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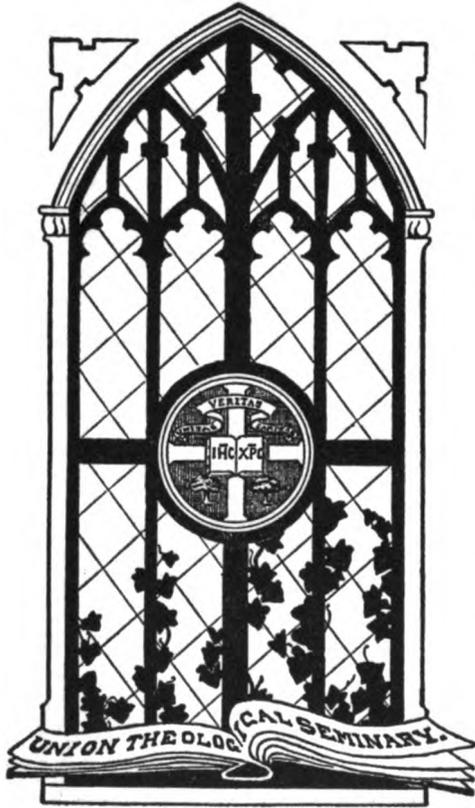
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Catechism Bible narr

CATECHISM BIBLE NARRATIVES



By REV. GEO. W. LOSE



FROM THE JOHANN REU
COLLECTION

CATECHISM BIBLE NARRATIVES

A SERIES OF BIBLE NARRATIVES
ON THE FIVE CHIEF PARTS OF
LUTHER'S SMALLER CATECHISM

FOR USE IN
LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOLS

BY
REV. GEO. W. LOSE



LUTHERAN BOOK CONCERN
COLUMBUS, OHIO
1915

TL55
L879

305376

PREFACE.

THERE is no more important duty devolving upon Christians than that of teaching the Word of God, and especially teaching it to the young. We of the Lutheran Church are particularly anxious to familiarize as many as possible with the chief truths of the Bible as they are set forth in Luther's catechism. It is the purpose of this series of lessons to render assistance in this grand work of the Church by explaining the truth as we have it in our beloved catechism in the light of illustrations taken from the Word of God—either narratives or pertinent passages. We have devoted considerable space to the Hints and Explanatory Notes and hope that teachers and pupils will find them suggestive and otherwise helpful. Since we believe the most effective method of teaching is by means of catechisation, we have appended to each lesson a larger number of questions than are usually found in Sunday-school text books.

G. W. LOSE.

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1. THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO JEREMIAH.

JER. 1, 1-10.

THE WORD OF GOD.

The Bible is called the WORD OF GOD because GOD GAVE IT IN WRITING through the prophets in the Old Testament and the Evangelists and Apostles in the New.

Jeremiah, God's Messenger to Judah.—The words of Jeremiah¹ the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth² in the land of Benjamin: to whom the Word³ of the Lord came in the days of Josiah⁴ the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It⁵ came also in the days of Jehoiakim⁶ the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah⁷ the son of Josiah, king of Judah, unto the carrying away⁸ of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

The Prophet's Call.—Then the Word⁹ of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed¹⁰ thee in the belly I knew¹¹ thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot¹³ speak: for I am a child.¹⁴

The Prophet's Commission.—But the Lord said unto me. Say not,¹⁵ I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces:¹⁶ for I am with thee¹⁷ to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth,¹⁸ and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over¹⁹ the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down,²⁰ to build, and to plant.²¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The name of Jeremiah means, "One raised up by the Lord." 2. A city of priests located about three miles north of Jerusalem. 3. Not

