

HOME DEPARTMENT MAGAZINE



HOMEWOOD
APRIL, MAY, JUNE
1929

PHOTOGRAPH

BY HONORABLE

Home Department Magazine

I. J. VAN NESS
Executive Secretary

HIGHT C. MOORE,
Editorial Secretary

NOBLE VAN NESS
Managing Editor

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MARK YOUR RECORD EVERY WEEK IN THE BLANKS BELOW

Record of _____ for _____ Quarter

HOME DEPARTMENT of

Sunday School of _____

Visitor _____

Month of _____

Dates of Sundays _____

Lesson for this Sunday Studied _____

Attended Sunday School Today _____

Offering Inclosed, cents _____

You have agreed to study the Sunday school lesson for half an hour each week. The other items are voluntary. Please mark this record each week, and have it ready for the Visitor, who will call at the end of each quarter.

Quarterly Total: _____ Time present _____ Amount \$ _____
Studied _____ in Sunday school _____ Contribution _____

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Home Department Magazine

HIGHT C. MOORE, Editor

April, May, June, 1929

Home

BY ADA CLARK

"What is home?" I asked a traveler,
As he journeyed on the way;
"Home," he said, "is peace and comfort,
Far from hurrying crowds away."

"What is home?" I asked a toiler,
As he trudged along the lane;
"Home," he said, "is where the weary
Seek for rest at night again."

"What is home?" I asked a maiden,
As she lightly tripped along;
"Home," she said in tones so tender,
"Home is just one glad sweet song."

"What is home?" I asked a bridegroom,
As he waited at the door;
"Home," he said in whispered accents,
"Home is love and nothing more."

"What is home?" I asked a mother,
As she crooned a lullaby;
"Home," she said, "is heaven's fortress,
Where God guards us from on high."

"What is home?" I asked of many,
As I wandered near and far;
"Home," they said in deepest reverence,
"Home is where the loved ones are!"

How Aunt Julia's Fire Grew

BY HONTAS ENOCH STORY



VEN with the little shawl drawn closely around her shoulders, Aunt Julia felt it was too cool on the veranda, since the early spring shower, and she returned to the sitting room where she had built a fire early in the morning.

But when she sat down in her easy chair, to continue her reading, she saw there was only a heap of black coals, in the open grate. Only one little faint ray of light could she see.

Aunt Julia, as every one called her, lived alone in her neat little cottage. She had no near relatives and in spite of her many friends, she often grew lonely and despondent.

And today, as she sat before the open grate and gazed upon the heap of black, dead coals, she pictured it as her own life. Perhaps she was just one little faint ray of light, not making any one cheerful nor helping any one through life. For several moments she was buried with intense thoughts.

She realized however, she must at once re-kindle the little live coal or she would have no fire. She got her basket of dry pine splints and carefully placed them on the live coal and soon had a bright blaze winding its way through the wood and coal.

She had hardly seated herself again and opened her book until she heard the slam of the door—some one calling loudly as if the occupant of the house were deaf.

Lena Young rushed into the little sitting room and threw her arms about the old lady's neck, saying, "Oh! Aunt Julia, I made the best grade in the spelling test today of any of the other girls, and it was all because you, Auntie, had helped me yesterday afternoon to master those old, tedious words. Really, Aunt Julia, I don't think I could ever make the seventh grade this year if it were not for your kind help."

"Well, I guess little deeds do help sometimes," said the old lady. "Have you any problems that I can help you solve this afternoon?"

"No," replied Lena, "and too, I promised mother I would be home early and keep baby while she went shopping."

Hearing the postman's whistle, the girl ran to get the mail. She returned saying, "You have a big, fat letter and it's from Morristown, too." This was where Ada Watson lived—a cousin—the nearest relation of the old lady.

Lena gave her the letter with a stroke of love on the little, stooped shoulder and left her alone to read.

Anxious for the news the letter might hold, the feeble fingers could hardly open it quickly enough. Sure enough, it was from Cousin Ada. And as she read, her face began to brighten with a smile. It was inviting her to make her annual summer visit to them, sooner than she had planned. The children wished her to come earlier that she might enjoy their early vacation picnics with them; they felt like their picnics would not be complete unless she could accompany them.

A tear of joy fell upon the pages as she folded the letter. She thought of the great pleasure she always got out of the visits at the Watson home.

As the old lady went about her little task in the kitchen that evening, preparing her supper, she was almost deciding already to change her visit to an earlier date, although it would be two months yet until vacation time. There was no reason why she could not go then, and if it pleased the children better for her to come at this time, why not go?

She enjoyed a hearty supper, thinking the coolness from the early spring shower had given her an unusual appetite. The last dish had been washed, the tea-towel hung on the rack, when the telephone rang. Answering it, she learned the person at the other end of the line was her neighbor, Mrs. Webb, who was calling to tell her how much the family had enjoyed the delicious doughnuts she had sent over for their supper.

After the short conversation with Mrs. Webb, Aunt Julia returned to the

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sitting room feeling very happy over the cheerful little incidents that had come her way late in the afternoon.

As she looked into the open grate she saw that the one little live coal had grown into a bright fire, throwing it's rays of light throughout the room. She could hardly realize that such a bright fire could have come from the one little live coal. Then she thought of her own self, she had felt so despondent in the afternoon but was now happy.

"Surely," she said to herself, "hearts, like fires can be made to burn much brighter with only a little re-kindling."

The Palace

BY LIDA WILSON TURNER

The people next door have a new baby boy!
But as they already have seven,
I doubt if this baby will bring them much joy,
Why didn't it stay up in heaven?

The house they live in is so shabby and small
They really were crowded before,
There's not enough food and clothes for them
all,
And yet God has sent them one more!

I was asking their mother about it one day
And this is the story she told:
She said she'd a palace (just where she'd not
say)
But so large that each child it would hold.

She said that the rooms were of silver and blue
And the walls reached up to the sky,
With windows of gems where the sunshine
came through,
There were flowers and song-birds close by.

I asked her to show me that great palace too,
But she smiled and then shook her brown
head
As she rose from the chair to see what she
could do,
Before putting the baby to bed.

I walked slowly home from this house where
I'd been,
When something just gave me a start!
And I knew that great palace I never had seen
Was really the mother's big heart!

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Ornithology from an Invalid's Chair

BY NELLIE CAMPBELL



REVERSING the order of Mohammed and the mountain, the invalid brought the birds to her when she could not go to the birds.

The means she used were very simple. The invalid had found that an inactive body made her mind too active in plans that others must carry out. She had learned to curtail the details.

Her first bird-luring device was a shallow pan of water for a bird bath. It was, in truth, a discarded dripping pan, a trifle rusty but whole. It was placed under an apple tree close to the house where it could be seen easily by the invalid in her wheel chair by the window. To hide its pannish appearance it was surrounded by stones, quite a rockery of them. This miniature pool was ready and waiting for the birds when they should return from the south.

The first arrivals were the robins and blue birds. What a thrill these heralds of spring gave the invalid! Eagerly she watched. Would they find the water? Would they use it? Perhaps, had it not been such a very dry spring her reward would not have been so great. After the first fat robin hopped upon the rim, there was not a day and hardly an hour when the bird bath did not have its visitors. How thirstily the birds drank! With what enjoyment and bird-satisfying adequacy they bathed! Then up into the apple tree to preen and fluff and smooth their feathers.

Soon other birds came. The glossy grackles with shining purple or bronze heads strode about the lawn and over the stone into the water. With them were the smaller rusty black birds and those despised cow-birds whose young are raised in other birds' crowded nests.

In awkward contrast to the grackles the flickers jerked along, dragging uncomfortably heavy tails over the ground. They were absurdly clumsy in the water the rare times they attempted to bathe.

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There were flocks of sparrows that sometimes completely rimmed the bath tray. Among the more numerous vesper sparrows and juncoes the invalid would sometimes see a single tree sparrow or a song sparrow or little chippy with his bright rufous crown.

Just once a mourning dove drank thirstily from the tray. At a distance the invalid could hear its sad sweet call, strangely mournful for a wooing song.

The first of May the wrens came to build again in the wren-house hanging in the apple tree. For three months the invalid watched all the busy wren life that went in and out of that little round front door. Yet she never saw the wrens bathe and only a very few times they drank at the bird bath.

It had its attraction however for other birds. Among its visitors the invalid now noted new birds almost daily arriving from their winter homes. There were the brown thrashers and the cat birds, the mocking birds of the north. There were the fly catchers, the tiny kinglets, the olive vireos and the more beautiful goldfinches, also the redstarts that loved to display their pretty markings. Then the thrushes appeared, the brown spotted wood thrush and a smaller one with olive back—perhaps the Wilson thrush the invalid decided.

For three delightful days the apple tree was full of little warblers stopping on their way to their more northerly nesting places. Then came a memorable day when the oriole's orange and black were first seen. To the invalid he seemed never so gorgeous before. His frequent and elaborate baths convinced her that he too was aware of his fine appearance.

At this time another beautiful bird appeared, the rose-breasted grosbeak. Shining in black and white with a splash of brightest cherry on its throat, the male was quite a contrast to his mottled brown and white mate. The two were often together in the water.

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Throughout May and June the bird bath retained its popularity. As the nesting season advanced, the invalid noted it was less often visited. August found it almost deserted. Later, however, the flocking birds seemed to make it a part of their rendezvous before they journeyed southward. Then at times it was almost crowded.

With the summer birds leaving and others coming from the north, the invalid made use of another luring device. This was a shelf with a rim around it to hold food for the birds. It was fastened to the ledge outside the window where it could be filled easily. Also it pleased the invalid that here it would bring the birds even closer than they came in the summer.

The food for the tray consisted mostly of seeds. The favorites were the sunflower, so rich in oil. The greatest treat, however, was cracked nuts. In a corner of the tray a piece of suet was nailed. The nail kept it from being wastefully carried off. (These foods and the absence of crumbs did not attract the English sparrows.)

There was besides a piece of suet on the trunk of the apple tree. It was ingeniously held in place and protected by a wire soap-dish, such as commonly hangs between the faucets over the kitchen sink.

This suet was soon discovered by a hairy-woodpecker hunting grubs in the apple bark. He pecked at it appreciatively and managed, even with the wire over it, to break off quite a chunk. Away he flew with this. When later Mrs. Woodpecker appeared, the invalid wondered if her mate had not carried the titbit to her with news of the new feeding place.

To the suet came also the smaller downy woodpecker, the titmice, the chickadees and the nuthatches. Of these drab colored birds, it was easy to recognize the acrobatic nuthatch that went head first down the tree trunk. The titmouse wore a tufted crown, the chickadee a black cap and also announced itself in its chick-a-dee-dee-song.

The fearless little chickadees were the first to be attracted to the window tray.

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They came three and four times a day, always in pairs, and always one politely waited above in the apple tree while the other flew down to select a seed. Down and up, down and up they would fly in turn each careful not to intrude upon the ones in the tray.

Less courteous was a pair of greedy blue jays that ate there together, determined alike to get the most and the best. To the invalid they were altogether too handsome to be completely despised for their gluttonous manners or even for their criminal reputation.

Quite in contrast to the bold blue jays and the friendly chickadees were the shy and frightened visits from a solitary nuthatch that again and again would fly close to the tray before it gained confidence to alight. Then seizing a seed it would be gone like a flash.

Likewise a woodpecker, most cautiously sidling along the rim to the corner that held the suet, would remain there hardly long enough to secure a meal. Though they came all winter for food, the invalid felt that these birds never lost their show of fear.

Even more wary was the cardinal. Not once did he venture upon the window tray. Yet even to have him sit in the apple tree delighted the invalid. There, perched aloft, all in flaming red, he would give forth again and again his clear, ringing whistle.

Thus it happened that by these simple means which provided them water and food, the invalid had throughout the whole year her bird visitors. How greatly these bird visitors increased the interests and enjoyments of her wheelchair-world no one knew so well as the invalid.

Grandmother

By ALICE THORN FROST

Sweet understanding in her gentle eyes

As shy I whispered little childish fears,
Watched her dear face, and swift my troubles fled.

While soft she wiped away my ready tears.

And just today, now sad and older grown,
On a low mound, grass-grown, I rest my hand.

And murmur, "Comfort me as in past years,
Somewhere, somewhere, I know you understand."

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Josephine and Viola

By MARGARET HENDERSON



SHALL always remember our first day at Williamses. I was tired in mind and body at the time and grim blindness had almost overtaken me so we had come, my kind husband and I, to seek rest for me and perhaps health and happiness again in the big rambling farm house nestled on the side of a verdant hill in the shadow of the romantic Blue Ridge Mountains.

It was a lovely morning in early spring when the jerky, rumbling steam train came to a wheezy stop at the little station. As we alighted the first thing that met my senses was the smell of apple blossoms and then, through my husband's eyes, I saw the beauty around me. A lane lined with apple trees in fullest blossom led from the tiny station up a gentle slope to the homelike farmhouse almost a quarter of a mile away. To the left as far as the eye could reach, and to the right, stretched the apple orchards—delicate pink, snowy white; gentle breezes wafting the perfume, delicate petals dropping softly to the ground; fleecy white clouds in the tender spring sky and in the near distance the beautiful blues, violets and mysterious purples of the stately Blue Ridge Mountains.

Kindly old Captain Williams, the host, had come to the train to bid us welcome and help us with our bags. As we walked slowly up the fairy lane listening to old Captain Williams' courteous Southern voice, I watched beneath the heavy shade that protected my eyes from the light the miriads of pink petals on the soft rich brown earth and I caught a glimpse of four dainty furry feet, the feet of Carlo the collie who always came to meet the train. He usually scampered and ran, but this time he was walking sedately and gravely to show his sympathy for the poor lady who walked so slowly and who could not even lift up her tired eyes to the beautiful sky and the glorious apple trees.

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We were not the only guests at the farmhouse, for its reputation had gone abroad. Although it was now called a summer boarding house, there was an atmosphere of hospitality and friendliness about the old home that warmed the hearts of all who came there. Some came, like ourselves, seeking rest and the return of health in the pure air of the hills; others came for the privilege of being with old Captain Williams and listening to his tales of the Civil War, for he had been one of General Mosby's Guerillas and many were the exciting tales he told of the time when the peaceful country-side around had been covered with army tents and grim blue-coated soldiers had guarded every path. Still others came so that they could retrace again the steps of General Sheridan and his men on their historic march to the sea, for it was all around here that these stirring events had happened when old Captain Williams was young. And sometimes the younger people, eager for adventure, would wander off in the cool woods and search around in the gullies and deep under the roots of the ancient trees, often finding Indian arrows, occasionally an old broken tomahawk, and once some enthusiastic searchers had brought in an old broken skull,—trophies of the time when our country was in its infancy and Indians roamed at will over the whole section.

But the ones who really loved the old farm were the little children who came with their parents to spend the happy summer vacation. The long summer days were not long enough for all the wonderful things there were to do. The cows, the chickens, the dogs, the old mother cat with her family; the turkeys that were being fattened up for Thanksgiving, and the funny fat baby pigs rolling about in their pens; the interesting bees to be watched but not touched; the baskets upon baskets of fresh vegetables to be picked every day; and the strawberry patch to be watched for its first touch of red.

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We had been a week at this delightful place but in spite of all the happiness and peace around us, for me the days were long and dreary for I could not see and pain was my constant companion. Then one day when the big dinner bell had rung and everyone had trooped into the cheerful dining room to eat the abundance of luscious and nourishing things that can only be found on the table of a Virginia farmhouse, I sat in my place with my tired eyes cast down—one of the cheerful throng but not a part of it. When the long meal was at last over and just as I was about to leave the table, I felt two little bodies press close against me and two little faces gazed up into mine. "Would you like us to come up to your room and play with you?" said a sweet little voice. "Oh, would you," cried the other little child. It was Josephine and Viola, five and seven; with round rosy faces, hearts filled with pity, quaint little ways. In my room a little later we sat in a row on my bed. The children had their little hands in mine and their smooth baby brows were wrinkled in puzzled thought. "Oh, I know," cried Viola, jumping excitedly up and down, "we'll play blind man's buff—it's just the thing. Your eyes are already fixed so nicely and Josephine and I can hide in easy places so you won't have to work hard to find us."

We played every day after that; anything, everything, that did not require the use of eyes, and then somehow, somehow, the pain began to go.

After a while we took long walks together, motherly little Viola holding my hand and leading me around the bumpy places and Josephine running ahead to see that there were no old sticks in the road to be stumbled over. One day we were walking down in the hollow near the negro settlement and close by the old frog pond. Cro-honk, cro-honk, came an awful sound very close to us. Josephine and Viola clung to me in terror. It must be the bull gotten loose from the pasture. We ran and ran and the harder we ran the closer sounded the noise. I could not go fast because the road was rough and hard to see but

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filled with terror as they were the little girls would not leave me, and once when we thought the bull was right on our heels, they put their arms tight around me to save me if he came. Just then we passed by the old pond and as we passed the deep bellow sounded again. Filled with laughter, I sank down on the grass. "Why, darlings, it's only the grandfather bullfrog. He doesn't like to be disturbed and has been calling as loud as he could to tell us to go away." What fun we had for days laughing about old grandfather, bullfrog and telling Captain Williams all about it.

The long summer days were drawing to a close and here and there were touches of gold and brown in the tall forest trees. The time was very near now when the little girls would leave the old farm and return to their home in the city. We spent much of our time in the woods, Viola and Josephine as busy as little beavers gathering fragrant pine needles to make a pillow for me. Viola said it would help me to get well and little Josephine whispered shyly that it would help me to remember them. Carlo was always with us as we walked over the soft carpet of leaves and moss, dashing frantically ahead every now and then peering into holes and hollows in search of a rabbit, and almost upsetting us as he came bounding back. We passed an especially beautiful old tree and the children thought this must be where the nightingale lived that we heard singing so sweetly on the soft summer evenings.

At last the day came when my little friends were to leave me. The train would be due now in a few minutes and I sat on the wide porch waiting for the children to come out. Carlo understood that something must be wrong for he pressed his soft nose into my hand and laid his beautiful brown head on my knee.

Almost before I knew it they were gone. There were hugs and kisses, Carlo barking frantically, and old Captain Williams calling for them to hurry as the train was almost due. Then they were gone. But when almost half way down the lane both little girls stopped

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suddenly and turned and ran back to me. Josephine thrust her old rag doll Nancy into my hands and whispered "she will keep you company till we come back," and dear little Viola snatched a scarf from a chair on the porch and wound it around my shoulders, breathless in her hurry. "I felt an awful cold wind down in the lane," she said, "you might get cold in your poor eyes again."

Now, after all these years, I close my eyes and see again the little figures flying down the lane; I catch a glimpse of four dainty furry feet, and my nostrils are filled with the scent of apple blossoms in spring.

Sanctuary

BY JANE TAYLOR DUKE

The road leads across a narrow bridge built over a singing stream, and as one enters the woods it becomes a trail. Up, up, always up, the path leads as it winds around the mountains. A giant tree fallen these many years and covered with moss and lichen, is my guide post, here I leave the beaten trail and turn into the woods, still climbing upward. At last I come to a spot in the heart of the forest which is to me a place of peace,—not a mile from our cabin and yet entirely secluded. Here seated on a flat gray rock under a great beech tree, one can look down into the forest below. Sunlight glances through the trees and plays among the leaves, silence broods over all, save for the sound of the brook far down below, or the call of a wood thrush, the dropping of a scaly bark nut.

There are a thousand beauties to attract one in my hidden nook, galax leaves cluster under the trees, lichens in a great number of varieties adorn the rocks and trees. The dainty winter-green lifts its waxen blossom from under the dead brown leaves, pink rhododendrons bloom on the hillside in luxurious profusion, dainty maiden hair ferns spread their lacy foliage. Everywhere the process of life rising from death—the forest renewing itself. One

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feels very near to God when all around are evidences of his handiwork, "as the outward eye rejoices in nature, so does the inward sight behold a vision of the goodness and glory of God," I feel aware of his presence, speaking through the wind, through the sunlight and the clouds overhead. How petty and trivial seem the cares and worries of everyday life, how foolish the rush and hurry! It is good to sit under the beech tree and learn a lesson in patience. There is no hurry in nature, "the forest sleeps silently all winter until God has woven it another dress, the seed lies patient in the dark ground until the vigilant sun has sought it out. The apple tree must wait eight years for its first fruit. Nothing complains, nothing frets or fumes. Only where man lives and works do you catch that note of impatience. He gets all fretted and feverish and out of sorts, then nature comes along, if he will only let her, and takes him on her knees, and lays her cool hands on his hot temples, and draws into his ears soft words of admonition, and the fever in his blood subsides, 'Whither so fast little man?' Nature admonishes. 'Whither so fast? Wait awhile. Wait awhile. Rest and wait.'"

I love to think of how our Lord needed the quiet of the mountainside to pray, of the communings which he held with our Father

"Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forsopt, forsopt,
Into the woods my Master went
Forsopt with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to him,
The little grey leaves were kind to him
When into the woods he came.

Out of the woods my Master went
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came
Content with death and shame."

I come home refreshed, inspired, renewed in spirit by the gentle breezes, the scents and fragrance, the beauty of the forest for here I find that rest, that peace, that calm and repose, which nature alone can give.

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Enter a Leprechawn

BY EDWIN TARISSE



COUPLE of young men, strolling along the edge of Pigville Pond, eyed curiously a little woman who had slipped through the fence of the potter's field and was coming briskly towards them.

"Looks as if she might be one of them," said one of the young men, nodding toward the hospital.

The woman reached him as he spoke. "Do ye know where I could get sight of a pig hereabouts?" she asked eagerly.

"There's a fine pig over to Patsy Callahan's, ma'am."

"And where does Mr. Callahan live?"

"There, ma'am. The little white house beyant the pond, with the blue pig-pen behind it. Ye can't mistake it."

"She's all right," he added, as she went on. "It's good sense the woman has that wants to see Patsy Callahan's pig."

Now the heart of Mary Callahan was sore. It was scarce a week since she and Patsy had buried the dear old mother, who had sat for the last ten years in her rocking-chair by the kitchen stove, knitting mittens for the children or tending the latest baby or telling stories of the "ould country." She had a merry word for every one, in the house and out of it, from Patsy himself to the pig in the blue pen or the old goose that wandered about the place.

The house was strangely empty. The little room right off the sitting-room, where it was warm at night, for the rheumatic old bones, was in perfect order, but still Mary stood there, smoothing the white coverlet.

