courtesy even in the lions' den. (d) He refers his salvation directly to God. (e) He gives as the reason his long loyalty to God. (f) The king felt that he could now legally release Daniel. (g) God had preserved Daniel from any injury.

The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies are based on the text of the Revised Version.

Verse 10. And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed—Certain princes, jealous of the rank and honor accorded to the Hebrew, Daniel, and knowing his fidelity to Jehovah, had laid a plot for his destruction. They requested of the king that he sign a decree "that whosoever (should) ask a petition of any god or man save of (the) king (should) be cast into the den of lions"; and the king, evidently forgetting his favorite Daniel, and his fidelity to Jehovah, was in his extreme vanity persuaded to sign the decree.

Open . . . toward Jerusalem—As every devout Mohammedan to-day still worships at sunrise with his face toward Mecca, so the devout Jew of the exile period worshiped with his face toward Jerusalem, the Holy City and the seat of Jehovah's sanctuary.

11. These men—Those who had persuaded the king to sign the decree.

12. Interdict—A strict prohibition with an attached penalty.

The law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not—Literally, *passeth not away*. "The writing which is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse" (Esth. 8. 8).

16. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel—Before being cast unto the lions Daniel is summoned before the king, who speaks to him words of encouragement and in the spirit of an apology for bringing this disaster upon him.

Whom thou servest continually—A remarkable tribute to Daniel's fidelity to Jehovah.

He will deliver thee—The expression of a hope rather than a positive conviction on the part of Darius.

17. The den—This was probably part of an artificial structure and was apparently, at least in part, underground.

Signet—among Baby- other ancient Hystapis rep- lion hunt."

18. Inst— meaning of The root from signifies to th it means to sp and commen which to them

19. Very c—haste—Indic- rius in regard fate of Daniel prove that hi "Thy God . . . rather than a

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It will be rec- terpretation of promoted by the province of Baby (2. 48). This quered Jerusalem and many of the into captivity (2 pany was Danis chadnezzar it ap three succeeding though even in worst (Belshazza official, though e (Dan. 8. 27). A the handwriting exalted, being m dom" (5. 29). nominal promotio appointment Belsh dom passed to D circumstances of t racted to Daniel commended him should have anno lean dynasty and of the Medes an tinguished him i was such a man a

Signet—Seals and signets were common among Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, and other ancient peoples. "The signet of Darius Hystaspis represented the king as engaged in a lion hunt."—*Raclinson*.

18. Instruments of music—The real meaning of the word so translated is not known. The root from which it is derived in Hebrew signifies *to thrust, to overthrow*, and in Arabic it means *to spread or to spread out*. Translators and commentators conjecture the meaning which to them seems suitable to the context.

19. Very early in the morning, . . . in haste—Indicating the intense anxiety of Darius in regard to the possible and even probable fate of Daniel. This evident anxiety seems to prove that his words to Daniel in verse 16, "Thy God . . . will deliver thee," were a hope rather than a strong conviction.

20. With a lamentable voice—Literally, *a pained voice*, betraying the anxiety which he felt.

O Daniel, servant of the living God—It seems evident that the example of Daniel's fidelity had made a strong impression upon Darius, with whom the question now was a question of the actual power of this God whom Daniel served so faithfully.

21. O king, live forever—The standing formula with which Daniel addressed the king (comp. Dan. 3. 9; 5. 10; 6. 6). The fact that Daniel answered at all was proof that he still lived. No further word was really necessary.

22. His angel—Literally, *his messenger*, that is, his ministering servant (comp. Gen. 24. 7, 40; Exod. 33. 2; Num. 20. 16).

Before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee—This innocence had now been amply vindicated, and Darius was more than ready to credit the vindication.

23. Because he had trusted in his God—"Who through faith . . . obtained the promises, stopped the mouths of lions" (Heb. 11. 33).

The remainder of the story is told in verses 24-28, which should be read in connection with the lesson text, as should also the part of the chapter preceding the text. Darius's vengeance upon the men who had maliciously accused Daniel was most severe, though in perfect harmony with the sense of justice of the time. In judging the details of any narrative of antiquity we must endeavor to first place ourselves mentally in the situation and environment of the times and peoples concerning whom the narrative informs us.

The Lesson Exposition

PREMIER IN DARIUS'S COURT

It will be recalled that Daniel, after his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, was promoted by that monarch to be ruler of the province of Babylon and chief of the wise men (2. 48). This was the king who had conquered Jerusalem and carried away the king and many of the highest classes of the people into captivity (2 Kings 24. 14). In this company was Daniel. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar it appears that Daniel, under the three succeeding rulers, lost his high position, though even in the reign of the last and the worst (Belshazzar) he was still employed in official, though evidently subordinate, business (Dan. 8. 27). As the reward for interpreting the handwriting on the wall, Daniel was again exalted, being made "third ruler in the kingdom" (5. 29). But that was but brief and nominal promotion, for the very night of the appointment Belshazzar was slain and the kingdom passed to Darius the Mede. And yet the circumstances of the appointment doubtless attracted the attention of Darius, and commended him to his favor. That Daniel should have announced the fall of the Chaldean dynasty and the establishment of the rule of the Medes and Persians must have distinguished him in the eyes of the new king. He was such a man as the king needed in the ad-

ministration of the new and great domain of which he had by the fall of Babylon become ruler. So he made Daniel premier president of the three presidents under whom the one hundred and twenty satraps of the provinces administered the imperial government.

THE SECRET OF DANIEL'S SUCCESS

If in our time a man should rise to such eminence and power the magazines and daily papers would display his picture and give long articles describing his career, analyzing his character, and setting forth the elements which explain his success. If as we might study some present-day character we study Daniel, we will not find his history one difficult to understand. It has miraculous elements in it, to be sure, but it has some important natural elements also, without which the miraculous would never have appeared. 1. In the first place, Daniel was well-born, being evidently connected with the highest class of families in Judah (1. 3). Belonging to a princely or royal family does not always mean excellence, but in Daniel's case it did, for he was of those who were without "blemish, but well-favored." 2. He was also naturally well endowed intellectually and was well educated and socially well trained. And coming to Babylon thus equipped, he was given the additional advantage of the fullest

Chaldean education (1. 4). If a book had been issued then, as in our time, entitled "Who's Who?" Daniel would have been found among the eminent men who had the advantage of a thorough education. In that respect he was like Moses, who was an alumnus of the University of On, where he had been trained in all the learning of the Egyptians. Both Moses and Daniel were men of princely natural endowments, and these endowments were developed by education. All this is largely involuntary, though the study involved in an education requires voluntary coöperation with parents and instructors. But there appear some purely voluntary elements in Daniel's case. 3. He manifested clear moral convictions and strong will power. Refusal to drink of the king's wine and eat of the king's meat revealed moral strength. 4. He was profoundly pious. He prayed habitually. He revered and honored God.

THE HIGHER SENSE

But other men have had all the things just named—good birth, high mental endowments, education, conscientiousness, and piety—and in as high degree as Daniel had them, and have not had what was the chief thing in Daniel, namely, what may be called the God-sense, the vision and the ear for God. It is easy to say that God could reveal himself to and through any good man, and in a sense he does. But the whole history of prophecy indicates that in degree if not in kind the power to interpret God, to receive revelation from him, belongs only to a few. There are the rudiments of every type of genius in all minds, even the commonest. Every man has something in common with the great poet and painter and orator, but in them his rudimentary power rises to genius. Prophecy is spiritual genius. All men have some prophetic faculty, but all may not be prophets in the sense in which Isaiah and Daniel were, even as they cannot be poets like Homer or artists like Raphael. And so great prophets have been few, even as great geniuses of other kinds have been few. And the great spiritual geniuses—the men who have had the clearest, largest vision of God—rule the world in the spiritual sphere, even as geniuses of other orders rule the world in their spheres.

THE VICE OF JEALOUSY

The spirit which prompted the presidents and the princes to plot against Daniel was one of the basest though not uncommon infirmities and vices of mankind. It was plain, unqualified jealousy. They hated Daniel because honors had been bestowed upon him which they desired for themselves. No doubt they justified their jealousy, as men still do. Daniel, they might have said, was an interloper, belonging to an alien race. He was an upstart, having come to Babylon as a slave. It was easy to

suggest that he was overrated by the king, and was no more capable, or was even less capable, than many who were put under him. The eyes of envy would see a thousand faults in him—his speech, his manner of life, his bearing toward others. It is not difficult for a man who wants another's place to convince himself that he ought to have it. It is a most unworthy spirit. It is the product of selfishness. It is utterly lacking in generosity. It is morally blinding. And yet it is a vice to which people in the highest ranks of life are exposed. It inflames the minds of the most cultured even more than the crude. It manifests itself in affairs of government among public officials as it did there in Darius's court. The church is not free from it, and even among the ministers of Christ it sometimes reveals itself. But wherever found it is base and despicable and hateful in the sight of God.

GOING STRAIGHTFORWARD

The enemies of Daniel made a snare of his virtue. They gave up the attempt to find some ground for accusation against his official conduct. His administration was faultless. No doubt they threw chances for personal profit in his way, opportunities most cunningly devised. But Daniel was simply honest, and temptations to dishonesty held no power for him. To a man simply and securely settled in his purpose to be honest the way is always perfectly clear. They gave that up. Then they made their master stroke. They set a trap into which they felt sure Daniel would walk, simply because of his moral steadfastness and fearlessness. They said, "Daniel will stand by his religion." And so they arranged the little matter of the lions' den at the end of a way from which they were satisfied Daniel would not turn aside. "Daniel will walk into it," they said. And he did. Jesus used to do the same thing, essentially, with the Pharisees. They watched him. They brought the sick into his sight on the Sabbath, and said, "Now we will have ground for complaint, for he will heal." And he did. King Darius was only a tool in the hands of the crafty plotters. They understood the king's weakness and they understood Daniel's strength. Wherein they blundered—and that was fatal for them—was in leaving God out of the account. Their plan was perfect except in that one oversight. But their failure at that point was discovered too late. Then they saw that the lions' den lay at the end of their own way also, but that for them there was no way out of it, as there had been for Daniel. But the highest tribute ever paid to Daniel was this that was rendered by his enemies. But it is dangerous for the wicked when they stake their success upon the certainty of a good man's integrity. Something unexpected is likely to happen.

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The burdens th Puffballs are put people. What a man to-morrow. What a man I always gain. No man is los transaction. Right is the on God is the infin

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Purpose proves God is the presic

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THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, our Father, for thy promise that we shall not be tempted beyond that we are able to endure, and that in every temptation thou wilt open for us a way of escape. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." We rejoice to read of Daniel's courage and faith and strength, but we fear lest our strength would fail us under a trial like his. Thou knowest the limits of our endurance. Have compassion upon our weakness, and suffer us not for any fear of danger or for any enticements of evil to fall away from thee. And may there abide in our hearts this confidence, that into whatever snares of evil we may fall, our God is able to deliver us. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

Daniel was brave because he knew God.
To touch the greatest strength the soul must be sincere.

We would never be afraid if we could see our fearless angel guards.

Angels often guard us when our conduct is unangelic.

The hero is always hopeful.
Courage carries the keys of kingdoms.

II

The burdens that rest on love are light.
Puffballs are easily thrown about; so are puff people.

What a man involves to-day he will involve to-morrow.

What a man leaves for something better is always gain.

No man is loser when he finds God in the transaction.

Right is the only defense against wrong.
God is the infinite majority.

III

Scepters are swayed by souls, not by swords.
To do whatever is *best for me* I must do my best.

We may not kill the archers, but we can quench their arrows.

If I love God with all my soul to-day I shall have more soul with which to love him to-morrow.

Daniel's purpose in his heart made him a hero.

Purpose proves personality.
God is the presiding personality.

IV

Things do not work at random in God's realms.

There is more harmony than we know, could we but catch the music.

In the sphere of divine deeds nothing happens.

Purpose may be traced in every corner of creation.

To trace God's purposes would be to untangle the puzzles of Providence.

We do not always see the *upper* truth from the *under* side.

V

If the *highest* in us is to live the *lowest* in us must die.

Soul *attitude* determines soul *altitude*.

Clean character is moral asbestos—it cannot be consumed.

No man is false who is faithful to the truth.

VI

When we give up to God we always get a thousandfold more than we give up.

To possess Him who is all we must be dispossessed of all but him.

If we would lay down life's curses we must take up life's crosses.

VII

Hope is at the heart of the sorrow that sings.
Blank despair is mute.

The dead man's fingers thrum no living lyre.
Self-despair is one thing, despair of God is another.

Out of the throes of self-despair is born the heavenly hope.

The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

What a refreshing breath of Christian courage! If Daniel had this courage, so may I. Let me get something now from this old serv-

ant of God. No man liveth unto himself. Daniel did not know that what he was doing in his house in Babylon twenty-five hundred years

ago would be like a visit of good cheer from my next-door neighbor to me here in America—a country he never knew existed. The circles of influence are wide. If I can be helped by Daniel, perhaps I may help some one far away whom I do not know.

He was not young when this great test of faith and principle came to him. Age weakens a man's nerve. A den of lions was enough to take the spirit out of a heart eighty years old. But one who waits upon the Lord for eighty years renews his strength. Daniel began to trust God when he was a boy, when he decided to brave the king's anger and eat no meat and drink no wine from the king's table. Eighty faithful years made him very sure of his God. When he knew the writing was signed he went into his house and, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God as he did aforesaid. Blessed old man! What a lesson for me! He knew the thing was settled; nothing could change the decree. The den of lions was an awful thing indeed, but nothing could make the circumstances different. It was an accepted trial. He did not ask God to change anything; he saw that it had to be just as it was. What then? Doubt, worry, fear, distrust? O, no. "The storm swept o'er the upper ocean, but naught disturbed the quiet of the deeper sea." See the calmness of that soul, because he believed in his God. He not only kneeled to pray, but he gave thanks before his God just as if he had never heard of a lions' den. I wonder what he gave thanks for. I suppose for the many times he had been helped over hard places in the eighty years gone by; thanks for a quiet hour to talk with God; and thanks for one more opportunity to prove his loyalty to him. He was so occupied with the vision of Jerusalem from those open windows—Jerusalem far out of sight yet so real to the devout worshiper—that he forgot all about the lions.

It would not have been quite so if Daniel had gone away to pray because of this emergency. He was used to praying. He did not open his windows for that occasion. They were already open. I suppose they were never shut. He had done this three times a day "aforesaid." It was his habit, and he seems to have been in such sweet communion with God that he forgot to mention the lions. It was not necessary. All he needed was to get so near that he was sure the everlasting arms were around him. God knew about the lions; he intended his serv-

ant should go through that singular experience; but he intended, too, to bring him through it so victoriously that Daniel would be glad to all eternity that he had such a chance to prove what a great and good God was his.

I have read these beautiful words about open windows: "A man whose earthly life had reached its twilight, sitting in the quiet of a summer evening, looking out upon the landscape mellow in the sunset afterglow, said: 'The soul has its windows as well as our own houses. If we would lift the curtain on the heavenward side we should know better how to live and have less dread of death. We see too much of the present and too little of the future. To lean on the window sill and look into the busy throng is pleasant, for God has offered us many opportunities for work; but to lift the windows on the other side and give the winds that blow from heaven free course through the house is a great comfort, a refreshment, a consolation. There are angels round about us, but we do not see that they are there. We need their kind offices, but the windows are closed and they cannot enter.'"

We need the open air, we need the cheering outlook. People are sick and languid from want of fresh air in the house. The soul faints from want of open windows. The windows of faith, hope, love—how hard they are to open because we keep them so much closed. These are the windows on the Jerusalem side. The air that comes that way is a tonic to make us strong for trial; the prospect makes one forget the trial just at hand. There is the window of memory too. We say sometimes it is a depressing view from that window. But not when the light of God's mercy and care shines over it. When he was in trouble David said, "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Hope for the present comes with the memory of God's goodness in the past. Let us draw a line in our Bibles around the words "his windows being open." Daniel would have had no heart to open them with his old, trembling hands when he knew there was a plot against his life. He would have sat down in the dark to brood over his sorrows. But when he came into that room where he talked with God every day every window was wide open.

Keep the soul-windows open—Faith, Hope, Love, Memory, Thankfulness. Trials must befall us; they are a part of all human experience. But no manner of hurt is found upon us when we have a clear, constant look Godward.

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. Envy is the yokel-fellow of eminence.—*Tupper.*

2. Better be in shame now than in the day of judgment.—*Mohammed.*

3. Verse 10.

A man can bear
A woman's contempt, when he has that within
Which says he's worthy.—*Alexander Smith.*

4. A gre
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Belshazzar, and

4. A great deal depends upon a man's courage when he is slandered and traduced. Weak men are crushed by detraction, but the brave hold on and succeed.—*H. S. Stevens.*

5.

Who is the happy warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?

'Tis, finally, the man who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity—
Who with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpassed:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the
earth
Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause:
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of heaven's applause:
This is the happy warrior; this is he
That every man in arms should wish to be.
—*Wordsworth.*

6. Verses 14-16. When Palissy, the Huguenot potter, was lying a prisoner in the Bastille for his adherence to the Protestant faith, it is said that the king of France, who had a great regard for him, visited him in his dungeon, and told him if he did not comply with the established religion he should be forced, however unwillingly, to leave him in the hands of his enemies. "Forced, sire!" replied the noble old man, with all the energy and fire of his earlier years. "This is not to speak like a king; but they who force you cannot force me. I can die."—*William M. Taylor.*

7. Verses 11-17.

Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates the excellence it cannot reach.

8. To persevere in one's duty and to be silent is the first answer to calumny.—*Washington.*

9. Whoever has a good work to do must let the devil's tongue run as it pleases.—*Luther.*

10. Censure and criticism never hurt anybody. If false, they cannot harm you, unless you are wanting in character; and if true, they show a man his weak points, and forewarn him against failure and trouble.—*Gladstone.*

11. Themistocles, while he was yet young, said that he had done nothing gallant, for he was not yet envied. And we know that as the cantharis is most busy with ripe fruits and roses in their beauty, so envy is most employed about the eminently good and those who are glorious in their places and esteem.—*Plutarch.*

12. Verse 18. The words of King Henry:

O sleep! O gentle sleep!
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
Why, rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And lullst with buzzing night-dies to thy
slumber,
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody?

Canst thou, O partial Sleep! give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude;
And in the calmest and most stillest night
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down,
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.
—*Shakespeare.*

13. Verse 22. A naked man with innocency is better armed than Goliath in brass or iron.—*Bishop Reynolds.*

14.

A just man cannot fear;
Not though the malice of traducing tongues,
The open vastness of a tyrant's ear,
The senseless rigor of the wrested laws,
Or the red eyes of strain'd authority,
Should in a point meet all, to take his life;
His innocency is armor 'gainst all these.
—*Ben Jonson.*

15. Verse 23. In the Jewish legend Nimrod casts Abraham into a furnace of fire, and it changes for him into a bed of roses. In Goethe's Faust the angels cast roses upon the demons, and each rose as it touches them becomes a drop of liquid, scorching fire. So even God's people are saved even in the midst of the fiercest persecutions.—*Schleiermacher.*

Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

1. He Prayed as Aforetime. "This helps to explain much of his conduct. We cease to wonder at his boldness before Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius, when we learn that

Daniel maintained such constant communion with God. The roots of his character were mellowed and fattened by the dews of heavenly influence which fell upon them in the closet.

He drew his strength from the heaven with which he was in such continuous communication. He was 'Daniel,' the judge of God, because he was first 'Israel,' a prince of God, who prevailed with him in prayer. His public life was holy and incorruptible, because his hidden life was prayerful and devout. He carried his business habits with him into the closet; and so he was enabled to carry his devout spirit with him into business.—*Rev. William Taylor, D.D.*

"Daniel did not try to outwit by intrigue. His was a much more safe and simple procedure. He had simply to do right. He said his prayers as he did aforetime. He prayed kneeling as he had always done. He prayed aloud, as had been his wont. Three times a day, and with windows open, he called on the God of his fathers, as his mother had taught him in his boyhood. A more adroit man would have practiced casuistry upon himself. A diplomatic saint would have shut his windows, drawn a curtain, prayed in a whisper, lessened the number of his devotions, had some other engagement, if haply he might have saved his quivering limbs from the lions' teeth. Not so this simple child of God. Not so much as by the lowering of his voice, or the closing of a shutter, would he seem to fear man more than God."—*Rev. Austin Phelps, D.D.*

"He did exactly as he had been accustomed to do. He did not then for the first time throw open his window; if he had done that he would have been a Pharisee. He did not close his window, because, for the first time, there was danger in opening it. If he had done that he would have been a coward. He was neither the one nor the other, but simply a brave, good man, who loved life well, but who loved God better, and who when a thing was put before him, when Timidity whispered, Is it safe? and

Vanity suggested, Will it be popular? took counsel of his own true heart, and simply inquired, Is it right?"—*Rev. W. M. Punshon, LL.D.*

Imperial Persia bowed to his wise sway,
A hundred provinces his daily care;
A queenly city with its gardens fair
Smiled round him, but his heart was far away.
Forsaking pomp and power, three times a day
For chamber lone, he seeks his solace there;
Through windows opening westward floats his
prayer,

Toward the dear distance where Jerusalem lay.
So let me morn, noon, evening, steal aside,
And, shutting my heart's door to earth's vain
pleasure

And manifold solicitudes, find leisure
The windows of my soul to open wide
Toward that blest city and that heavenly
treasure

Which past these visible horizons hide.