only a command of the Lord but also a revelation of His will. We call this revelation the Bible; the word Bible means book; and because the Bible is God's revelation to us, we call it the *Word of God*. God gave it in writing through the prophets in the Old Testament and the Evangelists and Apostles in the New. Since God's Word is given to us in writing we call it Scriptures, and since it is God who gives it we call it *Holy Scriptures*. God gave it in writing so it would not be lost or forgotten. One part of the Bible is called the Old Testament, the other part is called the New Testament. 4. Josiah was a god-fearing ruler, laboring to purge Judah of Idolatry, reigning from 641—611 B. C. 5. This prophet continued to proclaim God's message throughout the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. 6. Reigned from 609 to 598 B. C. 7. The last king of Judah, 597 to captivity. 8. The Babylonian captivity began 588 B. C. 9. God has always had some way to make known His Word. The men who wrote the Old Testament, as noted above, were the prophets. A prophet was a teacher who was sent of God to show the people God's will. They often spoke and wrote of the future. Jesus had not yet come, and no one but a prophet could speak and write of Him. The Old Testament was given first to the Jewish people, and was therefore written in the Jewish or Hebrew language. The Evangelists and Apostles, as we have seen, wrote the New Testament. As the Greek language was everywhere known in their day these men wrote in the Greek language. From the time of Moses who wrote the first books of the Old Testament, until the time of John who wrote the last books of the New Testament is about 1600 years. 10. God formed the prophet and every one of us for a purpose. He has something for each one to do. 11. God knew the prophet, and what use He would make of him, before the prophet had being. God is eternal. 12. Note to what a high position this lowly man is exalted. There is no more important office on earth than that of the holy ministry. 13. The prophet felt that he was not able to go on such a mission. Humility is a good trait. 14. Notice how humble the prophet speaks of himself. 15. Although we should feel our inability to do certain tasks well, when God's call is plain we should not object. 16. When the prophet thought of his mission to the nations he was terrified. A preacher should not be deterred from proclaiming God's Word by fear of men. 17. God promised to be with the prophet. This promise is to us also, and should make us courageous. 18. God gave the prophet power of speech so that he would never lack words. He also promises to be mouth and wisdom to His preachers today. They should be careful to preach what God has put in their mouth, and not what popular sentiment and human reason suggest. The holy men who wrote the Scriptures spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. St. Paul says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." That means that God told the prophets what to write and how to write. Therefore we say the Bible is the Word of God. 19. Jeremiah was not set over the nations to attract attention to himself, but to tear down and build up. 20. Idolatry and many evils that came with it were to be rooted out

by his preaching. There are many evils to be rooted out to-day by preaching God's Word. That portion of the Word that is especially helpful in this is the Law. 21. The love of God was to be planted in the hearts from which idolatry was up-rooted. This was done then, and is done now, by preaching the Gospel. In the law and Gospel we have the way of salvation revealed. St. Paul says, "The Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The Bible tells us all that we need know in order that the man of God may be perfect. That means, the Bible tells us all that we need know in order to be saved. It teaches us to know ourselves and our sinful condition; and it teaches us to know God and His gracious will toward us in and through Christ our Savior.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is the signification of the name Jeremiah? 2. What can you say of Anathoth? 3. What is meant by the expression, the Word came to the prophet? 4. What do we call God's written revelation to us? 5. What does the word Bible mean? 6. Why do we call the Bible the Word of God? 7. Through whom did God give us the written Word? 8. Why do we call this Word the Holy Scriptures? 9. Why did God give us His Word in writing? 10. Into what two parts is the Bible divided? 11. What was the character of Josiah? 12. When did Josiah reign, and with what good work is he to be credited? 13. When did the Babylonian captivity begin? 14. In what words did God make His will known to the prophet? 15. What is a prophet? 16. Why did God raise up prophets to speak and write in Old Testament times? 17. In what language was the Old Testament originally written, and why? 18. Who wrote the New Testament? 19. In what language was the New Testament written, and why? 20. How many years intervened between the writing of the first and last books of the Bible? 21. What calling of our day corresponds to that of the prophets? 22. What can you say of the office of the holy ministry? 23. What trait of character did the prophet manifest? 24. Although we should be humble, what should we not do when the call to duty is plain? 25. What promise did God give the prophet that He has also given to us? 26. How did God fit the prophet for his work? 27. What will God give His messengers today? 28. What should ministers be careful to do? 29. How did the prophets speak? 30. What is the meaning of the words, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God? 31. For what purpose was Jeremiah sent? 32. What portion of the Bible is especially helpful in rooting out evil? 33. What portion of the Bible kindles faith and warms the heart with love? 34. What does the apostle mean by the words, That the Man of God may be perfect?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 3, 5, 9. Search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.

2. THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

EXODUS 19 AND 20.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The TEN COMMANDMENTS are THE SUM OF THE DIVINE LAW which God at creation implanted in man, and then solemnly REPEATED ON MOUNT SINAI.