"Mother, Mother, Mother!" cried Janie, Katherine and Alice, all rushing in together, and tumbling over one another in their eagerness. "There's a woman at the door!" they cried, breathlessly. "Hurry, Mother, hurry!"

Mary swallowed the lump in her throat, and hastened to the door. There stood the dearest little old woman in the world. Her hair was as white as

snow. Her eyes were the blue of a fringed gentian, and showed a wistful look. There was something, not so much unhappy as unsatisfied about the face, until she glanced down upon the children. Then a contented look stole over it, and she put out her tiny hand toward them, and as quickly drew it back.

"What can I be doing for you, mem?" asked Mary, gently.

"Will you take me and hide me? I've run away."

"Run away! From the asylum beyant?" pointing to the great building which stood but a few rods away.

"Yes."

"Don't they treat you well, acushla?" asked Mary, indignantly.

"Oh, yes, they were good to me, but I'm tired of it, mem. I've been there for me own. And when we were out walking in the grounds this morning, twenty years, and I'm not saying there wasn't plenty to ate and everything nice and clane, and the nurses and the docthors kind, but there's none been to see me for ten years, and I think so be that they're all dead, and I'm lonesome it was so pleasant like, with the grass turning grane and the trees coming out with the laves, that I thought of the ould country, and I wanted to see a pig that bad I couldn't stay. So I ran away, mem. And have ye such a thing as a pig I could look at, mem?"

"This way, this way, mem! We've the finest pig hereabouts, mem! And a goose, moreover!" cried the children, all together, as they seized their eager visitor and hurried her toward the pen.

But the little woman came back after a step.

"You needn't be afraid I'd hurt the childher, mem. I never hurt anything in my life."

"Faith, mem, ye couldn't if ye tried," said Mary, laughing softly as she looked down at the tiny form. "Ye're only the size of a leprechawn, anyway!"

"Run away, is it?" she said to herself, as she turned to her work. "Poor, wee woman! And twenty years in the big building yonder and never once seen a pig or a goose! Mary Callahan, it's ye that should be down on your knees, thanking the Lord for the pig, forby he does ate like a Christian. And never come to see the little granny for ten years! Likely they are all dead and she left alone with the twelve hundred lunatics in that big building. Glory be that granny had us all with her to the last, and that we didn't go first to lave her to an institootion because she was a bit childish."

"Not but that they're good things, those institootions," continued Mrs. Callahan, "but I've no use for the likes of them while Patsy lives, and we two can work for the childher."

The children came trooping in with their guest. "Mother, let her sit in granny's chair by the stove," they cried, "while we get the kittens."

"Sit ye here, mem!" cried Mary, pulling forward the old rocker. And the guest sank down into the soft, worn cushions.

"Is there anything I could do for ye, mem? Could I peel the potatoes? I could peel them good," she said.

Mary stooped down impulsively and kissed the soft, white face.

"Bless ye, mem! It's good for sore eyes just to see ye sitting in granny's chair, widout doing a thing. And those nice white hands of ye! It'd be a burning shame to give them the rough praties to peel."

"But I'd like to do something, mem," said the wee woman, wistfully.

"Can ye knit, mem?"

"That I can, mem. Lave the needles and a spool of thread and I'll be after knitting ye some nice lace for the childher's skirts."

And Patsy Callahan came home that night and found in granny's chair, by the shining kitchen stove, a wee woman, with snow white hair and eyes the blue of a summer sky. She was knitting busily at her lace, while she told a fairy-story to the children at her knee.

Patsy stole softly out to Mary, who was feeding the pig.

"Where did ye find her, Mary? She's the one that's lost from the hospital, and they're hunting her high and low."

"She ran away, Patsy. She's been twenty years in the big building beyant."

Patsy turned and looked across the fields to the imposing structure, standing in its formal, although pleasant grounds.

"Twenty years! Did ye ever hear the like of that, now? Twenty years! But she could get out o' doors when it was pleasant. Were they bad to her?"

"She says not, but it's ten year since any one has come to see her, and she thinks all her own people are dead. And today she got that lonesome for the sight of a pig that she just slipped away and come here."

"Patsy—the childher are that wild about her—there's granny's place empty in the house—it's not much the wee woman'd take. Do ye think we might, Patsy—"

Mary's voice failed.

"There, there, Mary!"

"It's little the wee body'd be after atting, and—what does she make ye think of, Patsy?"

"She's the image of a leprechawn, acushla."

"That's what I said myself when she came in the morn," said Mary, laughing. "Patsy—sure a leprechawn's good luck."

"Well, well, Mary. I must go to the hospital and see the superintendent."

That night, when the wee woman was sound asleep in granny's bed, Patsy Callahan went over to the hospital and announced his discovery. The superintendent eyed the honest Irishman keenly. "What is your idea, Mr. Callahan? To take this old woman?"

"Well, sor, that's what we thought of, Mary and I. We're just after laying Mary's mother away, and the house is empty like. We'd give the wee woman granny's place by the fire, and maybe it'd help to keep our hearts warm. And it's a good thing for the childher to see an old body in the house, tended care-

fully. Sure, there'll come a time when Mary and I'll be old, too, sor."

"Well, Mr. Callahan," said the superintendent, after a moment's consideration, "it's the first case of the kind we ever had. But I will attend to the necessary formalities, and you shall take the old woman for a month on parole. Then I will visit you myself to assure myself that she is happy and contented."

It is five years now since the wee woman ran away from the hospital for the sight of a pig. Many is the pig she had helped Mary Callahan feed since that day, and many a yard of lace has she knit, while she told the children the fairy tales of the old country or taught them their prayers, for the children love granny dearly, and believe God sent her to them in place of the other granny whom He took away.

Not once in those five years has Mary Callahan gone to bed without stopping to see that the wee woman was covered warm, and to smooth the soft white hair and kiss the soft white cheek, as she whispers, "The Lord keep ye, granny darlint!"

And luck! A leprechawn cannot bring half the luck that the wee woman has brought the Callahans!

Spring in a City Sick-Room

BY ANNVE ALLISON

I can see the side walls of apartments next door,

An ugly, red glare to the eye,
With a telephone wire strung along it,—no more

Save two narrow patches of sky.

One morning, at dawn, when the house was asleep,

And I tossed, open-eyed, on my bed,
A sound which I loved caused my pulses to leap—

Wild geese flying north overhead!

Again, at the dawn, while the city was still,
There came an intangible thing
Which seemed with new courage my senses to fill—

The magical breath of the spring!

And, now, through the top of my window, there float

Brave sounds which are cheery and clear,
And I eagerly drink in each jubilant note
Of the robin which comes every year.

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Putting 'It in the Budget

BY MARY S. STOVER



HE visitor dubiously watched her hostess' little daughter set about the dish washing. "Laura seems very handy for a child of her age. I don't have Annis help yet. Dishes, furniture and everything of that sort cost too much now for us to risk having them ruined."

"Of course we must expect some marring and breakage when the children help," agreed Laura's mother. "While we plan and study how to avoid disasters, a certain amount of loss should be counted on. In this family, we do count on it, just as on the other natural expenses which go into the annual budget in the sense that everybody understands that there'll have to be a little more spent on replacement than if mother were working alone.

"Laura is such a capable and sunny young housemaid that I have an idea all which her assistance costs is more than made up for right now. If it were not, the future results should be valuable enough to justify the increased outlay. I consider that any fair toll from childish accidents which occur while a girl or boy is learning to aid in caring for the home may well be accounted part of their educational expenses! Seldom would it amount to what is spent for music lessons or even for the incidentals of some school studies in which we parents see little use."

"Or for candy and other treats!" put in the visiting mother energetically. "You are right in terming this an educational investment and something of enough importance to be worth all it costs. I mean to start Annis on a course of housework next week; but first of all we'll talk over the value of a girl's understanding all the care of a home. I shall try to get her to loving it as Laura does. That thought of having the breakage expenses in the budget will certainly make for self-control and good nature when accidents do occur."

HOME DEPARTMENT MAGAZINE

Rebel Jerry Goes Home

BY BETTY GILBERT



THROUGH blinking, half-opened eyes the man on the springless cot gazed slowly about the room, brilliant with the morning sunshine that streamed through the uncurtained window.

As he glanced at the cheap pine chair by his side his hand reached out and touched lovingly the flag draped across its back. Not a flag flaunting proudly the stars and stripes, but a faded, battle-scarred flag of the Confederacy, in defiance of which had rallied as noble and chivalrous manhood as America could boast.

The eyes of Jerry Beauford passed beyond the drab walls of the poorhouse to scenes of other days. He saw himself a headstrong youth rallying to the call of his beloved South, swearing allegiance to a cause he believed just. How proudly he had received into his keeping this self-same flag from the hands of that grand old warrior, General Robert E. Lee.

Faithfully he had fulfilled that trust, carrying it safely through many a battle and hard campaign, and then had come the proudest moment of his life when, at the close of that bloody strife, General Lee with his own hands had presented him the flag he had carried so long.

Then came that message from the great, understanding heart of Abraham Lincoln, "that the men of the South were his disobedient children and as such would be forgiven and the past as though it had never been; that they should retain their horses to till the soil and help rebuild a more solid and glorious Union," and the bitterness had left his heart never to return.

The harsh clanging of a bell roused him from his memories. Again he was Rebel Jerry, friendless inmate of the poor-house, and hastily dressing he was soon seated with others at the breakfast table to which the bell had called them.

April, May, June, 1929

Twenty years before Jerry Beauford had moved north with his wife and child. But business reverses had overtaken him and in the twinkling of an eye a terrible accident had robbed him of his loved ones. Now in the twilight of life he found himself the friendless charge of a charitable institution.

The constant prayer of his heart, oft uttered, that he might see again his beloved South before he died, had won for him the name of "Rebel" Jerry and few, indeed, knew his real name signed on the register of the county poor farm.

"Don't you know what day this is, Reb?" shrilled an old fellow at the head of the table.

"Ah haven't forgotten it's Decoration Day, suh, and will be at the crossroads on time," Jerry Beauford replied quietly as he rose from the table.

Before the sun was an hour higher he was trudging along the dusty lane towards the crossroads where soon, to the music of fife and drum that thin blue line would march by on their way to the little cemetery to pay homage to their comrades of other days for whom the last long taps had sounded.

As he crossed the bridge that spanned Goose Creek he noticed it was full to its banks from the spring rains and made a mental note that it would have to lower a bit before the fish would bite.

In the distance came the thrilling notes of the fife and he quickened his steps. In memory he was back amid the scenes of sixty years ago. Once more he was marching at the head of a long gray column listening to the stirring strains of Dixie and holding aloft the old flag that now lay in the crook of his arm.

Suddenly the shrill cry of a child shattered his day dreams and as he stopped to listen a woman's frantic cry for help reached his ears. Running forward Jerry Beauford saw, on the creek bank beyond some willows, a woman with arms outstretched towards a little boy who was struggling in the water.

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For the first time since it had been given into his keeping the old flag trailed in the dust, for Jerry had thrown off his coat and plunged into the icy waters of Goose Creek. With great effort he managed to reach the child and keep its head above water until willing hands relieved him of his burden, then his senses reeled and he slipped downward into smothering darkness.

Jerry's first conscious feeling was of delicious warmth and his eyes opened to look into the anxious face of a woman bending over him.

Placing her hand on his forehead she said in a voice rich with concern, "Lie quiet and don't talk, but listen to what I have to tell you. I am Helen Wynn, of Kentucky, and it was my small son you saved from drowning an hour ago. I have heard your story, Jerry Beauford, and my heart is bursting with gratitude to you which I find no words can express, but as soon as you are able to travel I shall take you home with me and try to repay my debt with loving service as long as we both shall live. I, too, love this old flag, Mr. Beauford, for my grandfather wore the rebel gray," and Helen Wynn laid the flag on the coverlet beside old Jerry:

One week later Jerry Beauford, with Helen Wynn and her young son, Buddy, rode along a turnpike that wound through the very heart of the Kentucky bluegrass. The eyes of old Jerry were beholding again his beloved Southland and he pinched himself to be certain he was not dreaming.

"Look, Uncle Jerry, we're home!" shrilled Buddy Wynn joyfully as they turned down a wide driveway lined on either side by drooping magnolia trees at the far end of which stood a large Colonial house, its white pillars and sprawling galleries giving it a "befo' the wah" grandeur, while its myriad diamond-shaped windows sparkled in the rays of the setting sun.

As the car came to a stop the old man felt loving arms encircle his neck and warm lips on his own. The cry of his heart was at last answered, for Rebel Jerry had come home.

"Bluebird Trail"

BY FRANCES MARSHALL MORGAN

There's a lovely road loitering between the hills surrounding the little valley where we live and from one year's end to the other there are the most beautiful things to be encountered along its course. There are many like it in our state of Tennessee whose mountains, mysterious hills and emerald-like valleys are picturesque beyond compare—yet the particular road of which I tell you, I do declare, is the most alluring of them all!

It's a lazy road and takes its time about getting along. In the autumn the crazy "snake" fences are buried in creepers which turn scarlet with Jack Frost's first visit and there are red-fruited vines that meander here and there as well as stiff, mauve partridge berries. In spring the wild honeysuckle completely hides the rock walls and fences and it is so sweet, sweet with coral, yellow and white blossoms that their perfume almost takes ones breath away. The fields on each side are like green jewels; the skies are blue meadows covered with "sky sheep," the little white clouds that chase each other about them.

This road I've christened "Bluebird Trail."

"Bluebird Trail" begins in our town and ends in another town twenty-five miles away. This is a favorite drive. Yet I adore it for a particular reason. It is because the bluebirds love it, too.

Whenever we choose "Bluebird Trail" for a pleasure jaunt one of these celestial-hued little fellows seems always to be waiting for us. We never fail to discover him perched upon a post and he flits and skims along, leading the way, a friendly little pilot. He may disappear for a moment but always he, or his brother waits around the curve. Oh, it seems an enchanted road!

One day I asked a man who knows much of bird lore if birds really followed moving objects and he assured me that this was frequently the case. He readily believed in our bluebird guide.

Among the feathered creatures remaining the year around in the Southern States, the little conductors of "Bluebird Trail" have one rival for the beauty prize. This is the scarlet coated cardinal, the loveliest bird in a section abounding in beautiful songsters. Yet the bluebird is distinctive in that he has figured prominently in literature. Many of you are familiar with Maeterlinck's wonderful story, "The Bluebird."

The bluebird is very abundant where found. He measures about seven inches and is one of the most domestic of our wild feathered creatures. He will readily make his home in a box near our own residences. His wild home is to be found in the cavities of old stumps and deserted woodpecker holes. Bluebirds rear two, often three, broods a year with from four to six birdlets in each.

There is no reason why the farmer should tear our beautiful little azure-feathered friend for his food consists principally of grasshoppers, katydids and crickets. He dines off of other insects harmful to the farmer's crops and eats for dessert, many wild fruits and berries. The bluebird has been known to devour frogs and lizards—horrors! In the breeding season he ranges throughout our country east of the Rocky Mountains and remains in winter as far north as Illinois and Pennsylvania.

The "Bluebird Trail"—yes, we all follow wherever it leads for the bluebird is the symbol of happiness and the real quest of life is the search for true happiness. Many people fail in the search—they grow weary of the journey where the bluebird leads—and often the "Bluebird Trail" goes in a circle—it winds up at our own, familiar doorstep.

Closed

BY MRS. W. THORBURN CLARK



OH, O John," called Mrs. Hollis. "Won't you go to church this morning and take Elsie? The boys have gone and left her, and she is so fretful about it that baby will not be able to get his morning nap and then he, too, will be fretful."

"We-I-I," replied Mr. Hollis uncertainly. "I had not *thought* of going, but if you insist that I take Elsie, I suppose I will have to, but wait a minute," he called after her as she turned back into the kitchen. "Isn't your mother coming today, and don't you think you will need me around to help with the baby while you get the dinner?"

"I will not need you," said Mrs. Hollis. "Mother will take care of baby. What I want most right now is that you take Elsie on to Sunday school."

"Oh, well, get her ready," sighed Mr. Hollis, "while I finish this article."

And settling himself a little more comfortably in the porch swing, he

opened the Sunday paper where he had left off when called.

The sun was shining brightly and the birds were singing their sweetest Sunday carols, but suddenly they seemed to be a long way off and the swish, swish, of the water from Mr. Smith's hose as he gave his car a wash-off, ceased entirely, and Mr. Hollis found himself before the church. And the doors which should have been standing invitingly open on this bright and beautiful day were shut and across the front in great black letters was the word which sometimes greets last minute shoppers on the doors of the great department stores, "CLOSED."

John Hollis turned away and started homeward puzzled at the strange situation, but seeing a group of boys playing ball in an open field went over to find one of them was his son, John, Jr.

"What are you doing here, John?" he asked.

"Well," replied John, "there was no Sunday school, and the fellows said we

might just as well play ball. There wasn't anything else to do, so I came with them."

"You are not to play ball on Sunday," said Mr. Hollis. "You come home with me, but where is Emmett?"

"Emmett? Oh, Emmett went with the gang over to the lake in the park. I think they are going swimming, boating, and perhaps later go off to fish."

"What are we coming to?" muttered Mr. Hollis.

"Well, you go home and I will see about Emmett," was the parting injunction as he turned his footsteps toward the park.

As he hurried along whom should he meet but Mr. Samuel Hester, the real estate agent, strolling through the open field carelessly cutting off the weed-tops with his walking stick.

"Hester, you are the very man I want to see," exclaimed John Hollis. "When I purchased my home of you I was assured that I would have as good school and church advantages as any suburban district could have, but see what has happened. Here I go to church and find the doors shut and my boys running around playing ball and fishing. I feel that the advantages were misrepresented."

"Wait a minute before you say anything further," said the agent. "Just what have you done to keep the church doors in this community open? Where were you last Sunday?"

"Out in the country on a visit to my brother."

"And the Sunday before?"

"Down at Ocean Ridge for the weekend."

"And the Sunday before that?"

"We had visitors and I stayed home."

"Your neighbors," said Mr. Hester, "spend their Sundays just about as you do, so why open the church?"

"But, man, my boys, what is to become of them?" asked John Hollis.

"You and your neighbors," continued the agent, "can spend the Lord's Day

in driving around in your cars, in visiting and entertaining, and expect somebody, you haven't made it clear just who, to support the church to keep your children from running wild as you say, but I say the responsibility is yours, and if you do not bestir yourselves their blood be upon your heads."

And the erstwhile affable and pleasant-voiced agent seemed suddenly transformed into a stern and irate judge towering with flashing eyes above the now conscience-stricken man before him.

"And I tell you," the man now thundered—

But John Hollis heard no more, for just then the paper rustled to the floor and he sat bolt upright in the swing, startled to realize that he had been dozing and the "thundering voice" was only that of Mrs. Hollis quietly telling him that Elsie was ready for Sunday school.

"All right, come right on, girlie."

"Hi, there, Bob Smith," he called to his neighbor, "put on your coat and come go with me to Sunday school. Don't you know that it is up to us to support the church in our community, or what will become of our boys? Like as not they would soon be playing ball or even fishing on Sunday."

"Say, Calvin," he called to the neighbor on the other side, who was immersed in the Sunday paper, "come go to church with me this lovely day. I haven't been going as often as I should, but I am going oftener in the future."

He went down the street, his little daughter's hand grasped tightly in his, making such purposeful strides, that when they turned the corner the child was almost running to keep up.

Mrs. Hollis, gazing after them in astonishment, said to herself as she picked up the paper, "Now I wonder what it was that he read in the paper which made him so ready and willing to go to Sunday school!"

But Mrs. Hollis did not know about the dream of the closed doors.

What Everlasting Flowers Mean to Me

BY ANNETTE FRANTZ



On the one side of our garden is a small piece of ground twenty by twenty-four feet. This patch of earth is—my garden. The over-draperies, cedar chest and the small rug in my bedroom came from that piece of ground last year. Besides the money it furnished me, it also stimulated within me the desire to raise pretty and interesting plants.

Three-fourths of my garden is planted in everlasting flowers, or more generally called straw flowers. The other fourth is for odd and other pretty plants I wish to raise, but the everlasting flowers are the income.

Some plants should be started in the house and transplanted into the warm ground after all danger of frost is over. Most of the different varieties however can be planted in the early summer. When the flowers are in full bloom, they should be cut off or pulled out by the roots and hung heads downward in a dark dry place so they will dry out. If they are cut off, the flowers should be sorted in short, medium and long stemmed bunches to hang up. These flowers have eternal beauty and never fade, which makes them an ideal winter decoration.

Globe amaranth are clover-like flowers of purple, striped, white and other colors, some have the petals tipped with a dark shade. This variety should be cut just before they are fully ripe.

Helichrysum is another wonderful everlasting flower and should be cut also a little before the petals have become opened. This flower makes beautiful bouquets and they are double with many different shades from white to dark red.

Baby's breath is a plant which has many small flowers on, the bushes are used to mix with the other flowers. This flower must be sown very early to produce blooms in late summer. It is best to start the seed in the house.

Another variety to give the bouquets a wonderful selling power are the ornamental grasses. These are of different kinds and some are silver white plumes with shades of other coloring. The grasses are best pulled out by the roots.

Mix up the colors and varieties in small bunches of a dozen to three dozen flowers and grass plumes in a bunch. Sell them around Thanksgiving day and after, for ten to twenty-five cents a bunch. A small brother sold mine and I gave him a percentage of twenty per cent on all he sold. I never have any left at the first of December, which speaks well for my garden and means the things I desire to have. Try this plan and earn your desires also—you can do it.

Jest You Quit Your Worryin'

BY SUSAN HUBBARD MARTIN

Jest you quit your worryin'.
Something nice is coming
Jest as sure as flowers bloom
And busy bees are humming.

Jest you quit your worryin'
And change your thoughts to gladness.
This old world's a happy place,
Never meant for sadness.

Jest you quit your worryin'.
Face about—take warning,
Greet your friends with smiles and say,
"Ain't it grand this morning!"

And the first thing that you know
You'll be fine and splendid—
And the ill you thought you had
Will certain sure be mended.

Jest you quit your worryin'
And onward press, believing
God will pour His blessings down.
Get ready for receiving.

Brighten the Corner

BY GRACE HELEN DAVIS



"LISTEN, John, isn't that sweet?" asked Mrs. Avery.
Mr. Avery laid down his Sunday paper and listened. The two were quietly reading on their pleasant porch after dinner, and somewhere inside the house their little daughter was singing the verse that she had learned that morning in Sunday school.