—*R. Wilton.*

2. In the Den of Lions.

God of Daniel, hear my prayer,
And let thy power be seen;
Stop the lion's mouth, and bear

Me safe out of his den.
Save me in this dreadful hour;
Earth and hell and nature join,
All stand ready to devour
This helpless soul of mine.

No way to escape, I see
The sure-approaching death;
Vain are all my hopes to flee
Out of the lion's teeth;
In the mire of sin I lie,
In the dungeon of despair;
Hear my lamentable cry,
O God of Daniel, hear!

Save me for thine own great name,
That all the world may know
Daniel's God is still the same,
And reigns supreme below.
Him let all mankind adore,
Spread his glorious name abroad;
Tremble all, and bow before
The great, the living God.

—*John and Charles Wesley.*

The School of Practice

1. I see that Daniel was able to endure the trial described in this lesson because he brought to it the established habit of a lifetime. In the hour when it took courage to pray Daniel simply went on doing what "he did aforetime." I am resolved, therefore, this week and hereafter to maintain religious habits, believing that in special hours of temptation these habits will be a source of strength to me.

2. Daniel was watched by others and his conduct closely scrutinized, and if any defect had existed it would have been used for his overthrow. I will try this week and constantly to so live honestly and faithfully that my conduct will endure the scrutiny even of enemies.

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Intermediate Quarterly.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: 1. Pictures of Daniel in the lions' den are plentiful. A good one is furnished in *Intermediate Quarterly*, page 89.
2. A seal (signet) impressed on softened seal-

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Connecting L

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ing wax in the presence of the class will make more realistic the sealing of the stone, verse 17. *Connecting Links.*

Intervening Events: With the overthrow of Belshazzar, king of Babylon (Lesson 1), came an entire change of administration, explained in verses 1-3. The satraps' plot to ruin Daniel unfolds itself through verses 4-9.

Narrative Outline. (For the teacher. Language and detail to be adapted to the pupils.)

1. The Plot. 2. The Chamber of Prayer. 3. The Royal Palace. 4. The Den of Lions. 5. The cause of the jealousy of the satraps was Daniel's superiority in character as well as in position.

2. The most important phrase in verse 10 is "as he did aforetime." The machinations of the jealous lords and princes made no difference to Daniel. He simply did his duty. The roundabout phraseology of verses 11-16 must not be allowed to hide the dramatic situation—the plotters gathering in dark corners to watch Daniel; their formal progress to the throne room; their apparent innocence in asking their question; the ease with which they entrapped the king into saying that the law was unalterable; the one unpopular fact that they were able to allege concerning Daniel; the sore displeasure of the king with himself, the cruel inexorableness of the plotters; and the weak words of comfort spoken by the king as he condemned his best friend to death.

3. Picture the night. Verse 18 tells us how the king spent it. We may easily infer how Daniel spent it, watched over by angels and listened to by God. How did the jealous satraps spend it?

Picture the morning. I suppose that for months afterward people remembered that one wonderful morning when the self-indulgent king arose very early. A guilty conscience did what the sense of duty failed to do. Note his timorous call to Daniel, and Daniel's reply, and the joyful results.

Suggested Generalization. (Adapt form of statement to pupils.)

Four thoughts should be impressed: 1. The value of prayer. 2. The faithfulness of God. 3. The value to the Christian character of trial and test. 4. The priceless advantage of a good conscience. These are profound topics, but they are also simple, and easily within the grasp of children. The first two find ready illustration in the relation of boys and girls to their fond fathers and mothers. 1. A boy well knows that it is worth while to ask a favor from one who is constantly planning how to grant a favor. That may be true of your pupils' fathers and mothers; it is certainly and in a far deeper and profounder sense true of God. Even the daily life of the school brings illustrations of faithful friendship—weak types

of the faithfulness of God. 3. In these days of physical training boys and girls know well the value of trial and test to physical strength. 4. From personal experience your pupils can tell the advantage of a good conscience.

Memory Verse (Golden Text): "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psa. 34, 7). *Scholars' Home Work.*

What made Daniel so great in the king's estimation?

What was Daniel's chief aim in life?

Who gave Daniel honor and position?

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: See notes on the Junior Grade.

Constructing the Lesson.

The five scenes of activity described in our lesson furnish a good outline.

1. The private room in which Daniel prayed. Prayer in the East is a public function. Men pray on the street wherever they are, at the hour of prayer. It was Daniel's habit to hasten home. There was no immodesty or show in "the open window."

2. The dark corners from which the plotters peered out to look and to listen.



3. The judgment hall, where the weak king first labored till the going down of the sun to deliver Daniel, then sentenced him with the cry of the weakling that God should deliver.

4. The king's palace, where he lay all night in an agony of conscience and apprehension.

5. The den of lions.

Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline: Having brought out the story and a portraiture

of the leading actors, ask each pupil to write on his pad the name of

DANIEL

FOR HIM

Faithfulness,
Faith,
God's Angel,
God.

AGAINST HIM

Jenual satraps,
Petty presidents,
A weak king,
Lions.

Daniel believed in his God and would do what God ordered regardless of results. We are not sure that he expected a miraculous delivery. He would do his duty anyhow. But God sent the deliverer.

The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

Who was Darius? is a question of no consequence to the moral teaching of this lesson. For its answer, so far as answer can be given, see any good Bible dictionary.

The selection of Daniel to be "grand vizier" on the reorganization of the empire is notable. The Medes came from the far northeast, and could know little of the Jews. An old man who had been chief of the Chaldean magi under Nebuchadnezzar was, one would think, the very last to be intrusted with power by a foreign conqueror. But he was able and he was good.

Oriental magistrates and ministers are proverbial for avarice, partiality, self-seeking, and accessibility to bribes. Those who have read

any trustworthy book on the Turkish empire will be ready properly to appreciate Daniel's rectitude.

Often in ancient times kings were accorded divine honors. The new law forbidding prayer for thirty days to any but the king was doubtless intended thus to honor him.

Close study of the characters or classes of characters introduced by this lesson would be profitable. The king is typical of moral weakness, while the accusers and the accused are both strong; the first strong in wickedness and envy, Daniel in goodness and faith. Study these by turn.

There are far more people who are weak than who are strong. Most sinners are sinners through weakness. To us it seems the height of absurdity as well as of wickedness to have put a good man in a den of lions. But we dare not say we would not do as ill as Darius if we found ourselves in Darius's circumstances if ever we have been led or entrapped by others into wrong things which we would never have thought of alone.

In the conduct of the princes, strong in their sin, we see "the cause of envy, and that is everything that is good; and the effect of envy, and that is everything that is bad."

We talk about Daniel as strong in his goodness. Really he was strong in his God. It is our mission also to be "blameless and harmless without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Phil. 2, 15). Find from Heb. 11, 33 precisely what force it was that stopped the lions' mouths.

The Responsive Review

1. What is true about those that fear God? "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." 2. What did Daniel do in the face of Darius's decree? He prayed and gave thanks to God just as usual. 3. How did the king feel about the decree after he discovered that it referred to Daniel? He was greatly displeased with himself. 4. What did he try to do? He tried to deliver Daniel. 5. What did Daniel say to the king on the next morning? "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths."

The Church Catechism.

57. What is prayer? Prayer is the offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to His will in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies, and in faith that if we so ask we shall receive.

LESSON III. Returning from Captivity

[Oct. 15]

GOLDEN TEXT. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Psa. 126. 3.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

Ezra 1. 1-11

[Commit to memory verses 5, 6]

1 Now in the first year of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jer-e-mi'ah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cy'rus king of Per'sia, The

REVISED VERSION.*

1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation

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

[Oct. 15]

LORD God of
doms of the
build him
in Ju'dah.

3 Who is
his God be-
ru'sa-lem, a
house of
God,) which

4 And w
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5 Then r
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6 And all
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7 Also Cy'
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8 Even the
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9 And this
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10 Thirty
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11 All the
five thousand
Shesh-baz'zar
tivity that wer
Je-ru'sa-lem.

[Furnished by

M. Returning
Tu. Jeremiah's
W. Isaiah's p

New Canadian

Till praise
And who
Praise

1. The King
was Cyrus? W
Where is Persi

LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Je-ru'-sa-lem, which is in Ju'dah.

3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Je-ru'-sa-lem, which is in Ju'dah, and build the house of the LORD God of Is'-ra-el, (he is the God,) which is in Je-ru'-sa-lem.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Je-ru'-sa-lem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Ju'dah and Ben'-ja-min, and the priests, and the Le'vites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Je-ru'-sa-lem.

6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, and with goods, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.

7 Also Cy'rus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Neb-u-chad-nez'zar had brought forth out of Je-ru'-sa-lem, and had put them in the house of his gods;

8 Even those did Cy'rus king of Per'sia bring forth by the hand of Mith're-dath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Shesh-baz'zar, the prince of Ju'dah.

9 And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives.

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.

11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Shesh-baz'zar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Bab'y-lon unto Je-ru'-sa-lem.

Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

M. Returning from Captivity. Ezra 1. 1-11.

Tu. Jeremiah's prophecy. Jer. 29. 10-14.

W. Isaiah's prophecy. Isa. 44. 21-28.

throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath Jehovah, the God of heaven, given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Whosoever there is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Jehovah, the God of Israel (he is God), which is in Jerusalem. 4 And whosoever is left, in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the freewill offering for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.

5 Then rose up the heads of fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, even all whose spirit God had stirred to go up to build the house of Jehovah which is in Jerusalem. 6 And all they that were round about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered. 7 Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put in the house of his gods; 8 even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. 9 And this is the number of them: thirty platters of gold, a thousand platters of silver, nine and twenty knives, 10 thirty bowls of gold, silver bowls of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. 11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up, when they of the captivity were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

Th. God's word to Cyrus. Isa. 45. 1-13.

F. Prayer for restoration. Dan. 9. 16-25.

S. Help from the Lord. Psa. 124.

S. The joy of deliverance. Psa. 126.

Time.—B. C. 538 or 536. Places.—Persia, Babylon, Jerusalem.

The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 227.

I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 231.

Oh, happy day that fixed my choice
On thee, my Saviour and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice.

New Canadian Hymnal No. 233.

Oh, what shall I do my Saviour to praise,
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace,
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem.

Questions for Senior Scholars

1. The King's Proclamation (v. 1-4).—Who was Cyrus? What facts do we know about him? Where is Persia? Give some facts about the

empire. What was the Word of the Lord now to be fulfilled? Who had given Cyrus the kingdoms of the earth? What charge was laid upon

him? Why was there no "house of the Lord" in Jerusalem? What did the proclamation exhort? What were the Jews to do who remained?

2. *The Exiles' Response* (v. 5, 11).—What class of men were the fathers? Who were the Levites? What was their work? What was the

purpose of the returning Jews? What precious things were given them? Why were these things willingly given? How came the "vessels of the house of the Lord" in Babylon? How came Cyrus to return them? What did the Jews sing in the days of their restoration? GOLDEN TEXT.

Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *The Decree of Cyrus* (v. 1-4).—Who had been acting as king of Babylon just before Cyrus? What had Jeremiah written concerning the return of the Hebrews to their own country? (See Jer. 29. 10.) What prophet had mentioned Cyrus by name? (See Isa. 44. 28.) To whom did Cyrus make his proclamation? How does he speak of the temple in Jerusalem? What call did he make to the Hebrews? What

help did the king order the people to give to the returning exiles?

2. *A King's Gifts for the Temple* (v. 5-11).—What shows that the Jews kept up their tribes and their religious worship in Babylon? Who helped the people to get ready for the journey to Jerusalem? What gifts did they receive from the people? What did Cyrus himself give? By what other name is Sheshbazzar known?

Questions for Younger Scholars

Where had the Jews been captives? For how long a time? Who had promised to deliver them? By whom did he send the promise? *By the prophet Jeremiah.* Who was now king of Persia? What did he say he would do? *Set the captives free and build a house for the Lord.* What call did Cyrus send throughout his kingdom? Were many ready to go and help build the Lord's house? What did they take with them?

Gold and silver and good gifts. Where were the vessels of the Lord's house? *They were still in Babylon.* Who had brought them there? *Nebuchadnezzar.* How many were there in all? *Five thousand and four hundred.* What did King Cyrus do? *He sent them all back to Jerusalem.* How did the Jews feel about going home? *Very glad and thankful.* To whom did they give the glory for their deliverance? *To the great God.*

The Lesson Analysis

I. *King Cyrus's Proclamation* (verses 1-4).

(a) Cyrus, king of Persia, (b) was stirred up in spirit by Jehovah (c) to fulfill a prophecy of Jehovah spoken by Jeremiah. (d) He issued a proclamation, (e) recognizing Jehovah as the God of heaven, who had made him imperial ruler of the world; (f) accepting Jeremiah's prophecy as a charge from Jehovah to build the temple in Jerusalem; (g) and calling on all worshippers of Jehovah to return to Jerusalem, and rebuild Jehovah's temple there. (h) Cyrus calls on all good citizens to assist.

II. *The Exiles' Response* (verses 5-11).

(a) The first to respond were hereditary rulers of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, priests and Levites. (b) With these returned

others whose spirits Jehovah had touched. (c) To a remarkable degree people of all races contributed toward the building of Jehovah's temple, and showed kindness to the departing Jews. (d) Cyrus returned to the Jews the vessels of the house of Jehovah which Nebuchadnezzar had captured and from which Belshazzar had impiously drunk. (e) All this Cyrus did with close accuracy, keeping an accurate account of the vessels thus returned, (f) and the names of the men who delivered them and of the men who received them.

This lesson, while containing valuable "morals" of its own, is of most importance as a "conjective," uniting two stages in the development of Jehovah's plans.

The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies of this lesson are based on the text of the Revised Version.

THE MAN AND THE BOOK.—All the information which we have concerning Ezra, the famous leader connected with Israel's return, is obtained from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah and the apocryphal writings of the Old Testament. From these we learn that he was a priest, a scribe, and a prophet, representing in a way the transition from the prophetic office to that of the scribe. In the capacity of a scribe we must think of him, however, not as a mere copyist, nor yet as the author of the law, but as a diligent student and teacher of the law. Ezra occupied a position of prominence under Artaxerxes, the son and successor of Xerxes, B.C. 464-425. With the permission and under the protection of a special edict of the king, he led a large company of Hebrew exiles back to their native land (B.C. 458). The edict of the

king and all at Jerusalem probable that of the restoration long Nehemiah and Nehemiah, to ively are pre

Verse 1.

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Cyrus ki

birth and ear Persia, there down to us fr able that he w of Media, aga revolt, gaini then, by the over Media al thority over o the whole of A empire. Baby Cyrus reverse denationalizat had been follo lonian kings pr quered nation freedom, both p which he found liberated and p land. He thus nation, the ins fulfillment of

Jehovah by might be acferred to is one captivity (Jer. are accomplish and perform my ing you to retu Jehovah sti —In an inscrip mentions the fr homes the exiles as their gods," the gods which cede for him bet and Neho.

2. Jehovah, was not, as migl if taken alone, a the local authorit and often implor He hath ch

king and all that is known concerning the return of the exiles under Ezra and the subsequent work of Ezra at Jerusalem is given in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Originally these two books were one, and it is probable that they were put into their present form by the same hand. They give us not a complete history of the restoration, but rather a short sketch of a few important events of that history, passing over in silence long periods intervening between the events mentioned. Considerable portions especially in Nehemiah are written in the first person. This first person in Ezra everywhere refers to Ezra, and in Nehemiah, to Nehemiah, though it is not certain that these memoirs written by Ezra and Nehemiah respectively are preserved to us in exactly their original form. Parts of these memoirs seem to have been lost.

Verse 1. Verses 1-3 of the first chapter of Ezra are almost word for word the same as 2 Chron. 36, 22, 23, and it has been supposed that originally not only the books Ezra and Nehemiah formed one book, but this larger book contained the books of Chronicles also; that is, that there was a time when Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah in some form or another constituted a single work.

Cyrus king of Persia—Concerning the birth and early life history of Cyrus, king of Persia, there are conflicting accounts handed down to us from different sources. It is probable that he was the grandson of Astyages, king of Media, against whom he later led an army revolt, gaining first control over Persia and then, by the defeat of Astyages (550 B. C.), over Media also. He rapidly extended his authority over one country after the other, until the whole of Asia Minor had become part of his empire. Babylonia was added in 538 B. C. Cyrus reversed the policy of deportation and denationalization of conquered peoples which had been followed by the Assyrian and Babylonian kings preceding him, and gave to the conquered nations the largest possible degree of freedom, both political and religious. The exiles which he found in Babylon and its vicinity he liberated and permitted to return to their own land. He thus became, in relation to the Jewish nation, the instrument in God's hands for the fulfillment of prophecy, that the word of **Jehovah** by the mouth of **Jeremiah** might be accomplished. The prophecy referred to is one concerning the seventy years of captivity (Jer. 29, 10): "After seventy years are accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."

Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus—In an inscription of Cyrus the king himself mentions the fact that he "restored to their homes the exiles who were in Babylonia as well as their gods," and concludes by praying that the gods which he has thus restored may intercede for him before his own gods Bel-Merodach and Nebo.

2. Jehovah, the God of heaven—Cyrus was not, as might be supposed from this verse, if taken alone, a monotheist; but he recognized the local authority of the deities of subject races, and often implored their favor.

He hath charged me—In Isa. 44, 24-28

and 45, 1-13 is described the divine mission which Cyrus probably unconsciously discharged in relation to the Hebrew people. Some have supposed that Cyrus had been shown these prophecies and was influenced in his action by reading them; others have thought that possibly Daniel's influence with the king has something to do about this action, but for neither supposition is there historical evidence.

3. Of all his people—The majority of those who returned with Ezra belonged to the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, but some also of the ten tribes which had been deported earlier may have returned with those of the southern kingdom. Cyrus in using this expression thought doubtless only of the captives from Judah and Benjamin.

He is God, which is in Jerusalem—"He is the God who is in Jerusalem" (marginal reading, Rev. Ver.).

4. Silver, . . . gold, . . . goods—For the journey and the immediate needs of the people after their arrival, besides the freewill offering, which was for the temple.

5. Heads of fathers' houses—Elders, heads of families, and groups of families, to whom, because of the tribal division of the nation, belonged rank and authority.

Judah and Benjamin—The two tribes included in what is generally spoken of as the captivity of Judah.

7. Vessels of the house of Jehovah, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem—Referring especially to the capture of Jerusalem in 597 B. C., when Jehoiachin, his household, and ten thousand of the better classes were carried off to Babylon. The despoiling of the temple is mentioned in 2 Kings 24, 13: "And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house."

His gods—The word in the original may be rendered either as singular or plural. Some have considered the singular the preferable rendering because of Nebuchadnezzar's devotion to one god, Merodach, in whose honor the king restored the temple of E-sagila with unrivaled splendor.

8. Mithredath the treasurer—The Hebrew form of the Persian "Mithradath," familiar to us as Mithridates—a very common name among the Medo-Persians.

Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah—

Sheshbazzar is probably to be identified with Zerubbabel. This has until lately been the commonly accepted view, and has still, as it seems to us, the balance of support in its favor. It was common for men of prominence, even for kings, to have different names, by which they were referred to interchangeably. The laying of the foundation of the temple which in Ezra 3. 8 is ascribed to Zerubbabel is in 5. 16 ascribed to Sheshbazzar. The prophet Haggai (1. 1; 2. 2, 21) refers to Zerubbabel as the governor (Pekhab) of Judah, which title is also given to Sheshbazzar in Ezra 5. 14. Shesh-

bazzar is called prince ("nasi") in relation to his own people only.

9. Knives—This rendering is uncertain, since the word so translated occurs only here in the Bible. Other suggested translations have been: censers, changes of raiment, vessels adorned with network, etc.

11. Five thousand and four hundred—Since the number of vessels enumerated in verses 9 and 10 when added together do not equal this number, it is necessary to assume that only the principal kinds of vessels are specially mentioned.