God on Mount Sinai. — And it came to pass on the third day,¹ in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud;² so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.³ And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God;⁴ and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.⁵ And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake,⁶ and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.⁷ And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them.⁸ And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for Thou chargest us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest He break forth upon them. So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

The Word of the Law. — And God spake⁹ all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.¹⁰ Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make unto thee

any graven image,¹¹ or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God,¹² visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me;¹³ and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep *My commandments*.¹⁴ Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

The People in Awe of God. — And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking;¹⁵ and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak Thou with us,¹⁶ and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you,¹⁷ and that His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.¹⁸

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The third day after Moses had told the people to be ready to stand in God's presence. 2. By these extraordinary manifestations God meant to impress the people with His nearness and His wonderful attributes. 3. The knowledge that they were near to God filled them

with fear. 4. A wonderful occasion! The man of God leads this great congregation in most intimate worship of God. 5. These strange sights and sounds were not only to fill the people with awe, but also to attract their attention. God wants all to listen when He speaks. 6. Very likely Moses at this time said what is recorded in Heb. 13, 21, "I exceedingly fear and quake." 7. Moses' childlike confidence in God moved him to do what God commanded. 8. Moses was to charge the people not to press into God's holy presence out of vain curiosity. They were to be satisfied with seeing and knowing what God revealed to them. A lesson here for us. 9. God has spoken much to us through men: here He speaks directly to men. 10. He reminds Israel, to whom the law was given, of His deep interest and great love for them. 11. We are forbidden to make pictures and images for the purpose of worshipping them, as the heathen do. We are not forbidden to make pictures and images for edification, pleasure, and other proper purposes. 12. God is jealous in the sense that He will not divide the honor that is due Him with any creature. 13. God punishes children for the sins of their parents only when they continue in them. There is great danger that they will do so. 14. By these words God assures us that He would rather show mercy than visit iniquity. 15. The giving of the law was attended by appalling incidents in order to impress the people with God's glorious majesty, and to indicate that the law brings terror to all by showing them their sins. It is of this law, the *Holy Ten Commandments*, that the first part of the catechism treats. The *commandments* are called *holy* because God gave them. They are holy, also, because in them God asks us to be holy. They are the sum of the divine law. God has given us many laws. The Bible is full of them. All these laws are summed up in the ten commandments. God first gave His law to mankind at creation. He implanted it in man's heart. While man remained as God created him it was natural for him to know and do what is right. But man did not remain as God created him. Man disobeyed God, and thus lost the knowledge of God's will and the power to do it. After this it was necessary for God to give His law again. This He did through Moses on Mount Sinai, of which our lesson today treats. Moses was the leader of the Jews, and he proclaimed the law to *them*. However the law was intended for all men. 16. Because of their natural sinfulness Israel could not endure that the righteous and Holy God should speak to them. In His great mercy God ordinarily speaks to sinners through men. 17. This terrifying experience was given to prove Israel, and to draw them nearer to God. Our Heavenly Father never proves His people through trying experiences such as sickness, disappointment and bereavement. 18. Moses is called of God to come near and endure the experience while the people stood afar off. So Jesus, the second Moses, our Mediator, endured and suffered for mankind.

QUESTIONS.

1. After what incident were the strange scenes referred to in this lesson written? 2. With what did God mean to impress the people? 3. What filled Israel with fear on this occasion? 4. In what did Moses lead the people? 5. What was the purpose of these remarkable sights and sounds? 6. What may we learn from this? 7. What words did Moses probably utter at this time? 8. What enabled Moses to obey these hard commands? 9. What charge was he directed to give the people? 10. What lesson may we learn from this? 11. While God usually speaks to men through men, how did He at this time converse with them? 12. What had God done for Israel's ancestors that should have convinced them of His interest and love? 13. For what purpose may we not make pictures and images? 14. In what sense is God jealous? 15. When will children be punished for the sins of their parents? 16. Of what danger are we here warned? 17. What words of the lesson show that God would rather show mercy than punish? 18. Why these appalling manifestations at the giving of the law? 19. Which is the first chief part of the catechism? 20. Why are the commandments called holy? 21. Of what are they the sum? 22. When did God first give His law to man? 23. How was it given? 24. How did our first parents know what to do and what not to do? 25. What became of this natural knowledge of the law? 26. What was then necessary? 27. Where was this done? 28. Through what man was it done? 29. To whom did Moses proclaim God's law? 30. For whom also was it intended?