"Brighten the corner where you are!
Brighten the corner where you are!"
came little May's glad young voice.

The fond parents smiled, and Mrs. Avery remarked musingly, "I wonder if she knows what it means, John?"

"Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do,
Do not wait to shed your light afar!"
sang May.

Suddenly the look of half-amused interest faded from Mrs. Avery's face. "John," she said, "do we know the meaning of it?"

John Avery looked at his wife in surprise. "Why, what can you mean, Mildred?" he asked. "Of course, we understand the lines, and I think that May does, too."

"Yes, but, John, they really don't mean anything to us," explained Mildred. "Don't you see that we've been hearing those words, and singing them, for years and years and that they never really made much impression on us? We just sing them and forget all about it until next time."

Her husband was silent for a moment. "Yes, I see," he said slowly then. "Well, it's not too late to start now, Mildred. What could we do about it?"

Mildred Avery stared animatedly at her flaming bed of petunias. "I don't know, John, but there must be some corners to brighten here in Russville," she said. "Of course, I belong to the missionary society and the ladies' aid, but it would be fine to do something for someone right here; just little acts of Christian kindness—not acts that have

been asked, or that are a neighbor's duty, but those that you have to go out and seek for yourself. I don't mean charity, either, but friendliness."

"Well, Sunday would be just the day, for we can do things together," said John understandingly. "Shall we decide to brighten someone's corner each Sunday, Milly?"

Mrs. Avery nodded. "And I know what we'll do today, John," she said. "We'll take the Duncans out for a drive this evening. Do you remember how they admired the car that time we stopped in about that strip of land? I know they would be simply delighted to go driving, and they must be so lonely these days!"

The Duncans were an aged couple who had raised a large family well, seen them go off into the world, and then had raised a second brood, left orphaned by one of their sons and his wife. Now the last of these grandchildren, Marcia, was married and the old folks were left all to themselves in their cottage near Russville. They had always been frugal and careful, but they had labored to give the children and grandchildren a good start in life, and there was little left for them besides their small property and a few dollars in the bank. Nothing for luxuries!

Mr. Avery was pleased with the idea of giving the Duncans an hour's pleasure. "And next week we could take out Mrs. Simmons. She might lose some of her irritability if folks were better natured toward her," he remarked.

"Why, yes. Anyone would feel cross who is lame and can't get about much," said Mrs. Avery, and started planning. "Then tonight we'll have an early supper and go calling at Duncan's. We'll have time for a nice drive before church at eight."

The plan was carried out to the immense satisfaction of everyone. Mr. and Mrs. Duncan were delighted to see the Averys drive up with their lovely little daughter, and more than delighted when

their object was explained. They were soon ready, and were happily seated in the back of the car with May, whose company they had begged.

The long drive over the pleasant countryside pleased them all, and when they finally drove up before the church and Mr. Avery had helped everyone to alight, he said:

"Well, I've never had such an enjoyable ride before! We'll do this often."

"Yes, and I've thought up some more corners to brighten," laughed Mildred Avery, as the Duncans entered the church ahead of them, hand in hand. "This is really like a game, John, the game of 'brighten the corner,' and incidentally it brightens the player, too."

Two Gardens

BY AGNES TAYLOR HAWKINS

"Of course I could let you have some dahlias but the stems would be very short, you see we are not cutting the buds. Jim is planning to exhibit at the Dahlia Show and you know how careful you have to be."

"Oh Mrs. Butler I wouldn't have you cut them for anything. I really should not have asked, but your flowers are always so lovely and I thought you might have a few to spare."

"Let me see, there might be some zinnias. Come down this way."

"A glory of color—zinnias of every shade, big marigolds, blue, blue ageratum and tall purple asters." Mary Turner gave a little gasp of delight. "How beautiful, I didn't know you had so many. How you must enjoy them."

"I certainly do, but it means hard work and plenty of it. Now let me see, Jim wants all the largest zinnias saved for seed and the asters are hardly open enough to cut. Would you care for some marigolds?"

"Really Mrs. Butler you had better not cut any, I feel sure I can get some somewhere else, I can't tell you know I have enjoyed your garden. I have

never seen handsomer flowers anywhere."

"But Mary I feel I should let you have some. You say our Circle is to take them to the City Home?"

"Yes, but you needn't bother Mrs. Butler and I really must be going." Somehow the very flowers themselves seemed less bright as Mary turned to go.

"If it was just a little later it would be different, I hope you understand."

Mary walked very fast till she was well out of sight of the Butler place. Her face was flushed, it was hard not to think very bitter thoughts.

"Is that you Mary Turner?" called a voice from the porch of a vine covered cottage.

"Yes, Mrs. Collins, may I come in." The shady porch looked very inviting after the heat of the September sun. And Mary knew how comforting a few words with the dear old lady would be.

"How hot you look child, sit right down while I go and speak to Liddy a minute." She was soon back, "Liddy has just finished churning and she is going to bring us some buttermilk. Excuse me for calling you as I did but I've been trying all the morning to get someone to cut the roses to take this afternoon. I know it is late but if I stick them, heads and all in a tub of water till time to go they will be fresh as can be. Thank you Liddy." This last to a small colored girl who came with a dainty tray.

"Oh Mrs. Collins what a relief, not the buttermilk but the flowers. I have been having such a time, I went by the Butlers and—"

Mrs. Collins laughed merrily, "I see you haven't any. Well we must not be too critical. It is hard to part with our treasures sometimes. Take a tea cake dear, these were made from my mother's recipe."

"They are delicious, so crisp, I didn't know I was hungry. But I will cut the roses now if you are ready and you tell me just which to get."

"Get all of them dear, I have not had any in the house for several days so there would be plenty for today. And"

Mary I know how old folks love sweet old fashioned flowers so if you have time will you take this basket and cut mignonette and rose geranium, some sweet alyssum and I think you can find some hardy carnations and there ought to be some for-get-me-nots. I thought I would make several little nose-gays for some of the shut-ins. I will certainly be glad when this hand of mine gets so I can use it."

"And I didn't even ask about it, but you must excuse me, I was wondering where could I get some flowers. How is it?"

"Much better, dear, but you had better start cutting the flowers, you know they don't like this hot sun."

"Oh, Mrs. Collins, how can I ever thank you enough?"

"Thank me? Why, my dear child, this is what my flowers are for and don't you know the more they are cut the more they will bloom. Now take these scissors and run along."

What Love Is

By F. J. H.

"And what is love?"
Thus did I ask a mother, as she went
About her round of duties, one by one,
Setting to rights the things that had gone wrong

As patient mother hands have ever done.
"Love? Why, love is service, love that gives
and gives
Yet gives again to every daily need;
Where love is, there no bounds are set,
Loving is giving—such is love's own creed."

"But what is love?"
"Love?" And she stopped again, just to bind
up

A wounded finger, stooping to caress
The hurt spot, just to make it well again—
"Love? Why, love, you know, is also ten-
derness."

So, love is of itself no simple thing
But holds within itself sweet sacrifice,
The faithfulness that holds up weary hands
And to each day's demands gladly replies.

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I Remember

By FLORENCE JONES HADLEY

I remember one certain visit I made to the old home when I had been away for a year after my marriage some years before. I went back to the old nest every year for a visit, but I remember this one time more vividly than any other.

As I hurried down the walk, wishing I could go faster, I saw father at the well, drinking the ice-cold water that he seemed always to be craving. At the gate I saw—mother.

She was watching to catch the first glimpse of me, and as I went on, she hurried to meet me. I can see it all now. The faint, sweet summer dusk, the roses in father's rose garden, the trees that swept their shadows over the lawn in moonlight or sunlight, and mother watching for me at the gate, just as she always watched for her children when they were a bit late coming home.

Yes, she was always watching—that mother of mine. When we were children and were late in coming home from a happy time with some playmate, we would see mother the first of all at the gate, her eyes shadowed with anxiety. "I didn't know what might have happened to you," she would always say, and we, with the impatient wisdom of childhood would tell her that there was nothing to be afraid of—we could take care of ourselves.

And when we were grown it was ever the same. Even after we felt perfectly competent to leave Mother to make a home for ourselves, Mother would watch at the gate if she knew we were coming; home, or just watching in the hope that we might come unexpectedly to surprise her. And when we were there, all her children together, Mother still watched at the gate, just as of old, when we were not back by the time she thought we ought to be there. I can hear her now, through all the dear, dead days that are so full of memories.

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"I didn't know what might have happened to you," she would say just as in the olden days, and again we would laugh at her, but not with the calm superiority of childhood wisdom. We now watched for children of our own to come home, for we know the world better than we did then, knowing that much may happen outside the walls of home.

Dear old Mother! I can see it all now. I see the roses warm and fragrant in the dusk, Father's roses that he loved, I see the trees that reached out welcoming arms to us as we neared them, just as they sheltered us once long ago.

I see Mother at the gate, watching, waiting, just as of old, and I hear her say with a little sigh of relief, "I didn't know what might have happened to you." And I do not laugh, for now I know that to mothers, children never grow old, never are wise enough to do without mother's watchful love. The old gate stands lonely, without its precious companion, but perhaps other mothers will watch with it until it, too, gives up its guardianship.

Yes, dear old Mother, I remember! And I want to go home again, just a child, to see you watching at the gate, just to see the old love-light in the dearest eyes in all the world. I still see them—

Dear mother eyes!
In all the wide, wide world there lies
A love that lives for me alone,
A love that ever meets my own
And swift replies.

O steadfast eyes!
So clear that truth finds no disguise;
Within your haunting depths I see
The love that makes the world to me
A paradise.

O dearest eyes!
Long years have dimmed your sunny skies:
But shining on, still lead aright,
My sun by day, my star by night,
Dear mother eyes!

Spring's Miracle

By C. B. MADDOCK

As twilight fell, the sweet spring rain
Beat rhythmic'ly, a little chime
Of tinkling harp-sounds on the pane,
An overture to April time.

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Against the wall grey-green with mould
And moss, etched deep with ancient trace,
The cherry tree leaned, garled and old,
Widowed of all that once lent grace.

It shivered in the wind that stirred,
As if at coming of the dark.
Raindrops slipped down its boughs, and blurred
With misty tears, its lichened bark.

But—when the morrow's dawn had dyed
With rose-leaf tints, the sky's grey hue,
I found the tree transformed—a bride
In laces wrought with pearls of dew!

Burdens and Balances

By FRANCES M. LIPP

Not so very long ago we came out of a neighbor's house in a boat, a very true neighbor who gave us a house of refuge. After sailing over water-covered fields, concrete roads, hidden and useless, seeing devastation and suffering, and experiencing the pangs of the homesick, and watching our children a-wonder for toys, and familiarities, and what it is all about, we have been doing some balancing.

Balancing is very interesting and very essential. Boats made by tyro boatmen did not balance in those exciting times of the great flood. Nor did the burdens balance imposed on some by irresponsible others. A boat that doesn't balance is unsafe for its purpose, so is a burden.

To presume to say that the flood was sent as a national lesson, an individual punishment, a warning to over-weening wealth and grasping office holders, is not within our realm. To assume that it should prove a lesson for the forgetful ones, the unneighborly, the selfish, is certainly within the scope of anyone who has experienced it.

How often we see people who cheerfully take up tasks that rightfully belong to others, never complain, and are weakened in physical ways, mental ways, by overburdens. And too often we meet someone who grumblingly moans his fate in life, and who seems to have absolutely nothing to do. Perhaps that person needs the other's bur-

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den. Again we see those who actually steal and cheat in time and means to avoid their rightful duties, a man who loiters in the office, a wife who does not conserve in the home, a profiteer in the years and happiness of his poorly paid employes.

Emerson probably meant a sense of balance in his essay on compensation. Browning also, when he admonished: "Welcome each rebuff.

That turns life's smoothness rough."

America this past year witnessed acts of heroism and selflessness unequalled in any bloody, man-destroying war. And they have become beautiful because they were against a common foe, not for the destruction of someone's son, but his preservation. How sublime a struggle, and how wonderful must its results be. No squabble, no filth of trenches, and hatred of hearts.

But a real forward-looking, soul-uplifting work. Men who could not stand a baby's cry endured seventy-two-hour shifts in rescue work, and levee sand-bagging. Men who walked formerly on opposite sides of the street because of political differences worked side by side in ditches with opponents, drank with them from soiled tin cups, and gaunt and tired, lay down beside them for a bit of rest on a damp, chilling levee. Women who never even nodded to each other in small-town greeting cooked side by side in crowded kitchens, shared mattresses and rugs with the wives of their husbands' business competitors. Real friendships were formed, big ideals joined, littlenesses and petty strifes were washed away as the muddy waters receded.

Surely this rebuff has helped to make smooth many a rough spot in humanity's daily march. Creed differences have been forgotten. Strong, bashful men have prayed for neighboring fellow-men, whose houses were swiftly going under water. The night of April the 24th such a parlor prayermeeting was held in our little town. The host, a lumberman, had taken in three families of his business competitor's foremen. Litterate and illiterate prayed, youth and age, husband and wife who had never

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heard each other make a sacred petition opened up the genuine depths of their hearts at the call of a little inundated town, "There is nothing left to do for us but pray." And, after all, that was the first ALL anyone could do. Sandbags, sweat, money, toil availed nothing as the waters crept in on us deeper and deeper. Prayer was the all that could be done, any time, and the sense of its balance of human burdens, of his balance when our burdens became too great for us, was then impressed as never before.

The First Star

BY VELMA BELL

*Starlight, star bright,
First star I've seen tonight,
I wish I may, I wish I might
Have the wish I wish tonight.*

I

One fair star in the peacock blue,
One fair star in the sky is gleaming;
Dusk and springtime over the world,
Twilight over the world is dreaming.
Time for dreams and for wishing, too.
Elfin time is the dewy twilight.
How many wishes, a golden star,
How many dreams float up toward thy light!
Children playing on many a lawn
Pause in their play with faces glowing.
Saying the fairy charm once more—
Marvelous thoughts their eyes are showing.
Some fair maid at her window stands,
Breathing a wish with yearning laden.
Making a wish from her very heart—
Why does she grow so red, this maiden?
Plodding people remembering youth,
Half in whimsy and half in earnest
Whisper the charm-verse, gazing rapt
Heavenward where, like a gem thou burnest
How many dreams go floating up?
How many wishes in pain or singing
Mingle their laughter and mayhap tears
Up where my own little wish goes winging!

II

What shall I wish tonight, oh, wondrous star?
A holy hush is o'er the young spring night,
The twilight bows in awe to you, oh, queen,
To you, his radiant Lady of Delight.
A weeping willow flings her long green hair
Across the sky where still is sunset's mark;
Red are the fervid maples—red as life,
And budding elms calm green in gathering
dark.
The smell of little growing things is sweet,
And sweet the twittering as the swallows
dart.
I drink deep draughts of loveliness and cry,
I wish I may keep springtime in my heart.

HOME DEPARTMENT MAGAZINE

Daily Home Readings and Lesson Studies

Recommended for Daily Worship in the Home

Prepared by J. D. MOORE

The Ministry of Isaiah

THE LESSON PILOT: April 1 to April 7

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. How Isaiah become a volunteer. (Mon.)
2. What comfort Ahaz received from Isaiah. (Tues.)
3. In whom alone did Isaiah see hope for mankind? (Wed.)
4. What the reign of Christ means. (Thurs.)
5. How Isaiah was faithful to his king. (Fri.)
6. How Paul was true to his vision. (Sat.)
7. How may we honor God? (Sun.)

What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. Where every great career begins. (I)
2. The chief condition of usefulness. (I)
3. What sign God gave the people through Isaiah? (II)
4. How long did it last? (II)
5. How would they be helped by it? (II)
6. Is the word of God's messenger always pleasant? (III)
7. To whom are God's ministers sent? (III)

GOLDEN TEXT—Then I said, Here am I; send me. Isaiah 6: 8.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 1

Read Isaiah 6: 1-6—THE CALL OF ISAIAH
"I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

Like all true prophets and preachers, Isaiah received a special and direct call from Jehovah to be his messenger. He did not call himself, because he felt that he was sinful and unworthy. The people did not call him, because in their moral depravity they did not want the services of a prophet who would denounce them for their sins. No man has any right to speak for God unless he has been commissioned by the Lord to bear his word to men. But every one to whom the call comes should respond as Isaiah did, saying, "Here am I, send me." It may not be an audible voice but it must be distinct and definite. Unless a messenger is certain that God has called him into the ministry, he will be half-hearted in the proclamation of his word. Isaiah received a revelation of God's holiness which also revealed to him his own sinfulness. But God's cleansing fires burnt away his disabilities and fitted him to go with clean lips among a people of unclean lips. And with his own soul aflame with

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a sense of God's holiness, he willingly offered himself for service. When we see God on his throne and witness his glory, we see how imperfect and sinful we are. But the contrast which brings out our faults before God reveals the source of our cleansing and power.

May God give each of us a special revelation of himself, and may we heed the call which it may inspire in our hearts.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

Read Isaiah 7: 1-9—ISAIAH ENCOURAGES AHAZ
"Take heed, and be quiet; fear not."

The kings of Israel and Syria, in the days of Ahaz, king of Judah, formed a confederacy against Judah and besieged Jerusalem in order to dethrone Ahaz, the rightful king who was grandson of Uzziah, and place their favorite, Tahael, on the throne in his stead. Since both Judah and Israel at the time were tributary to Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria, it would seem that Rezin, king of Israel, wished to place a king on the throne in Judah who would join him in a revolt against Assyria, a thing which Ahaz seemed unwilling to do. But the combined armies of Syria and Israel at his gates spread consternation among

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his people, and Ahaz himself was greatly disturbed and terrified. However, Isaiah, the prophet, came to him with a word of cheer from the Lord. He predicted a chain of disasters coming to the confederates. Within three score and five years, Ephraim, or Israel, would be broken; which prophecy was fulfilled in 722 B.C. when Sargon besieged Samaria and took Israel captive to Assyria; and with the fall of Israel, Damascus would topple, and with the going of Damascus, Syria would fall. But Ahaz would get only so much comfort from Isaiah's words as his faith in God might afford him. Unless he believed; he would not be established.

May our faith in God give us comfort in all our anxieties, as we take our troubles to him and leave them there.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

Read Isaiah 7: 10-17—IMMANUEL
"A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

As a preacher of righteousness, Isaiah could see no hope for a sin-cursed people except in the coming of a personal Redeemer. But none of the prophets were more Messianic than he. He predicted the Incarnation, the virgin birth of the One whose name should be Immanuel or "God-with-us." The sign which God would give would be that of the virgin birth. This means the divine sonship of him who is thus born, and to whom the name Immanuel could rightly be applied. It is strange that the virgin birth of Jesus should be denied by any man of intelligence who accepts the fact of the Christ at all. One had just as well deny that there ever was a person by the name of Jesus as to affirm that he was not born of a virgin by conception of the Holy Spirit. None other than a divine Person could save a lost world. None other than Immanuel could redeem sinners. Man-kind must be lifted up by a Power greater than human strength. God must come down before men can go up.

May we realize that in Jesus Christ we have God with us, and may his presence be our chief concern and highest joy.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 4

Read Isaiah 35: 1-10—THE FUTURE HAPPINESS OF ZION

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs."

Not only did Isaiah predict the coming of the Messiah but also described the condition of things which his presence would accomplish. He views the work of the Messiah as that of a Redeemer, one who "ransoms" his people. The reign of Christ is a restoration, not to the old order but to the right order. It is the "restitution" of all things. Nature is to feel the thrill of the new life imparted to mankind. Under the care of redeemed men, the desert will blossom as the rose, and the barren arid wastes that would not sprout the cactus will be covered with the cedars of Lebanon. The eyes of the blind will be opened, and the limbs of the lame will be healed. Man in his relations to his fellows will not be as a beast of prey, seeking to profit by his neighbor's misfortune; for in the kingdom of Christ there is "no ravening beast." The ransomed of the Lord will obtain joy and gladness.

May we pray and labor for the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the world.

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

Read Isaiah 38: 1-8—ISAIAH MINISTERS TO HEZEKIAH

"I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years."

However good or great a man may be, he is subject to the common afflictions and infirmities of the flesh. Hezekiah had been a good man and a righteous ruler, and when serious illness befell him, it seemed a national calamity. Isaiah, true to his king, did not hesitate to tell him to "set his house in order" and to make whatever plans or arrangements he wished to make before the end should come. The prophet would not keep anything back from the king, but would tell him what he might expect. Hezekiah wept and prayed when Isaiah told him he must die. He had prayed before, and on his death-bed he did not have to form a new habit in order to talk to God. And God heard him, and lengthened his days miracu-

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lously. Hezekiah was due to die then, but God gave him fifteen years of grace. The going back of the shadow ten degrees on the sun dial of Ahaz was a miracle in nature corresponding to that which God performed in restoring Hezekiah to health again. Isaiah was the bearer of both messages from God, one that he was going to die and the other that his death had been postponed fifteen years.

May we accept our recoveries from serious illness as God's merciful extension of time in which we may serve him in the world.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

Read Acts 26: 12-20—OBEYING THE HEAVENLY VISION

"I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

To Saul the vision of Christ on the Damascus road was not only a revelation but also an obligation. It was not only a vision of Jesus as Lord but a call from him as Lord. The vision involved the call. Saul could not be obedient to what he saw without accepting what he heard. Before his conversion he was a rabbi, and afterwards he was a minister of Jesus Christ. The direction of his energies was changed. Like Isaiah, the call of the Lord left him only its own alternative in life. He had been drafted by Christ. He had been thrust into the ministry. His own people might hate him for obeying the heavenly vision yet his duty was plain and his obligation unchangeable. As a witness for Christ among a rebellious and prejudiced people, it was necessary that he should be endowed with a conviction of truth that was as deep and strong as the currents of his own life. His experience of grace and his call to the ministry were the only explanation he could offer for the change which had taken place in his life.

May we be faithful in whatever duty may be imposed on us by the will of Christ revealed to us.

SUNDAY, APRIL 7

Read Psalm 118: 12-19—FAITHFULNESS TO JEHOVAH

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all the people."

The singer acknowledges himself a debtor to God because of all the benefits

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which he personally had received direct from God. He could not mistake the source of his blessings and could not, and would not, deny his obligation to render thanksgiving and praise to the divine Giver. He would do so not only in private but also publicly, "in the presence of all the people." He wished to honor God not only as worthy of his personal adoration but as the Benefactor to whom he would acknowledge his obligation before the people. He has in mind the worship services of the sanctuary. He could not honor God enough by a merely private expression of praise or gratitude but would pay his vows to God in the presence of a multitude before whom his tributes would magnify the name of the Lord. People who do not acknowledge Christ before men do not really acknowledge him in their hearts.