The Lesson Exposition

THE CLOSING CAPTIVITY

It is difficult to fix the exact dates at which the Babylonian captivity began and ended, since the sacred writers employ at least two modes of computation; the first being the *civil*, which considers it as extending from the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar (B. C. 606) to the decree of Cyrus (B. C. 536); and the *ecclesiastical*, extending from the burning of the temple (B. C. 588) to its reconstruction (B. C. 517). But however it is computed it covered seventy years. It must be kept in mind that the entire population, except the peasantry, had been deported. But it must also be considered that the captivity was not particularly oppressive. The exiled Jews were not reduced to slavery as was frequently done by conquerors, but were treated rather as colonists. Their family life was not broken up. The letter which the prophet Jeremiah, who was left at Jerusalem, sent to the captive people throws light upon this (Jer. 29. 5-7). In harmony with this counsel that they should seek the peace of the people among whom they were placed, there was no serious discord between the Jews and the Babylonians, and so there was no race hatred or persecution. Their religious liberty was not interfered with, and they had their prophets and teachers. Ezekiel was with them, and Daniel much of the time was in position of highest influence in the court, and always God's interpreter to his times. So far as material interests and opportunities were concerned, the Jews had no special motive for returning to Palestine. But the national spirit and aspiration had been kept alive in them, and the great spiritual mission for which they had been raised up remained yet to be fulfilled.

THE HEARTS OF KINGS

We have had several instances described in which the Babylonian rulers were deeply influenced by the religion of the captive Jews. There was first of all their immediate conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar. After Daniel had interpreted the dream of the great image the king declared,

"Your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings" (Dan. 2. 47). And after the deliverance of the three Hebrews from the fiery furnace he issued a proclamation denouncing and threatening all who should "speak anything amiss against the God of" the Jews (Dan. 3. 29). After Daniel's interpretation of another of the king's dreams, and its fulfillment, Nebuchadnezzar issued an extended account of God's dealings with him, and closed with ascriptions of praise and honor to "the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment" (Dan. 4. 37). And after the deliverance of Daniel from the lions' den Darius also issued a decree, which closes with words of lofty praise equal to those of the great prophets (Dan. 6. 25-27). And in the present lesson we find Cyrus sending out a proclamation in which he acknowledged that his kingdom was given him by God, and giving command for the rebuilding of the destroyed temple at Jerusalem. Here it is distinctly said that "the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus." Daniel was the king's premier and favorite, and we know that at that time Daniel was filled with the thought of the return of his people from their exile. He knew what the prophet Jeremiah had written concerning the time of the captivity (Dan. 9. 2), and he gave himself to prayer. Let the student not fail to read this ninth chapter of Daniel as one of the best commentaries on the termination of the captivity. We may be sure that Daniel talked with Cyrus about this great matter, and showed him all that Jeremiah had written concerning it; and without doubt also called his attention to that remarkable passage in the prophecy of the book of Isaiah in which Cyrus is directly referred to as the servant of Jehovah in connection with this very restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of the temple (Isa. 44. 28). Through all the years God held the hearts of kings in his hand.

A SIFTED PEOPLE

The return of the Jews to Jerusalem was entirely voluntary. The decree of Cyrus merely

gave permission to return. Only those who returned, professed themselves as exiles who acted for their own benefit, and only those who would attempt to return for their own sake. Their spirit. Those who, therefore, represent the most religious and national enthusiasm, and the highest idealism, were the ones who returned. The hardships and trials which they had to endure, and the strength and faith which they were the new age, and the land which they had to possess more difficult than that of Joshua, a second conquest, and a second heritage, came with it, and the fact that they had promised land, which had been prepared to that would embrace them, and yet carry for the purpose of spirit, divine aim in all that they did. And that the beginning of the nation selected was indeed, "with all raised." God will

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conquest of our c
Our great Lord
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gave permission for, and encouragement to, the return. Only a fraction of the people actually returned, probably not more than one sixth. This voluntariness of the return, and the conditions under which it took place, made of the exiles who actually went back a sifted and selected company. It was an arduous undertaking, and only the hardest and most adventurous would attempt it. There were no selfish motives for returning, and so the proposition made its appeal chiefly to the patriotic and religious spirit. Those who joined the company, therefore, represented the strongest, most patriotic, most religious element. They stood for a national enthusiasm, a religious zeal, and an exalted idealism absolutely essential to the success of the enterprise on which they embarked. The hardships and opposition and discouragements which they encountered called for all the strength and faith which they represented. They were the new pioneers returning to conquer again the land of their fathers—a conquest possibly more difficult than that to which the hosts of Joshua addressed themselves. But these second conquerors, and rebuilders of a ruined heritage, came with a moral discipline more perfect than that of those who first entered the promised land. They were cured of idolatry, which had been the curse of the nation. They were prepared to establish a new national order that would embody the best elements of the old and yet carry forward to realization the divine purpose of spiritual revelation which was the divine aim in all his providence over the nation. And that the company that was to return to begin the national life over again were divinely selected was indicated in verse five of the lesson, "with all them whose spirit God had raised." God was in it all. He stirred up the

spirit of Cyrus the king to issue the proclamation and the call, and he stirred up the hearts of those who were fitted to respond to the call.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GENTILES

In this decree by Cyrus providing for the return of the exiled Jews to Jerusalem and for the rebuilding of the temple, the Gentile world made an investment in the kingdom of God and were admitted into partnership in the great enterprise of carrying light and truth to the whole world. This exodus from Babylon was very different from that from Egypt. Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, and pursued after them; but Cyrus approved their going and encouraged and helped them in their purpose. And the people from whom they departed gave them gold and silver and all needed help. God was unfolding his larger plans. It was the greatest investment the Gentile world has ever made. Babylon and all the glory of Cyrus's kingdom passed and were forgotten. It is difficult to find anything in the life of the world that has come from Babylon. But Jerusalem has endured. The re-collected and ordered sacred literature which constitutes the canon of Old Testament Scriptures, the centuries of influence proceeding from the temple and the synagogue as places for highest teaching, the preparation for the birth of Him who was to be the Light of the world—all these things were made possible by Cyrus's great decree, and the gold and the silver which he and his people sent back with the company who returned to restore the ruined city and build again the Temple Beautiful. And the Gentile world is only beginning to draw its profits from that great partnership. Its future spiritual dividends will be increasingly great.

THE LESSON PRAYER

Our Father, in the story of the captivity of thy people we have been given to look into the heart of the heathen world, and to feel our kinship with all nations. The kings of Babylon were made thy servants, and thou didst touch their hearts to do thy will. We are debtors to all men, for the blessings of thy kingdom have been brought to us by the help of all. As we have been helped may we be willing to help; and may we gladly and gratefully bear to the peoples who yet know not thy Son the saving grace of his gospel. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

Our return from captivity must follow our conquest of our captor.

Our great Lord is always doing great things for us.

Going away from God is never a part of the return. The farther we wander away the less ready we are to return.

No man is ever a man of might till in subjection to the Almighty.

No man is ever a great conqueror until he is conquered by something great.

II

The hope of return is promise of help to return.

It is easier to go away from God than it is to come back.

God's mercy is the magnet that brings men back.

We can get away from God without any help, but God must help us back.

Sin asks us to part with all that is good, but never gives us any good in return.

Even misery is mercy if it bring us back to God.

III

If a man will have "staying strength" he must stay with God.

God gives prophecy of return.

God gives promise of return.

God gives power to return.

Every man is in a "Strange land" until he finds God, the home of his heart.

God often guides men by man.

Nations have often done God's will without knowing it.

The Lord girded Cyrus, though he knew it not.

IV

The crimes of a nation are the aggregate crimes of individuals.

It is always pagan to wander from God.

The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

A man traveling through a dreary country came upon a cabin where a family of natives lived, shiftless, ignorant, and poor. In a stone set against the broken door to keep it open he saw a tiny speck which he thought it worth while to look into. So he brought another stone from the many lying about, and asked the mistress of the cabin if she would exchange stones with him. "One's as good as another," she said, indifferently; so he carried it off to examine, and found it contained a valuable mineral which led him finally into possession of a great fortune.

So these chapters of far-off history, and these long lists of queer, hard names seem dull to you, one as good as another and none much worth reading? If you have eyes to see you will find they contain diamonds of truth sparkling in the light of God's eternal faithfulness and love. His thoughts toward Israel and Judah are his thoughts toward you and me; thoughts of good and not of evil, to bring us to an expected end. Life is not a game of chance. God has a plan; for every life an "expected" end.

Judah was a captive. By the rivers of Baby-

Punishment for sin may prepare the sinner for salvation.

The history of nations never comes clear till read in the perspective of Providence.

God always wants to help us back if we want to get back.

Whatever helps the soul to succeed is sublime success.

Whatever makes us break with duty is disaster.

V

God clings long and lovingly to the least lingering vestige of life in the soul.

There is no loneliness like the loneliness of love.

No good is permanently lost to the good.

Life and love cling forever to the skirts of God.

Did not hope project itself into another home, the losses of this earthly life were enough to sting the soul to madness.

God can make sobs of grief turn to songs of gladness.

VI

Tears have fertilized the most fruitful fields. Sorrow mingles her portions with bitter-sweet. Sorrow has wrung from her wine press of woe the wealth of the world.

Scars must mark the hands that sway scepters.

The soul is often like the moonflower, blooming best in the night.

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lon her heart was heavy when she remembered the homeland. She could not sing the old songs in a strange country. But she could not forget. If she could forget she might be happy even in a far-away place. But memory haunted her. Never could she dash utterly from sight her own inheritance, her beautiful temple, the promise of Jehovah to make of her a great nation. The riches, learning, and glittering fascinations of Babylon could not satisfy, because God had intended her for something better. He never meant her to be a slave, but to rule over her rightful possessions, richer and more enduring than Babylon's most alluring dreams. The pain and wonder of her loss breaks the heart of the God who loved her. He cries out, "Israel a servant? he, a home-born? Why is he spoiled? Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way? O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved! How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Thy ways and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; thy wickedness is bitter because it reacheth to thine heart."

Yes: it is a heart story. A captive, exile heart; a soul whose birthright is lost through rebellion and the worship of false gods; a heart never at rest because God made it for better things than the world can give. It is a heart, too, that cannot forget. There is always a haunting memory of something lost.

Is yours a captive, exile heart? Or are you at home with God? Do you love to be where he wishes you to be? Do you take for your very own the good things he made for you, and are you living the free, happy life of a child of God, the heir of all things worth having? O, do come out of Babylon and rule as you have a right to, over the inheritance God has given you. You, a servant? You, a home-born? By birthright an inheritor of everything your Father owns? Why are you spoiled? Who has taken your rights away? Must you forever be a captive? No. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; . . . the Lord hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of him that

was stronger than he." This was the heart of God toward Judah in captivity; this is the heart of God toward you. The seventy years of exile were not years of chance happening. We are never out of God's sight, however far we wander. Cyrus was what we call a heathen, "an outsider"—but God used him to bring his exiles to their own land. He is using people and circumstances you would not suspect to bring you into possession of what by right is yours. God is in every life, caring, guiding, controlling. He has not given up the government of this world to Satan, though that great spirit of evil would have you think so. If your faith needs a prop read the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah.

But notice that no one in Babylon was taken back to Jerusalem by force. Only those went whose spirits were stirred to go. It is always a matter of choice. We must ourselves ask the way to Zion with our faces thitherward, saying, "Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten."

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. Verse 1.

The Spirit of God,
From heaven descending, dwells in domes of clay:

In mode far passing human thought, he guides,
Impels, instructs; intense pursuit of good,
And cautious flight of evil, he suggests,
But in such gentle murmurs, that to know
His heavenly voice we must have done his will.

—John Hey.

2. Spiritual plowman, sharpen thy plowshare with the Spirit! Spiritual sower, dip thy seed in the Spirit, so shall it germinate; and ask the Spirit to give thee grace to scatter it, that it may fall into the right furrows! Spiritual warrior, whet thy sword with the Spirit, and ask the Spirit, whose word is a sword indeed, to strengthen thine arm to wield it.—*Spurgeon*.

3. Mark the rain that falls from above: the same shower that drops out of one cloud increaseth sundry plants in a garden, and severally, according to the condition of every plant. In one stalk it makes a rose; in another, a violet; diverse in a third, and sweet in all. So the Spirit works its multifarious effects in several complexions, and all according to the increase of God.—*Jeremy Taylor*.

4. Verse 3. Pizarro, in his earlier attempts to conquer Peru, came to a time when all his followers were about to desert him. "Drawing his sword, he traced a line with it from east to west. Then, turning toward the south, 'Friends and comrades,' he said, 'on that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, desolation, and death; on this side, ease and pleasure.

There lies Peru with all its riches; here, Panama and its poverty. Choose, each man, as becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south.' So saying, he stepped across the line. One after another his followers followed him. This was the crisis of Pizarro's fate. There are moments in the lives of men which, as they are seized or neglected, decide their future destiny.—*Precott*.

5. Verse 4. Some men give so that you are angry every time you ask them to contribute. They give so that their gold and silver shoot you like a bullet. Other persons give with such beauty that you remember it as long as you live; and you say, "It is a pleasure to go to such men." There are some men that give as springs do; whether you go to them or not, they are always full; and your part is merely to put your dish under the ever-flowing stream. Others give just as a pump does where the well is dry, and the pump leaks.—*Becher*.

6.

Laid on thine altar, O my Lord divine!
Accept this gift to-day, for Jesus' sake.
I have no jewels to adorn thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring, within my trembling hand,
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small:
And thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How, when I yield thee this, I yield mine all.
Hidden therein thy searching gaze canst see
Struggles of passion, visions of delight,
All that I have, or am, or fain would be—
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite;

It hath been wet with tears, and dimmed with sighs;

Clinched in my grasp till beauty hath it none!
Now, from thy footstool, where it vanquished lies,

The prayer ascendeth—May thy will be done!
Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail!

And merge it so in thine own will, that e'en
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail,

And thou give back my gift, it may have been
So changed, so purified, so fair have grown,

So one with thee, so filled with peace divine,
I may not know or feel it as mine own,

But, gaining back my will, may find it thine!
Observer.

7. Verse 6. A worthy Quaker who lived in a country town in England was rich and benevolent, and his means were put in frequent requi-

sition for purposes of local charity or usefulness. The townspeople wanted to rebuild their parish church, and a committee was appointed to raise funds. It was agreed that the Quaker could not be asked to subscribe toward an object so contrary to his principles; but then, on the other hand, so true a friend to the town might take it amiss if he was not at least consulted on a matter of such general interest. So one of their number went and explained to him their project; the old church was to be removed, and such and such steps taken toward the construction of a new one. "Thee was right," said the Quaker, "in supposing that my principles would not allow me to assist in building a church. But didst thee not say something about pulling down a church? Thee -may'st put my name down for a hundred pounds."—*Mericate.*

Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

1. *Cyrus Guided and Girded by the Almighty.*

(1) In Isa. 44. 24-28, and 45. 1-7, there is a remarkable paragraph which was on record long before Cyrus had any knowledge of the true God, and, possibly before he was born. In this section Jehovah says of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." Then Cyrus is called the "anointed," and the promise is made to him: "I will go before thee, and make the rugged places plain: I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I am the Lord, which call thee by thy name, even the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my chosen, I have called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else; beside me there is no God: I will gird thee, though thou hast not known me." This passage, and the allusions which precede it in chapter 41, in which Cyrus is spoken of as "one from the east" and "one from the north," suggest to us that the Almighty had his hand on other nations besides the Jews; and that he had other chosen leaders under his influence in addition to Hebrew kings and prophets.

(2) Josephus in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, book xi, chapter ii, has an allusion to this prophecy of Isaiah which is worth citing, as reproducing the traditional view and belief in the case. Speaking of the decree which Cyrus issued, in regard to the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, he says: "This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book of prophecies which Isaiah left behind him; for this prophet

said that God had spoken thus unto him in a secret vision: 'My will is, that Cyrus, whom I have appointed to be king over many and great nations, send back my people to their own land, and build my temple.' This was foretold by Isaiah one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished. Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfill what was so written."

(3) Dr. Bushnell in one of his volumes of sermons, in a discourse on "Every Man's Life a Plan of God," uses the text cited above, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me," and says: "This remarkable man, Cyrus, was designated and named by the prophet, even before he was born, as a chosen foster son of God. 'I have surnamed thee,' he declares: 'I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me.' And what should he be but a model of all princely beauty, of bravery, of justice, of impartial honor to the lowly, of greatness and true magnanimity in every form, when God has girded him, unseen, to be the minister of his own great and sovereign purposes to the nations of his time. Something of the same kind will also be detected in the history and personal consciousness of almost every great and remarkable character. Christ himself testifies to the girding of the Almighty when he says, 'To this end was I born, and for this purpose came I into the world.' Abraham was girded for a particular work and mission, in what was denominated his call. Joseph, in Egypt, distinguishes the girding of God's hand when he comforts his guilty brethren in the assurance, 'So, it was not you that sent me hither, but God.' . . . And these master spirits of the world are not so much distinguished, after all, by the acts they do, as by the sense itself

of some my upon them, fulfill."

2. *Cyrus's* in addition to God of Isra- to their own tack on Egy Palestine oc had also, as found that i affected popu provinces of invasion, in might unite v in his favor v predecessors c Babylon had porting the t nationalizing them in the Euphrates. C quences of thi

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of some mysterious girding of the Almighty upon them, whose behests they are set on to fulfill."

2. Cyrus's Political Policy. Other motives in addition to a desire to glorify and obey the God of Israel moved Cyrus to return the Jews to their own land. He was meditating an attack on Egypt, and it behooved him to have Palestine occupied by friendly peoples. He had also, as Professor Sayce has suggested, found that it was dangerous to allow a disaffected population to remain in one of the provinces of his empire which was subject to invasion, in which case the revolting colonists might unite with the invader—as had occurred in his favor when he attacked Babylonia. His predecessors on the throne of Assyria and of Babylon had been pursuing the policy of deporting the tribes which they conquered, denationalizing them, if possible, and planting them in the regions along the Tigris and Euphrates. Cyrus, after reviewing the consequences of this policy, concluded to reverse it,

and accordingly he sent back to their own lands not only the Jews but other exiles as well, thereby securing their loyal devotion and gratitude, and planting in the lands which had lain waste for years an indigenous population friendly to him and at peace with one another. Thus the general policy upon which he decided redounded to the advantage of the exiled Jewish tribes. And thus we see how the general providence of the Almighty, in its natural order of operation, was interwoven with his special purpose of mercy toward the chosen people. In fact, the entire course of events by which Cyrus, after twenty years of campaigning, at last conquered Babylon, and thereby made his monarchy the greatest thus far in history, and was brought into contact with the captive Jews, in the very year when their doleful seventy years of captivity were about to expire, and was induced almost immediately to take measures to return them, according to prophecy, to their own land, is one of the most marvelous things in ancient annals.

The School of Practice

1. In this lesson I see how God stirred up the heart of King Cyrus, and the hearts of the people to do certain things. I believe he still prompts men to do special things. I will this week carefully consider whether God so prompts my heart to any duty, and if he does I will promptly obey.

2. In the lesson I see that many who did not themselves go with those who returned to rebuild Jerusalem helped by their gifts those who went. I believe I should do this in missionary work and in many other things; and this week I will help by my gifts in some work which I cannot do myself.

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of *Intermediate Quarterly*.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: Any pictures of travel over an Oriental desert. In the *Senior Quarterly* are two very clever pen-and-ink sketches of travel on camel back and **A FOUNTAIN IN THE DESERT**, sketched by Mr. Woodward, not far from the road followed by the returning exiles. Show on map the route from the banks of the Euphrates, near to which most of the exiled Jews were temporarily settled, to Jerusalem. An interesting portrait sculpture of King Cyrus, who permitted the Jews to return, is given in the *Senior Quarterly*, page 207. Compare Cyrus' proclamation with the *Governor-General's Thanksgiving Proclamations*. The large number of utensils mentioned in verse 9-11 was due to the character of sacrificial worship, which should be sufficiently explained to make the story intelligible. The name Cyrus in ancient characters (*Senior Quarterly*, page 207) will be of interest.

Connecting Links.

Recall the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah; Ezekiel's prophecies to the exiles, and especially his vision of the life-giving stream; Daniel in Babylon, his trials and triumphs while still a boy, the writing on the wall, and the lions' den. Picture the lonely country of Judah, without inhabitants except poor and helpless people. Picture the exiles themselves, settled in a peaceful and fertile region, and getting rich; but many of them steadily longing to return to the Lord's land, and to worship him there with all their hearts.

Say a word about the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which tell about the return of the exiles to Judah, and about the building again of the temple and the walls of Jerusalem. The Bible should always be presented to the pupils as a collection of books.