GOLDEN TEXT.

LUKE 11, 28. Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.

3. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.

MATTHEW 22, 34-40.

THE TWO TABLES OF THE LAW.

The FIRST TABLE of the divine law treats of LOVE TO GOD and the second table treats of LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBOR.

The Lawyer Tempts Jesus.— But when the Pharisees¹ had heard that he had put the Sadducees² to silence³ they were gathered together. Then one of them which was a lawyer,⁴ asked Him a question, tempting⁵ him and saying, Master,⁶ which is the great commandment in the law?⁷

Jesus Replies.— Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, This is the first and great commandment.⁸ And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.⁹ On these two commandments hang all the law¹⁰ and the prophets.¹¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The Pharisees were a self-righteous sect of the Jews. 2. The Sadducees were a sect of the Jews much smaller in number than the Pharisees. They denied some of the plainest teachings of the Bible, such as the resurrection of the body. 3. Jesus had silenced the Sadducees who say there is no future existence, by reminding them that God said to Moses at the burning bush, "I am the God of Abraham." That patriarch, although he had passed from earth centuries previous, still existed, since God is not the God of the dead but of the living. 4. The lawyers of that day were students and teachers of the law of Moses. 5. Tried to draw an answer from Jesus with which they could find fault. 6. He addressed Jesus with respect. 7. That was a disputed question among certain students of the law in those days. Some exalted portions of the ceremonial law above the law of love. 8. Obedience to all other laws is impossible where there is no true love of God. This is required by the first table of the law. 9. Love of our neighbor will follow when there is love of God in the heart. This is required by the second table of the law. God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai *two tables* of stone on which the commandments had been written by the finger of God. Jesus refers to the tables of the law in our lesson. God has not told us how many of the commandments were on each table, but from Jesus' words we learn that the commandments of the *first table* treat of *love to God*, and those of the *second table* treat of *love to our neighbor*. Both tables ask us to love. In Romans 13, 10 we are told, "Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." Our Lord gives us the sum of the first table in the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." When Jesus calls this the great commandment of the law He means that it is the most important of all the commandments. God would have us love Him above all else. He has shown Himself worthy of our love by creating us, preserving us, and sending His only begotten Son to redeem us from Satan and sin. The first three of the commandments treat of love to God. Therefore there are three commandments in the first table. Jesus says that the second commandment is Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There are seven commandments that treat of love to our neighbor, therefore there are seven commandments in the second table. In the words just given Jesus expresses these seven commandments in one. That is, these words are the sum of the second table. 10. Every part of God's law requires love of God and love of our neighbor. Our neighbor is every one who stands in need of our counsel and assistance, be he friend or foe, or who he may. Our neighbor in the sense here used may live a long distance from us. Some neighbors are nearer to us than others. The members of our family are the nearest neighbors we have. The Christian Church is the spiritual family of which we are members. All members of the church are also our near neighbors. However God enjoins upon us to do good to all men. We are even to do good to our enemies. Jesus

says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Therefore all men, even our enemies, may be our neighbors, although members of our family and Christians are our nearest neighbors. We are to love God with all our heart, that is, above all things; we are to love our neighbor, however, as we love ourselves. 11. The writings of the prophets, found in the Old Testament, also teach man to love God and his neighbor.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who were the Pharisees? 2. What can you say of the Sadducees? 3. How did Jesus silence the Sadducees? 4. Who were called lawyers in that day? 5. What was the purpose of this lawyer in approaching Jesus? 6. How did he show his respect for Jesus? 7. What gave rise to his question? 8. Why does the the command to love God come first? 9. When can we expect one to love his neighbor? 10. What word expresses the requirement of the whole law? 11. Through whom did God give us the written law? 12. Where did this take place? 13. What, according to God's Word, is the sum of the first table? 14. Why is this called the great commandment? 15. Mention three ways in which God shows Himself worthy of our love. 16. How do we reach the conclusion that there are three commandments in the first table? 17. What, according to Jesus' words, is the sum of the second table? 18. How many commandments in the second table? 19. Who is our neighbor? 20. Who is our nearest neighbor? 21. Who also is a near neighbor? 22. In what words does God teach us that anyone may be our neighbor? 23. In what words does He teach us that our enemy may be our neighbor? 24. How are we to love our neighbor?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 22, 37-39. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