May we honor God under such conditions and by such means as will contribute most to his glory.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, April 7

TOPIC—The Ministry of Isaiah.
THE LARGER LESSON—Isaiah 6: 1-18; 7: 1-17; 20: 1-6; 28: 1-22.

Lesson Text and Comment

1. ISAIAH BEFORE GOD
Isaiah 6: 1 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.
2 Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.
3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.
4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.
5 ¶ Then said I, woe is me; for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.
6 Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:
7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.
8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

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An experience of God is the starting point in any life of usefulness. Before Isaiah could go before the people as God's prophet he had to appear before God. He had to see the Lord "high and lifted up" in order that he might see himself lowly and cast down. The spirit of humility can behold God in his holiness and glory, and can go from his presence purged of sin and prepared for a career of surpassing usefulness and power.

II. ISALAH BEFORE THE PEOPLE

Isaiah 20: 1 In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

2 At the same time spake the LORD by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoes from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

As a sign to the people of Judah that God would bring their enemies, the Egyptians and Ethiopians, to nakedness and shame, he directed that his prophet, Isaiah, should lay aside the coarse camel hair sackcloth he usually wore and appear before the people only in his undergarments and barefoot. This he did for three years. The people would naturally wonder at his appearance, and would; upon inquiry, understand and be comforted by the assurances it

gave them if they had the proper faith in God.

III. ISALAH BEFORE THE KING

Isaiah 38: 1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,

3 And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

4 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying,

5 Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

Every messenger of God has a word for rulers and those in authority as well as for the common people. He must know how to abound and how to be abased. He must not be averse to being subject to nakedness and privations nor be ashamed to look kings in the face. It may be sad or unpleasant news he has to bring to men in high positions, but let him deliver it as God gives it to him. He must have a message for the rich as well as the poor, for the high as well as the low, for the good as well as the bad. He must be God's mouthpiece to all men, and become "all things to all men that he might win some."

Hezekiah Leads His People Back to God

THE LESSON PILOT: April 8 to April 14

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What invitation did Hezekiah issue? (Mon.)
2. Who accepted it? (Tues.)
3. What took place the second week? (Wed.)
4. To whom did Hosea prophesy? (Thurs.)
5. The chief theme of Micah's prophecy? (Fri.)
6. With whom is love original? (Sat.)
7. Contrast Jehovah with other gods. (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful.* 2 Chronicles 30: 9.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 8

Read 2 Chron. 30: 1-6—THE PEOPLE SUMMONED TO KEEP THE PASSOVER

"They established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel . . . That they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem."

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. Of what was the passover a memorial? (I)
2. Had it been neglected? (I)
3. Why Hezekiah wanted it revived. (I)
4. Whom did he specially invite? (II)
5. His invitation carried what plea? (II)
6. How was the passover celebrated that year? (III)
7. What effectual prayers were offered? (III)

In his plans to revive the temple service king Hezekiah of Judah remembered that the passover had been long neglected. But it was then the first month of the Hebrew year and was too late to celebrate it on its regular date,

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the fourteenth day of that month. The people had not had sufficient notice and the priests did not have time to make adequate preparation for its rightful observance. But he discovered in the law of Moses (Num. 9: 10f) that provision had been made for the celebration of the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month where there was ceremonial uncleanness that disqualified the people from having it at its regular time. So he suggested to his counsellors that they proclaim an invitation to all the faithful, from Beersheba on the south to Dan on the north, to come to Jerusalem for the celebration of the passover on the second month. He did not limit the invitation to the people of his own kingdom but extended it to those of the northern kingdom of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh who were still in the land after the fall of Samaria and the captivity of Israel in Assyria. He had no political purpose in trying thus to bring any of the children of Israel to Jerusalem. His appeal was that every one might "turn again unto the Lord."

May we earnestly invite all our neighbors to join with us in a general genuine revival.

TUESDAY, APRIL 9

Read 2 Chronicles 30: 13-22—THE PASSOVER KEPT
"The children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness."

There were many among the northern tribes that scorned the invitations of Hezekiah to come to Jerusalem for the passover, but there was a great number who did accept it in sincerity of heart and with a genuine desire to worship God. But they had not been accustomed to the rites and ceremonies involved in its observance. Hence many of them were not ceremonially clean when the time came to begin the festivities. They had not performed the regular requirements for their purification and ate the passover "otherwise than as it is written." But Hezekiah prayed for them, basing his prayer on the effectual ground that their hearts were right even though they had not been "cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." During the

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seven days the priests and Levites conducted services of song and taught the people "the good knowledge of the Lord."

May our hearts be right before God even when in our feebleness and ignorance we approach him clumsily.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

Read 2 Chronicles 30: 23-27—THE JOYFUL RESULT
"Since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem."

Not only did the great assembly in Jerusalem observe the feast of unleavened bread for seven days, as prescribed by the law of Moses, but they unanimously decided to continue the festivities another whole week. They wanted to do more than was required of them. Hence the second week became a matter of free will service to Jehovah and was characterized by abundant sacrifices, amounting to two thousand bullocks and seventeen thousand sheep, the gifts from king Hezekiah and the princes of Judah for that purpose. It was during the second week that the people experienced such joy, and in the spirit of devotion to God offered prayers that went "up to his holy place, even unto heaven." Nothing like it had been seen at Jerusalem since the days of Solomon, when the glory of the Lord filled the temple and when sacrifices without number were offered to Jehovah by a devout people.

May we realize that our greatest joy is to be found in doing for Christ what is beyond our regular line of duty.

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

Read Hosea 11: 1-11—JEHOVAH YEARNS FOR HIS PEOPLE

"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?"

Hosea was a prophet in the kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes, at the time of its greatest decline and for many years before the Assyrian captivity. He was contemporary in the latter part of his ministry with the prophets Jonah and Amos. Like Amos he pronounced the judgments of God against the rebellious people and yet pleaded with them to turn away from their sins before it should be too late to save them from national disaster. When they were an

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infant nation in Egypt, helpless and without a champion, God espoused their cause and delivered them. But they forgot him and sacrificed to Baalim. He taught Ephraim "to go," or how to walk, when he was a child though the child did not know whose hand it was that had held him up. And though the people are destined to become subjects of an Assyrian king, yet Jehovah loves them and will not surrender his love for them. He remembers his covenants of mercy and will not desert them even though they have backslidden from him.

Thank God that his love does not change and that he remains faithful even though we ourselves prove faithless.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

Read Micah 7: 14-20—THE LOVINGKINDNESS OF JEHOVAH

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity."

Although Micah's prophecy is one of the shorter prophetic writings, none of them present a brighter or more hopeful outlook for the people of God. It was he who predicted the place where the Messiah would be born (5: 2), in accordance with whose prophecy the Wise men from the east were directed to go to Bethlehem when Jesus was born. Micah was therefore thoroughly Messianic in his inspired view-point and utterances. He consequently abounds in the promises of God, and foresees the triumph of Jehovah over all his foes. He perceives God as a great forgiver, the only deity who can forgive sins, and who can bestow mercy upon his people. He will keep the covenant he made with Abraham and will "feed the people with his rod," as the shepherd's crook points the way to the pastures for the sheep. Micah was contemporary with Isaiah and belonged to the kingdom of Judah during the reign of Hezekiah, the time when prophecy reached its zenith and the hearts of the two prophets were aflame with Messianic inspiration.

May God "subdue all our iniquities and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

Read 1 John 4: 7-16—GOD IS LOVE

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

Love is the test of the Christian life because Christ occupies the throne in

the affections of his people. Where love is not he is not. Where love is he is. His presence explains that of love. Where hate, rancor and bitterness are welcome, the spirit of Christ is scorned and rejected. In Christ Jesus, divine love was expressed. It is something therefore which is original with God. It is not a natural disposition of mankind. It is not that we loved him, but that he loved us and "sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The mercies of God promised through his servants of old were granted in the gift of the divine Son. In nothing could God have expressed his love more perfectly than in the gift of his Only-begotten Son.

Since God loves us, may we truly and sincerely love one another.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

Read Psalm 148: 8-17—JEHOVAH IS MERCIFUL AND GRACIOUS

"The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion."

How different our God is from the gods of the heathen! Ours is a God who is not to be dreaded but loved. Theirs are gods and spirits whose vengeance they fear and whose favor they seek to win by trying to appease their anger. Pagan gods are not regarded as embodiments of love or mercy. But every one who loves God knows him to be surpassingly merciful and kind, without partiality or discrimination. He is the champion of the weak. He feeds the hungry. He lifts up the fallen. His goodness is his glory. His mercies are endless and inexhaustible and his kingdom is therefore everlasting. The more mankind can know about him, the more conspicuous his attributes and dispensations of mercy become.

May we "make known to the sons of men God's mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom."

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, April 14

TOPIC—Hezekiah Leads His People Back to God.
THE LARGER LESSON—2 Chronicles 30: 1-27.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. THE REVIVAL LEADERS

2 Chronicles 30: 1 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to

Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel.

2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month.

3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

4 And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.

5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.

The feast of the passover commemorated the most important event in Hebrew national history, the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage by the miraculous hand of Jehovah. So when they allowed the celebration to wane, they showed that they were forgetting God. In Judah during the reign of Hezekiah, the passover had been for a long time indifferently observed but not "in such sort as it was written." He and the princes of Judah decided to have it properly celebrated again in strict compliance with the laws governing it, and invite the neighboring tribes to join them in the festivities, and in making a new start toward the spiritual worship of Jehovah.

II. THE REVIVAL CALL

2 Chronicles 30: 6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.

7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

8 Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

9 For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compas-

sion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.

After the Assyrian captivity of Israel, following the fall of Samaria, there were a great many of the children of Israel in the territory of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh who remained in the land. Hezekiah and the princes of Judah sent messengers to them urging them to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the passover, entreating them to "turn again unto the Lord," so that the children of those who had been carried away captive might receive kindness from their captors and be permitted again to come into the land. Some of them accepted the invitation but others scorned it.

III. THE REVIVAL EXPERIENCE

2 Chronicles 30: 25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.

26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem.

27 ¶ Then the priests and Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling-place, even unto heaven.

It was a great fellowship meeting which was held in Jerusalem when the people came from the northern and southern sections to celebrate the passover by request of Hezekiah and the princes of Judah. Israel and Judah had done a great deal of warring with each other, but had practiced very little of the grace of loving each other. Now the worship of God brings them into a joyous fellowship. Nothing like it had occurred since the division of the empire following the death of Solomon. The prayers of the people led by the Levites breathed the spirit of unity and spiritual power, and ascended to God's holy dwelling place, even unto heaven. How powerful are the united prayers of a people who are deeply in earnest and are devoutly seeking God!

Comfort for God's People

THE LESSON PILOT: April 15 to April 21

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What was Isaiah's message of comfort? (Mon.)
2. How God comforted Elijah. (Tues.)
3. What comfort Amos offered Israel? (Wed.)
4. What restoration did Amos prophesy? (Thurs.)
5. How Jesus comforted Martha. (Fri.)
6. The Spirit as Comforter. (Sat.)
7. Thanking God for comforts. (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.*
Isaiah 66: 13.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 15

Read Isaiah 40: 1-11—COMFORT FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

In what way does God comfort his people? Do we not often have mistaken notions about the grounds of our consolation and peace? How was Isaiah authorized to speak comfortably to Jerusalem? His messages of joy would afford the people only so much comfort as they might be prepared to receive from God. Their relations to the Lord would measure their pleasure in the prophet's word from God. He assured them that Jehovah would grant them "double for all their sins," that his pardon was twice as much as was necessary to forgive them every sin they had committed. What rejoicing there is in the heart when one has a sense of an abundant forgiveness with God? There was the joy also of looking for the Coming One, the promised Messiah who would visit the people. How glad we are when we receive news of a forthcoming visit from those who are near and dear to us? We are glad in proportion as we love them and want to see them. In the coming of the Lord all inequalities are wiped out. The valleys are filled up and the mountains are laid low, and there is a common but a high level. Among those who resist him he will rule with "a strong hand," but to all who follow him he will be a shepherd who feeds the flock and tenderly cares

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. A condemned man's happiest day? (I)
2. What is our first great joy? (I)
3. How Isaiah referred to John. (II)
4. What Isaiah said the Lord would do. (II)
5. What will stand forever? (II)
6. The joy of being rewarded. (III)
7. The comforts of divine help. (III)

for the lambs and the delicate ones among the sheep.

May the boundless graces and mercies of God in Christ Jesus be our unfeigned comfort.

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

Read 1 Kings 19: 9-18—GOD COMFORTS ELIJAH
"I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal."

Elijah thought he was the only man in all Israel who was brave enough to resist the popular tide of Baal worship which was espoused by the court of Ahab the king. But he was not as lonesome as he thought he was. He was rightly ambitious for the reestablishment of Jehovah worship, but his despondency had in it a bit of conceit. When a good man gets the idea that he stands alone in the advocacy of righteousness in his community, he assuredly has another thought coming to him. What a joy filled the heart of Elijah when God informed him that besides him there were seven thousand faithful ones in Israel who had quietly resisted the mighty currents of Baal worship, and had never so much as bowed to the idol. As had as conditions are, there are unseen forces of righteousness which God has in reserve against the day of his power. Elijah would need to learn some things, and to do yet other things supplementing what he had already done. Nothing dissipates despondency like a vigorous program of activities for the future along conservative lines.

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May we have great joy in the confidence that Christ's kingdom shall flourish even though it seems we ourselves have failed.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

Read Amos 9: 11-15—GOD COMFORTS HIS PEOPLE
"I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel."

Amos prophesied in the kingdom of Israel about fifty years before Samaria was captured by Sargon and the people carried captive to Assyria. He lived in an age of wantonness and corruption. His fiery eloquence was directed against the wickedness of his times, and yet his denunciations of sin contained the passionate plea for repentance. His prophecy closes with a Messianic hope. He foresees the restoration of Israel, but it is a spiritual rather than a national recovery. It is by the grace of God that the heirs of David shall possess the remnant of Ephraim. God alone is to build the fallen tabernacle as it was in the days of old. The captives will not bring themselves back from bondage, but the Lord will. Great prosperity will attend the people when the Lord visits them. "The plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed," that is to say, plowing will continue till the harvest and the vintage will last till spring, with products abundant and with seasons and soils favorable for unlimited production. Happy are the people whose God is the Lord, and whose king is the Christ!

May we have no prosperity except that in which we can be happy and abundant in the service of God and our fellowmen.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

Read Luke 4: 14-18—JESUS THE COMFORTER
"He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted."

It was on Saturday, May 28, 32 A.D. (Savage) that Jesus for the first time after his active ministry began attended the synagogue services in his home town of Nazareth. His growing fame made his old acquaintances proud of him and it was with marked esteem that the leaders in the exercises for that day gave the book of Isaiah to him to read. His selection was the sixty-first chapter,

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in which the prophet foretold the mission of the Messiah as the friend of the poor, and the comforter of the broken-hearted. As a reformer, Jesus espoused the cause of the underprivileged. As a Saviour, he preached the gospel to the poor, touching humanity at the places of its greatest destitution. He was the physician who could give sight to the blind and comfort the sorrowing and distressed. He could remove the causes of blindness and of grief. He gives strength to the feeble and liberty to the captive. At his voice the wail of anguish ceases. Above the roar of the billows that threaten to engulf our souls, we can hear his tender words as he approaches us in the gloaming, "Fear not, it is I."

"What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!"

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

Read John 11: 17-27—JESUS COMFORTS MARTHA
"Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection and the life."

After the death of their brother Lazarus, Mary and Martha at their home in Bethany were visited by a great many of the Jews who came to comfort them. But they were only friends who could do no more than mingle their tears with their own. Four days after his death Jesus came. Martha left the friends in the house with Mary and ran out to meet the Master as he approached, saying to him among her first words, "Master, if you had been here, my brother had not died." He then assured her that her brother would rise again. She believed he would certainly rise at the last day. That was some consolation; however, her heart was torn with anguish for the loss of him until the last day. Then Jesus told her that he was the resurrection and the life, that in his death was already conquered and that the life in him could not perish. Though physical existence might cease, life itself would never die. Jesus asked Martha if she believed this, and she replied that she believed he was the Son of God. Her faith opened the way for the Son of God to go to the tomb and bring forth from the grave her departed brother.

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May our faith in Christ be our consolation in the midst of bereavements and sorrows.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

Read John 14: 15-24—ANOTHER COMFORTER
"I will pray the Father and he will give you another Comforter."

While he was with his disciples, Jesus himself was their Comforter. They believed in him as the Son of God, and he was to them therefore a constant joy, and his companionship a source of inexpressible delight. But his predictions concerning his death brought them great worry and anxiety, and Peter even rebuked him for mentioning such a thing. The disciples could not bear the thought of his leaving them. And although he saw death looming before him, he seemed all the more intent upon providing for the comfort of the men whom he was to leave and on whom would depend the prosecution of his work in the world. They felt, as he knew, they could not get along without him. So he promised them another Comforter, whom the Father would send after he himself had gone back to the Father to whom he could present the petition in person. And the other Comforter would continue with them and would magnify the Christ in their lives. They were not strangers to the Spirit, and yet they were to know that through the Spirit Jesus himself would not leave them comfortless but would come to them and be with them to the end.

May we by the presence of the Spirit in our hearts carry our Comforter with us everywhere we go.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Read Psalm 30: 1-5—COMFORT IN SORROW
"Weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning."

This is one of David's songs, written perhaps on his recovery from a serious illness. God had heard his prayer and had restored him and "kept him alive." He did not forget the Lord had so graciously remembered him. How often men will pray earnestly when they are in deep distress, and when they are relieved, they fail to thank God for having heard them! David calls on all the

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saints to join him in a song of thanksgiving. His own praise is inadequate to express his gratitude. Weeping may indeed endure for a night, but the night cannot go on forever. There will come the morning joys after the horrors of the dismal darkness.

May we look through the gloom of our temporary griefs to the dawn of the endless day.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, April 21

TOPIC—Comfort for God's People.
THE LAMB'S LEMON—Isaiah 40: 1-11.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. THE COMFORT OF GOD'S PARDON

Isaiah 40: 1 Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
2 Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

To the penitent there can come no greater comfort than the word of forgiveness of sins. The person under sentence of death could never see a happier day than that on which his chief executive issues him a full and complete pardon. Jesus Christ alone can forgive sins, because he is God. He only gives a sense of sins forgiven. With him there is a pardon for all. His atoning grace is greater than the iniquity of our sins, and is more than sufficient to cover them twice over. Let our rejoicing in Christ begin with a sense of his remission of our sins.

II. THE COMFORT OF GOD'S POWER

Isaiah 40: 3 ¶ The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

6 The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field:

7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

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Isaiah prophesies the coming of the Messiah's herald, a voice "that crieth in the wilderness." John the Baptist was the fulfillment of that prophecy. In the Coming One God's power would be manifested in the equalization of all life, in making all conform to the divine plan. In the construction of the King's highway, the valley would be filled up and the hills cut down. Every one is to contribute to the majesty and empire of the Lord's Messiah. The hills will sacrifice their abundance and the valleys their deficiency, and both alike will form his royal thoroughfare. The voice of the messenger proclaims the transiency of human life, which is like the grass of the field. But the power of God and the word of God will abide forever, and all that is based on them will stand when the rains descend and the floods come. In Christ alone is there the comfort of safety.

III. THE COMFORT OF GOD'S PROVIDENCES

Isaiah 40: 9 ¶ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain;

O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

10 Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

How happy God's children should be in the enjoyment of his protecting care and beneficent reign! He abundantly rewards all who labor for him. His rewards are with him, ever ready to be given to those who win them. Not only in the future life but also in this world, he rewards his servants. He makes provision for their necessities, and as a shepherd carries the weak lambs in his bosom, he enfolds the feeble soul in his own almighty arms. Since there is assurance that the Lord will provide and protect, of whom or of what should we be afraid?

The Suffering Servant of Jehovah

THE LESSON PILOT: April 22 to April 28

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What was the Sufferer's mission? (Mon.)
2. How the passover lamb typified Christ. (Tue.)
3. God's purpose in Christ's death. (Wed.)
4. What the death of Jesus does. (Thur.)
5. How to glorify God in our sufferings. (Fri.)
6. With whom Jesus identifies himself. (Sat.)
7. What is the standard of merit? (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—With his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53: 5.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 22

Read Isaiah 53: 1-12—THE SUFFERING SERVANT OF JEHOVAH

"Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

Nowhere in all the prophetic writings concerning the Messiah is there a more adequate picture of the Christ than that given in this chapter of Isaiah. It was perfectly fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. As a sufferer, he could not be a worldly sovereign or potentate, but a spiritual personality and power. The description

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of the person here could not refer to any of the great men who have ever lived. Isaiah foretold the character of the Sufferer, and that he would be rejected of men because mankind would despise him on account of his lowliness and lack of "comeliness." He described also the mission of the Sufferer who would bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. Not having in himself any cause for distress, he was distressed by the afflictions of all of us. His atonement is clearly set forth. "He was

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wounded for our transgressions" and "with his stripes we are healed." It was according to the divine appointment because "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." He was God's chosen agency for the redemption of men. Then his personal history is outlined by the prophet who views him going from "prison and judgment" and of making "his grave with the wicked and the rich in his death." But in it all and through it all, the Sufferer is to be abundantly rewarded. Because he made his soul an offering for sin he cannot fail of glory with the Father nor before men. His life will not be wasted but will be abundantly fruitful; for "he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

May we carry our griefs and sorrows to the divine Sufferer who has already borne them for us.

TUESDAY, APRIL 23

Read Exodus 12: 1-11—THE ATONEMENT
TYPIFIED

"It is the Lord's passover."

By divine appointment the Hebrew year began with the first day of the Hebrew month Nisan. After the nine plagues in Egypt which had not been effectual in bringing about the release of the Israelites from the domination of Pharaoh, God interposed with a mighty hand. Egypt would be smitten with the death of every first born in every family and among all the beasts. There was just one way to avoid the scourge. Let there be a lamb chosen on the tenth day of the month, then slain on the evening of the fourteenth day, and its blood sprinkled on the lintels and doorposts. By this means God would pass over and not slay the first born. But nothing else could avert the terrible calamity, the like of which had never occurred and would never take place again. By observing the specifications as given by Moses and Aaron, the Israelites escaped the disaster. But among the Egyptians there was not a home in all the land in which there was not one dead. The lamb of the passover was typical of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and under whose blood we are safe from the wrath of a sin avenging God.