Narrative Outline. (For the teacher. Language and detail to be adapted to the pupils.)
The Golden Text: who first wrote it and sang it? Jews who had been brought back over the desert from Babylonia to the beloved homes of their ancestors in and near to Jerusalem. It was Jehovah, our God, who brought them

back. He had told the prophet Jeremiah that he would (Jer. 25. 11, 12; 29. 10). Jeremiah was dead now; but God's Word cannot die.

Verses 1-4: When Jehovah was ready to bring his people back he first made the great King Cyrus, who reigned over many lands and peoples, feel kind toward the Jews. The kingdom of Cyrus was very great; it included what on our school geography maps are called Turkey (in Asia), Persia, Afghanistan, and Beluchistan. He sent heralds through all these regions, wherever Hebrew exiles dwelt, to tell them that God had charged him to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and to invite Hebrews everywhere to join in the work. People of other races were invited to "give a lift" (verse 4, literally) to every Jew who was willing to return—to make contributions of money for the building of the temple, and of donkeys and camels and other things needed to help him to go across the desert. When they all came together to start they had 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6,720 asses. Cyrus himself made a "freewill offering" for the temple of gold and silver.

Verses 5-11: God not only touched the heart of King Cyrus; he stirred up the spirit of many influential Jews to cross the desert to rebuild the temple. The people of other races helped liberally. Cyrus restored the treasures of the old temple. Sheshbazzar commanded the exiles on their return. A plain description of the journey over the desert will profoundly impress the children.

Suggested Generalization. (Adapt form of statement to pupils.)

1. The inevitable fulfillment of God's Word—a truth capable of the most varied illustration, from the Bible and from daily life.

2. God makes *all things work together* for good to his children. Even the exile of the Jews, which was their punishment, at the end became an advantage.

3. What good deeds we cannot do ourselves we should assist others in doing.

4. Golden Text: No virtue graces character or is more pleasing to God than does thankfulness, appreciation, and acknowledgment of favors received.

Memory Verse (Golden Text): "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (Psa. 126. 3).

Scholars' Home Work.

Advance Work: Read the LETTER for next Sunday. Memorize the Golden Text of Lesson IV.

Review Work: Write down, and return next Sunday, the Golden Texts of Lessons I, II, and III.

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be

supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

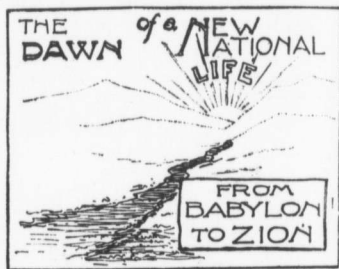
Illustrative Material: Helpful pictures are to be found in the Senior and Intermediate Quarterlies. No attempt should be made to teach this lesson without a map, which should show both Babylon and Jerusalem. Compare suggestions for illustration in THE JUNIOR GRADE.

Constructing the Lesson.

Study the LESSON ANALYSIS, WORD STUDIES, LESSON EXPOSITION, HEART TALK, and SCHOOL OF PRACTICE. Observe how the printed lesson passage divides naturally after verse 4.

Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline: In two or three sentences survey the Captivity (better called the Exile). 1. Its causes—moral and political; 2. Its characteristics—the downfall of Judah, the circumstances of the exiles, the psalms of captivity; 3. Its effects on the moral and national sense of the Jews.



Our Blackboard plan will be of service in teaching the lesson. Reproduce it in the class on slates or pads. If difficulty is found in drawing the hills, the pathway, or the sunburst omit them. In no case let any *drawing* be done in the class; but the inscription should be written or printed by each pupil during the lesson hour, as suggested below, the teacher directing attention exclusively, if possible, to the contents of the inscription; for this is not a lesson in writing, but in memorizing and thinking. The inscription will be found to contain a satisfactory statement of the facts of the lesson and an impressive index to its *spiritual teachings*. After having brought out the facts in pictorial fashion, have the last four words written on the pads: From Babylon to Zion.

The proclamation of Cyrus, the outset of the returning Jews, their journey westward across the desert, their arrival at Jerusalem, and the forlorn condition of that city, should all be made plain before placing emphasis on the his-

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toric fact contained in the first words, The Dawn of a National Life.

(When this is first written omit the letters EW.) Show how beautifully these returning exiles symbolize the coming of souls to Christ. Draw a line through ATIONAL, and place EW above it. We now study the beginning of the divine life in the human soul. This also involves a journey—a journey from sin and selfishness to God. The usage of the church through the ages has spiritualized the meaning of BABYLON and ZION, so that there will be no difficulty in applying the spiritual truth to the class. At the bottom of the pad inscribe the Golden Text,

THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US,

and show how true this is in the case of each pupil, how abundantly true it may be.

The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

The period of the Jewish exile is one of the most important in history. In two generations the motive and characteristics of the Hebrew were deeply changed. The idolatrous propensities which had clung to the race from Jacob's time suddenly died. Reverence for the Book and for the rabbi gradually outrivalled reverence for immediate communion with God, and the synagogue came to be as revered as the temple. The modern Jew—the Jew of commerce and scholarship—may be said to have been born in the Babylonian exile; the nation that re peopled southern Palestine, while a true descendant of that which had been exiled, had an entirely new individuality, which has never since been lost. Then, too, *the Jews who did*

not return became almost as influential over later generations as the Jew that did; with the exile the Jew of the dispersion came into being. Meanwhile Babylon had been destroyed. About 549 B. C. Cyrus had overthrown the Median empire, and soon thereafter established his power over most of Asia Minor, and about 538 he subjugated Babylon. No one could have watched these changes with more intelligent and devout interest than the Jew, familiar with the prophecies. The policy of Cyrus was gentle. He sought to pacify the agitated races that he found in his newly conquered domains, and readily opened a way for the return of the Jews to their own land.

Several lines for illuminating study converge in our printed verses. 1. Concerning Cyrus. From books of history and of reference revive your knowledge of the character of this wonderful man, by what means he acquired his great empire; and the effect of his religion on the Jews. 2. Concerning Prophecy. Read carefully Isa. chapters 13, 14, and 21, and Jer. 50 and 51. Note that in Isa. chapters 40-48 Jehovah's servant is no longer the warrior, championing the cause of the Lord of hosts, but the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief who would win the world to God by sacrificing himself. That the passages have a direct Messianic bearing should not be allowed to conceal their revelations concerning the radical change in Jewish character, and the part that change afterward played in preparation for the Messiah. 3. God's providence in bringing to the throne of western Asia at this juncture a man of Cyrus's personal traits and governmental ideals. 5. The Return Across the Desert. The chief purpose of those who returned: the attitude of those who remained; why most of the returning exiles belonged to the tribe of Judah; the building of the temple. Compare Psa. 60, 126, 129.

The Responsive Review

1. What was the purpose of the proclamation made by Cyrus? *To rebuild the temple of the true God in Jerusalem.* 2. Who led the way in the return? *The chief men of Judah and the priests and Levites.* 3. What did Cyrus send back to Jerusalem? *The sacred vessels of the house of the Lord.* 4. What did the happy people say after their return? GOLDEN TEXT: "*The Lord hath,*" etc.

The Church Catechism.

58. What kinds of prayer are enjoined in the Scriptures? We are taught in the Scriptures to pray in private, in our families, and publicly in the house of God.

Matthew vi. 6. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

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

LESSON IV. Rebuilding the Temple

GOLDEN TEXT. The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. 1 Cor. 3. 17.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Study Ezra 3. 1 to 4. 5. Read Ezra chapters 5 and 6 and Hag. chapters 1 and 2]

Ezra 3. 10 to 4. 5 [Commit to memory verses 10, 11]

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of A'saph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Is'ra-el.

11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth forever toward Is'ra-el. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12 But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

1 Now when the adversaries of Ju'dah and Ben'ja-min heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el;

2 Then they came to Ze-rub'ba-bel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of E'sar-had'don king of As'sur, which brought us up hither.

3 But Ze-rub'ba-bel, and Jesh'u-a, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Is'ra-el, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el, as king Cy'rus the king of Per'sia hath commanded us.

4 Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Ju'dah, and troubled them in building.

5 And hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, even until the reign of Da-ri-us king of Per'sia.

Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

M. Worship commenced. Ezra 3. 1-9.

Tu. Rebuilding the Temple. Ezra 3. 10 to 4. 5.

W. Opposition. Ezra 4. 6-16.

REVISED VERSION.*

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise Jehovah, after the order of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah, saying, For he is good, for his loving-kindness endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised Jehovah, because the foundation of the house of Jehovah was laid. 12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

1 Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity were building a temple unto Jehovah, the God of Israel: 2 then they drew near to Zerubbabel, and to the heads of fathers' houses, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assyria, who brought us up hither. 3 But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us in building a house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us. 4 Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Juah, and troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Th. The building stopped. Ezra 4. 17-24.

F. Prophecy of gladness. Jer. 33. 7-14.

S. Longing for God's house. Psa. 84.

S. The living temple. 1 Cor. 3. 6-17.

Time.—B. C. 536. Place.—Jerusalem.

The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 27.

The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is his new creation.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 327.

Softly fades the twilight ray
Of the holy Sabbath day;
Gently as life's setting sun.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 286.

With joy we hail the sacred day
Which God has called his own;
With joy the summons we obey.

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

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INTERVENING
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Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *Holy Sorrow and Holy Joy* (v. 10-13).—What did the builders do? What had become of the former temple? What was the work of the priests? What was the work of the Levites? What was the "ordinance of David"? Why did the people praise the Lord? Why should we praise him? Are more responses advisable in our religious services? Why did the people weep? Are the former days better than the present?

2. *Temptation and Resistance* (v. 1-5).—

Who came to tempt the Israelites? Why did the adversaries not wish the temple erected? In what form did the temptation come? Should we work in reforms with all who would work with us? What principle should guide us in accepting or refusing aid in Christian work? How were the Israelites troubled in building? Who were the hired counselors? What is bribery? Can there be bribery without money? What does the New Testament say of God's temple? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *The Foundation of the Temple Laid* (v. 10-13).—How long had the Jews made preparation for building the temple? With what ceremonies was the foundation begun? How were the older men affected? the younger men?

2. *The Design of Enemies* (v. 1-5).—Who

were the adversaries or enemies of the Jews? What offer did they make to the Jews? What was their real purpose? Did they tell the truth when they said they worshiped the God whom the Jews worshiped? Tell the rest of the story.

Questions for Younger Scholars

Where did the Jews go when they left Babylon? What made their hearts glad? *To think they were going back to the city of God.* In what condition did they find the city? *In ruins. Who had destroyed it? Nebuchadnezzar, seventy years before.* What had become of the beautiful temple? *It was thrown down.*

What did they begin at once to do? *To build an altar and to worship God.* What was the first work they did on the Lord's house? *They laid the foundations.* Why did the people rejoice when they came back? Why did some weep? What showed their love for the Lord? *The willingness to work.*

The Lesson Analysis

I. *Introductory* (Ezra 2. 1 to 3. 9).

(a) The list of the people who returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple is given.

(b) Jeshua (Joshua) was the chief of their priests, and Zerubbabel (possibly he who was called Sheshbazzar in our last lesson) was chief governor. (c) Before building the temple the returning Jews erected an altar and resumed sacrificial worship. (d) They began the work of gathering the material for the temple, and imported much of it from Lebanon by way of Joppa. (e) Jeshua, the chief priest, had the oversight of the workmen.

II. *Holy Sorrow and Holy Joy* (verses 10-13).

(a) The corner-stone-laying service. (b) The priests were robed in white and sounded wind instruments. (c) Other religious officers (Levites) answered them with rhythmical instruments of percussion. (d) They sang antiphonally, one party responding to the other. (e) Their song was of thanks to Jehovah "because he is good, for his mercy endureth for-

ever." (f) The music was so strong and so impressed the feelings of the people that they shouted with joy. (g) But many of those who had seen the original temple wept with a loud voice. (h) The shouts of joy and the noise of weeping could not be distinguished.

III. *Temptation and Resistance* (verses 1-5).

(a) The foreign people who during the years of exile had been settled in the land of Israel did not in their hearts welcome the Jews back. (b) They recognized that the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem would be a first step toward the reorganization of the nation. (c) Hypocritically they came to Zerubbabel, and offered to join the Jews in building the temple, (d) claiming that they had been consistent worshippers of Jehovah. (e) Zerubbabel and Jeshua and their colleagues refused to allow them to participate in the building of the temple. (f) From that time the Gentiles interfered with them, and weakened their hands, (g) hiring counselors against the Jews all through the reign of Cyrus.

The Lesson Word Studies

NOTE.—These Word Studies for this lesson are based on the text of the Revised Version.

INTERVENING EVENTS—Chapter 2 is devoted largely to an enumeration of the principal men and heads of tribes and families, priests, Levites, and others, who accompanied the caravan of returning exiles from Babylonia to Jerusalem. In Ezra 2. 64-66 the number of Israelites returning is stated as 42,360 plus 7,337

servants and maids, making the total of 49,697 persons. Of this number there were 200 "singing men and women," that is, professional singers. This company took with them 8,136 beasts of burden, of which 6,730 were asses, 736 horses, 435 camels, and 245 mules. The first thing necessary after the arrival of the caravan at Jerusalem was the choosing and establishing of homes by the returning exiles. This occupied some months. At last in the seventh month the people reassembled in Jerusalem and at once reinstated "all the set feasts of Jehovah that were consecrated." The beginning of the actual work of the rebuilding of the temple was not so simple a matter. Cedars of Lebanon and prepared stones were necessary, and it was two years and two months longer before the actual work of the building could be begun. Our lesson story begins with the events accompanying the laying of the foundation of the temple.

Verse 10. They set—That is, those in charge of the building set the priests. Some ancient manuscripts read, "The priests stood."

Their apparel—The dress of the priests consisted of short breeches (Exod. 28. 42) made of fine linen; a long coat with sleeves also made of fine linen; a girdle, woven of the same colors that were in the veil before the Holy Place; a cap of linen. On their feet they wore nothing (comp. Exod. 3. 5; 39. 27-29; Josh. 5. 15).

Sons of Asaph with cymbals—For the assignment of instrumental music to the Levites by David and of the cymbals specially to the sons of Asaph, compare 1 Chron. 25. 1 with 1 Chron. 16. 4, 5 and 25. 6.

11. They sang one to another—Probably, as has been the traditional interpretation, this refers to antiphonal singing in which two choirs sang alternate phrases in response to each other. Such psalms as 136; 24. 7-10; 106; 107; 118 were suited especially to such rendering. Our limited knowledge, however, concerning early Jewish music makes it impossible to speak authoritatively with regard to what music was used and how it was rendered.

"For he is good, for his loving-kindness endureth forever toward Israel"—These words are probably not a quotation from the psalms, but rather a liturgical response used at sacred festivals, upon which the well-known psalm, Psa. 136, was itself based. This verse is a marked fulfillment of the prophecy, Jer. 33. 10, 11, which compare.

12. Old men that had seen the first house—The "first house" refers to Solomon's temple, which had been destroyed in 586 B. C., fifty-one years before. Even sixteen years later the prophet Haggai (2. 3) could still appeal to some who had seen the former temple.

Wept with a loud voice—In their extreme sorrow because of the comparative insignificance of the house being erected to the former temple in its glory.

13. Could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people—A most marked difference of effect which the inauguration of the building had upon the younger people, on the one hand, and the older people, on the other.

Verse 1. The adversaries of Judah and Benjamin—The Samaritans living just to the north, called adversaries by anticipation.

2. Since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assyria—Esar-haddon was the son and successor of Sennacherib. In the year 677 B. C. Sidon had revolted from the authority of Babylonia, but was promptly captured and destroyed, and another city, called "The City of Esar-haddon," was built in its place. This new city, together with the surrounding country, was colonized with captives from Elam and Babylonia, and of these captives many settled as far south as the region which we know as Samaria. The descendants of these colonists, who had intermarried with the remnant of Jews still dwelling in the country, were a mixed race, adhering partly to the religion of the Jews and partly to that of the land from which the colonists had come. Because of the fact that they were not Jews of pure descent the returned exiles would have nothing to do with them.

4. Weakened the hands of the people of Judah—Put obstacles in their way, hindered them in their enterprise in every manner possible.

5. Hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose—Men who, for pay, made false representations before the king concerning the purposes and work of the Jews at Jerusalem.

Darius king of Persia—Not to be confused with "Darius the Median" of Dan. 5. 31. The king here referred to was the third ruler after Cyrus and the reorganizer or (second) founder of the Persian empire. He reigned from 522 to 485 B. C.

The Lesson Exposition

INSPIRATION OF HIGH IDEALS

These returned exiles, who undertook to restore a ruined land and build again a national capital and a national temple, were inspired

by high ideals. Those ideals lifted them out of everything that was selfish and sordid and made them capable of all necessary labor and sacrifice. The end aimed at was so great and

worthy that great, was the historical situation, and those heroic what must read this his imaginatively but if we can feel the power inspired the turned to the and waste for the thrill of did things of history gloried would be a the only thing which men have ideals so great selfishness.

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worthy that the cost of its attainment, however great, was relatively small. We must exercise the historical imagination and reconstruct the situation, and put ourselves in the place of those heroic men, and realize something of what must have been their feelings, or we will read this history to very little purpose. Read imaginatively and coldly the story will be dull; but if we can enter into the heart of it, and feel the power of the ideals which moved and inspired the hearts of that company that returned to their homeland that had been desolate and waste for seventy years, it will stir us with the thrill of the highest romance. Those men did things of the kind that have made human history glorious, and without which history would be a tame and insipid tale. For about the only things worth recording are the things which men have done under the inspiration of ideals so great as to lift their lives out of selfishness.

NATIONAL ENTHUSIASM

The story of the rebuilding of the temple and of Jerusalem is an illustration of a fine and noble type of national enthusiasm, which is but another term for patriotism. The spirit of Judaism thrilled each individual heart. They felt the pride of national history. There were the traditions of their origin, the annals of the patriarchs, the deathless story of the deliverance from Egypt; there were the achievements of their great kings, David the warrior and Solomon the wise; and mingled with their civic pride and patriotism there was a deep spirit of religious exultation. For the thing which made their national history unique was its religious character. Religion was from the beginning the soul of their national life. They were a people divinely raised up, and they were led, and protected them, and rewarded and punished them; and their overthrow and exile had been because of their unfaithfulness to Jehovah, and they were permitted to return, after seventy years of discipline, that they might establish again his worship. The spirit, therefore, which animated them was a combination of the two deepest and strongest sentiments by which the hearts of men are inspired—patriotism and religious zeal. Both of these sentiments prompt men to the noblest

CONFESSION AND ATONEMENT

It points to the first essential in all religion that the returned exiles began their work by setting up the great altar of sacrifice on its old foundation in the midst of the ruins of the temple, and instituting thereon the ancient burnt offerings morning and evening (Ezra 3, 2, 3). That was a national confession and atonement. First of all they needed to effect reconciliation with God and to have the assurance of his favor. The great altar was the thing of supreme importance in the temple be-

cause it stood for the idea of atonement; and the idea of atonement was of highest interest because men having sinned required pardon and reconciliation. Other parts of the temple could wait, therefore, but the altar of sacrifice they felt must be set up at once. And the altar of sacrifice, the idea of confession and atonement, is still the essential thing in religion. The primary fact to be kept in mind is that men are sinners and need pardon and reconciliation with God. We must set up this great altar, which with us is the cross of Jesus Christ, first of all. Religion has other important elements, but the atonement is the central and fundamental thing. Set up the altar first; build up the complete temple of religion about that.

VALUE OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL

The returned exiles bore testimony to the value of religious ceremonial. They began at once the observance of the religious festivals required by their law. "They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; and afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord" (3, 4, 5). Religious ceremonial was an important agency for religious education with the Jews. It was a system of impressive object lessons bringing home repeatedly to the minds of the people the great facts of spiritual importance in their national history and expressing the fundamental doctrines of their national theology. And religious ceremonials have always been an important factor in the spiritual history of the world. Ritual has served, when properly employed, as a religious stimulus as well as a means of instruction. It has been misused and made harmful by being thought of as an end rather than as a means, killing out rather than kindling spirituality. On the other hand, extreme reactions against religious ceremonial, which have rendered public worship barren and cold, have been almost as unfortunate as excessive ritualism. The spiritual life of society needs the help of that religious habit which established and generally observed ecclesiastical services represent.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

A mob or a crowd does nothing but mischief or folly. Fifty thousand people of average intelligence and good desires would be impotent without the guidance of a leader to give direction and concentration to their efforts. The history of the returned exiles illustrates this. They had their leader who had highest authority and responsibility. Zerubbabel was their commander in chief (3, 8). But a leader can accomplish but little without organization. He must have those who will understand his

plans and who will cooperate in carrying them out. Organization is to the leader what the body is to the intelligence and the will—it carries his thought and purpose out to all the extremities and details of an undertaking. This appears very perfectly in the enterprise of the rebuilding of the temple. The organization was complete from the superintending chief down to what in our modern phrase we would call the "boss" in charge of a group of workmen. And at last that very subordinate official was very important, for he represented the point of contact with the actual work. If he had failed "to set forward the work of the house of the Lord" the whole undertaking would have failed. God's work now requires leadership and organization. But its success depends not simply on the men at the head, but upon fidelity down the whole line. A leader must have prompt following or he can do nothing. If we may use a word not in the dictionary, we might say that success in all great enterprises requires two things—leadership and "follwship"—and it is hard to say which is the more important.