4. REVIEW OF LESSONS 1-3.

The Bible, The Word of God.— Lesson 1, tells us how the Word of the Lord came to the great prophet Jeremiah, in the days of King Josiah, calling him to service in behalf of the nations of that day. The Word of God has come to us in more fulness in the Holy Scriptures—the writings of the prophets, Evangelists and Apostles. God inspired these writers so that the product of their pens is no other than God's Word. They

spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. All these writings are inspired in every particular. The writings of the prophets constitute the Old Testament, those of the Evangelists and Apostles, the New Testament. The former was written in the Hebrew language, the latter in the Greek language. The first five books of the Old Testament are from the pen of Moses, who lived 1500 years before Christ, the last book of the New Testament was written by John, 1600 years later. As God called Jeremiah to make His will known in his day, so He now calls men to the office of the ministry for the same purpose. God promised to be with the prophet, gave him a knowledge of the message he was to proclaim, and was mouth and wisdom to him. All this He does for the ministers of the Gospel to-day. That portion of the Word which demands that we fulfill God's holy will and condemns all who fail to do so, is called Law; that which brings us the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has saved us from our sins, and through faith makes us forever blessed, is called Gospel. In the Law and Gospel God has revealed to us all that we need know unto salvation.

The Giving of the Law.—A most remarkable incident was that to which Lesson 2 directs our attention. God drew very near to His people, and revealed Himself to their leader, Moses. There were strange sights and sounds, and even Moses exclaimed, "I exceedingly fear and quake." That portion of God's will that was made known at that time is called the Law. It had been implanted in man at creation. While man remained as God created him it was natural for him to know and do what is right. He did not need any special revelation. But man disobeyed God, and thus lost the knowledge of God's will, and the power to do it. After that it was necessary for God to give His law again. He solemnly repeated it to man through Moses on Mount Sinai, 1500 years before the time of Christ. God has given us many laws, but they are all summed up in the Holy Ten Commandments. The commandments are called holy because God who gave them is holy, and because in them God asks us to be holy. God wrote the commandments on two tablets of stone, and committed these to His chosen people by the hand of Moses. The giving of the Law was attended by appalling incidents in order that the people might be impressed with God's glorious majesty, and to indicate that it is the pro-

vince of the Law to bring terror to man by showing him his sins. Although the law was given to the Jews, it is intended for all men.

The Two Tables of the Law.— There are two tables of the divine Law. Jesus gives a brief but most satisfactory explanation of these tables in His reply to the lawyer who tempted Him. (Lesson 3.) We are not told how many commandments there are in each table, but we are told that the commandments of the first table treat of love to God, and those of the second table treat of love to our neighbor. Both tables treat of love. The sum of the first table is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. When Jesus calls this the great commandment of the law He means that it is the most important of all the commandments. Since the first three commandments treat of love to God there are three commandments in the first table. The second commandment, that is, the sum of the second table, is, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There are seven commandments in this table. While the first table treats especially of love to God, and the second especially of love to our neighbor, every part of the law requires love of God and love of our neighbor. Our neighbor is every one who stands in need of our counsel, be he friend or foe, or who he may. He may live near by or at a distance. The members of our family are our nearest neighbors. Our fellow Christians come next, those of our congregation being the nearest of these. But every one who is in need is our neighbor, and should be treated as such. Even our enemies are our neighbors, and Jesus says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matthew 5, 44. We are to love God with all our heart, that is, above all things; we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 1. 1. To what prophet does this lesson call attention? 2. What call came to Jeremiah? 3. In what form has the Word of God come to us? 4. Who wrote the Scriptures? 5. How did God prepare these men for that work? 6. How do we regard their writings? 7. Which writings constitute the Old Testament? The New Testament? 8. In what language was the former written? The latter? 9. When did Moses live, and which books of the Bible did he write in full? 10. How

many years from Moses to John? 11. What office has the Lord instituted for the proclamation of His will? 12. What promise has God given for the especial comfort of ministers of the Gospel? 13. What portion of the Scriptures is called law? What Gospel? 14. What may be said of God's revelation to us?

LESSON 2. 1. To what incident does this lesson direct our attention. 2. To whom did God at this time make known His will? 3. What served to add to the impressiveness of this occasion? 4. What words is Moses supposed to have uttered? 5. What is the portion of God's will then revealed called? 6. How was the law made known to man at first? 7. What became of this knowledge? 8. What was then necessary? 9. When was this repetition made? 10. In what has God summed up His law? 11. Why are the commandments called holy? 12. In what form were they given to Moses? 13. Why were there such appalling incidents at this time? 14. For whom is the law intended?