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May we take God at his word and comply with the conditions under which we may be saved from death through Jesus Christ.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

Read John 19: 28-37—THE ATONEMENT ACCOMPLISHED

"He said, It is finished; and bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

Christ's crucifixion was a tragedy far beyond any other instance of injustice, if it be not regarded as the price which had to be paid for the redemption of mankind. Judas Iscariot, the Jewish and Roman courts were all incidents and parties to the "offense which must needs come." They were not irresponsible agents, but the worst they could do was to bring about the death of Jesus upon which he could accomplish his supreme mission in the world. God had a purpose in it, and it was his doing even though it was man's misdeeds. Human justice was outraged but the divine plan was fulfilled. The blood atonement is not a mere theory of religion. It is the supreme fact of revelation and of Christian experience. It alone affords hope to the soul that is sunk in sin. It alone describes the fearful nature and consequences of sin, in providing an atonement which is sufficient to remove the guilt and destroy the effects of every sin in all mankind.

May we hold up the crucified Christ as the only hope, but all-sufficient Redeemer, for lost men all around us.

THURSDAY, APRIL 25

Read Romans 8: 6-11—THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

"By whom we have now received the atonement."

God loved us before Jesus came. He so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son. In Christ God is reconciling the world unto himself. The gift of his Son was his effort to win lost men to him, and to provide the means whereby he might not destroy mankind in sin and unbelief. Jesus died for us in order that we might become righteous, not because we were righteous. "For a good man some would even dare to die," but who among men would die for the wicked and mean and ungodly? But only Jesus, as the prescribed Lamb of God whose blood should make atone-

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ment for sin, could by his death change the wicked and make them righteous. No mere man could by his death transform the hearts of those for whom he died and make them good instead of bad. So it is through the death of Jesus that we are justified, that is, exonerated or not condemned, before God. Not only are we not condemned but are made positively righteous. Not only are we saved from death through his death but saved unto life through his life.

May we enter more and more into an appreciation of the significance of the sufferings and death of our Lord.

FRIDAY, APRIL 26

Read 1 Peter 4: 13-16—PARTAKERS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

"Rejoice, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."

Since Jesus our Lord and Master was the world's greatest and best Sufferer, why should his people shrink from suffering, provided they endure it for the same cause and in the same spirit in which he suffered? Why should they think it strange that they are subject to sorrow, and that the way is not smoothed out before them? Do they think they are better than their Lord and are more entitled to ease than he himself was? He promised them comfort in the midst of their griefs but he did not promise them exemption from suffering. But we ought to be sure that in our reproaches we are actually suffering with him and not on account of some evil disposition or bad conduct on our part. Many a Christian suffers because of his own sinful deeds, and such penalties may bring him to repentance but in the experience of them he cannot be said to suffer with Christ. And not a few can by patience and meekness in their trials glorify God more than many others do whose works testify to the goodness and mercy of God. Not all can labor effectively for Christ but all who suffer according to his will can commit their souls to him in well-doing by patience and trust.

Let us glorify God on behalf of all suffering we must endure for Christ's sake.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 27

Read Acts 22: 1-8—CHRIST SUFFERS WITH HIS SAINTS

"Why persecutest thou me?"

Saul's powerful opposition and hostility to the Christians was due to his ignorance of Christ. He regarded them as heretics because he thought Jesus was an imposter, and that he was neither the Messiah nor a good man. He devoutly believed in the supernatural and in the resurrection, though he considered the report of Christ's resurrection as a frame-up to establish the claim to divine Sonship which Jesus had made during his lifetime. But when on the Damascus road he was halted by the great light from heaven and by the voice which said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me," he was forced to the conclusion that the people whom he was persecuting were the folk with whom the divine voice was identified. He could consistently oppose the Christians until he beheld the Christ whom they worshiped glorified and exalted by the Father. Then to continue to fight them would be to fight against God. Jesus makes common cause with his people, even the least among them. "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

May we treat our Christian fellow as though he were the person of Christ.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28

Read Revelation 5: 9-14—THE SUFFERING SERVANT HONORED

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

In heaven the angels and archangels vie with each other in paying homage to Jesus Christ. The saints sing before him the endless songs of redemption by his blood. Nothing less than the unlimited power of God in Jesus Christ could unlock the mysteries of redemption and reveal the mercy and grace of God toward sinners. It was not by his life on earth nor by the ethical value of his teachings, but by his death that the slain lamb opened the scroll on which no other power in heaven or on earth could even look. The power of Christ lay in his sacrifice of himself. Sacrifice is the standard of merit and of power and of glory. He is able, who is worthy, to

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open the book. No power could open it except that which was good enough to do so.

Thank God that in Jesus' death the impossible was accomplished and what none other could do was done by him.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, April 28

TOPIC—The Suffering Servant of Jehovah.
THE LAMBER LESSON—Isaiah 52: 13 to 58: 12.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. THE SUFFERER'S REJECTION

Isaiah 52: 1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Isaiah predicted that the Suffering Servant would be rejected and that unbelief would characterize the people to whom he would come. He explains why the Messiah is rejected, and why many stumble because of him. His origin is humble, as "a root out of a dry ground," as a plant where plants cannot flourish. Even Nathaniel asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Then, because he becomes a sufferer, men shun him as a failure and as a culprit upon whom they conclude God's favor does not rest, else his lot would be more prosperous and honorable. Men naturally turn away from the scenes and subjects of suffering. The old saying is still true of human nature. "Laugh and the world laughs with you; weep and you weep alone."

II. THE SUFFERER'S SORROWS

Isaiah 52: 4 ¶ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep be-

fore her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

The glory of the sufferings of Christ lies in the fact that he endured them not because he deserved to suffer but for the sake of others. It was our sorrows that he bore. It was our griefs that crushed his great heart. It was for our transgressions that he was wounded. It was for our iniquities that he was bruised. It is our health that is made possible by his stripes. But how terrible must be our sinfulness, since he had to endure such awful suffering to atone for it! A stranger to his generation was he, misunderstood and despised by those whom he sought to help. He had not resentment enough to answer for himself before his accusers, as a sheep is dumb before her shearers.

III. THE SUFFERER'S REWARD

Isaiah 53: 10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

God had a purpose in the sufferings of his Son. In no other way could an offering for sin be made. But by such means a complete atonement was provided. His sufferings and death will not be without abundant fruit. Millions of souls are born of the travail of his soul. He will justify many whose iniquities he bears. And to him personally there is coming glory as great as his sufferings were. He will have his portion with the great. God has exalted him, and given him a name above every name.

What Hilkiah Found in the Temple

THE LESSON PILOT: April 29 to May 5

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. Where did Josiah begin his reform? (Mon.)
2. From what had the temple suffered? (Tues.)
3. Why was Josiah troubled on hearing the law? (Wed.)
4. What place was given the law in Ezra's reform? (Thurs.)
5. Why is the Bible our sole authority in faith and practice? (Fri.)
6. How far does the Bible teach us? (Sat.)
7. Why we should love God's word. (Sun.)

What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. Why was the book lost in the temple? (I)
2. What led to its discovery? (I)
3. To whom was it first read? (II)
4. To whom did Josiah then read it? (II)
5. What public vow did the king make? (III)
6. Who else joined him in the covenant? (III)
7. How thorough was the reform thus brought about? (III)

GOLDEN TEXT—*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And light unto my path.*
Psalm 119: 105.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 29

Read 2 Chronicles 34: 1-7—JOSIAH'S RIGHTEOUS REIGN

"He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

Josiah was the son of a wicked king, Amon, and his own son, Jehoiakim, who was put on the throne of Judah by Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, was an unrighteous man. How true it is that both goodness and wickedness are personal qualities, and neither are directly transferable from father to son. The faith of the parent certainly does not guarantee the righteousness of the child. However, Josiah was not without some worthy lineage. His great grandfather, Hezekiah, was a good man, and his grandfather, Manasseh, started out wrong but finally got right. There is an advantage in having good forebears. Josiah had been trained by Levites who must have been loyal to Jehovah and who instructed him in the ways of the Lord as far as they knew them. So when he began his reign at the very early age of eight years, he started at once a strict religious reform, beginning at his own capital, Jerusalem. The idolatrous shrines which his father had erected were broken down and burnt. He then carried the good work into Manasseh and Ephraim, among the people left from the Assyrian captivity, personally superintending the destruc-

tion of the "high places and groves" where the people had worshiped Baalim.

Let us clean up before our own doors before we carry any reform movement into our neighbor's premises.

TUESDAY, APRIL 30

Read 2 Chronicles 34: 8-13—THE HOUSE OF JEHOVAH REPAIRED

"He sent Shaphan . . . and Josh . . . to repair the house of the Lord."

As the people under Amon turned their attention toward the "groves and the high places," they neglected the house of Jehovah, the magnificent temple of Solomon. King Josiah determined to have it repaired and put in condition for use again, following his crusades against the various places of idol worship. His program of reform was constructive as well as destructive. Large sums of money had been contributed by the faithful from all sections of the country with which the house might be thoroughly cleansed and repaired. So in the eighteenth year of his reign, Josiah gave orders that the money should be used for the purpose for which it was given, and that expert workmen should be employed to make all the necessary repairs. The temple had been standing nearly 350 years, and much of the time since the days of Solomon it had been neglected, although in the days of Hezekiah great religious festivities were held there. The temple

suffered more from disuse than from abuse, although some of the kings of Judah had actually removed the floors and some of the stones from certain portions of the house. These had to be restored and vast quantities of rubbish had to be removed from the different corridors.

May the honor and glory of Christ be uppermost in all our church building programs and activities.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

Read 2 Chronicles 34: 14-21—WHAT HILKIAH FOUND IN THE TEMPLE
"I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord."

It is no wonder that the house of the Lord had been neglected since the book of the law had been for a long time lost in it. The word of God does no good lying dust covered on the center tables of the homes or on pulpits in churches or on the shelves of booksellers. It must get into the hearing and thinking of the folk. The contributions raised by Josiah for repairing the temple had been stored away in the corridors of the house, and when the money was brought out for use in making repairs, Hilkiah found the book of the law which was given to Moses under it all. He reported his finding to Shaphan the scribe who, in turn, took it to king Josiah who ordered that it be read before him immediately. He was greatly distressed to learn how far short of the divine requirements the people before him, and of his own times, had fallen. He had been instructed concerning the worship of Jehovah by the scribes and Levites who had been his teachers, but he had not received the full text of the law, and had not known the whole truth. He was not aware of the extent to which his fathers had departed from the path until he found out the right road.

May we regard the written word as the sole authority in all matters of faith and practice.

THURSDAY, MAY 2

Read Nehemiah 8: 1-8—EZRA'S PUBLIC READING OF THE LAW

"Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people."

After the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem by the returned exiles from

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Babylon, the most important thing was to get the law embedded in the minds and hearts of the people. No reform movement is permanent which is not supported by the right sort of intelligence on the part of the people. Under Ezra definite steps were taken to acquaint the people with the law of Moses and to build up public respect for the word of the Lord. It was not enough that the book should be in the hands of the priests who might dole out such portions of it to the people as they might see fit from time to time. But the folk themselves must be taught it and caused to understand it, so that each might apply it to himself. Ezra had assistants and teachers who, as he read the law before all the people, would explain it to such as did not understand its meaning. His purpose was that the book itself might be heard and understood by everybody.

May we stand firm for the principle of an open Book before all the people.

FRIDAY, MAY 3

Read 2 Timothy 3: 16-17—THE SCRIPTURES ARE INSPIRED

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Concerning the Bible there can be but two alternative opinions or views. First, it is the sole authority in matters of faith and practice because it is inspired of God, and no other writings are so inspired; or in denying its authority one avers that it is not inspired or that other authorities in religion have been inspired equally with it. There is no middle ground. We must accept the Bible as our authority or else deny that it was a direct product of the Spirit of God. The church is not the authority except as it gets its own inspiration from the word of God. The individual is not the authority except as he is taught of the Spirit in the things already revealed. No agency or individual or group of individuals has received or will receive any new revelation. Therefore the appeal is to the Book. What saith the word? Everything we need for our inspiration, instruction, correction and equipment for service are to be found in it. The Holy Spirit honors the word to the saving of

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souls and the enlightenment of the people. Does one want to know the way of life? Let him go to the Bible. Does one wish to know what to believe or to do? Let him consult the Book rather than accept the flats or pronouncements of priests or preachers or councils.

May we accept the Bible as the inspired word of God.

SATURDAY, MAY 4

Read Romans 15: 1-7—THE SCRIPTURES ARE FOR INSTRUCTION
"Whatever things were written aforetime were written for our learning."

As a youth at Tarsus and in his education under Gamaliel in Jerusalem, Saul had been taught a profound respect for the ancient Scriptures. He never had any cause to repudiate them. Though a new revelation had been given him, nothing in the life of Christ had annulled the Scriptures but everything had confirmed them. Jesus embodied the spirit and precepts of the Old Testament writings. The duty of the strong toward the weak could be discovered in the ancient inspired writings as they were interpreted in the light of Christ's character and example. Jesus is the center of the whole revelation. Both the Old and the New Testaments have no message if they do not show the Christ and do not present him as the hope of mankind. The Bible is not a book on philosophy or ethics, but the revelation of Jesus Christ. It gives us instruction in proportion as it makes him known to us as worthy of our supreme faith and loyalty.

May we not only know the Bible but by it grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

SUNDAY, MAY 5

Read Psalm 19: 7-14—PRAISING GOD'S WORD
"More to be desired are they than gold."

Every honest man wants to know the truth, about himself as well as about other people and about things in general. He welcomes the light, although it shows him the defects of his own nature. He wants to know the worst, as well as the best, there is in him. He desires to know his limitations as well as his possibilities. There is no intelligent self-improvement without such in-

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formation. The singer praises the word of God because its light is impartial and true. By means of its warnings he may avoid the places of danger, and by the searchlight of its truths he may even be kept back from presumptuous sinning. He enumerates its practical values and benefits, growing out of certain characteristics which it has. To him it is therefore a source of great pleasure. He loves it because it tells him the truth and he loves the truth.

May we be constant in our devotion to the Bible as God's word.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, May 5

TOPIC—What Hilkiah found in the Temple.
THE LARGER LESSON—2 Chronicles 34: 1-23.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. THE BOOK FOUND

2 Chronicles 34: 14 ¶ And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses.

15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan.

16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do it.

It was to the discredit of Josiah's forefathers that the book of the law of Moses had laid unused so long in the temple that the fact it had ever been placed there had passed entirely from the memory of all the people. But when good king Josiah began to put the temple into proper shape, after it had been damaged and neglected by the kings before him, he found the long lost treasure. The discovery of the book was the reward of his devotion to God and of his concern for the house of the Lord. To neglect the Lord's house is to leave its treasures hidden. To love it and attend upon its services is to find rare and precious deposits within its walls.

II. THE BOOK READ

2 Chronicles 34: 29 ¶ Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

30 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the

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inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD.

When Josiah knew that the law had been found in the temple he had it read before him first of all. He was anxious to know the exact text of God's requirements. He then saw how far remiss his fathers had been. He was deeply moved and penitent. He took steps to have the book read before all the people, gathering the elders of Judah and Jerusalem together for that purpose. Going into the house of the Lord he himself read the book, giving it his royal sanction and professing his allegiance to its precepts and warnings.

III. THE BOOK OBEYED

² *Chronicles* 34: 31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.

³² And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to

the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. ³³ And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

After he had read the book of the law, Josiah publicly made a covenant to keep all the commandments of the Lord and with all his soul to perform the words of the covenant. Like Joshua of old, he would set the example before the people, "As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." Not only did Josiah himself subscribe to the covenant as contained in the book but caused all who were present to profess their love and loyalty to God. He then made a complete work of destroying all the idolatrous "abominations" that remained anywhere in all the countries that "pertained to the children of Israel." So thorough was the reform and so deep the revival that during the life time of Josiah there was no departure from the worship of Jehovah anywhere in his realm.

The Early Ministry of Jeremiah

THE LESSON PILOT: May 6 to May 12

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. The two dates of Jeremiah's call? (Mon.)
2. What caused Jeremiah's lament? (Tues.)
3. Why Jeremiah was condemned as a "Calamity howler." (Wed.)
4. Why the princes exonerated Jeremiah. (Thurs.)
5. Was Daniel's disobedience disloyalty? (Fri.)
6. Why Stephen was considered a blasphemer. (Sat.)
7. In whose truth should we walk? (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*We must obey God rather than men.* Acts 5: 29.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, MAY 6

Read Jeremiah 1: 1-10—THE CALL OF JEREMIAH
"I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

Few of the ancient prophets belonged to the priestly order. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were the two most notable exceptions to the general rule. Prophecy was not a profession but a calling. It did not follow lines of heredity. For

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. How Jeremiah was like Moses. (I)
2. Why did he feel so weak? (I)
3. Was that a good sign and why? (I)
4. What two alternatives Jeremiah offered the people? (II)
5. Which had they accepted? (II)
6. Did Jeremiah recant before the princes? (III)
7. How was his courage further shown? (III)

the most part the prophets were not of the official classes but were common men whom God raised up to give a special message to the people of their times. Jeremiah began his ministry in the thirteenth year of the reign of king Josiah, about the time the young king started his reforms, and doubtless urged his monarch on in his efforts to bring about a revival among the people. He

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was called to the prophetic office even before he was born. The Spirit of God had chosen him to be a prophet and had sanctified him or ordained him long before his birth. His call was of the pre-determinate counsel of God. Although he alleged his unfitnes and incapacity, saying he was but a child, he accepted the call. God would tell him what to say and would be with him. So he was bidden to "fear the face of no man" but to go forward with Jehovah's program among the nations.

May God's call to us mean his mercy to everybody.

TUESDAY, MAY 7

Read Jeremiah 8: 18-22—JEREMIAH'S LAMENT
"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?"

Jeremiah lived up to the time of the captivity of Judah. His keen prophetic vision saw the national disaster long before it took place. He lamented the cause of it more than the cost of it. The fact that the people by their sins had forfeited the favor of God grieved him to the heart. There seemed no chance to restrain them from their idolatrous practices, and hence there was no way to avert the downfall of the kingdom. When he would try to comfort himself, the pangs of sorrow would grip his heart. He could hear the wail of the daughter of his people in a far country. He was chilled with the knowledge that hope had passed and that all opportunities for the people to retrieve their loss had gone forever; that the "harvest is past and the summer is ended." The hurt of his people was his hurt. But there was no balm in Gilead and no physician could heal the wounds that had grown to be incurable. Since the people had forsaken God, there was no one who could heal them.

May we be deeply grieved for the sins of the unsaved and perishing souls around us.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8

Read Jeremiah 26: 1-9—THE MINISTRY OF JEREMIAH
"Speak unto all the cities of Judah . . . the words I command thee to speak unto them."

Immediately after the death of good king Josiah, when his wicked son, Jehoiakim, was put on the throne by

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Pharaoh Necho, Jeremiah took occasion to make his plea from the Lord that the new king should follow the ways of Jehovah. He predicted that God would destroy them, as he did Shiloh, if they did not heed his words, but promised them that if they would obey the laws of Jehovah, he would even yet turn aside the scourge which was pending. So Jeremiah not only preached a message of rebuke but also of promise and hope. He was not a "calamity howler" as the priests and other prophets in Judah claimed him to be. Because he could not prophesy good to Judah unless the people would turn from their sins, there were many who said he was a traitor to his country and ought to be put to death. But their condemnation of him was judgment against themselves. It indicated that they meant to continue in the ways which he said meant their ruin.

May we be faithful both to the truth and to those who are perishing because they reject it.

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Read Jeremiah 26: 10-18—RESULTS OF JEREMIAH'S PREACHING
"This man is not worthy to die; for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God."

It was the priests and prophets who condemned Jeremiah for predicting the downfall of Judah unless the people would repent. When the princes heard what the priests and prophets had said concerning Jeremiah, they came up to the Lord's house and sat down in the entry of the new gate, where an official hearing before them was to be had. Jeremiah then told the princes, in the hearing of the people who had assembled there, what he had said to the priests and prophets. He repeated the warning and concluded by saying that they might put him to death but that they would shed innocent blood if they did so, because he himself was not responsible for what he had told them but had merely given them the word of Jehovah. The princes and the people became convinced that Jeremiah was not worthy of death because he had spoken the word of the Lord to them. He was not an enemy to the kingdom but was its friend in giving the people timely

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warning. One of the elders related a case parallel to it during the days of Hezekiah, where the people listened to the prophet, and God's anger was averted. So Jeremiah's message, like every other positive word from God, brought about a division of opinion among the people.

May we always prefer to be right rather than popular.

FRIDAY, MAY 10

Read Daniel 6: 10-16—DANIEL'S COURAGE
"Prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

It was in order that the presidents and princes of the empire might get a cause of death against Daniel that they concocted the scheme to have king Darius issue a decree that none of his subjects should worship any god or man save the king only for thirty days. Daniel knew that his personal loyalty to the king was not involved in his disregard of the decree. The best service which he could render Darius was to have disregarded the decree which the king, in ignorance of its purpose, had signed. It resulted in the discovery and punishment of the conspirators. They were rightly adjudged worthy of death because they had used the king's power as a cat's paw with which they meant to remove Daniel whose superior qualities they did not wish to emulate but because of which they were murderously envious of him. Daniel, in the face of the decree, prayed with his window open toward Jerusalem, just as he had been doing. It was not a bit of defiance. It had been his custom, and he had no occasion to break it. His duty to God did not clash with his duty to his king. But because of the courage of his religious convictions, he proved as faithful to his emperor as he was loyal to his God.

May we boldly stand up for Jesus even in the face of threats against us on that account.

SATURDAY, MAY 11

Read Acts 6: 8-15—STEPHEN'S COURAGE
"They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke."