TRUMPETS AND TROWELS

There is a story of Napoleon, how in the famous passage of the Alps he came to a company of his soldiers who had tried again and again to drag a heavy piece of artillery up a steep and difficult pass, and who stood discouraged and helpless, feeling that it could not be done. The emperor summoned his chief musician and commanded him to have played the most inspiring selection he could make. When the band struck up the thrilling music the tired and disheartened soldiers were renewed in

strength, and with shouts carried the gun up the heights. The leader there at Jerusalem who had charge of that hard task of rebuilding the temple understood human nature as well as Napoleon. The man with the trumpet and the cymbal is often quite as important as the man with the hammer and the trowel. The French, it is announced, have abolished the drum from their armies. The first war they have will probably show this to have been a mistake. A man who inspires a hundred men to fight does more than if he himself carried a gun. The chief thing in war and in work is to maintain enthusiasm. That was what the men with the cymbals and trumpets and songs did there at the laying the foundations of the temple. And now very often in our churches we most need those who know how to thrill and inspire us and set us shouting while we work.

FALSE FRATERNITY

The people who asked to join with the returned exiles in rebuilding the temple were a mongrel race, more pagan than Jewish, and whose religion was three fourths idolatry. They wished to fraternize and be recognized as equal. That would have dragged the Jews back into idolatry again, and lost all the spiritual gains of the captivity. The refusal to fraternize with them would be denounced by many now as narrow and bigoted. But it was a matter of self-preservation. And it is doubtful now whether, in fraternizing with those who agree with us in many secondary things but disagree with us in the fundamentals of faith, we are not indulging a false sentiment to the hindrance of the truth. Principle should never be surrendered to sentiment.

THE LESSON PRAYER

We thank thee, our heavenly Father, that thou hast ever great enterprises with which to task the strength and test the courage of thy church. In every generation and in every land thou hast called the strongest and the bravest to gird themselves for work and for war. Give us to see the greatness and the urgency of the work that lies before us, and may our hearts kindle with holy enthusiasm as we see how wide and gracious are thy purposes to the working out of which thou art summoning us. Into thy great designs we would merge our lives, and be saved from the pettiness and sordidness of selfishness by entering into the spirit of thy service. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

My soul is God's candle, my body his temple.
I cannot disrespect my flesh when I know
that it is God's fane.

The superstructure cannot stand unless the foundation be of the Lord.

Service is the only coin that pays the debt of duty.

We may men.

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this jubilee in
anything to us?
Paul wrote to
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foreigners, but f
and of the hous

We may learn some good lessons from bad men.

The single-eyed saint sees more than the argus-eyed world.

To be shrewd is the world's standard, to be true is the true standard.

Single-hearted service multiplies the most.

Even a savings bank may do a losing business.

The man who steals a penny cannot be trusted with a dollar.

Christian reflectors throw nothing but light.

II

No man who lives *falsely* sees *truly*.

Humility stoops, but it scales the heights. The power that lifts *personality* must be within the *person*.

It is always lawful for the lower law to yield to the higher.

No man is kingly till he serves the "King of kings."

Out of one's place success is impossible.

The "Sun of righteousness" is never tarnished by shining on sinners.

Death strips a man of all but his character.

No man can be weak when his strength is in the Lord.

III

Love's commandments are never grievous to lovers.

Love would consume itself in feeding others. God cannot be counted out of any moral transaction.

To drive out darkness, let in the light.

The eyes may look, but it is the soul that sees.

We never find the kernel till we break through the shell.

Doing good is the only thing that is worth doing.

The career of evil may be brilliant, but it must be brief.

He is the *best ruler* whom the *best rules*.

IV

If we could *see* mere we should *sing* more.

You can never arrive at good by going the wrong direction.

Material prosperity may pave the way to moral poverty.

The loam of human life needs no tilling to grow tares.

Everything in *nature* is "after its kind"; so is everything in *human nature*.

Many a truth has been lost on the mind that was not ready for it.

He who takes care of the seeds of trees will take care of the seeds of truth.

Be not baffled by thy failure; honest effort is itself moral victory.

V

To hear God speak once, it were worth while to listen a whole lifetime.

Often we do not see till the glory of the scene is gone.

God will appear to him who really wants to see him.

The greatest *gift* is the *giver*.

The *envelope* of the flesh ought to bear the *stamp* of the spirit.

Let us banish all trash from God's temples.

The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

It was a desolate, orphan life in the land of captivity; there was no visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence. God had not forgotten or forsaken them, but there was no meeting place with him. Their song beside the rivers of Babylon was always of the ruined temple; "our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste." But now they have come home, captives no longer, exiles no more, and the old-time gladness of God's presence was again to be known. O, happy day! No wonder all the people shouted with a great shout when the foundation of the temple of the Lord was laid. And what is this to me? Have you and I any real interest in this jubilee in long-ago Judea? Does it mean anything to us? Yes; it means what Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesian believers: "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built

upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord for a habitation of God through the Spirit." It means this for us if we have come home to God; out of the world, away from the sin that held us captive. It was an orphan life there. God never forgot us; but we had no meeting place with him. We were aliens; foreigners; "lost sheep of the house of Israel."

"Far out on the mountains cold and bare,
Away from the tender shepherd's care."

But we have come back to the fold now. We are not exiles any longer. We are part of the household of God. In Christ Jesus we who once were far off are made near by the blood of Christ. And now the rebuilding of the spiritual temple begins. We are to be a habitation of God through the Spirit.

The builders rejoiced when the foundation of the temple was laid. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." This is why Christians are glad; they know whom they have believed, and they sing while the temple walls go up because they know nothing can move the foundation on which it is built. On this foundation the building "grows" into what the great Architect designed it to be.

The temple distinguished Israel from all other nations: the soul-temple built upon faith in Jesus the Redeemer and Saviour, distinguishes a true Christian from the world. Jesus told the woman at the well in Samaria that the time would come when no material temple would be needed, but everywhere men would worship the Father in spirit and in truth; the soul would be the Holy Place where the light of the Spirit would shine; where the living bread from heaven would satisfy; where the incense of prayer would rise with the intercession of the Great High Priest; and where there would be no veil of separation from the immediate presence of God—"which temple ye are."

The prophet, in a vision, saw healing waters issuing from the temple; waters that cured bruises and sores. So, from every soul-temple where God dwells, a purifying, healing influence goes out to bless the world. It makes one better just to think of a beautiful, unselfish life. There is one who has been called "the best-loved woman in the world" because of her unostentatious, ceaseless devotion to the welfare of others. She never talks of her own good works, but there are thousands blessing Helen Gould in their hearts for her wise and loving ministries. The sweetest of all I have heard said of her I think is this: A brakeman

on a railroad said, "She asked me about my life, and I made up my mind to clean up and live better."

The rebuilt temple is a symbol not only of the soul restored, but also of redeemed humanity brought back to favor and fellowship with God; a symbol of the church completed and perfected, built upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. The temple was built of stone "made ready before it was brought thither." So we, the living stones, are made ready, each for its own setting in the great spiritual house. Hammer, chisel, and friction for polishing, shape and beautify each one for its intended place. Strong souls that have borne much and have overcome, and been made, like Jesus, perfect through suffering, are made pillars in the house of God.

I do not quite know what that means, but I think it means they have places of great honor and responsibility in the heavenly kingdom because God knows they can be trusted. Never mind, then, the sorrow that cuts, the trial that shapes, the discipline that polishes, only so that we are ready for our place in the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: whose light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal, and whose foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones. It is no play of fancy. God's chiseled, cut, and polished ones will be the glory and the joy of Jesus in heaven. Think of it! the foundation of the perfected spiritual building, the glorified church—the foundation, Jesus, garnished with all manner of precious stones! Does it really mean that even you and I may add to his glory in the presence of the angels forever?

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1.

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest,

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with material filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;

And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

—Longfellow.

2. Verses 11, 12. The devil cannot stand music.—*Luther.*

3. The foot always steps more lightly and willingly when there is a band of music in front.—*David Swing.*

4. When troubles come, go at them with songs. When griefs arise, sing them down. Lift the voice of praise against cares. They sing in heaven, and among God's people on earth; song is the appropriate language of Christian feeling.—*Beecher.*

5. Amphion . . . is one of the most famous of mythical musicians. Having become king of Thebes, it is said that when he played

on his lyre, and took the he was for

Myths.

6. The music of the winds in the wild melody in the strains God sings; and in these a sentiment, a heart, transport closer to the

7. Verse groans, but thought and fiance with

8. Verse is remember

9.

Hark! the fal

Peal once r

From the dee

Wild and w

Temples, tow

There lie b

Undescried, s

Gleam, at s

And the marin

In whose ea

Night by nigh

Though dead

round.

Go the bells of

Peal for me

So my heart pe

Sad and plea

—*Wilhelm M*

Mangan.

1. "The Pe
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on his lyre, stones moved of their own accord, and took their places in the wall, with which he was fortifying the city.—*Gagley's Classic Myths.*

6. The music of art is but the imitation of the music of nature; there are voices of grief in the winds, joy in the songs of spring, and melody in the rippling stream. These Æolian strains God employs to educate the finer feelings; and man, conspiring to the same result, adds these artificial charms, which elevate the sentiment, quicken the imagination, touch the heart, transport the soul and draw the finite closer to the infinite.—*W. H. Robertson.*

7. Verse 11. God is glorified, not by our groans, but our thanksgivings; and all good thought and good action claims a natural alliance with good cheer.—*Whipple.*

8. Verse 13. A sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things.—*Tennyson.*

9.

Hark! the faint bells of the sunken city
Peal once more their wonted evening chime!
From the deep abysses floats a ditty,
Wild and wondrous of the olden time.

Temples, towers, and domes of many stories
There lie buried in an ocean grave—
Undescried, save when their golden glories
Gleam, at sunset, through the lighted wave.

And the mariner who had seen them glisten,
In whose ears those magic bells do sound,
Night by night bides there to watch and listen
Though death lurks behind each dark round.

Go the bells of memory's wonder city
Peal for me their old melodious chime;
So my heart pours forth a changeful ditty,
Sad and pleasant from the bygone time.

—*Wilhelm Mueller, translated by J. C. Mangen.*

10. When Peter of Cortona was engaged on a picture for the royal palace . . . Ferdinand II particularly admired the representation of a weeping child. "Has your majesty," said the painter, "a mind to see how easy it is to make this very child laugh?" The artist merely depressed the corners of the lips, and the inner extremities of the eyebrows, when the little urchin seemed in danger of bursting his sides with laughter who, a moment before seemed breaking his heart with weeping. If this be true in the world of living men, slight, very slight, are the causes that make or break the happiness of life. The touch of a brush can dim heaven with a cloud, or brighten the prospect in the horizon.—*Dr. Elon Foster.*

11. Verses 1-5. Adversity is the trial of principle.—*Fielding.*

12. Our antagonist is often our helper.—*Burke.*

13. My worst enemies are more valuable to me than my best friends.—*Luther.*

14. If we are at peace with God and our own conscience, what enemy among men need we fear?—*Ballou.*

15. A certain amount of opposition is a great help to a man. Kites rise *against*, and not *with* the wind. Even a head wind is better than none. No man ever worked his passage anywhere in a dead calm. Let no man wax pale, therefore, because of opposition. Opposition is what he wants and must have, to be soil of manhood and self-reliance. He that cannot abide the storm without flinching or quailing strips himself in the sunshine, and lies down by the wayside to be overlooked and forgotten.—*J. Neal.*

Opposition and difficulties are a part of our divinely intended environment in the mastering of which the sterling elements of character develop.

Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

1. "The People Shouted . . . Because the Foundation was Laid." When the clock struck midnight on the 30th of June, 1867, the joy bells of St. James' Cathedral, Toronto, rang out; it was the 1st of July, the birthday of the new Dominion. Confederation was accomplished, and Toronto was once more a capital. The capital only of a province, it is true, but that province the wealthiest, the most enterprising, and the most populous in the Union. The day was observed by the greatest rejoicings in the city. What with bonfires, fireworks and illuminations, excursions, military displays, and musical and other entertainments, the citizens and the thousands of strangers who crowded the streets did not want for amusement. Since the visit of the Prince of Wales (now King Edward VII.)

no such day had ever been witnessed in Toronto. To celebrate the event a banquet was given in the Music Hall, over the present Public Library room, at which the Hon. John A. Macdonald and Hon. George Brown were the principal guests, as having united for the accomplishment of this grand and crowning work. Their mutual interchange of compliments on the occasion, when each spoke of the other as respectively the greatest statesman and patriot Canada had ever produced, was a striking feature on this memorable occasion.

The progress made since Confederation has been amazing. Both the area and population of the Dominion have largely increased, and the commerce of the country has reached enormous proportions. Railways extend from ocean to ocean, while a very considerable number of vessels are engaged in traffic on the lakes.

It is impossible to overrate the importance to us of our Confederation. Our vast territorial expanse, our great natural resources, and our salubrious climate, all point to future greatness. Moreover, the federal form of government which we have adopted, is one well calculated to ensure national strength and stability through united effort, in one Dominion parliament, side by side with an efficient administration of the local affairs of each province through provincial assemblies. The tie binding us to the motherland is the strong tie of affection, with no element of coercion.

2. "Let Us Build with You." "Now began the first renewal of that jealousy between the north and the south of Palestine, which for a time had been subdued in the common sense of misfortune, and the feud between Jew and Samaritan which, under various forms, continued till the close of this period—a jealousy which if it represents the more tenacious grasp of a purer faith, indicates also the more exclusive and sectarian spirit now shrinking closer and closer into itself. It is the story again and again repeated in modern times: first, the desire of an estranged population—heretical and schismatical as they might be—to partake in a glorious national work; the fierce recrimination of the excluded party and the determination to frustrate the good work in which they cannot share. The Protestants of the sixteenth, the Puritans of the seventeenth century may see their demands in the innocent, laudable request of the northern settlers: "Let us build with you." The stiff retort of the church, whether in Italy or England, may fortify itself by the response of the chief of the fathers of Israel. Each alike appeals for historic precedent and sanction to the imperial government which gave them their positions—the one to Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, the other to Cyrus, king of Persia, Constantine or Charlemagne, Elizabeth or Cromwell. Each alike, and all their successors, deserve the rebuke which had been anticipated by the great prophet of the captivity

(Isa. 60, 10, 11) when in his ideal glorification of Jerusalem he described that its walls should be built, not by its own children, but by the sons of strangers, and that its gates should not be rigidly closed, but should be open continually and be shut neither day nor night."—*Stanley's History of the Jewish Church.*

3. *Beginning a Great Work with Praise.* The greatness of the work now undertaken could not have been fully understood by those who took part in it. The colony was poor, surrounded by foes, and subject to all the privations, trials, and demoralizations incident to pioneer life in a new community. They could not see that this new temple would be the rallying place of a new-born nation, that associated with it would be many glorious names and heroic deeds, and that within five hundred years it would be splendidly decorated and renewed, and then glorified by the ministry and miracles of the Messiah. But even if they had foreseen all that followed they could not have done a better work than to begin their task and commemorate the laying of the foundation with an elaborate and hearty service of praise to Jehovah, to whom the house was to be dedicated. When Dwight L. Moody, an almost unknown American evangelist, opened in London, his first service under discouraging circumstances, at his first visit there, fearing and trembling and yet praying and firmly trusting, he said, "Let us praise Almighty God, who has all power in heaven and earth, for what he is going to accomplish in this great city." And the service that day was a foretoken of a series of meetings which shook the British Isles. And, going for an illustration back to the book of Job, how suggestive is the word of Jehovah (38, 4, 7) to his suffering servant: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy!" To begin a needed and noble work in the spirit and with the voice of praise, is to afford one strong assurance and foretoken of a great victory.

The School of Practice

1. In the rebuilding of the temple the help of everyone was needed. If I had been there, there would have been something for me to do, and I would have been dismayed if I had refused or neglected to do it. But the help of everyone is needed now in the work of the church. I will this week seek to discover what I can do, and do it.

2. I see that those who blew the trumpets, and played on the cymbals, and sang, rendered important service because they encouraged the workmen. This week I will seek for some opportunity to encourage some one who is engaged in a good work.

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Intermediate Quarterly.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: Robinson's Arch, a portion of the temple building still standing, is pictured in the Senior Lesson Quarterly, page 209; a very good illustration of the consecration of the

temple and t
on page 93 o
monolith of
is given on
Show on map
burnt offering
Connecting

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noise—What are
rrying? laughing?

2. Treat the sec
Men foreign in ac

temple and the formal anthem of praise appears on page 93 of the Intermediate Quarterly; and a monolith of Esar-Haddon, the King of Assyria, is given on page 212 of the Senior Quarterly. Show on map the relative position of the altar of burnt offering and the temple.

Connecting Links.

Review the "story" of our last lesson: God working on human hearts; the proclamation by Cyrus; the uprising of the "chief of the fathers"; the assistance of friendly foreigners; the return of the consecrated vessels; the return across the desert to Jerusalem.

Narrative Outline. (For the teacher. Language and detail to be adapted to the pupils.)

This lesson passage, like the last, naturally falls into two divisions: The rejoicing of friends and the opposition of adversaries when the foundations of the temple were laid, verses 10-13 and 1-5.

The adult mind assumes the details of the rebuilding of the temple, and passes on with greater interest to the consequences. But all the details will be fresh and of peculiar interest to the child. Ezra 2 tells how many people came with Sheshbazzar over the desert from Babylon to Jerusalem, and how many horses, mules, camels, and donkeys were in the caravan—more than nine times as many donkeys as horses. They all came together as far as Jerusalem, then separated and moved on to the cities their grandfathers had lived in. But they all gave just as much as they could to a common fund for the rebuilding of the temple. Describe how a few months later the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem; the erection of the altar of burnt offering (so that regular services might be begun immediately); the hiring of workmen; and the importation of building material by way of Joppa. Later still they began to build the temple itself. Name the two men who supervised the work. Perhaps Zerubbabel was the same as Sheshbazzar of our last lesson.

The introduction to the lesson story is itself pictorial. But the printed verses are positively picturesque, and if vividly understood by the teacher, and rendered into modern English, will be delightfully entertaining to every child. Describe everything. 1. The laying of the foundations; the priests' costumes; trumpets and cymbals; a hereditary clan of musicians; David's ordinance revived; the song (psalm) of thanksgiving and the shout of praise; those dear old people who remembered the first house; the noise of weeping and the noise of joy. Then picture a company of people on a distant hill, who could not get to Jerusalem, and how they wondered as they heard the mixed noise—What are they doing in Jerusalem—crying? laughing? singing? shouting? or what? 2. Treat the second scene in the same way: Men foreign in accent and in dress (false in re-

ligion, too, for they were really pagans), pretending to be worshipers of the true God, just like the Jews, and asking to join them; the good reasons Zerubbabel and Jeshua gave for refusing them; and the bitter hatred that led these pagans to trouble God's people for years and to try to hinder them in building the temple.

Suggested Generalization. (Adapt form of statement to pupils.)

By the help of the Golden Text treat the lesson story as an allegory.

Memory Verse (Golden Text): "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3. 17).

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: See suggestions in THE JUNIOR GRADE.

Constructing the Lesson.

Outline: 1. Holy Sorrow and Holy Joy, verses 10-13. 2. Temptation and Resistance, verses 1-5.

Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline: Thoroughly understand and make vivid each phrase in the first four verses. Sorrow and joy, like men and women, may be holy or un-



holy. There is an evil sorrow "that worketh death" and a godly sorrow "that bringeth forth acceptable fruits of righteousness." Give illustrations. There is a "mirth whose end is madness," and a "joy of the Lord" which is our "strength." Give illustrations. The sorrow of our lesson story was good, because it was sorrow for sin; but it soon gave place to a joy which was also good, because it sprang from thankfulness for forgiveness and the renewed favor of God. The concrete cause of this sorrow was the destruction of the temple and the concrete cause of the joy, its restoration. The reason for the greatness of the

sorrow and joy was the holiness of God's temple. Place on the lesson pads:

THE TEMPLE OF GOD IS HOLY

Turning to the last five verses of the lesson we study an example of temptation and resistance, the ike of which is experienced by every individual who tries to serve God. There are many spiritual lessons here, some of which have been brought out in the LESSON EXPOSITION, COIN THOUGHTS, and HEART TALKS. But the best treatment of this section, after full explanation, is the allegorical:

WHICH TEMPLE YE ARE

The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

Judea and Jerusalem, rocks and ruins, must have contrasted unpleasantly with the fertile plains of Babylonia from which "they of the captivity" had returned. With mingled sad-

ness and exultation they proceeded to carry out the plans of the Lord. Read Psa. 125 as an expression of their feelings; also Psa. 115, 124. They lost no time in planning for the rebuilding of the temple, and at once erected an altar and resumed the regular ritual. It was about fifty years since the last burnt sacrifice had been offered there. The first four verses of our lesson lead out in many directions. The corner stone of the temple was laid April, 536 B. C. Note the possible identity of Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar.

Collateral Scriptures should be studied to throw light on the last five verses of the lesson. "The people of the land," or "adversaries," were "Samaritans." For their origin see 2 Kings 17, 24-41. Their request to join in the building of the temple is diplomatically refused (Ezra 4, 3), and for fifteen years the building is interfered with. Compare Ezra 4, 24 with the last two verses of our lesson. Compare also Hag. 1, 1-15; 2, 1-9; Zech. 1, 1-6; Hag. 2, 10-19, 20-23.

The Responsive Review

1. What did the builders lay? *The foundation of the temple of the Lord.* 2. Why did the people praise the Lord? *Because he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.* 3. What did the enemies say? *"Let us build with you."* 4. What was the response? *"Ye have nothing to do with us."* 5. What is said in the New Testament of God's true temple on earth? **GOLDEN TEXT:** "The temple of God," etc.

The Church Catechism

59. After what manner hath our Lord taught us to pray? Our Lord hath taught us when we pray to say: "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

LESSON V. Power Through God's Spirit

[Oct. 29]

GOLDEN TEXT. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord. **Zech. 4, 6.**

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Study the chapter. Read Zechariah chapters 1 to 8]

Zech. 4, 1-10 [Commit to memory verses 8-10]

1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.

2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

REVISED VERSION*

1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. 2 And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have seen, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with its bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps thereon: there are seven pipes to each of the lamps, which are upon the top thereof; 3 and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. 4 And I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? 5 Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord.

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

[Oct. 29]

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6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Ze-rub'-ba-bel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Ze-rub'-ba-bel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

8 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

9 The hands of Ze-rub'-ba-bel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.

10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Ze-rub'-ba-bel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

Home Readings

[Furnished by the International Bible Reading Association]

M. Power Through God's Spirit. Zech. 4. 1-10.

Tu. Fear not. Zech. 8. 1-13.

W. Recommencing the building. Ezra 5. 1-5.

6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah unto Ze-rub'-ba-bel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts. 7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Ze-rub'-ba-bel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the top stone with shoutings of Grace, grace, unto it. 8 Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, 9 The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. 10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for these seven shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel; these are the eyes of Jehovah, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

Th. The building finished. Ezra 6. 13-22.

F. Encouragement to work. Hag. 1. 1-15.

S. God's presence. Hag. 2. 1-9.

S. Power in weakness. 1 Cor. 1. 18-31.

Time.—About B. C. 519. Place.—Jerusalem.

The Lesson Hymns

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. 481.

Sweet is the sunlight after rain,
And sweet the sleep which follows pain.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 370.

Conquering now and still to conquer,
Rideth a King in his might,
Leading the host of all the faithful.

Questions for Senior Scholars

1. *Vision* (v. 1-5).—Who had talked with the prophet? What did the angel now do? What did the prophet see? How many lamps were on the candlestick? How many pipes led to these lamps? From what did the pipes proceed? What stood beside the candlestick? Did the prophet understand the vision? Where else do we find mention of the golden candlestick? (Exod. 40, 24, 25.) Where did the golden candlestick stand? Who afterward saw in a vision the golden candlestick? (Rev. 1. 12, 13.) What did the lamps represent? (Rev. 1. 20.)

2. *Interpretation* (v. 6-10).—What is the word of the Lord in the Golden Text? What does this mean? How is it explained by 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28? Who was Zerubbabel? In what work was he engaged? (Verse 9; Ezra 5. 2.) To what are the obstacles before him compared? What promise was given him? What promise is given in Isa. 40, 4, 5? Who were Zerubbabel's chief opponents? What do we learn here concerning God's omniscience? What direct lessons do we here learn concerning the church and ourselves?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars

1. *The Golden Candlestick* (v. 1-5).—What part had Zechariah taken in the laying of the foundation of the temple? Who came to him when he had the vision? How does the prophet describe his feeling? What kind of a candlestick did he see? How was the candlestick supplied with oil?

2. *Not by Might, nor by Power* (v. 6-10).—What very precious truth was brought in this figure of the olive trees to Zerubbabel? By whose power had he gone on so far? What was the promise of God to Zerubbabel? In what way can this effort of the Jews be spoken of as the day of small things?

Questions for Younger Scholars

What did the Jews have to do? *Stop building the temple. Why? They were so troubled by their enemies.* Who brought a message from the Lord to them? *The prophet Haggai.* What other prophet came to cheer them?

Zechariah. Who was the leader of the Jews?
Zerubbabel. Who gave the message to Zechariah? What did he show to Zechariah? Did the prophet know what the vision meant?
Not at first. How did he find out? *The angel*

told him. Where do we find the meaning of it? In the GOLDEN TEXT. Of what is the candlestick an emblem? Of the pure service of God. What is a real Christian? A light in the world. Of what is the oil an emblem? Of the Holy Spirit. Who is stronger than all human

might and power? God. What was the great "mountain" which hindered and troubled the Jews? The Samaritans. Who can remove mountains? Our God. What does he say of small things? That we should never despise them.

The Lesson Analysis

I. Introduction: Zechariah's mission and book.

II. The Vision (verses 1-5).

(a) An angel of Jehovah had shown Zechariah several visions, and explained them to him. (b) He now awakened the prophet from his sleep (c) and showed him a candlestick or lampstand of gold, such as was used in the temple; (d) seven lamps were on it, just as there were on the one in the temple, (e) but there were seven pipes connected with the seven lamps, and the one in the temple had no such pipes, and there were two olive trees, one on each side of the lampstand. (f) Zechariah asked the angel what these meant.

II. The Interpretation (verses 6-10).

(a) The angel explained the meaning to Zechariah. (b) It was a message of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, the governor. (c) This message was that the real power in this world is not physical but spiritual, and comes directly from Jehovah. (d) Because the Spirit of God is in Zerubbabel mountains shall melt into plains before him. (e) The angel foretold the day when crowds of people should shout with gladness because the last stone of the new temple should be in its place. (f) A definite promise was given to Zerubbabel that he should complete the temple building.

The Lesson Word Studies.

NOTE—These Word Studies are based on the text of the Revised Version.

THE TIMES OF ZECHARIAH.—Hardly had the work of rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem begun than a serious check was encountered. The Samaritans, the northern neighbors of the Hebrews in Judea, had requested to be allowed to participate in the rebuilding of the temple on the plea "we seek your God, as ye do." But their request was peremptorily refused by the Jews. Hereupon the Samaritans complained at the Persian court and made representations throwing discredit and suspicion upon Zerubbabel and his collaborators at Jerusalem with a view to stop the work. Cyrus was no longer on the throne, and his immediate successors gave ear to the representations of the Samaritans and prohibited the continuation of the work. It was not till Darius the son of Hystaspis ascended the throne that the work was permitted to go on. The delay had been one of about fifteen years. It was at this critical time that Zechariah, as also his contemporary, Haggai, prophesied. Zechariah in the name of Jehovah summoned the people to once more arise and continue the work, and Zerubbabel, the prince or governor, the Joshua, the high priest, gladly responded, leading the people, who at first showed a general apathy and disinclination to undertake the work again, in the endeavor. Further obstacles were placed in the way of the workers by the satrap of Syria and other Persian officers, but under the leadership of faithful prophets and others, and with the firm support of Darius the king, the work was continued, and in four years' time, in the sixth year of Darius, the temple was completed.

Verse 1. The prophecies of Zechariah, one of which we are to study in to-day's lesson, are like those of Daniel and Ezekiel and Saint John in his apocalypse, given largely in the form of symbolical visions, which fact must be kept in mind in the interpretation of the prophecies. In chapter 4 is given the fifth of a series of visions, the explanation to the vision itself being found in the context. The whole chapter should be read.

The angel that talked with me—The same person mentioned in Zech. 2, 1, "And behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand." Note the similarity to the vision of Ezekiel (Ezek. 40, 3).

Waked me—Zechariah. Zechariah was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, a prophet

mentioned in Neh. 12, 4, who was one of the chief priests that went up with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem, that is, returned with him from captivity. Zechariah himself, like his grandfather, was a priest as well as a prophet.

2. A candlestick all of gold—Literally, "lampstand." In design like the candlestick originally placed in the tabernacle having seven lamps thereon. The lamps were supplied with oil from a bowl or reservoir placed above them from which the oil was conveyed into them by means of seven pipes to each of the lamps.

3. Two olive trees by it—That is, by the bowl or reservoir. In verses 11 and 12 we are told that these trees had each a fruit-bearing "branch" which "emptied itself" (that is, de-

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DISCUSSION

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livered its oil) by means of a golden tube into the oil-bowl of the candlestick. The point of the vision is that the candlestick gave forth its light, and was in turn supplied by a continual and inexhaustible flow of oil without the assistance of any human agency.

5. Knowest thou not—The interpreting angel expresses his surprise at the inability of the prophet to interpret the vision without assistance.

6. In this verse begins the interpretation of the vision, which had been granted unto Zechariah the prophet as a message of encouragement unto **Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts**—that is, the work undertaken and superintended by Zerubbabel was to be carried on and completed not in the strength of those engaged in it, but by Jehovah himself.

7. Who art thou, O great mountain before Zerubbabel?—A mountain of difficulty and hindrance, interfering with the work in hand, is referred to.

Thou shalt become a plain—Every impediment and hindrance shall be entirely removed.

The Lesson Exposition

DISCOURAGEMENT AFTER ENTHUSIASM

The company of exiles who, by permission of Cyrus, king of Babylon, returned to Jerusalem, numbered in all probably about fifty thousand. Their return was in the year B. C. 538. Their Jewish leader was Zerubbabel. Seven months after the return the great altar for burnt offerings was built upon its original base in the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed (Ezra 3. 1-3), and the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles was again instituted. In the second month of the second year after the return the foundations of the temple were laid (Ezra 3. 8-13). Great enthusiasm prevailed in connection with this, trumpets and cymbals mingling with songs and the shoutings of the people. Then a disturbing element came in. The Samaritans (a mongrel people resulting from the intermarriage of Jewish peasants left in Palestine after the captivity with Persian colonists whom Nebuchadnezzar had sent to take the place of those who had been deported) asked to be permitted to join with the Jews in rebuilding the temple. This request being refused, they systematically obstructed the work, and kept up their obstruction through the balance of the reign of Cyrus and that of two of his successors. The effect appears to have been a suspension if not an abandonment of the work of temple-building for fifteen years. The Samaritans probably were in position to prevent the transportation of timber to Jerusalem, which required to be brought overland thirty-

Bring forth the top stone with shoutings—This top stone represents the finishing touch given to the completed work. The work shall be finished amid great rejoicing.

8. By way of further interpretation of the vision the message of the vision is repeated in definite words by the angel. This second message is contained in verse 8 and the following verses.

9. The hands of Zerubbabel . . . shall also finish it—Jehovah definitely confirms the promise to Zerubbabel that his work shall be successfully completed, and this completion of the work shall in turn be the proof that **Jehovah of hosts hath sent me (the angel) unto you (the prophet).**

10. The beginning of the work had been a day of small things, the resources of those engaged in the work being apparently inadequate to the undertaking, and the positive hindrances comparatively great. But since **these seven . . . the eyes of Jehovah, which run to and fro through the whole earth, perceive and behold all things, and so also the progress of the work, their fore, who will venture to despise or presume to hinder it?**

seven miles from the Sea of Joppa (Ezra 3. 7), and without this the temple could not be built even though the foundations were completed. In any case the work was not carried forward during the fifteen years, and the original enthusiasm gave way to discouragement and lack of interest. It was not creditable, but it was quite human. There is a tendency in human life toward the dying out of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm, we must remember, literally means *en-duced*, filled and inspired by God. Enduring and high enthusiasm is sustained by faith. Isa. 40. 28-31 is a great passage bearing on this thought.

SOMETHING WORSE THAN DISCOURAGEMENT

It is bad enough to lose heart, but it is worse to lose desire for great things. The returned exiles encountered what seemed to them insuperable difficulties in their attempt to rebuild the temple. Their discouragement had much justification. But their apathy and indifference and final indisposition were without justification. From saying, "It is impossible to build the temple," they sank to saying, "We do not care to rebuild it." If one fail, having honestly and waits and longs for an opportunity to retrieve it, he may have suffered no moral loss. But when he becomes content with the failure, and loses the wish to do what he failed to do, he has fallen to a low level. That was what happened with the returned exiles. After a while they began to say, "The time is not come,

the time that the Lord's house should be built" (Hag. 1, 2). They became absorbed in building their own homes of ceiled cedar, and accustomed to seeing the Lord's house lying waste. There are many communities now in which this sordid, selfish spirit prevails, where the people have grown accustomed to seeing their house of worship in a state of decay, or even to the absence of any place of worship at all, and content to let it be so. If some one suggests repairing or building, the response is, "The time is not come to build."

THE CALL OF THE PROPHET

The prophet is the unknown and incomputable factor in history. He is the surprise which God reserves against the days which are without hope. When the game seems lost and righteousness about checkmated, God plays the prophet, and the whole situation is changed. No man can anticipate when or where the prophet will appear. He is spirit-driven, and the Spirit comes as he will. The prophet, however, is very sure to come when he is not expected. Just when people are saying that God will no more speak to the world, when sordidness and carnality seem to have buried the soul, then comes the prophet, and his call is like the trumpet of the resurrection. But for these awakening summons of God's prophets the souls of men would long ago have become utterly enfeebled and the sense of God utterly extinguished. So God sent two prophets to that community of returned exiles who were fast sinking into dull sordidness and for whom the inspiring ideals with which they first came from captivity were fast dying out. Haggai and Zechariah roused the people out of moral lethargy and stirred them to complete the work which they had commenced but abandoned. In the year B. C. 520 this awakening took place, and it was the result of the call of these two prophets. Students of the present lesson should not fail to read the whole of the books which bear their names.

"APOCALYPSE," OR REVELATION BY SYMBOLIC VISIONS

The Bible student will have his attention attracted to a new form of Scripture in the writings connected with and following the captivity. It is what is known as "apocalypse," or revelation by symbolic visions. In the New Testament the revelation of John is of this character, and is commonly called the "Apocalypse." It was a marked contribution to the Scriptures by the influences of Babylon and Persia on the Jewish mind during the captivity. The books of Ezekiel and Daniel are of this character, and they belong to the period of the captivity. The book of Zechariah, from which the lesson is taken, is highly symbolic. Such writings would not have been adapted to the Jewish mind be-

fore coming under the influence of the farther East. It shows us how God adapts his revelations to the types of mind to which he speaks. The Persians and the Assyrians were richly imaginative, with a love for mystery and enigmatical symbols. The Jewish mind, which it must be remembered had its origin in that older Orient, was quickly responsive to the stimulating environment in which the captivity cast it. The Jew, consequently, after the captivity was more Oriental than he was before. The understanding of symbols such as Zechariah described was not difficult for those to whom they were first given, and they impressed the messages which they embodied as no mere plain statement could have done. People of the Western nations often find it difficult to understand this highly colored symbolism. But it is well for us to remember that the Bible is for all mankind, and that the greater part of the human race are Orientals.

THE TWO SYMBOLS

It is important for us to know that in such symbolic visions as that of the Temple Candlestick and the Two Olive Trees given in the lesson that not all parts of the symbolic objects have any significance. Our familiar rule of rhetoric, that we must not attempt to make a figure of speech go on all fours, is never more important than in the study of these symbolic portions of Scripture. In the present case just two things were intended to be set forth, according to the explanation by the angel. First, the seven lamps of the candlestick were declared to represent "the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth" (verse 10). Second, the two olive trees upon either side of the candlestick, which the angel declared represented "the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (verse 14). These manifestly refer to the civil and religious heads of the nation—Zerubbabel and Jeshua. God, the church, and the state—those were the ideas which this vision represented. Let these three work together and human society will be perfected.

REVIVING THE FAITH OF A NATION

And the aim of the vision, the message which it was intended to convey, was one of inspiration to the nation. "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," Zerubbabel as civil ruler was charged with building the temple. He had commenced, but had abandoned the work because of difficulties which had arisen like a mountain. But then God was saying that the mountain should become a plain, and the temple should be completed with shoutings and with grace (verse 7). It was the buoyant, triumphant spirit of the optimism of faith.

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Nothing that
It is too bad
to finish.

THE LESSON PRAYER

We also have laid the foundation of great work with joy, and have grown discouraged by difficulties and ceased to build up the walls. Labor, and lack of sympathy, and opposition, and long delay, have overtaxed our patience and sapped our strength, and we have turned away from our tasks and left them unfinished. And we fear that our hearts have sometimes lost their hold upon the high ideals, and that our souls have descended to the levels of low content. Stir us out of our torpor and strengthen our hearts with courage and send us back to begin again upon the abandoned foundations of our work, assured that our success depends not upon our own might or power, but upon thy Spirit who worketh in us. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

God's spirit empowers the spirit of man.

All power is directly or indirectly the expression of personality.

Flint flings fire when you smite it.

Struggle is God's plan for building the soul to large proportions.

The soul that would be powerful must submit to the highest power.

If you would be *dynamic*, keep in touch with the *dynamo*.

Prayer is the soul's trolley-arm that grips the live wire of God's power.

The power of fire is not in the flame, but in the fuel.

II

Personality propagates power.

Personality cannot *be* and not be influential.

Every man is more for good or bad than he can tell.

The tread of truth has tottered many a throne.

God's touches are all "*finishing touches*."

The things that were the best when God made them may become the worst when man mars them.

What God does not begin no man would better finish.

The best things may be put to the worst uses.

III

It takes God to make a flower, but any fool can spoil one.

Things would seem better to us if we were better.

Nothing that God does needs to be done over. It is too bad to begin what is not good enough to finish.

IV

It is only the oil of the spirit that can make the machinery of life run smoothly.

It is only mercy that writes the emancipation proclamation across the midnight sky of penitence.

With power any man may climb to heaven or crawl to hell.

The might that would make a man may mar an angel.

Every man must accept God's power in some form, or do without its help in any form.

V

The earth is everywhere a-tremble with the footsteps of God's power.

Men may walk with God to *heal*, or they may walk *from* him to woe.

God allies himself with everything we touch in order that he may touch us through everything.

The man of power must never gloat over it.

A man must invest power or divest it.

Power brings joy to its possessor only from harvest fields whither it has gone to glean.

Power is most ecstatic, when, with knotted thews, it throws itself under the burden of an overloaded brother.

VI

Hoarded talents are like hoarded manna, they will spoil.

The *non-use* of talent is the *abuse* of talent.

The telegraph operator counts for naught if he does not transmit the message.

Truth is given to be given away.

Talent must work or wither.

God would find his way to man through man. The way to grow puissant is to serve.

The Lesson Heart Talk

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES

There is new light upon the sayings of the prophets when we read them in between the lines of Hebrew history. We better understand the meaning of Zechariah and Haggai when we know them as God's messengers in the time of the return from captivity and the rebuilding of the temple. And while the history has always its spiritual teaching for us, so, too, the prophecies bear a living message to our hearts to-day.

It is not by might nor by power that the soul temple is rebuilt. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works lest any one should boast."

When the temple builders were so disheartened by their opposers that they stopped working, leaving the stones piled in disorder for their enemies to point at as a failure, the Spirit of God spoke to them through Haggai. What do you mean, he asked, saying the time has not come to build the house of the Lord? Consider what you do. Is it right to be taken up with business, pleasure, and material comfort, and be indifferent about the work the Lord brought you here to do? And when they were aroused to renewed effort and again their adversaries tried to hinder, Zechariah, moved by the same inward voice, feminded them that success depended not upon their own skill or strength, but upon the Spirit of the Lord, who commanded the work to be done. Men could not hinder what God had determined. Who art thou, O great mountain? Thou shalt fall before a soul filled with the might of the Lord.