When Christianity began to spread rapidly in Jerusalem and after even a

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"great company of the priests had become obedient to the faith," it became apparent to the Jewish leaders that the despised sect of the Nazarene was a force to be reckoned with. They could not overthrow it by ignoring it. They must resist it, in defense of their cherished traditions. Stephen was one of the most active and effective workers among the Christians, and against him the storm of opposition would naturally turn. In the synagogue he argued with the ablest speakers representing the cult called the "Libertines" and other Jewish leaders from Cyrene, Alexandria in Egypt, Cilicia and Asia; but the whole array of debaters was not a match for the peerless preacher of Jesus Christ. Their failure to stand up before him terrified them. It led them to start measures to do him violence and to accomplish by force what they could not do by argument. They brought him before the Sanhedrin, or Jewish court, having engaged witnesses to swear the lie that he had spoken blasphemous words against God's holy place and the law. Because he had refuted their arguments, they claimed he had spoken against God. How beautiful and angelic was his face as he sat before his accusers who had perjured themselves to make out a case against him!

May we be calm in the midst of any commotion which our witnessing for Christ may occasion.

SUNDAY, MAY 12

Read Psalm 26—WALKING IN INTEGRITY
"I have walked in thy truth."

How courageous one can be when he knows he is right! If he is in doubt about it he will be fearful. But when he is sure of his position, he cannot be moved because he knows he is standing on the Rock that can never be destroyed. His personal or temporal welfare does not concern him much. If he reckons with that he will become shaky. The immovable life is that which walks in the truth of God. Such a one is not contentious though he seems so to his maligners. His convictions of truth are positive and he stands by them because he knows they are from God and that

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in doing so his "foot standeth in an even place."

May we walk not in our own integrity but in the truth of God.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, May 12

TOPIC—The Early Ministry of Jeremiah.
THE LARGER LESSON—Jeremiah 1: 1-10; 8: 10, 11; 9: 18; 9: 2: 26; 1-24.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. JEREMIAH'S CALL

Jeremiah 1: 6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

7 ¶ But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

9 Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

Jeremiah realized how feeble he was and how much he lacked the qualifications needful for the work of prophesying to which God had called him. His spirit was similar to that of Moses when God spoke to him from the burning bush (Ex. 4: 10). God never calls a man who thinks he is equal to a task. The man who sizes up the work and realizes its magnitude and importance never feels he is competent to do it. But God gives him the ability. And where God calls, a man can be sure that God will be with him in his work. He ought not to tear the face of any man, and be careful only to speak the words which the Lord has given him to proclaim.

II. JEREMIAH'S MESSAGE

Jeremiah 26: 8 ¶ Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.

10 ¶ When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the Lord, and sat down

in the entry of the new gate of the Lord's house.

11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

Jeremiah had given the people of Judah warning from God that unless they turned to Jehovah the city would fall and the temple would be destroyed. They did not apply the warning to themselves but only the disasters of the penalty for disregarding it. So the priests and prophets made out a case of treasonable utterance against Jeremiah, and said he was worthy of death. When the princes heard about it, they came up to the Lord's house where the crowd had assembled to clamor for the prophet's death. The accusing priests and prophets presented their case before the princes.

III. JEREMIAH'S COURAGE

Jeremiah 26: 12 ¶ Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.

13 Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

14 As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you.

15 But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

The faithful prophet would not be intimidated nor swerved from his message. He repeated to the princes what he had already said publicly before the priests, prophets and people. He had merely spoken the words God had given him. Jehovah had issued the warning, not the prophet. He could not say anything else than what God had told him to tell. They might kill him if they wished, but they must know that he was innocent of any treason against his kingdom. He restated the alternative of averting the disaster he predicted if they would amend their ways. Of course, the princes, as judges, had to acknowledge that Jeremiah was not worthy of death since he had only spoken the word of the Lord to them.

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Jeremiah Calls to Obedience

THE LESSON PILOT: May 13 to May 19

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What desecration of the temple in Jeremiah's day? (Mon.)
2. When are a people worse than their fathers? (Tues.)
3. What was Saul's sin in saving Agag? (Wed.)
4. What two alternatives are imposed by God's laws? (Thurs.)
5. Name some penalties for disobeying God. (Fri.)
6. In what way was Christ a servant? (Sat.)
7. How God is to be worshiped. (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.* Jeremiah 7: 23.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, MAY 13

Read Jeremiah 7: 1-11—**JEREMIAH CALLS TO REPENTANCE**

"Amend your ways and your doings."

Against the religious sham of his times, Jeremiah preached positively and with tremendous emphasis. He used the personal pronoun of the second person in delivering the invitations and judgments of God to the people. He did not shun the whole truth nor shirk his duty to proclaim it. The people had resorted to the ceremonies and ritual of worship in the temple as a subterfuge for their wrong doings. They would even stand up in the Lord's house and claim that their fidelity to the temple gave them the liberty to commit any sin they wished. Instead of the temple being a sacred place for devout souls to worship, it had become a hiding place for adulterers and a den of robbers.

May we ever experience that penitence for our sins which will lead us to forsake them.

TUESDAY, MAY 14

Read Jeremiah 7: 21-28—**A DISOBEDIENT PEOPLE**
"They did worse than their fathers."

How apparently strange it is that one generation will not profit by the experiences of the former one. There are individuals who do so, but unless such is a general average there is either, no progress made or an actual going backward. Jeremiah complains that the

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. The place of repentance in righteousness. (I)
2. How is repentance rewarded? (I)
3. What is the cause of disobedience? (II)
4. Does God issue indulgences? (II)
5. Did God command sacrifices? (III)
6. What did he command? (III)
7. When is any service acceptable to God? (III)

people of his day were even worse than their rebellious fathers had been, and would not listen to the commands of God to their ancestors nor be instructed or improved by the providences of God in olden times. They had come to trust in their sacrifices, whereas God had not given their fathers any commands regarding sacrifices at all, but had insisted on a strict obedience to all his laws governing their conduct and behavior. The command to obey was accompanied with the promise that God would be with them and be their God, as he had sworn to their fathers. But before the oath to their fathers could be applicable to them they would have to make God their own choice and trust him for themselves.

May we not offer to God any substitute for obedience to his will.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

Read 1 Samuel 15: 17-23—**OBEEDIENCE BETTER THAN SACRIFICE**

"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Every sort of disobedience to God seeks to camouflage its transgression. It will even perform pious acts, and will often be lavish in its pretensions to goodness and virtue. Saul had disobeyed the command of God in respect of Amalek, and had saved the best of the sheep and the oxen as trophies of his victory. It was not a matter of kindness on his part that he saved king Agag alive. He simply wanted to have

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his own way. And when unexpectedly arraigned by Samuel for having disobeyed God, Saul tried to lay the blame mildly on the men in his army but justifying them, in that they had brought the sheep and the oxen to sacrifice to Samuel's God at Gilgal. As if Samuel might be appeased by such a tribute paid to his God by the victorious Saul! Samuel declared the whole thing a gigantic piece of disobedience, and that God had not delight in burnt offerings that were made to him in contempt of his word.

May we remember that the smallest act of obedience to God is better than the most stately ritual or gift without it.

THURSDAY, MAY 16

Read Deuteronomy 11: 29-32—**OBEEDIENCE AND BLESSING**

"Thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim and the curse upon mount Ebal."

All the laws of man merely prescribe penalties for their violation. They do not promise blessings upon those who obey them, although they are guarantees of the welfare of society. But it is not the province of human law to secure to the governed the benefits of obedience. But the law of God promises blessings to all who obey him as well as penalties upon all who are disobedient. Before the children of Israel had entered Canaan, Moses their great law giver gave full directions concerning the text of God's commands to them, and how they should be perpetuated and regarded by the people. From Mount Gerizim should be read the blessings pronounced upon all who would keep Jehovah's laws, while from Mount Ebal should be read the curses or penalties which would inevitably follow if they disobeyed them. From one side came the voice of promise and from the other the word of warning. Everywhere in God's word it is so.

May we give heed to both the promises and the warnings of the Bible.

FRIDAY, MAY 17

Read Deuteronomy 28: 15-24—**DISOBEDIENCE AND PUNISHMENT**

"If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord, all these curses shall come upon thee."

Moses was explicit in describing the various calamities which would be vis-

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ited upon the people both as a nation and as individuals in the land of Canaan if they failed to obey God's voice. They would be denied prosperity. Their fields would be barren and their cities destitute. Righteousness has great economic and social values. No people can prosper financially who are votaries of pleasure or addicts to sinful habits. They would be cursed as to children either with barrenness or with a diseased and feeble posterity. Sin brings its own train of evil consequences to the perpetrators of evil, such as wasting diseases, fevers and inflammations; besides the causeless contentions in which one becomes involved because of his wrong doing so that he is smitten "with the sword." He is visited with mildew and famine, so that his "heaven becomes as brass and his earth as iron."
May God forgive us the iniquity of our sins lest we suffer their direful consequences.

SATURDAY, MAY 18

Read Philippians 2: 1-11—**THE OBEDIENT CHRIST**
"Became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Jesus laid aside his divine authority when he came to the world and took upon himself the form of our flesh. Instead of being a commander he became subject to command. Instead of being ministered unto he became a minister. Instead of being a master he became a servant. But his subordination was in accordance with the will of God the Father. He willingly took upon himself the place of subordinate. The high purpose which he served was the motive of his humility. His plane was not that of an underling or inferior. But by his obedience he glorified obedience and demonstrated that the spirit of humility is that of the good and the great.

May we in all lowliness of mind esteem others better than ourselves.

SUNDAY, MAY 19

Read Psalm 96: 7-13—**WORSHIP ENJOINED**
"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness"

Worship is merely a part or an expression of service to God. All who do his will from a spirit of reverence do by their very doings worship him. "To

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labor is to pray" when labor is unselfish and Godward. God is to be worshiped "in the beauty of holiness" or in the sacred precincts of the soul where purity reigns. He is not to be worshiped in a sanctuary alone. Let him be served in the word to the heathen that he reigneth. Let the roaring sea be understood to be the baritone notes of the anthems of his praise. Let the fields praise him, with their first fruits offered in his honor. Let the people rejoice because he will judge the world with righteousness.

May we worship God in our lives as well as in our churches.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, May 19

Topic—Jeremiah Calls to Repentance.
THE LESSON—Jeremiah 7: 1-26.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. DISOBEDIENCE OF WRONG-DOING

Jeremiah 7: 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.

5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor;

6 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other Gods to your hurt:

7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

Jeremiah charged the people with oppression and idolatry, notwithstanding the fact they professed great allegiance to the house of the Lord and "the temple." "The temple" was continually on their lips. The doctrine of repentance is fundamental in an experience of divine grace. One will not in sincerity of heart seek God who is not anxious to quit his sins. But to all who are tired of sin, God's words are gracious in their invitations to return to him and in their promises of blessings to the penitent.

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II. DISOBEDIENCE OF DISTRUST

Jeremiah 7: 8 ¶ Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.

9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;

10 And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?

11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in our eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.

Distrust of God is the root of all disobedience to him. Jeremiah charged the people with having trusted in lying words. Their assumptions of God were false. They thought they could stand up piously in the temple and formally present themselves before Jehovah and get indulgence to commit any sort of sin they wished. Such religious formality is a tissue of falsehoods. The basest sort of unbelief is that trust in oneself which attempts to make God a party to one's own sinful ways.

III. IMPORTANCE OF OBEDIENCE

Jeremiah 7: 21 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

22 For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:

23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

God did not promise the children of Israel that he would be with them and bless them if they would offer a prescribed number of sacrifices to him. In fact sacrifices were not of divine appointment at all, but became a part of the Hebrew ritual, by divine sanction, that the people might have types or symbols of the plan of God for their redemption. But with them as with many others since their day, the symbol came to be substituted for that which was symbolized, and hence terrible abuses crept in. Jeremiah urged the people to stop sacrificing and remember that God has promised his blessings to all who will obey his voice whether their sacrifices be few or abundant. It is the will to do the will of God that makes any service to him acceptable and of value.

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God's Law in the Heart

THE LESSON PILOT: May 20 to May 26

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What is meant by "Israel's Restoration"? (Mon.)
2. Why God's first covenant failed. (Tues.)
3. Can love be coerced? (Wed.)
4. Why the gospel is sufficient for faith. (Thurs.)
5. When is a hope groundless? (Fri.)
6. How the Bible shows us ourselves. (Sat.)
7. How to live a clean life. (Sun.)

What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. Is one saved for his father's goodness? (I)
2. Is one condemned for his father's sins? (I)
3. Why God had to make a new covenant. (II)
4. What led him to make it? (II)
5. Was the new covenant breakable? (III)
6. Why? (III)
7. What assurance is given by the covenant of grace? (III)

GOLDEN TEXT—*Thy word have I laid up in my heart, That I might not sin against thee.* Psalm 119: 11.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, MAY 20

Read Jeremiah 31: 1-9—ISRAEL'S RESTORATION
"Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel."

As a prophet of Jehovah, Jeremiah lived in advance of his times. He could not only see the tremendous evil of sin and foresee what wickedness would bring to the people, but he could also discern the promises and purposes of God regarding the chosen people. He predicted the captivity and the return from Babylon. But his vision swept the broader field of God's original purpose concerning all Israel, including the ten tribes of the north, now in captivity at Nineveh for more than a hundred years, as well as the two tribes composing the southern kingdom of Judah. Because his vision as to the future of God's purpose was based on God's ancient covenant with all the Israelites, it could not comprehend the restoration of Judah without that of Israel. Hence it was a spiritual rather than a national recovery which he foresaw. It was the continuation of the true Israel of God. Tribal peculiarities would not survive the restoration which would come: for the "watchmen on Mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion." All Israel would worship at Jerusalem, and toward the house of Jehovah would turn the faces of pilgrims and exiles. God will not forsake his people. When they forfeit his protection by their sin

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and disobedience, he will punish them until they are scattered over the earth, but he then gathers up the faithful fragments and remnants to constitute the personnel of his continuing kingdom.

Let us thank God that his elective grace assures us of his unfailing love and providences.

TUESDAY, MAY 21

Read Jeremiah 31: 31-37—GOD'S LAW IN THE HEART

"I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel."

The children of Israel had broken the covenant of promise which they had made with Jehovah and were therefore not entitled to receive the benefits of it. When one party to a contract violates its terms, the other is legally free from all obligations imposed by it. God's covenant was one of law, amplified in the code given by Moses. The Israelites were bound to Jehovah by the ties of legislation. The law was on them but in many instances and times it was not in them. Legislation cannot do more for any people than what their voluntary assent to its requirements makes possible. The law had failed to redeem the people. As a covenant it had failed because the people had not lived up to it. Yet God's love was unchangeable and his promise irrevocable. Since the old contract had proved ineffective, he would make another covenant, and a better one. Instead of being written

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on tables of stone, the new law would be engraved on the hearts of the people. The new covenant would be one of mercy, of pardon and forgiveness of sins. It would provide a remedy for the ills incurred by breaking the law. It was based therefore not on man's goodness but on God's grace, and for that reason it will be effectual.

Thank God that our salvation does not depend on our merits but on God's unchanging love and grace.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

Read Deuteronomy 8: 1-9—TEACHING THE SCRIPTURES
"That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God to keep all his statutes."

It was never the purpose of the divine law to redeem mankind. Abraham himself was a righteous man because he "believed God" and not because of his covenant with God. Circumcision was merely a sign or seal of the patriarch's loyalty to Jehovah in whom he had already put his trust. But the law was given that the people might have a righteous fear of Jehovah, and that through their obedience to his statutes they might be kept in fellowship with him. The commands of God began with the fundamental requirement of love. He wanted such obedience as was prompted by love for him. Such a love was, of course, to be single and absolute. It could not be a matter of law but of volition. No man can love God merely because he is required to do so. Love cannot be compelled, it has to be coaxed. It is a state of the mind and heart entirely. Yet it can be kept alive and active by fidelity to God in all things.

May we be constant students of the Bible that the fear of the Lord may be ever before our eyes.

THURSDAY, MAY 23

Read John 20: 30, 31—THE FAITH PRODUCING WORD
"These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ."

The gospels do not, of course, record all the words or miracles of Jesus. Paul in his farewell address to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20: 35), quoted a saying of Christ which does not appear in any

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of the gospels. Perhaps the greater part of his teachings and doings did not get to the record at all. But we have enough to convince us that Jesus was the Son of God. We have enough to constitute an adequate basis of faith. That which was not recorded was evidently in line with all that was written. The testimony concerning him is ineradicable even if it is not exhaustive. People who reject him in the face of such witnesses as the writers of the gospels, who were Christ's biographers, would not believe even though one should rise from the dead to proclaim the deity of Jesus. Because that which is revealed or recorded is true, faith accepts those things which were not made known and for which knowledge must wait until it becomes greater and more perfect. The whole purpose of the Bible is to reveal Jesus as the Christ and Saviour. It is sufficient for all candid minds.

May we build up our faith on the inerrant word of God.

FRIDAY, MAY 24

Read Romans 15: 8-13—THE HOPE INSPIRING WORD
"That ye may abound in hope through the Holy Ghost."

The coming of the Messiah was the hope of Israel. There was no chance for the seed of Abraham except through the personal intervention of the promised Seed. However, their Messianic hopes came to be centered around the Jewish national independence rather than in a blessing that was to be world wide. That was so because they had obtained their hope from their traditions instead of the promises of God to Abraham and the inspired prophetic writings concerning the Anointed One. A hope is unfounded that is not based on truth. Any unprejudiced understanding of the Old Testament forecasts of the Christ would certainly have led the Jews to see that their Messiah would be a world Redeemer instead of a world ruler, and that in him the Gentiles as well as themselves might entertain a well-grounded hope of the future. God had said to Abraham that in him "all nations would be blest." To look for an exclusively Jewish Messiah was as-

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surely inconsistent with the promise to the patriarch concerning him. Only a materialistic understanding could have distorted that statement.

May we who have a joyous hope in Christ be more concerned that others shall have it too.

SATURDAY, MAY 25

Read James 1: 19-27—THE SAVING WORD
"The engrafted word which is able to save your souls."

James is emphasizing practical righteousness and also the means by which it may be acquired. He inveighs against highmindedness on the part of any who are contentious for their opinions, whose "wrath worketh not the righteousness of God." But he urges that Christians divest themselves of all their self-conceived and superfluous baggage, and open their hearts to receive an insertion of the word which is salutary and beneficial. Of course it is not the word that saves except that it is the "power of God to all who believe." There is no salvation without it, for saving faith "cometh by the word of God." By means of the revealed truths we can come to know ourselves more perfectly, provided we apply them to ourselves. Unless we are doers of the word, it has not enough personal application to our case to bring us within the area of a correct understanding of our condition. We forget what sort of folk we are soon after we stop looking regularly into the word of God. We soon cease also to bridle our tongues and to show mercy and kindness to the widow and the fatherless in their afflictions.

May we find in the word not only the condition for the saving of our souls but the means also of saving our lives and labors.

SUNDAY, MAY 26

Read Psalm 119: 9-16—THE CLEANSING WORD
"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."

Jesus said to his disciples in his farewell address to them, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." But only those of their number who had seriously accepted his teachings were clean, because there was one unclean among them, Judas Is-

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cariot. How can one be pure in an atmosphere reeking with sin and defilement? By giving attention to himself and his ways according to the word of God. If he should govern himself by any other standard he would become polluted with the ways of the world, and would fall a victim to its snares and temptations. It must be a source of inward and constant instruction, a subject of delightful meditation and study. Cleanliness is absolutely necessary to avoid infections. There is no protection for the life unless the word of God is hidden in the heart, purifying the fountain from which the issue flows.

May we put to hear the word of God that out of a pure conscience we may live upright lives.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, May 26

Topic—God's Law in the Heart.
The Lesson Lesson—Jeremiah 31: 1-40; John 1: 17; Hebrews 8: 7-13.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. THE LAW OF HEREDITY ANNULLED

Jeremiah 31: 29 In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.
30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

It was a long time before God's people learned that both righteousness and wickedness were personal qualities. In fact, they did not learn it until the truth was revealed in Jesus Christ. The self-righteous Pharisees of Christ's day thought they inherited goodness from Abraham, their forefather, and that God's covenant with him insured their own salvation. But not so in the kingdom of Christ. Neither the iniquity nor the faith of the fathers is transferred to the children. Everyone must die for his own iniquity or be saved upon his own acceptance of the plan of salvation.

II. THE COVENANT OF LAW INSUFFICIENT

Jeremiah 31: 31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.

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32 Not according to the covenant that I made with thy fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:

The covenant of law which God made with the children of Israel when he took them out of the land of Egypt was not annulled by divorce grace, as was the law of heredity, but was broken by the people and was rendered ineffective by their disobedience to the terms of the contract. God therefore had to make a new covenant or else have no people at all in the earth. Although God's law and sovereignty had not been arbitrary nor despotic but exceedingly merciful, the people had forfeited the blessings promised them under the covenant. His love would not let them go. His foreordination brought into existence a new covenant whereby he might yet redeem his people.

III. THE GRACE OF GOD EFFECTUAL

Jeremiah 31: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel;

After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

John 1: 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The new covenant which God made was one which would never be broken by the people who accepted it. It is of grace instead of law. It is a matter of choice rather than compulsion on the part of individuals. Only those become a party to it who would have it written on their hearts. Jehovah would be God to those only who made voluntary choice of him. They would therefore never renounce their own decision. On the voluntary basis, rather than that of law, there is assurance of the ultimate triumph of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ.

Later Experiences of Jeremiah

THE LESSON PILOT: May 27 to June 2

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What Jeremiah preached at the dump heaps. (Mon.)
2. To whom is God's word objectionable? (Tues.)
3. Why Zedekiah refused Jeremiah's advice. (Wed.)
4. Why Daniel's persecutors were punished. (Thur.)
5. Why Christians can be happy in trouble. (Fri.)
6. How persecutions spread the gospel. (Sat.)
7. When are persecutions a blessing? (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.* Matthew 5: 11.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, MAY 27

Read *Jeremiah 20: 1-6*—LATER EXPERIENCES OF JEREMIAH

"Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet and put him in the stocks."

Under a conviction of sin, people will either repent or revolt. Summoning the elders and people to meet in the valley

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of Tophet, the dumping ground where the garbage of Jerusalem was gathered and burnt, Jeremiah proclaimed to them the full character of their sins and the impending judgments of God upon them in consequence thereof. He must have chosen Tophet as the meeting place because its very environment corresponded to the filth and iniquity of their

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hearts. On hearing what Jeremiah had said, Pashur the ruling priest at the time unlawfully smote him and thrust him in the stocks, indignant because the prophet had predicted the downfall of the country. He was unwilling to turn from his sins, and hence sought to disparage Jeremiah's prophecy by insulting and humiliating him. However, on the following day, he had the prophet released from the stocks, evidently because he alone had been responsible for his imprisonment and the other elders and judges had not been taken in council on the case. But with his release from the stocks, Jeremiah let loose a flood of rebuke for Pashur, predicting that he would go with the captivity into Babylon and would die there. Instead of suppressing Jeremiah Pashur had merely succeeded in provoking the prophet to restate his prophecy with additional emphasis.

May we be all the more insistent in giving God's word to those who abuse us for it.

TUESDAY, MAY 28

Read *Jeremiah 38: 1-6*—JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON

"They took Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon."

From time immemorial time-serving leaders have spurned the messages of men who did not "prophecy good concerning them but evil." Any discordant note is considered a "monkey wrench in the machinery." A prediction of failure is regarded as an indication of weakness and tends strongly to demoralization. Jeremiah over and over again had pronounced the judgments of God on the people of Judah, predicting their overthrow and captivity. The impatient leaders became desperate. They could no longer permit the prophet to go at large. He was "weakening the hands of the men of war that remained in the city." King Zedekiah evidently feared the prophet too much to take an initiative in doing away with him, but very readily consented to the decree proposed by his priests that Jeremiah should be cast into an old deserted dungeon and left to die there of exposure and starvation. But

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as Jeremiah was being lowered into the pit the honor and integrity of Judah sank in the mire with him. They thus thought to rid themselves of him without dipping their hands in his blood.

May we never raise hand or voice against a prophet of the Lord merely because his words do not suit our fancy.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

Read *Jeremiah 38: 14-23*—ZEDEKIAH'S INTERVIEW WITH JEREMIAH

"The king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me."

At the time of Zedekiah, Judah was vassal to the Chaldeans, but had failed to pay the required tribute and was under siege by the armies of the sovereign power. King Zedekiah realizes his extremity and seeks the advice of the prophet who had been condemned to death by his counsellors and cast into the dungeon to die. He secretly has him taken out that he might consult him. Jeremiah will not tell him what God says concerning him until he is assured that his life will be spared. He then pleads with the king to "go forth to the princes," who were in the field against him and make the best terms he can, and it will be well with him. He must do so, says Jehovah, or else the destruction of the city can not be averted. But Zedekiah is afraid that the Jews who had already gone over to the Chaldeans would laugh at him if he should now become a humble suppliant upon the mercies of the besiegers because he had boastfully claimed that he could hold out against them. In making terms with them he would therefore have had to reverse and humble himself.

May we practice such submission to the will of God that we shall win the favor of all who are against us.

THURSDAY, MAY 30

Read *Daniel 6: 1-6*—DANIEL PERSECUTED
"The presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel."

Envy is one of the most diabolical sins. Out of it will come lying, deception, conspiracy, hypocrisy and murder. Because king Darius meant to make Daniel his premier and thus place him at the head of his government above the satraps and governors who had been the

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prophet's peers, they formed a conspiracy to bring about his undoing. But in every thing his record was clear. They acknowledged they could never get a case against him unless they might do so on account of his religion. He was a devout worshipper of Jehovah and prayed three times every day with his window open toward Jerusalem. Their scheme was to have king Darius make a decree that for thirty days no one in his realm should worship any god but the king himself, ostensibly as a mark of special respect and loyalty to the king, knowing that Daniel, in his integrity of heart, would violate the decree in observing his custom of praying to Jehovah. It was not only a dark conspiracy against Daniel, but an act of disloyalty to their king, in seeking to make him the puppet of their wicked ambitions. He himself later detected the treachery of their act, and the lions' mouths which were shut against Daniel were opened to devour them.

May we always remember that in being true to God we can be false to no man.

FRIDAY, MAY 31

Read Acts 5: 23-42—THE APOSTLES PERSECUTED
 "They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

When we are called upon to suffer any sort of hardship for Christ, there is always a peace in our hearts which surpasses any mental anguish which is endured. The greater such sufferings are the more abundant is the joy that accompanies them. The world does not understand such happiness. To one who does not know the secret of it, it appears to be fanaticism. The apostles in Jerusalem had been forbidden time and again to preach the doctrine of Christ. But Peter boldly told the Jewish council that he would obey God rather than men. They wanted to kill him, and secretly started a plot to murder him. Gamaliel, a member of the council, knowing what they had in mind, called for an executive session of the council and advocated toleration on the ground that if the apostles' doctrine was not of God, it would fall of its own weight; but if it were of God the Sanhedrin

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could not afford to go on record as opposing God. So they were let off with a beating. But the disgrace of being flogged was eclipsed in their hearts by the joy of suffering shame for Christ.

In the midst of our severest trials, may we hear Jesus speaking to us most plainly, "Peace be unto you."

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

Read Acts 8: 1-8—THE EARLY CHURCH PERSECUTED

"They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."

When believers became very numerous in Jerusalem, the Jews became alarmed for the preservation of their traditions and institutions. They had lost vast numbers to the Christian faith. But a strong powerful church was not to be built up at Jerusalem. It would have become too Jewish. Converts from Judaism could do better elsewhere, among non-Jewish people. The Christians themselves needed to get out. They were fledglings no longer, and God allowed a swift and merciless persecution to stir up their nest and compel them to use their wings in flight. Stephen, one of the seven had been killed already; and Philip, another of the seven, had evidently been marked for the slaughter. His flight from Jerusalem brought the gospel into Samaria, and the refugees from Judea carried the word into Syria and Asia and became the centers of an evangelism which was soon to take on a world wide aspect.

Wherever either or own choice or the force of circumstances may place us, may we steadfastly witness for Christ.

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

Read Matthew 5: 3: 11—PERSECUTED FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Has this beatitude any application to us who live in a land of religious freedom? We can worship as our consciences dictate. But under the prevailing sentiments of evil, we will suffer for righteousness' sake if we take a positive stand for Christ. There is no merit in posing as a martyr or in courting opposition in order to capitalize it for one's own advantage or renown. There is no blessing in being persecuted

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for persecution's sake but for righteousness' sake. Even then, and only then, can the sufferer endure his tribulations patiently who bears naught but love toward those who do him wrong. What is the estate of such sufferers? "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." They not only belong to the kingdom but it also belongs to them. Its privileges, hopes and joys are all theirs.

May we so live that wherever we go, there the kingdom of heaven will be.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, June 2

Topic—Later Experiences of Jeremiah.
 THE LASKAR LESSON—Jeremiah 20: 1-6; 37: 1-38; 38: 1-7.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. CONDEMNED BY THE PRINCES

Jeremiah 38: 4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

5 Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you.

6 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

The princes of Judah regarded Jeremiah as a menace to the kingdom because he did not fall in with their notions and plans but had predicted its overthrow if the people would not repent of their sins. His powerful preaching had weakened the morale of some of the strongest men of war that remained in Jerusalem who had become convinced that the prophet was right and that what they needed to do was to turn to God instead of depending upon their own swords to save them. But the princes were not inclined toward a policy of repentance but persisted in a course of forcible resistance. So they decreed that Jeremiah should be put to death, and at their wishes, king Zedekiah had the prophet lowered into a dungeon to die.

II. REMEMBERED BY A EUNUCH

Jeremiah 38: 7 Now when Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the

king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin;

8 Ebedmelech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city.

There was more kindness in the heart of the foreigner, an Ethiopian eunuch belonging to the king's court, than there was in the hearts of Jeremiah's own countrymen toward him. The eunuch, like the good Samaritan, took the part of a friend, and risked his own reputation and life to save the life of one who was the victim of treachery. He was aware that the prophet's words of warning were right because, as purveyor of the king's household, he had to inform his majesty that the bread supply of the city was already exhausted.

III. REPRIVED BY THE KING

Jeremiah 38: 10 Then the king commanded Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

11 So Ebedmelech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.

12 And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.

13 So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

Zedekiah was a vacillating ruler, without strong personal convictions of duty. At the demand of the princes, he had put Jeremiah into the dungeon, but at the request of his private secretary, he took him out. But after his reprieve of Jeremiah's sentence, he was careful to keep him hidden in the courts of the Lord's house from the eyes of the princes, and to consult the prophet himself if there might yet be some more acceptable word from him. However, Jeremiah had no new message from God for Zedekiah: he must either humble himself before God and the Chaldeans, or else suffer the loss of his kingdom.

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The Story of the Rechabites

THE LESSON PILOT: June 3 to June 9

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. How long had the Rechabites been total abstainers? (Mon.)
2. What lesson to Judah from their fidelity? (Tues.)
3. Why is liquor a cause of poverty? (Wed.)
4. How intemperance produces sorrow. (Thur.)
5. What is the cure for the drink habit? (Fri.)
6. Any hope for drunkards, as such? (Sat.)
7. When does God deliver men? (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*We will drink no wine.* Jeremiah 35: 6.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, JUNE 3

Read Jeremiah 35: 1-11—THE STORY OF THE RECHABITES

"But they said, We will drink no wine."

Originally the Rechabites were Kenites who were of the posterity of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law who accompanied the children of Israel into the land of Canaan by special request of Moses. They were not numbered among the Israelites and lived a separate and nomadic life. The son, or lineal descendant, of Rechab, by whose name the family was called, was Jonadab, famous for his piety in his day, whose precepts his children faithfully observed. Jonadab lived 300 years before the days of Jeremiah, and for all this time, his descendants had kept sacred his command to abstain from wine and to live the separate and simple life. Although they were offered wine by no less a person than Jeremiah, the prophet of Jehovah, they refused it. God's purpose in this was to give them opportunity to register their fidelity on the records of God's own people. And if the people who are not of Israel find it in their hearts to maintain such integrity, shame on the people of God that they should do less.

May we be as faithful in practicing temperance as a moral principle as any others may be in observing it as a social policy.

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. Why Jeremiah offered the Rechabites wine. (I)
2. What did they say to him? (I)
3. Why the Rechabites planted no vineyards. (II)
4. Where is the place to stop whiskey legally? (II)
5. Who is worse, the distiller or the drunkard? (II)
6. Why the Rechabites lived a separate life? (III)
7. Why were they in the city, then? (III)

TUESDAY, JUNE 4

Read Jeremiah 35: 12-18—JUDAH COMPARED WITH THE RECHABITES

"Go and tell the men of Judah."

Jeremiah used the example of the Rechabites as a severe rebuke to the rebellious people of Judah. The Rechabites for 300 years had kept the command of their earthly father; but the people of Judah had ruthlessly forsaken the laws of Jehovah, the Most High God. The Rechabites had not had the services of special agencies to remind them of Jonadab's commands or to urge them to remember their duty to obey them. Whereas God had repeatedly sent his prophets to urge the people of Judah not to forget Jehovah but to listen to his words. How faithful the Rechabites had been, and were still! But how faithless Judah had been and how degenerate even yet! With mighty blows, the fearless prophet of God lays the parallel on the hearts of the people of Jerusalem and Judah in an urgent appeal that they turn to God.

May we have that sobriety which will stand the tests of true piety and religión.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

Read Proverbs 23: 15-25—INTEMPERANCE AND POVERTY

"The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty."

How often have we seen this fact demonstrated! The history of drink is a tale of misery and woe, of broken hearts and wasted fortunes, of prema-

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ture deaths and drunkards' graves! Nothing good has been produced by strong drink. Only evil can come of it. There was never a greater economic lie than that which proclaims the right of the poor laborer to his drink. It can only make him poorer, and lower his efficiency and productiveness as a laborer. Even the rich who indulge in contraband high grade liquors are placing their fortunes in the waste basket with their cancelled checks. The immense wealth of the United States people today is due to national prohibition more than to any other single cause. Business men of integrity know this, and whatever may be their religious scruples as to temperance they are opposed to whiskey for economic reasons. And when the poorest man in any community makes himself poorer, he is helping to deplete the wealth of the community.

May our convictions as to temperance be strengthened by what we know would be the results of intemperance.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6

Read Proverbs 23: 26-35—INTEMPERANCE AND SORROW

"Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?"

How varied, how many and how poignant are the sorrows produced by strong drink? There is hardly a woe that is not either caused or increased by it. It is often made the servant of a depraved nature but it always deepens depravity. Its accumulations are all on the loss side. Its promises are never fulfilled, and the hopes which it begets are the imaginings of a distorted brain. Disappointments are in its train. Despair follows its hopes. Sorrow is in the wake of its enjoyments. It leads to lewdness and dissipation. It lowers the bars, which are none too high anyhow, and turns out every evil inclination in the heart of man. It enslaves the will and fastens its coils around the nobler impulses of one's nature. It begets wounds without a cause, and contentions and fights even with a man's own best friend. The poison of the adder is in the cup.

May we not only abstain from strong drink but seek to free everyone of its victims from its power.

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FRIDAY, JUNE 7

Read Ephesians 5: 15-21—INTEMPERANCE FORBIDDEN

"Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

Paul here states one thing over against its opposite. The filling of wine and the infilling of the Spirit are antipodes. The spiritual is contrary to the spiritual. No man can be filled with both wine and the Spirit. The remedy for intemperance is the presence of the Spirit in the heart, for "out of the heart are the issues of life." The grace of God is the cure of every evil with which mankind is beset. More and more the religious side of the temperance cause must be emphasized. Much of the present public sentiment against prohibition is due to the lapse of those who favored it solely for its economic or social advantages. No conviction sticks like that which has its anchorage in the heart occupied by the Spirit of God.

May we be so filled with the Spirit that there shall be no room in us for strong drink.

SATURDAY, JUNE 8

Read 1 Corinthians 6: 1-11—THE DRUNKARD'S HOPE

"Nor drunkards . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Paul is rebuking the church members at Corinth for going to law with one another before judges who are unbelievers, instead of either adjusting their differences privately or else having them settled before a council of the church. What hope could they have of getting a right adjustment before sinners? Men who are unjust, dishonest, intemperate and immoral are not going to adjudicate righteously if they can help it. They do not belong to the kingdom of heaven, and why should the citizens of the kingdom appeal to them for justice! Foolish, says Paul. What hope is there of reform as long as Christian people leave the problems of law enforcement in the hands of officials who patronize the bootlegger? And what hope has the drunkard for himself, both for the present and the future?

May we not regard prohibition as a joke but as a means of rescue for millions who would otherwise perish.

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SUNDAY, JUNE 9

Read Psalm 107: 1-9—JEHOVAH DELIVERS MEN
"He delivered them out of their distress."

The singer recalls the wilderness wanderings of the children of Israel as an example of the providential care and goodness of God. Memorable indeed were the instances in which Jehovah by the direct intervention of his power saved them from their enemies and from thirst and hunger. But they "cried unto him." He delivers those who call upon him for help, and who depend upon him to deliver them. We must not rely upon our own strategy even in our efforts to do good to people. Our reforms will fall flat unless God gives the victory. Legislation alone will never solve the liquor problem. Men must be delivered from the power of the devil by the Lord Christ. Some of the worst drunkards who ever staggered the streets have been changed by his grace into flaming evangelists of the gospel or eloquent advocates of righteousness.

May we look to God for success in our efforts to stay the curse of intemperance in our midst.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, June 9

TOPIC—The Story of the Rechabites.
THE LARGER LESSON—Jeremiah 35: 1-19.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. FORBIDDEN TO DRINK WINE

Jeremiah 35: 5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever:

When Jeremiah set wine before the Rechabites, as a test of their loyalty to the command of their father Jonadab, and as an example to his own rebellious people of Judah, they declined and stated the reason why they would not drink. It was a matter of scruple with them. They knew how to say "No" when wine was offered them. How much courage it took, we do not know. They had become so well entrenched in their

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habit of abstinence that they could say it with all ease. But since it was God's prophet who seemed to sanction their taking it, it was no little thing they did to refuse it.

II. FORBIDDEN TO RAISE GRAPES

Jeremiah 35: 7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents: that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers.

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; 9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

The Rechabites had been enjoined by their ancestors from planting vineyards and raising grapes, from which they would certainly have made wine; and had they made it, they would have drunk it. The place to stop whiskey legally is before it comes from the still. The making of liquors is worse than the drinking. There is usually greater sin and iniquity in it. The man who drinks it may be simply weak, but the man who profits, or tries to profit, from the making of it is mean enough to turn his neighbor's blood into his own bank account.

III. COMMANDED TO LIVE THE SEPARATE LIFE

Jeremiah 35: 10 But we have dwelt in tents and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

What was the purpose in Jonadab's command that his children live as a family apart from the Israelites and from all other peoples, without cities and without agricultural interests? In order that they might preserve the canons of their ancestral laws and remain a people unto themselves. They were in Jerusalem when Jeremiah offered them the wine, but dwell there temporarily, as they said, to escape the bands of Chaldeans and Syrians that roamed victoriously over the country at the time.

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Judah Taken Captive

THE LESSON PILOT: June 10 to June 12

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What was Judah's original standing among the tribes? (Mon.)
2. Why rebellious Judah was worse than heathen Amorites? (Tues.)
3. What warnings had Judah spurned? (Wed.)
4. Why Cyrus fostered the return to Jerusalem. (Thur.)
5. Who make the best citizens? (Fri.)
6. Why rulers are to be respected. (Sat.)
7. When are afflictions God's punishment for sin? (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*Righteousness exalteth a nation; But sin is a reproach to any people.* Proverbs 14: 34.

DAILY READINGS

Read Judges 1: 1.—JUDAH'S EARLY STRENGTH
"The Lord said, Judah shall go up; behold, I have delivered the land into his hand."

Judah was perhaps the strongest of the twelve tribes of Israel, both in numbers and in moral strength. To this tribe Caleb belonged, whose spirit of faith and courage was more or less typical of his people, although he was an outstanding personality among them. After the death of Joshua, there remained some powerful tribes of Canaanites and Perizzites dwelling in the strongholds of the mountains and valleys. The question arose as to which of the tribes ought to lead the campaign against them. On inquiring of the Lord, they were told that Judah should go against them because the Lord had already delivered that portion of the land into his hand. Judah's strength was shown both in looking to Jehovah for instructions and in carrying them out after they had been given. The tribe of Simeon was invited to join with Judah in the campaign and did so. But it was Judah's conquest. The Canaanites were utterly routed, having lost in one pitched battle ten thousand men. They captured the king and, according to the custom which the king himself had practiced with kings whom he had captured, cut off his thumbs and big toes. The king recognized divine retribution in meeting such a fate, because he had conquered no less than seventy petty kings

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. How long was Jerusalem besieged? (I)
2. Why was it besieged? (I)
3. Why did the city finally fall? (II)
4. What became of Zedekiah's army? (II)
5. What became of Zedekiah? (II)
6. Why the Babylonians destroyed the city. (III)
7. Who only were left, and why? (III)

and no less than seventy kings had lost their thumbs and big toes at his command.

May we go where God calls, knowing that his call is our honor and that such honor is our success.

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

Read 2 Kings 21: 10-15.—JUDAH WARNED
"I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth it, both his ears shall tingle."

Although Manasseh was the son of good king Hezekiah, he did not at first profit by the good example of his father but practiced all the abominations known to the rituals of idolatrous worship. He was even more wicked than the Amorites, because his sin was not only that of doing evil but also that of despising the light he had. There are none so low as those who make the descent from exalted privileges. He is warned by the prophets of Jehovah, perhaps both Isaiah and Amos, that God's punishment will be as severe as Judah's wickedness is reprehensible. The penalty must correspond to the guilt. Ears that are shocked to hear of their transgressions will tingle to hear of their retribution. Jerusalem will be wiped, as a man wipe a dish—scrubbed on both sides. A few years later Manasseh became tributary to Essar-haddon and was carried captive to Babylon; but upon his repentance he was restored. The prophets, in their denunciations of him and the wickedness of his reign,

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threatened the vengeance of God only on condition he did not repent.

May the warnings of God's word not only bring us back from our wanderings but lead us in the way we should go.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

Read 2 Kings 25: 1-12—JUDAH TAKEN CAPTIVE
"The city was broken up, and all the men of war fled."

It was in the year 587 B.C., that Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldean armies, and the monarchy of Judah ended. There had been conquests of the country before this, and the kings of Judah had been subject to Babylonian supremacy; but not until now, after repeated revolts against the Chaldean throne by the kings of Judah, was the city completely destroyed. It had been predicted by all the prophets of Jehovah unless the people would repent of their sins and turn to God. But "wiseacres" among them thought that Jerusalem, which had stood so long, could never be destroyed; and, furthermore, they did not see any relation between the worship of Jehovah and their victory against invaders; for they must have thought that "God fights on the side of the heaviest battalions" or "that he will take care of those who take care of themselves." At any rate they trusted in themselves and whatever military force they could command from time to time. The Babylonians, after besieging Jerusalem for two years, captured it, putting to flight the warriors of Judah and seizing king Zedekiah and his sons, first slew his sons before his eyes, and then, that he might linger upon that look, put his eyes out. The Babylonian general burnt everything in Jerusalem which he had to leave behind: taking with him to Babylon the captive king, and the portable metals of value from the temple and the king's palaces.

May we remember that God's wrath is only the exhaust of his love but that it is then as great as his love had been.

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

Read Ezra 1: 1-11—JERUSALEM REBUILT
"He hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem."

When Cyrus, 536 B.C., became ruler in Babylon, upon the fall of Belshazzar, the Jews had been in captivity for about

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seventy years. During all this time, they had not become absorbed, by inter-marriages with the Babylonians, into the local population. They were still foreigners in a strange land. Cyrus was statesman and diplomat enough to see that it was best that as many of the Jews as wanted to go back to their native land should be encouraged to do so, because they would be worth more as his subjects happy in their own country than miserable and mournful in Babylon. It was according to the prophecy of Jeremiah that it should be the case, but Cyrus was the unconscious agent of the divine purpose concerning Jerusalem. Of course, under a restoration authorized by the Persian king, Judah would be a province of Persia, yet the Jews would be invested with full religious liberty, and, in fact, encouraged and aided by their monarch in restoring the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem. All the precious metals and vessels which the Babylonians had carried to Babylon were placed at the disposal of the returning exiles, and besides vast sums were contributed by the people themselves for the expenses of the return and restoration.

May we accept all our recoveries as opportunities to serve God better.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

Read Matthew 22: 15-22—PIETY AND PATRIOTISM
"Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

In being loyal to God, no man can be untrue to his fellowmen. The Jews could render to their Persian king no greater service than to serve God faithfully and devoutly. Jesus himself taught the principle that loyalty to both God and the king was a duty and that neither was in conflict with the other. He was accused of being a disloyal citizen because his critics did not approve his sort of fealty to God. They censured his politics for religious reasons. And it sometimes happens that a man's religion is criticized for political purposes. Both are inexcusable and wrong. The most pious people are certainly the best citizens. Every state or commonwealth should encourage the worship of God among its people, even in its own political interests.