"How much we need the prophet's vision! You need it; I need it. We are builders; we have our commission from the great Master Builder. His design is perfect. He sees what a glorious house it will be if we follow his plan faithfully and well. In him, the building fitly framed together grows to a holy temple, for the habitation of God through the Spirit. But there are many adversaries. The world is not a friend to grace to help us on to God. We need the prophet's vision for courage, perseverance, success. No spiritual condition or set of circumstances can be more discouraging than were these conditions of the returned exiles. But every note of the prophet's message was hope, courage, certainty. Be strong, be faithful, do your part, and the headstones will be brought out with shoutings, "Grace, grace unto it!" Because there is an unseen force working in you; it is God that worketh in you to will and to do his good pleasure; he that has begun a good work in you will perfect it; he is able to present you faultless in the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust—that is, dominated more by the

seen and the natural than by the unseen and the spiritual—and so he spurs our trust by repeated assurance. "Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth with you: fear ye not." God does not change. The Holy Spirit abides with us forever. All you know of truth the Holy Spirit teaches you.

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

His one purpose is to make your heart a fit dwelling place for the holy and loving God. Why, then, be discouraged? Be strong, and work, for your Spirit remaineth with you, saith the Lord. But he says I must work. Certainly; we have our part to do. The temple-stones must not lie around in disorder. I must read God's Word; I must pray; I must serve; I must do with my might what my hands find to do. But I must do it all with the strong consciousness that it is a vain attempt without God, and a vital success, in spite of all hindrances, with him. Do not put this lesson up in cloudland, out of an ordinary person's reach. It is for the practical use of a teacher, mother, housekeeper, breadwinner. Everything in daily life helps or hinders spiritual temple building. A piece of work conscientiously well done puts in a stone. Temper controlled, patience kept, a loving deed done or word spoken, a trial trustfully borne, a hard lesson mastered in school, a sarcastic, disagreeable remark kept back, all these help on the building. They are not done by your own might or power; they are all the work of the Spirit of the Lord. The way to build rapidly, and true to the plan, is simply to open your mind and heart to the Holy Spirit. He is the workman. Just you be his tool. Let him sharpen and polish and use as he will. There is a legend of some devout monks building a shrine for worship, which as fast as they built in the daytime enemies destroyed in the night. But because they were sincere, always doing their best in spite of discouragements, one night a band of angels came and finished their work, so strong and beautiful that the enemies gave up the fight, and the wondering monks brought a thank offering to the shrine perfect beyond anything their own hands could have built.

So will the Holy Spirit build the soul-temple, and it shall be filled with the glory of the indwelling God; and we with eternal gratitude will say, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

1.
My reason
And follow

2. Verse
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How oft do
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They for us
And bright
And all for l
O, why shou
regard!

3.

These stars, t
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That heav'n
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Millions of sp
Unseen, both
All these with
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Of echoing hill
Celestial voices
Sole, or respon
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While they k
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With heav'nly
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4. Verse 6.

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The Lesson in Literature and Art

1.

My reason yields her hand to faith,
And follows meekly where the angel leads.
—Holland.

2. Verse 1. The Ministry of Angels.
How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succor us that succor want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flittering skies, like flying pursuivants,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch, and duly ward,
And bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward;
O, why should heavenly God to men have such regard!

—Edmund Spenser.

3.

These stars, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were
none,
That heav'n would want spectators, God want
praise;

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep;
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,
Both day and night; how often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding
walk.

With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heav'n.
—Milton.

4. Verse 6. Then I saw in my dream that
the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and
led him into a place where was a fire burning
against a wall, and one standing by it, always
casting much water upon it, to quench it; yet
did the fire burn higher and hotter. "Then,"
said Christian, "what means this?" The In-
terpreter answered, "This fire is the work of
grace that is wrought in the heart; he that
casts water upon it, to extinguish and put it
out, is the devil; but, in that thou seest the fire,
notwithstanding, burns higher and hotter, thou
shalt also see the reason of that." So he led
him about to the backside of the wall, where he
saw a man with a vessel of oil in his hand, of
which he did also continually cast, but secretly,
into the fire. "Then," said Christian, "what
means this?" The Interpreter answered, "This
is Christ, who continually, with the oil of his
grace, maintains the work already begun in the
heart; by means of which, notwithstanding
what the devil can do, the souls of his people
prove gracious still. And in that thou sawest

that the man stood behind the wall to maintain
the fire, this is to teach thee that it is hard for
the tempted to see how this work of grace is
maintained in the soul.—Bunyan.

5.

Hope was glad in the beginning, and fear was
sad midway,
But sweet fruition cometh in the end, a harvest
safe and sure.
That which is, can never not have been; facts
are solid as the pyramids:
A thing done is written in the rock, yea, with
a pen of iron.
Uncertainty no more can scare, the proof is
seen complete,
Nor accident render unaccomplished, for the
deed is finished.
Thus the end shall crown the work, with grace,
grace, unto the top-stone,
And the work shall triumph in its crown, with
peace, peace unto the builder.

—M. F. Tupper.

6. Verse 10. What maintains one vice
would bring up two children. You may think,
perhaps, that a little tea, or a little punch now
and then, diet a little more carefully, clothes a
little finer, and a little entertainment now and
then, can be no great matter; but, remember,
many a little makes a mickle. Beware of little
expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship,
as Poor Richard says; and, again, who chinties
love shall beggar prove; and, moreover, fools
make feasts, and wise men eat them.—Franklin.

7. A beautiful but somewhat complicated
machine was being exhibited to a group of me-
chanics, when suddenly its movements were al-
together stopped by a small screw becoming
loose. The exhibitor requested his auditors to
be patient while he remedied the evil, telling
them that the machine was as useless without
the screw as the screw would be without the
machine.—Magridge.

8. Verse 10. "The eyes of the Lord which
run to and fro through the whole earth."
How dreadful is the eye of God on him who
wants to sin! You have heard about a very dis-
tinguished French general, who, having been
captured by the enemy, was shut up in a
little room in a gloomy prison for a great while.
In the door of his little cell was a very small
hole cut. At the hole a soldier was placed
day and night to watch him. All he could see
was the soldier's eye; but the eye was always
there. Day and night, every moment when he
looked up, he always saw that eye. O! he says,
it was dreadful! There was no escape, no hid-
ing; when he lay down, and when he rose
up, that eye was watching him. How dreadful

will the eye of God be upon the sinner, as it watches him in the eternal world forever!—*Dr. J. Todd.*

9. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and

Lesson Side-Lights and Illustrations

1. "*The Angel Waked Me.*" The prophet had been in a trance, an ecstatic stupor, stunned and dazed with the previous revelations and visions. Now he is roused to behold a further representation of God's grace. "Thus in Dan. 8. 17, 18, the prophet tells of Gabriel's visit to him: "So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was affrighted, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man, for the vision belongeth to the time of the end. Now as he was speaking with me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright." So, also, in the account of the Transfiguration we read that the three chosen witnesses, Peter, James, and John, while the heavenly visitors were engaged in conversing with the Master, were similarly affected: "They were heavy with sleep; but when they were fully awake, they saw his glory—and they fell on their faces and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid" (Luke 9. 32; Matt. 17. 6, 7). It is a blessed office of angel or man to waken a human soul to see and understand celestial revelations!

2. *The Golden Candlesticks.* In the holy place of the Hebrew tabernacle, and in the similar apartment in the temple, there was a candlestick or lampstand of pure gold, arranged for seven olive-oil lamps. On the Arch of Titus in Rome can be seen to this day a carving of this lampstand, as well as representations of the table of show-bread and the silver trumpets, all of them trophies borne from the city after its capture by his army in A. D. 70. So, again, in Revelation 1. 12, 13, Saint John says: "And I turned to see the voice of him that spake with me. And I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like unto the Son of man." Fairbairn's Typology says in regard to this repeated symbolism: "The seven golden lamps are explained to mean the seven churches [of Asia Minor]. These churches, however, are to be understood not merely as so many organized communities, but as replenished by the Spirit of God, and full of divine light and power; and hence in the fourth chapter of the same book we again meet with seven lamps of fire before the throne of God, which are said to be the seven spirits of God—either the One Spirit of God in his varieties of

fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Always some damning circumstance transpires. The laws and substance of nature—water, snow, wind, gravitation—become penalties to the thief."—*Emerson.*

holy and spiritual working, or seven presiding spirits of light, fitted by that Spirit for the ministrations referred to in the heavenly vision. Throughout Scripture oil is uniformly taken for the symbol of the Holy Spirit. It is so not less with respect to its light-giving property than to its qualities for anointing and refreshment; and hence the prophet Zechariah represents the exercise of the Spirit's gracious working and victorious energy in behalf of the church under the image of two olive trees pouring oil into the golden candlestick—the church being manifestly imaged in the candlestick, and the Spirit's assisting grace in the perpetual current of oil with which it was supplied. Clearly, therefore, what we see in the candlestick of the tabernacle is the church's relation to God as the possessor and reflector of the holy light that is in him, which she is privileged to receive, and bound to give forth to others, so that where she is there must be no darkness, even though all around should be enveloped in the shades of night. It is her high distinction to dwell in a region of light and to act under God as the bountiful dispenser of its grace and truth.

The meaning of this repeated symbolism is gathered up more than once by our Lord when he says of himself, "I am the Light of the world," and to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world: Let your light shine!"

3. *Mountains Demolished.* Other scriptural references in point may be helpful. In Jer. 51. 25 the Almighty, speaking through the prophet to Babylon, says: "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain." In Matt. 21. 21 our Lord says, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, . . . if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea: it shall be done." Thus to Zerubbabel the message came that the difficulties which opposed his work, difficulties which rose before him like mountain barriers, should be swept away, and a clear and level path to victory should open before his advancing feet. The history of the church, age after age, has abounded with illustrations paralleling this assurance of triumph. (1) For instance, ancient heathenism rose like a mountain range, ice-clad, precipitous, impass-

able, before habitable ground in the government, customs, everywhere. The afflict of Christ, in which "plain"—no or military of the gospel era. (2) I presumed guise until a cent path of hu towering, so that few pe mounted or

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able, before the apostolic church. It owned the habitable globe; it was intrrenched in the home, in the government, in political life, in all social customs, in human experience of all phases everywhere. Read that notable work, *The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*, by Uhlhorn, if you would get a clear idea of the way in which this great "mountain" became a "plain"—not by human "might" nor by political or military "power," but by the spiritual forces of the gospel in the first three centuries of our era. (2) Political tyranny, dressed in the assumed guise of the divine right of kings, rose until a century ago like a huge mountain in the path of human progress. It was so vast, so towering, so buttressed on enduring foundations, that few people believed it could ever be surmounted or removed. But the gospel, teaching

men the doctrine of the divine fatherhood and human brotherhood, and the essential features of religious and civil liberty, began to undermine, and tunnel through, and overtop, and blast into, and flank this seemingly insuperable mountain-barrier, and lo! in our own time there are left only about six great governments on the globe which are absolute monarchies—all the others, scores in numbers, are representative and essentially republican in character. (3) Human slavery was another "mountain" which quickly became a plain, at the behest of the Ruler of Nations, a generation or two ago. (4) The liquor traffic, the graft and boodle system of government in our cities, and other "mountains" rise before us to-day. Shall we doubt that they shall all in due time become plains at the bidding of the King of kings?

The School of Practice

1. I know that many people begin many good works but grow discouraged and abandon them. I will this week consider whether I have not done this, and if so whether I ought not take up and go on with some undertaking I commenced but gave up.

2. The prophet of this lesson came to a discouraged people, and stirred them up and induced them to undertake work which they had forsaken. In a narrower but real way I may have the opportunity to encourage the discouraged, and for this week I will seek for such an opportunity.

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

The Junior Grade.

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the *Intermediate Quarterly*.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: Our picture of the Golden Candlestick, page 794; also picture in *Intermediate Quarterly*. Small copies of the seven-branched candlestick in brass are for sale in Jewish shops in most of our large cities.

Connecting Links.

Review: The prophetic careers of Haggai and Zechariah are noted in our study of Lesson IV for the Senior Grade.

Intervening Events: The delay in the completion of the temple, already noted, and the resumption of work under the urgent appeals of the prophets.

Narrative Outline. (For the teacher. Language and detail to be adapted to the pupils.)

Many of God's messages were conveyed to Zechariah by "angels" (Zech. 1, 8, 9, etc.; 2, 1-3, etc.; 3, 1, etc.), and are in the form of visions of a highly allegorical sort—for example, the visions of horses, 1, 7-11; of horns and smiths, 1, 18-21; of the man with the measuring line, 2, 1-5; of the high priest's change of raiment, 3, 1-10. To-day we study the vision of the golden candlestick, after which come those of the flying roll, of the women and ephah, and of the chariots and horses.

The sleeping prophet is aroused by the angel. In front of him is the golden candlestick or

lampstand which belonged in the temple. The pupil should be given a very definite conception of the appearance of this lampstand, an upright stem in the middle and three curved stems on each side, making in all seven resting-places for lamps; the stems were really pipes, through which the olive oil perpetually flowed to feed the lamps which constantly burned. The oil, as Zechariah afterward learned, came from the olive trees on each side. The lampstand and the trees were pleasant to look upon, but Zechariah felt that the angel would hardly have waked him to see them if they had not symbolized deep truth. The angel asked, "Do you know what all these mean?" and Zechariah said, "No."

The angel did not directly explain about the olive oil or trees or lampstand, but instead he gave to the prophet God's message to Zerubbabel, the good governor. Zerubbabel was trying hard to have the temple built, but the people were poor and discouraged. They had not of themselves might or power enough to build the temple, and they were beginning to forget about God. But God said (Golden Text), "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit." If God's Spirit worked with them they would be sure to succeed. So soon as Zechariah heard that, he fully understood the vision. Discouraged Zerubbabel had thought his troubles as big as a mountain; God said they should soon be flattened out like a plain. Discouraged Zerubbabel had thought that the temple would never be completed in his lifetime; God promised that

by Zerubbabel's own hands the last stone should be put in its place while everybody around applauded. Discouraged Zerubbabel had thought that some one else would have to finish the good work he had begun; God said that just as sure as Zerubbabel had begun it, so surely would he finish it. When he thought everybody had forgotten him God's eyes had been tenderly watching him.

Suggested Generalization. (Adapt form of statement to pupils.)

As it was not the shining gold of the lampstand that gave the light, but the oil flowing through the pipes, so it is not money or learning or shrewdness or influence that gives us real power, but it is God's Spirit.

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Illustrative Material: See note for the Junior Grade. Copy our picture on the blackboard.

Constructing the Lesson.

The lesson divides itself into The Vision,



GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

verses 1-5, and The Interpretation, verses 6-10. The second division is really an Application rather than an Interpretation. The angel plainly states the truth of which the constantly fed and constantly shining lamps are the symbols. Make plain, 1. What Zechariah saw; 2. What Zechariah heard; and 3. What lessons from the vision should come to us.

Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline:

1. Make plain in every detail what Zechariah saw; and first be sure you understand it yourself. On top of each of the seven arms of

the candlestick (see picture) was a lamp, and as the arms were pipes through which the oil passed, these lamps were continually fed with fresh oil, so that the light could never go out. On each side of the lampstand was an olive tree, to show that there was an unlimited supply of olive oil to be drawn from. It is all a symbol of unseen support. Other lamps have to be filled from the outside, like our kerosene lamps. But these were constantly full.

2. Zechariah asked the angel for an explanation, and the angel by a question expressed surprise that he needed any, and gave him none. Instead he told in plain words what the vision stood for. Remind the class of Zerubbabel's task; of his discouragement; of his lack of financial support; of the opposition of enemies; of the withdrawal of royal help, and of the lack of interest on the part of the Jews. But Zerubbabel had an unseen source of strength. It is described in the Golden Text.

The Senior Grade

[For pupils above the age of seventeen. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly.]

The background of this lesson should be thoroughly explored by senior students: the wrongful accusations of the Samaritans; the suspicions of the Persian governor, and his investigation (Ezra 5, 3, 4); his report to Darius (Ezra 5, 6-17); the search for Cyrus's decree and the confirmatory decree of Darius (Ezra 6: 1-12) (while the search was going on the prophetic visions came to Zechariah); the renewal of interest and effort in the building of the temple (Ezra 6, 13, 14); the completion of the temple; its dedication; and the readjustment of the sacred services. The decree of King Darius will repay close study; so will Zechariah's words concerning fasting. The eyes of God see with joy the plummet in the hands of Zerubbabel, as he tests the perfectness of the rising structure, for nothing is overlooked by the eyes of God. Verses 11-14 are necessary to the complete understanding of the lesson. Zechariah asks the meaning of the two olive trees, and of the olive branches which stand out above the rest at the side of the golden tubes, and which empty the oil into the lamps. The angel explains that these are the head of the church and the head of the state.

The Responsive Review

1. What did the angel show to Zechariah? *A golden lampstand.* 2. From what did the seven lamps receive their oil? *From two olive trees beside the lampstand.* 3. What did the angel say was the meaning of this vision? **GOLDEN TEXT:** "Not by might," etc. 4. Who superintended the building of the second temple? *Zerubbabel.* 5. What do we learn from verse 10? *That God watches over the whole earth.*

The Church Catechism

60. What is the fellowship of believers? *The fellowship of believers is the communion of saints in the unity of the Spirit, and more particularly the meeting of Christians with one another to testify of the grace of God in their hearts and lives, to confess their sins to one another, and to admonish and exhort one another to all holiness.*

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Primary Teachers' Department

Primary Notes

HOME again after the summer rest and the summer stimulus. Many primary teachers have enjoyed the Summer School, and having "heard it" all, are eager to "do it." New methods of work will be attempted—usually to the good of the class, since tried and proved methods only are emphasized in these valuable schools.

THE wise teacher will consider well whether the new method is adapted to her class. Conditions vary in primary schools as elsewhere. Put the newly acquired ideas into practice, and if they fit use them by all means. But first of all and always, be your own best self when you come before your precious charge, committed to you by the Father of every least child, and never attempt to wear an "armor" designed for another.

THERE are teachers, even primary teachers, who will enter upon the fall campaign with a lagging spirit. They see so little of the fruits of their labors. They are not quite sure that any real good comes of their well-meant efforts. "Do you think that nothing is happening because you do not see yourself grow, or hear the whir of the machinery?" says Henry Drummond. "All great things grow noiselessly; you can see a mushroom grow, but never a child." Be sure that your work is not in vain "in the Lord"! Put heart into it, let fervent prayers ascend to the throne in behalf of your dear children, get the best mental preparation you can, and then leave it to God and the angels!

At the triennial convention of the International Sunday School Association, held in Toronto last June, the great topic was "Winning a Generation." The humblest teacher has a part in this vast undertaking. The association stands for an enrollment of fourteen million children. What a work is in the hands of the parents and Sunday school teachers of today! They are going to be won—to something. Shall it be to Christ and the church? The answer depends largely—not wholly, but largely—upon the faith and love of the Sunday school teacher.

A Harvest Missionary Recitation

THE fields are all white, and the reapers are few;

We children are willing, but what can we do
To work for our Lord in his harvest?

We'll work by our prayers, by the pennies we bring,

By small self-denials—the least little thing
May work for our Lord in his harvest.

Until, by and by, as the years pass at length,
We, too, may 'be reapers, and go forth in strength

To work for our Lord in his harvest.

—Selected.

A Word of Cheer

THE most successful teacher of children is the one who believes in inspiration, for this results in a spontaneous action, which Mr. Emerson said "is always our best." The teacher of children should have such firm belief in this divine breath as to hold it sacred.

Earnest worker in the child garden, keep your heart open toward the children, your eyes bright and sharp to see the latest flower blossoming upon the tree of truth, and be sure to discern its form and to appreciate its beauty and fragrance. Have your mind ready for promptings from Him who will "bring all things to your remembrance," and "show you things to come."

Go bravely forward in your work, with an abandonment to God of your whole physical and spiritual being. When he shall give to you—in an unlooked-for manner, and when least expected—a germ of truth, of life, see that the soil of your heart and mind be as the good ground to receive it; do not allow either fowls, sun-scorch, or thorns to deprive you of it, but guard it, water it, and give it a chance—it will bring forth fruit, and its seeds, increased a hundredfold, you may use for others. Take a seed and plant it safe; "it will grow while thou art sleeping."—*Mary J. Chisholm Foster, in The Kindergarten of the Church.*

The Gates of Opportunity

AND these gates "no man shutteth." The traveler may pass by, and take some by-path if he will, but there stand these open doors which God hath set before us, and no mortal power can close them. Through them comes the appeal of souls in need; the cry for help; the offer of the most rewardful work in the world, in the church, the Sunday school, the mission field, the destitute and desolate places, among the sick and poor and sorrowful, among the rich and sorrowful—everywhere and always. "I have set before thee an open door . . . for thou hast a little strength." Enough then, to enter. Enter then, and his strength made perfect in weakness shall suffice for all the way beyond these open gates.—*J. H. J.*

International Bible Lessons

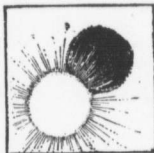
FOURTH QUARTER

LESSON I—October 1

DANIEL AND BELSHAZZAR. Dan. 5. 17-30

GOLDEN TEXT: "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Psa. 34. 16.