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May we be so faithful to God that we shall fail not in any obligation to our country.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

Read Romans 13: 1-7—RULERS ORDAINED OF GOD
"The powers that be are ordained of God."

Government is a universal order. It is not an ordinance of Christianity, yet God is its author and Christians are bound by its conditions and regulations. It exists even where its Giver is unknown. In this respect, it is closely allied with marriage which is a universal ordinance of God and which is essentially a civil contract between a man and a woman. Even where rulers are not God-fearing men, respect is due them because of their position as servants of the common interests under a divine provision. Governments may exist in various forms, and be used or abused in many ways, yet their existence is necessary to the preservation of the social order. There have been, and are now, men in power who employ it selfishly and despotically, but that is no argument against government but against the individuals who misapply their authority. While others may respect their governors from patriotic motives, Christians should do so for conscience' sake.

May we be good enough as Christians that we shall be good citizens.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16

Read Psalm 107: 10-16—SAVED FROM AFFLICTION
"He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death."

How true it is that God chastises his people for their transgressions. His love guarantees them correction when they need it. But he never inflicts heavy penalties without having given his children due warning of what he will do if they disobey him. Not all the afflictions of God's children are to be considered as his chastisement for sin, but where there is suffering in consequence of wrong doing, against which the heavenly Father has repeatedly warned us, we may, indeed, know that we are under his chastening rod. But even then, he can bring us back from any captivity into which he has sent us. He can raise us up from any depths into which he has cast us down. He can release us

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from the shackles with which he has permitted us to be bound. And he will do so the first moment the purposes of our chastisement shall have been fulfilled.

May we "despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of him."

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, June 16

TOPIC—Judah Taken Captive.
THE LARGER LESSON—2 Kings 25: 1-21.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. JERUSALEM BESIEGED

2 Kings 25: 1 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

3 And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.

One of the most effective methods of capturing a city in ancient times was to besiege it and starve the people into submission. For two years Jerusalem was surrounded by the Babylonian army so that there was no going in nor coming out of the city. Of course, its food supplies could not stand such a siege. Zedekiah had revolted against the government of Babylon in refusing to pay the tribute exacted of him as a vassal, and the army of Nebuchadnezzar had come to make a finish of the monarchy of Judah.

II. JERUSALEM FALLEN

2 Kings 25: 4 And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about;) and the king went the way toward the plain.

5 And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him.

6 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

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When "there was no bread for the people of the land," their downfall was at hand. Deprived of supplies no army can wage either an aggressive or a defensive warfare. Zedekiah's forces fled the city of Jerusalem, leaving it into the hands of the victorious besiegers. But the Chaldeans pursued the fleeing men of Judah demoralizing them completely and capturing Zedekiah and his sons whom they carried to Riblah, where the king of Babylon himself was, to be tried, or court martialed. His sons were slain before his eyes, and then his eyes were immediately gouged out. He was bound in fetters of brass and carried to Babylon.

III. JERUSALEM DESTROYED

8 Kings 25: 8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

9 And he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusa-

lem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away.

12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

Nebuchadnezzar's purpose was to destroy Jerusalem entirely, and leave nothing of the former dynasty or its constituency in the land. Any recovery might mean new trouble for him. His policy was to have no vassal in Judah rather than one which would not acknowledge his supremacy. So the city was laid waste, the gold and silver reduced to bullion and carried to Babylon, the vessels of the temple being carried intact to be used in the idol temples of Babylon. Only the poor people, who could develop no resistance, were left in the land to take care of the vineyards.

A Psalm of Praise

THE LESSON PILOT: June 17 to June 23

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. Of what is praise to God an acknowledgment? (Mon.)
2. By whom is God praised? (Tues.)
3. Why David knew God could be trusted. (Wed.)
4. Of what were Christ's miracles a continuation? (Thur.)
5. What is the surest defense? (Fri.)
6. Why praise God through Christ. (Sat.)
7. Who can see God in the sea? (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—Bless Jehovah.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, JUNE 17

Read Psalm 108: 1-12—PRAISES FOR MERCIES
"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Praise to God for his mercies is highly becoming in his people. It can never be adequate nor commensurate with the blessings received. But the sense of gratitude should be so profound that one feels the need to call upon his soul to speak out of its depths words of praise which the mind can not formul-

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. What is God's greatest benefit? (I)
2. What other blessings does he give? (I)
3. Why God's acts are official. (II)
4. Give two instances of them. (II)
5. To whom is God's grace limited? (III)
6. Why? (III)
7. What else, besides his grace, is infinite? (III)

O my soul. Psalm 103: 1.

ate nor the lips express. The more nearly one rightly appreciates the mercies of God the less able he finds himself to offer what to him is a suitable and satisfactory tribute of praise to the Giver. We have all received unmerited favors from God, and to thank him for them is to make a sincere acknowledgment of his grace and of our dependence upon his love and bounty. Gratitude to him therefore reacts healthfully upon the heart that has it. Ingratitude is base and is debasing. Since the Lord has

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given us infinitely more than even the best and most capable of our friends could supply, and so much more than we could acquire ourselves, how heartily we should praise him! For our bodily needs he has made provision. For our spiritual wants he offers an unwasted supply. When we are afflicted, we are either under his fatherly chastisement or else he is giving us opportunity to prove our faith and offer a testimony to his praise.

Whatever may be our lot or circumstances in life, may we see in them those things for which we should praise the Lord.

TUESDAY, JUNE 18

Read Psalm 103: 13-22—UNIVERSAL PRAISE

"Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts."

How many reasons there are why we should praise the Lord! His love for us is like, although far superior to, that of a father for his children. He knows our frame and understands our feebleness and short comings; and looks upon us with pity rather than scorn and with love instead of contempt. The inspired imagination of the psalmist perceives God as the divine lover of unworthy and sinful men whose life is as feeble as the grass of the field that is dried up by the hot winds. Nevertheless his mercy endures from generation to generation. It does not fail because man perishes, but spans the generations with its everlastingness. However, his special providences and mercies are limited to "such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." He loves all without regard to their attitude toward him but his mercies cannot go where they are rejected. His sovereignty is universal; he "ruleth over all." Either by direct or by indirect power, he controls the affairs and destinies of men. Therefore his praise should be as extensive as his dominion. "All authority and power" have been given to Christ Jesus, and to him as King of kings and Lord of lords supreme allegiance should be given and endless praises ascribed.

May we praise our Lord by a faithful obedience to his will and commands.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19

Read 2 Samuel 22: 1-7—A WORTHY GOD

"I will call on the Lord who is worthy to be praised."

David narrowly escaped death at the hands of one of the Philistine giants with whom he had a personal encounter; in fact, he was given up for dead. Upon his recovery, however, he recounted the instances in which his life had been spared and wrote a song of thanksgiving to God for having preserved him. His psalm abounds in the imagery of the wilderness in which he had received such marvelous mercies from Jehovah. God is his "rock," in which he is sheltered from the dangers that rained above his head. God is his "shield" behind which he is protected from the shower of darts hurled against him. He had proved the goodness of God. From varied and numerous experiences he had come to know that Jehovah is a safe and reliable help. He had prayed and God had answered. He knew his prayers had been heard by the Lord, else he could never have escaped death. Nothing less than divine power could have kept him alive. Since he had prayed the Lord to deliver him, and because he had been delivered when no man could help him, he concluded that it was certainly Jehovah who had preserved him, and Jehovah only.

May our experiences of God's goodness confirm our faith in him and lead us to trust him more implicitly.

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Read Isaiah 25: 1-8—A WONDER-WORKING GOD
"Thou hast done wonderful things."

All through the centuries God has performed miracles. Those which Jesus did were a continuation of the works of God from the beginning. To deny the miracles of Jesus, one would have to reject the whole biblical story. The very works of Jehovah establish the fact of his supreme power and goodness. Always his doings are beneficent. They are not mere exhibitions of force. The power they display is that of mercy to his people. Cities are razed only when they cease to be worthy of an existence and when the people have to witness the might of Jehovah before they will take due account of him. He is a "strength to

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the poor" and a "refuge from the storm" to those who seek him. He is a sheltering booth over the heads of the feeble who faint because of the heat. The high and mighty are brought low by his arm and the "blast of the terrible ones" is as harmless as the wind against a stone wall. By his power, he tears away "the covering cast over all people," by which the world is shrouded in darkness and ignorance, and brings "life and immortality to light" so that death is swallowed up in victory.

Thou alone, O God, art mighty to save, whose wondrous works ever bespeak thy praise.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Read Isaiah 26: 1-10—A SONG OF TRUST
"Trust ye in the Lord forever."

How easy and natural it is for us to trust in ourselves and, in our sense of self-sufficiency, to forget God! But as we fix our confidence in him, our own self esteem declines. However, we do not think less of ourselves than we ought to think, but we think "soberly." The truly right mind is that which depends upon God for understanding and wisdom. Isaiah says that the sort of wall with which Judah is to be surrounded is the "salvation" which God has appointed for her bulwarks. Is there any more effective defense for any life than piety and godliness? Men believe in the man who believes in God. He who trusts Christ can be trusted. He who lives the Christ life is inoffensive and even the most cruel and wicked are bound to respect his integrity and goodness. Moreover such a one is under the direct and immediate providences of God. The Lord will not suffer him to go far out of the way nor fall a victim to damaging influences. What peace of mind and heart is his who trusts the Lord in every thing! He can not be put to shame nor be robbed of his confidence, for God never fails him. The greater his distress may be at any time the closer God comes to him, and the sweeter his joy and peace become on that account.

O thou Jehovah, keep our minds stayed on thee and keep us in perfect peace.

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SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Read Hebrews 13: 7-17—PRAISE THROUGH CHRIST
"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

The eternity of Christ Jesus is credible along with his deity. He is pre-existent and eternal. He said, "Before Abraham was, I am." The tense of his life is present, because he is eternal. Only in his humanity can we ever speak of him in the past tense. God's greatest act of love was that of sending his own Son to save lost men. The incarnation is the supreme miracle of the ages. The virgin birth of Jesus was and is and will ever be without precedent or parallel. By his humiliation and suffering he became our high priest by whom we approach God for our salvation, who has offered himself for the atonement of our sins. Since it is through him we receive the grace of God, we should through him offer praise to God for that grace. The Channel by which we receive the blessing should also convey our thanks therefor. No praise is acceptable to God which does not come by way of Christ. No service is pleasing to him which is not done in Christ's name. It is through him we seek a city to come. It is unto him that we submit to those who have the rule over us. Doing all things unto him, and by him, we praise God through him.

May we offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually through Jesus Christ our Mediator.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Read Psalm 107: 23-31—SEE JEHOVAH IN THE SEA
"These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep."

Men can see only what they have the eyes to behold. Yet there are certain terrestrial conditions which manifest the divine power more visibly than others. The singer here describes the movements of the great seas as activities of God's power. And indeed those who traverse the oceans are made to witness a supernatural force, even if they regard the scenes of the seas as those of nature. But nature sometimes takes on a supernatural aspect, if the light of the supernatural is in the heart of the beholder. The great waves are

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caused by the winds. But what causes the winds? Jehovah, says the singer. There has to be a Primal Cause. In the midst of the storm the sailors despair of life and cry unto the Lord. And many have been the occasions when in the niche of time the change came and he who "rides upon the wings of the wind" has settled the trouble on the sea.

As we behold the beauties and wonders of nature, may we see in them the love and power of God.

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, June 23

TOTC—A Psalm of Praise.
THE LARGER LESSON—Psalm 103: 1-22.

Lesson Text and Comment

I. GOD'S PERSONAL BLESSINGS

Psalm 103: Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

What are the greatest benefits God confers on men, for which we should be most profoundly grateful? His blessings are very personal. He is as careful of your individual welfare as if you were the only person in the universe upon whom he could bestow his thought. His greatest blessing is the forgiveness of our sins and iniquities. Jehovah is the only deity to whom is attributed the power to forgive sin. Then there are many other good things he gives, such as health and the things needful for our bodies which by his grace, even in old age, may be renewed as the eagles at an advanced age are said to moult and become young again.

II. GOD'S OFFICIAL MERCIES

Psalm 103: 4 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

God is sovereign and many of his providences are official acts. "He executeth righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed" taking sides with the innocent victims of human intrigue and treachery. To the children of Israel his ways were made known through Moses. He is a merciful sovereign "slow to anger and plenteous in mercy." His official acts toward his own redeemed children are those of a Father who chides them for their waywardness but holds no grudge nor anger against them.

III. GOD'S FORGIVING GRACE

Psalm 103: 10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

What infinite forgiveness there is with God! What mercy! that he does not deal with us "after our sins," but his doings are all of his own grace. Though we are full of iniquity, he does not punish us according to the measure of our ill deserts. His mercy is as infinite as the heavens are high above the earth. But always, his grace is limited to "those that fear him." They alone occupy that attitude toward him which faces the love side of his nature. Not only is his mercy infinitely great, but infinitely great also is the distance at which he puts our sins away from us, "as far as east is from west." His pity toward those who fear him may be dimly comprehended by comparison with the pity a father has for his own tender, trustful and dependent little ones.

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Review: Prophets and Kings of Judah's Decline

THE LESSON PILOT: June 24 to June 30

What to Find in the Daily Readings:

1. What Isaiah under inspiration saw. (Mon.)
2. The best reputation one can have. (Tues.)
3. Old Testament types of Christ. (Wed.)
4. What two sins had Judah committed? (Thur.)
5. What is "the surer word of prophecy?" (Fri.)
6. When would Judah observe God's sabbath? (Sat.)
7. Grounds of hope in God. (Sun.)

GOLDEN TEXT—*I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* Jeremiah 31: 3.

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY, June 24

Read Isaiah 2: 1-11—**ISALAH'S INSPIRATION**
"The word which Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

Notwithstanding the exceedingly great wickedness of the people of his times, Isaiah saw the better day ahead for Judah and Jerusalem. There was nothing in his circumstances to warrant such a vision. It was therefore of divine inspiration. All the signs of the times were against it. It was a word direct from God. It was not even the work of his own powerful imagination. To foresee the time when all nations would "flow unto" the Lord's house was to see even beyond our own day. The Lord had forsaken Jacob's house, degenerate sons that the people of Judah had become, because they had grown wealthy and had turned to idols along with their Philistine neighbors. But beyond the stretch of Judah's history there lay out the plan of God for his people, which ordained that "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

May we have the faith to contemplate God's plan and purpose for the reign of Christ on the earth.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25

Read 2 Chronicles 29: 1-11—**HEZEKIAH'S REIGN**
"He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

What greater honor can be given the memory of a man than to say of him

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What to Find in the Lesson Study:

1. Relations between Isaiah and Hezekiah. (I)
2. The zenith of Isaiah's inspiration. (I)
3. When is a lost Bible not missed? (II)
4. The two-fold plea of Jeremiah. (II)
5. When will God's word not be forgotten? (II)
6. Why Jeremiah was persecuted. (III)
7. God's penalty for persistent disobedience. (III)

at the close of his life, "He lived uprightly before God and men?" Hezekiah's father was a wicked ruler, and it is to the son's credit that he did not follow in his father's footsteps. Not his father Ahaz but his forefather David became his example. If we must imitate our forebears, let us pick out the good ones to follow rather than the wicked ones among them. Hezekiah acknowledged that his fathers had sinned, and set about to repair the temple and make other reforms necessary to place the worship of God in its rightful place before the people.

Whatever our fathers have done or our children may do, let us see to it that we do what is right in God's sight.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

Read Hebrews 9: 23-28—**THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR**
"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

All through the book of Hebrews the sufferings of Christ are considered in the light of the Jewish types and symbols. Certainly the sacrifices of the Old Testament were not sufficient to put away sin. Their virtue consisted in their being typical of the greater and better sacrifice. How perfectly the suffering Christ fitted the symbolic description given of the Messiah in the figures and prophecies of the Old Testament, is the message of the book of Hebrews. Christ's high priesthood is a conception of him most readily grasped by the Jewish mind. As a high priest,

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his office and work could be made intelligible to all who were familiar with the Jewish ritual, and who were devoutly looking for the fulfilment of the ancient types. Yet in Christ a higher priesthood was set up, one in which the high priest offers himself as the sacrifice and for that reason enters but once into the holy of holies, making a final and sufficient atonement for sin.

May we rest our hopes on "nothing less than Jesus's blood and righteousness."

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

Read Jeremiah 2: 1-13—**THE MESSAGE OF JEREMIAH**
"Hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob."

In his message to the people of Jerusalem, Jeremiah rehearsed the story of God's goodness to the children of Israel in the days of their pilgrimage in the wilderness and their conquest and settlement in Canaan. The prophets frequently referred to the early history of Israel in their appeals to the defaulting descendants of Jacob to remember the God of their fathers and to renew the covenant with him. God's goodness should surely lead men to repentance. He also argues, in behalf of Jehovah, asking what iniquity have they found in God that they should forsake him? He says the people have committed two sins: first in having forsaken the living fountain, and second, in having hewn out for themselves cisterns that leak and that can hold no water.

May God keep us from the vanity and ruin of substituting our ways for his will.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Read 2 Peter 1: 12-21—**THE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY**

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy."

At an advanced age and shortly before his death, Peter wrote this general epistle to bring to the remembrance of his Christian readers everywhere the things concerning Christ which had been often told them. He stated how he had been with Jesus in the flesh and had with his own eyes witnessed his majesty and glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. But, he declares, there is a more sure word of prophecy even than that which he as an eyewitness can

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give; and that is the testimony of the Scriptures which speak of his coming. The holy men of old spake as they "were moved by the Holy Ghost," and hence their repeated and concerted prophecies concerning Christ constitute a testimony of Christ surer than that of an eyewitness; because there was no doubt as to the divine origin of the Scriptures even if some were disposed to question the reliability of the information concerning Jesus gained and given by the men who were with him on the earth.

Above the testimony of reason or experience, may we regard that of the inspired word of God.

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Read 2 Chronicles 36: 11-21—**JUDAH TAKEN CAPTIVE**
"Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees."

Zedekiah, king of Judah, refused the counsel of Jeremiah who urged him to submit to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to whom he was subject but against whom he had rebelled. Even the chief priests became corrupt "after the abominations of the heathen." The cup of Judah's iniquity was full. The Chaldean army conquered the city, slew its young men, burnt its palaces and homes, and carried its inhabitants captive to Babylon. It all came about because Judah forsok God, and took place according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, who wept and pleaded with the people to turn from their sins and avoid the terrible calamity which would last for seventy years. Their sabbaths, long neglected and abused, would begin with the downfall of their land.

May we observe God's will before his hand compels us to do so.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30

Read Psalm 130: 1-6—**HOPING IN JEHOVAH**
"Let Israel hope in the Lord."

The very spirit and atmosphere of prayer are those of hope in God. It presupposes some expectation that God will hear and answer. And so the most prayerful soul is the most hopeful one. Any confidence in God reacts to the cheer and comfort of the anxious heart of man. God's goodness and mercy are

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the grounds of our hope in him. How despairing we would be if he "should mark iniquity" and judge us according to our ill deserts. Although our waiting on the Lord is sometimes anxious, like the longing of the bedridden sufferer for the break of day after a sleepless night, yet we hope on and wait and watch for the gleam of light and the coming of comfort.

May all our hopes center in God who is merciful, and with whom there is "plenteous redemption."

LESSON STUDY

Sunday, June 30

Lesson Text and Comment

TOPIC—Review: Prophets and Kings of Judah's Decline.

I. ISAIAH'S LIFE AND TIMES

(Golden Texts and Lessons 1 to 4).

1. Then I said, Here am I; send me. Isaiah 49: 2.
2. Jehovah your God is gracious and merciful. 2 Chronicles 30: 9.
3. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. Isaiah 66: 13.
4. With his stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53: 5.

(1) In the midst of the wickedness of the people of Judah, Isaiah was called to be God's prophet to summon them to repentance and right living. His call came in consequence of a vision of Jehovah's holiness and glory. (2) King Hezekiah of Judah was a righteous ruler and often consulted Isaiah concerning God's will, and willingly followed the prophet's suggestions. (3) Isaiah not only warned the people against sinning against God but held up the mercies and promises of God as an incentive to righteousness. (4) In his prophecy concerning the Messiah, Isaiah reached the zenith of his inspiration. The hope of all Israel was the coming of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah who would redeem the world besotted in sin.

II. JEREMIAH'S EARLIER LABORS

(Golden Texts and Lessons 5 to 8).

5. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path. Psalm 119: 105.
6. We must obey God rather than men. Acts 5: 29.
7. Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people. Jeremiah 7: 23.
8. Thy word have I laid up in my heart. That I might not sin against thee. Psalm 119: 11.

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(6) In renovating and repairing the temple in Jerusalem, under the orders of King Josiah, Hilkiah found the book of the law as given by Moses. It had not been missed by the people, so delinquent had they become. But it was read and taught to the people by command of King Josiah during whose reign Jeremiah began his ministry. (6) Jeremiah continued to prophesy till the closing days of Judah's national history, when religious retrogression became general. He was bidden to brave the hatred of wicked men who would spurn his words of warning and reproof. (7) Along with his prediction of the downfall of Judah unless the people would repent, Jeremiah held out the promise of God to bless them if they would obey him. (8) The law of God both as written in the book of Moses and proclaimed by the prophets had failed to bring about the moral regeneration and reformation of the people. But, says Jeremiah, God will write his law in their hearts, through his grace, by which they can be saved.

III. JUDAH'S LAST DAYS

(Golden Texts and Lessons 9-12).

9. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Matthew 5: 11.
10. We will drink no wine. Jeremiah 35: 6.
11. Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people. Proverbs 14: 34.
12. Bless Jehovah, O my soul. Psalm 103: 1.

(9) Because Jeremiah predicted the downfall of Jerusalem unless the people would repent of their sins and turn to God, the priests of Judah condemned him to die, and he was thrown into a pit. But he was secretly taken out through the plea of an Ethiopian eunuch. (10) As an example of faithfulness, Jeremiah offered wine to the Rechabites who refused in loyalty to their father's command. How much more should Judah obey God? (11) The people persist in their hardness of heart, and Jerusalem is destroyed by the Chaldeans. (12) Yet in all the death and ruin of the ancient landmarks, there is the voice of praise to God whose loves hides behind the rod and whose purposes concerning his people are unchangeable and eternal.

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