Primary Notes



Preview. Look first at Golden Text for Review: "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness." God's goodness, then, will be a fitting theme, evidently in mind by the Lesson Committee. A crown will be a fitting symbol—only

It must be carefully explained, that as crowns are set upon kings' heads to mark them as kings, so goodness marks each day and year, as with a crown. Jewels are in crowns. Lesson thoughts from God's Word are worth more than jewels, even diamonds. We will have one of these each week. If we keep them all we shall be richer than pearls and diamonds could make us, and our riches will last longer.

God's gifts are all good. What he helps us to do is all a free gift. These jewels will all show goodness. Prepare a crown, so that a jewel can be added weekly.

At one sitting, dear teachers, read over all the quarter's lessons, if possible, with the thought of God's goodness in view.

This little hymn verse (tune, Jesus Loves Me,) will emphasize it:

God is good. He crowns the year
With his mercy, love, and cheer.
May we learn his holy way,
Love and trust him, and obey.
Help us to love thee,
Help us to trust thee,
Lord, may we follow
And please thee day by day.

Notice and emphasize personal character of lessons. Make pupils acquainted this quarter with Daniel, Belshazzar, Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Zechariah, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Paul (in Temperance Lesson), and the Messiah. What a gallery of portraits!

Approach to the Lesson. There was once a king who was rich, powerful, and well known, but he was not wise. To be wise is to be able to understand, to know what to do and how to do it. Wisdom is worth more than money, because, rich as this king was, he could not buy wisdom. There is a way to get wisdom, but it is not to

be bought for gold or silver. The story to-day will tell us who this king was, who could not read and understand a message sent him, and who was so foolish and unwise that he lost his chance of being good and ruling well. We shall also learn, if we listen, about one who was very wise, because God taught him, and how he read the message to the king.

Introduction. Go back over chapters three and four, and portray the scene upon which the lesson opens, the place, the persons, the mysterious message, and the summons which Daniel answered, coming in the strength and courage which only God could give.

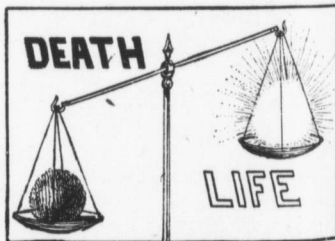
Daniel's Wisdom. Seek to make little ones understand what wisdom is, how much Daniel needed it, and where he got it. Daniel knew much, but wisdom taught him how to use it. First, he told the wonderful and strange story of Belshazzar's father, and how he learned to know God. The son, Belshazzar, ought to have understood this lesson and worshiped God, instead of bowing to idols, and using the holy things of God's temple, drinking wine and praising idols, in the golden cups. It was very wise in Daniel to say all these things. God taught him, as he will teach us, if we ask, and are willing to learn. We won't have such a chance as Daniel did, but we need wisdom, just the same, for every day.

The Message. Put this into simple words so that all may understand.

Belshazzar had not used his chance, and now it was to be taken from him. Ah, foolish king, to lose so much by pride and pleasing himself. Give the story's ending briefly—wise Daniel set on high and honored, and the unwise king killed in the coming in of the enemy.

Crown Jewel: Wisdom. Little people need to be wise, and grow up having wisdom. Remember how Daniel began, as a Temperance Boy. God will make us wise. Let us ask, and let us take, and use, what he gives.

Thought for Teachers. It will take great wisdom to teach this lesson aright. The Golden



Text should be taught in contrast with Daniel's character. God's face was turned toward him, is the positive teaching.

DANIEL

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LESSON II—October 8

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN. Dan. 6, 10-23

GOLDEN TEXT: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psa. 34, 7.

Primary Notes

Approach. Were you ever in great trouble, and were you helped out? Then you were delivered. To deliver means to save, to bring out of danger, to help out of trouble, to keep from being hurt or harmed. The Golden Text tells us how those who love God and fear to do wrong are saved, or delivered. God sends his angel to do it. Once there was a good man lying asleep in a prison. He was put there because he loved Jesus. Those who did not love the Saviour took this man and put him in jail, intending to kill him. The man was so full of peace and trust that he could sleep even there and then. By and by a touch woke him. Behold, there was an angel standing by, and the doors were open. The angel said, "Put on your cloak and follow me." So the two went out and no one knew till daylight. They went along, and by and by an iron gate opened to them silently without a touch, and then the angel, having brought the man to a part of the city that he knew, left him to go on to the house of his friends, where they were praying for him. You know where this story comes from. It is from the Bible, and the man's name was Peter. An angel delivered him. But it was not the first angel God ever sent on such an errand.

God always delivers his children when they are in trouble. Either he takes them the trouble away from them, or he takes them away from the trouble, or else he helps them to bear it, so that it is not really trouble any more, but something that is good for them, no matter how hard it may seem.

Daniel in Danger. Aim to fix the children's thoughts upon deliverance. Seek to lead them to firm trust in God for help at all times. Describe Daniel's danger. Who envied him? Why? What did these enemies wish to do? What plan did they make to get him into trouble?

Daniel's Duty. It made no difference what wicked rule his enemies made. It was Daniel's duty to pray just the same. It was right, and he needed to pray, and God would hear him. Suppose he had been a coward, and shut up his windows and pryed in the dark—would he have had a right to expect God's loving care? It is not best always to pray where people can see, but if Daniel had not opened his windows toward the city of Jerusalem and its holy temple



it would have showed him to be a coward, at this time.

Daniel's Deliverance. Here is another "D." The three words may be written on the board after one capital letter D. Recall definition of deliverance, and make sure that it is understood. Describe the anxiety of the wicked men to punish God's true servant, the king's distress and effort to save him.

Remember that it is the angel of deliverance that is the center of the story. Turn the thoughts to the angel shutting the lions' mouths, and to the calm trust of Daniel, who was no more afraid now than when he knelt at his open window to pray. Picture the coming of the anxious king in the early morning, and make the children hear the ring of faith and cheer in Daniel's "my God hath sent his angel."

Crown Jewel: Deliverance. Make this thought practical by enumerating dangers besetting children, and their safety in God. Sin is worse than a lion, and God is able to save from sin.

Thought for Teachers. These wonderful Old Testament stories carry their own teaching with them. The child can apply it, if they are told him with spirit, and in the right spirit. Irradiate this story with the truth of the encamping angel, and the sure deliverance, and of God's being the same now and forever.



LESSON III—October 15

RETURNING FROM CAPTIVITY. Ezra 1, 1-11

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Psa. 126, 3.

Primary Notes



Approach. As far as possible the jewel-thoughts are linked closely with the Golden Text, even though the word may not be of the short-est. If it is emphatic in the text, it is better to explain than to pass it over, if it really contains a lesson children can

understand. In this lesson there is a ring of joy in the Golden Text, and Gladness is a most appropriate crown jewel.

Open with a little talk about being away from home a long time, and how it feels to get back. At the time of the civil war in this country a soldier was taken prisoner. For months and months he was kept in prison, and then he was sick, far away from home, after being set free. At last he was able to go home. His little girl had long been watching and waiting for him. Every day she went to the gate many times to look up the street, wondering if he would come soon. When the soldier came at last, what a happy meeting it was, after being a captive or a prisoner so long! They were all glad together. They talked together of what great things God had done for them in bringing them together again.

To-day's story tells of gladness like that, only many, many more people were happy.

Introductory. Go back far enough into the history to explain the captivity. Recall lesson of September 3. Captivity of Judah. Picture the long weary years of absence from home and country.

God's Message to King Cyrus. This was a king of a heathen country, yet God could speak to him, and he did. He could use him, and he did. The Lord told Cyrus, the Persian king who now had rule over Babylon, to build again the beautiful temple at Jerusalem, and to let the Jews, God's own people, go back there to their own land.

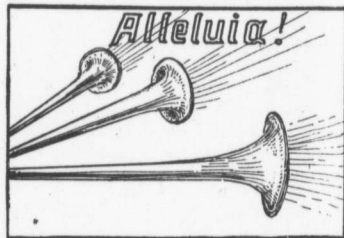
Cyrus's Message to the People. The king wrote down what God said, and also sent the word all through his kingdom. He told the captive Jews, from the land of Judah, that now they were free to go back, and God would be with them. Wherever any Jews were found who wished to go back and help to build God's house, those who lived in the place must help them, with gold, and silver, and goods, and beasts, as a freewill gift, not taking any pay.

The Return. Picture the gladness of the people over the king's message, and how their hearts longed to go home, and to build the temple. Make vivid the gathering of the families, the gifts of the neighbors, the preparation for the journey, in which perhaps even the children could help, and try to imagine how they all felt. Tell how Cyrus brought out the beautiful and precious vessels belonging to the temple, which his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken when he brought the people away as captives and burned the holy house of God. He had put these in the idol's temple, but now they were to be given back. There were five thousand four hundred in all, and Shesh-bazzar, a Prince of Judah, received them for the people, as they took their way up from Babylon to Jerusalem, with joy.

Jewel-Thought: Gladness. Did not God

crown that year of return home with goodness and gladness? How thankful and happy they must have been! And whenever we get away from our Father, by doing wrong, so that sin makes us prisoners, we can feel this gladness if we will come back. The way is always open. We need not stay far from Jesus, but may come back and obey him, and he will make us glad.

Thought for Teachers. If we have no "golden vessels," no rare gifts to offer for God's service, we can surely bring "silver basins of the second sort." These always outnumber those of gold, and the Lord hath need of every one.

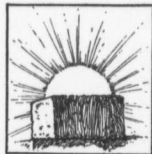


LESSON IV—October 22

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE. Ezra 3. 10 to 4. 5

GOLDEN TEXT: "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. 3. 17.

Primary Notes



Approach. The theme of this lesson is building for God. The church where we pray and praise is built for God. It is set apart to be used for this. The bricks and boards are no better than those in houses, but because God is worshiped it is his holy house. It is not a place in which to run and play. Impress this upon the children, and also that we do not need to be in church all the time to have God with us, for we can be temples for him to stay in, if our hearts are open and ready for him to come in and stay always.

Introduce by little story of an artist who painted the ceiling of a church as carefully in the out-of-sight places as anywhere, because God could see what man could not. God look at the inside. He wants hearts clean and loving for his temple.

How the People Built. They began at the foundations, and so must we. We must begin at the beginning, and make a place deep down in our hearts for God.

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dren listen, praise and the song was all God. He bro for him they v they did it.

The Work lived in the were displeas they would hel when they did chief man, the not be. Here i in the quarter charge of the p temple was Zer He was born i when the chan God moved his at the head of well to rememb second temple, called after Zer It is sad to much to do wit the Jews found made the peopl building, and h and hinder ther stopped, throu Cyrus. Many was king of Pers the house of G this lesson s holy house. Th where God's pe It may be only a or one build of a forever God m place.

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dren listen, in fancy, to the great chorus of praise and the sound of many instruments. The song was all about the goodness and mercy of God. He brought them back to their land, and for him they would build a house, and sing while they did it.

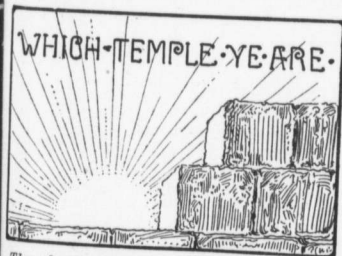
The Work Stopped. When the heathen who lived in the land saw what was going on they were displeased to be left out, and came and said they would help. But how could they serve God when they did not know or believe in him? The chief man, the prince, told them that it could not be. Here is another of the principal persons in the quarter's lessons. The man who had charge of the precious vessels and of building the temple was Zerubbabel, also called Shesh-bazzar. He was born in Babylon, but was a prince, and when the chance came to go back to Jerusalem, God moved his heart to go, and he put himself at the head of the company to lead them. It is well to remember this long name, because this second temple, coming after Solomon's, is often called after Zerubbabel's name, since he had so much to do with building it.

It is sad to know that when the enemies of the Jews found they could do nothing else, they made the people weak, and troubled them in building, and hired men to talk against them and hinder them, so that the work of building stopped, through all the rest of the rule of Cyrus. Many years afterward, when Darius was king of Persia, he gave it another start, and the house of God was finished.

This lesson should make us think of God's holy house. There must always be a church where God's people can meet to worship him. It may be only a little sod church on the prairie, or one built of mud and grass in Africa, but wherever God meets his people, there is a holy place.

Most of all, our Father wants a holy place in our hearts, kept always for him, clean and sweet. Have we such a place in the heart?

Jewel-Thought: Holiness. Explain that to be holy is to be right, to be pure, loving, clean inside, and like Jesus. To be like the holy Jesus is better than anything else.



Thought for Teachers. If "Holiness to the Lord" was "written upon the bells of the

horses" long ago, and even upon the pots and pans in temple service, surely our lowliest services should bear the inscription.

LESSON V—October 29

POWER THROUGH GOD'S SPIRIT. Zech. 4. 1-10

GOLDEN TEXT: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." Zech. 4. 6.

Primary Notes



Approach. Seek to explain and emphasize the thought of power that cannot be seen and yet is strong. John stood near a big locomotive, which was on the track. "How big and strong it is!" he said to father. "Why

doesn't it just start and go?" "It hasn't power," father answered. "Strong as it is, there must be steam inside to start it. A man builds a fire, makes the water boil, and then the steam makes the wheels go. You can't see how the wheels are turned, but you can see them go, and then you know the power must be there."

Earl was playing with a pile of stones. He was up on a bridge, and dropped the stones down into the water to hear them splash. "What makes the stones fall down?" he asked father. "There is a strange power in the earth that draws everything down," was the answer. "Unless you hold it up in some way, everything goes straight to the ground, which draws it by this power. We call it gravitation. Nobody ever saw it, but it is one of the strongest things in the world. Nothing would come down, and nothing would stay down where it is put if it were not for this power."

There is another power that can't be seen, and yet is strong. It is electricity, that makes the cars move. Some of the strongest things in the world cannot be seen. We know them by what they do.

Zechariah's Message. Another new person. Tell of his birth in Babylon, his being a minister (or priest) and prophet, or teacher, too. God gave the prophets in those days long ago messages straight from himself, and they were afterward put in the Bible. We have the whole Bible now, and do not need such prophets. Recall close of last lesson, the hindering of temple-building. Tell how for sixteen years the work stopped. Now came a message from God to Zechariah. He had an angel-visitor from God who showed and told him many things. Among others, the sight of a golden lampstand, and the words that explained it. There were seven lamps, and seven pipes for oil to keep them burning. Close by stood two olive trees. Oil

for the lamps must come from the olives. No one but God could make olives grow to give oil. It was by his power alone. Yet men could make pipes to carry the oil. Even this power to work must come from God, so all must be of God, you see. Then the angel, that had wakened the prophet out of sleep to hear the message and see the vision, or wonderful sight, told him the message for Zerubbabel. He said that the great work for God was not to be done by any power or strength of man, but all by the help of God's Holy Spirit. He said that Zerubbabel had begun the work of building the temple, and he should finish it, so that the topstone should be set at last with glad shouts. No one should despise the little things, for God could use them all and give power to work for him.

Jewel-Thought: Power. Tell very simply how God can make us strong to do hard things.

Thought for Teachers. Although no earthly might or power can avail for the building of character committed to us, it can be done "by my spirit, saith the Lord."



Whisper Songs for October

FIRST LESSON

The evil, the unthankful,
The proud, must lose their way;
But God walks with the righteous,
And leads them day by day.

SECOND LESSON

With angels in the heavens
Or lions in their den—
We need not choose, since Jesus
Has come to live with men.

THIRD LESSON

Our loving Lord will follow
Wherever we may roam,
And with our lessons ended,
Will lead us safely home.

FOURTH LESSON

The Lord is in his children,
He shines from every face;
We are his holy temple;
His glory fills the place.

FIFTH LESSON

No human might or power
Can fill our hearts with love;
But love—the Holy Spirit—
Flows freely from above.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

Fourth Quarter

Teacher. This is the day which the Lord hath made.

Class. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
RECITATION, OR SONG.

"Here we come again on Sunday,
When the church bells sweetly call,
With our bright and happy greetings,
Wishing our good-day to all.

"Here we come to help each other,
Loving, kind, and strong to grow,
And we thank our heavenly Father,
For he ever loves us so."

WHISPER PRAYER.

"Lord, help me when I try to pray.
Not only mind the words I say,
But may I try, with watchful care,
To have my heart go with my prayer."

PRAYER (all joining in Lord's Prayer at the close).

SONG OF PRAISE.

OFFERING.

(Arrange a march, if possible, even though the space may be limited. A pretty basket decorated with pink ribbons as a receptacle, and a sweet giving song, as the children march past the basket, depositing their offerings, will do much to dignify and enrich this part of the service.)

BIRTHDAY OFFERING. (Sing softly.)

"Hear the pennies dropping,
Hear them as they fall,
Every one for Jesus,
He shall have them all."

SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.

REVIEW OF LAST LESSON.

MOTION SONG.

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

CALLING BACK THE LESSON.

CLOSING EXERCISE.

"As we raise our hands toward the sky above,
We remember God's banner over us is love,
And we bow our heads again in prayer,
Giving ourselves to his loving care?
May the lesson learned in our hearts sink deep,
May the Lord between us a loving watch keep,
May we show this week in our work and play,
That we've learned of Jesus on this holy day.
We pray thee to take each little hand,
And lead us all to the better land.

"Amen."

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An Important Article

Reprinted from the September Number "Sunday School Banner."

CHURCH LIBRARIES

AT a recent convention some disparaging remarks were made about Sunday School libraries. This may have arisen from the class of books which are not acceptable to the scholars, or from the fact that the members of the school are not readers, or are spending their time on newspapers and magazines, at any rate the remedy lies with the school itself. It is quite easy to have a small committee appointed to be on the lookout during the year for the most suitable books and to add to them as funds are available. If there are good books in the library, then it is the duty of the teacher to know something about them and to recommend them to the members of his class. It is always in place for a minister to recommend a good book from the pulpit. It is the duty of the church and Sunday School to mould character, and books strengthen or undermine manhood, and much of the flabbiness of will and the low ideals of youth are due to the fact that there is no one directing the selection of books, and the reading is scrappy and light.

Are we as moulders of character to allow this condition of things to go on? Visit the homes of the people and look at the family library. The people have no strong thoughts on theology, because our sermons are no longer doctrinal, and there are no theological works in the family library. We are greatly in need of church libraries, one in every church, and open on prayer-meeting nights, where strong books, such as the people do not

buy, but which they ought to read, may be found. The theological habit of mind existing among Presbyterians is due in a great measure to the church libraries in connection with even the smallest churches in the old land. We have in mind a man who was nonplussed by an atheistic fellow-workman, who, whilst acknowledging defeat, went to the church library and secured Watson's Institutes of Theology, and studied the volumes, and then returned to gain a victory over his opponent.

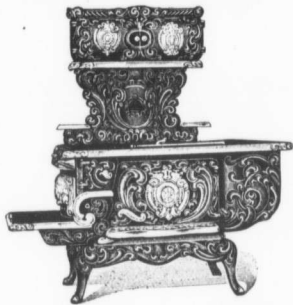
We have known many working men who became local preachers, who could pass a severe examination on Wesley, Watson and Fletcher, but where will we find that to-day? We must not leave the world of books to the devil. Christ has his place in literature and he is speaking in much of the fiction of to-day, and while many of our people may not read the religious books of fifty years ago, there are classics of devotion and great biographies which will never grow old. How are the people, young and old, to know about these stimulating books in biography, history, sermons, essays and fiction unless some one instructs them, and who is better qualified to do it, and upon whom does the duty devolve but the minister and the Sunday School teacher. A dozen books may form a church library, and an address on books and reading at the prayer-meeting will give it a start, and one year's service will prove that it is beneficial, by more intelligent and interested Christians, better sermons and better hearers and greater work done for Christ. Enlarge, refine, and strengthen the library in the school, and help the people with a library in the church.

The force of this article will appeal to all. There is no better time than the present to enlarge your Sunday School Library by the addition of some bright new books, or to start a Church Library. Write to

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By this arrangement the oven is constantly breathing in fresh air, which keeps the roast from drying up, thus preserving the juices of the meat.

Some constructions have a slide in the oven door by which they claim to ventilate the oven, but it will be readily seen that to admit cold air direct into the oven would so reduce the temperature as to be disastrous to good cooking.

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