LESSON 3. 1. Into how many tables is the law divided? 2. Where do we find a brief explanation of these tables? 3. Of what does the first table treat? 4. What is the sum of the first table? 5. What does Jesus mean when He refers to this as the great commandment of the law? 6. How many commandments in this table? 7. Of what does the second table treat? 8. What is required by every part of the law? 9. Who is our neighbor? 10. Who is our nearest neighbor? 11. Who is our next nearest neighbor? 12. What people are our neighbors? 13. In what words does Jesus assure us that our enemies are our neighbors? 14. How are we to love God? 15. How love our neighbor?

5. THE GOLDEN CALF.

Exodus 32.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

I am the Lord, thy God. Thou shalt HAVE NO OTHER GODS before me.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love and trust in God above all things.

Moses Called into God's Presence.—And Moses went up into the mount,¹ and was in the mount forty days and forty nights.²

The People Clamor for an Idol.—When the people saw that Moses delayed³ to come down out of the mount, they gathered themselves together unto Aaron⁴, and said unto him, Up, make us gods,⁵ which shall go before us:⁶ for as for this Moses that brought us up out of the land of Egypt⁷ we know not what is become of him.

Aaron Yields.—And Aaron said unto them,⁸ Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.⁹ And

all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.¹⁰ And he received them, and made a molten calf,¹¹ and they said, These be thy gods,¹² O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.¹³ And when Aaron saw it,¹⁴ he built an altar before it,¹⁵ and made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord.¹⁶ And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings;¹⁷ and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.¹⁸

God is Grieved.—And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy¹⁹ people have corrupted themselves.²⁰ They have turned aside quickly out of the way²¹ which I commanded them.

Moses Breaks the Tables.—And Moses went down from the mount. And as soon as Moses came nigh unto the camp, and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger waxed hot,²² and he cast the tables out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount.²³

Moses Deals with the Idolatrous People and Aaron.—And he took the calf, and burnt it with fire,²⁴ and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.²⁵ And he said unto Aaron,²⁶ What did this people unto thee, that thou²⁷ hast brought so great a sin²⁸ upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot;²⁹ thou knowest the people, that they are bent on mischief.³⁰

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Mount Sinai is in the desert region of the Peninsula of Sinai, and 7,000 feet high. 2. During that time God spake with him. 3. They became impatient waiting, and feared that Moses, their leader, would not return to them. 4. They came to Aaron in a crowd. 5. Think of it! God's chosen people asked a man to *make* a god for them. They want gods that they can carry around. In general we understand by other gods all that men devise in the place of God, and to which they give the honor due to God. Israel longed for other gods and said to Aaron: "Up, make us gods which shall go before us." Aaron transgressed the first commandment by yielding to their demand. The people committed this sin when they said of the molten calf: "These be thy gods, O Israel." They transgressed it also when they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar before the idol. They learned this from the heathen nations. They wanted *gods*. One is not enough. The Egyptians had many gods. It is dangerous to mingle with bad company.

We who are in the Egypt of this world must be on our guard. We are not in danger of breaking this commandment by fashioning an idol of gold, but we are in danger of giving to one thing or another "the honor that belongs to God alone." *Proud* people do this by setting their heart on clothing, jewelry, external beauty, gifts, etc. *Covetous* people do this by making the acquiring of money and other possessions their object in life. *Vain-glorious* people do this by setting out to win the praise of men. 6. These people were more ready to trust in a man-made god than to trust in the Lord who created them, who fed and clothed them, and who had led them out of Egypt. 7. God had commanded Moses to bring them out of Egypt. 8. Aaron was willing to make them a god, although he should have known better than to do so. 9. Probably he thought that by asking this of them they might change their minds and not insist that he make them a god. 10. The people were willing to give up their jewelry so that they might have a god such as they craved. There are people to-day, also, who want a god—a religion and a faith to suit themselves. 11. He melted the gold and made of it a calf, after the pattern of the Egyptian god Apis, a bull. 12. This was the same as setting aside the true God, and putting a calf in His stead. 13. God enjoins that we fear, love and trust in Him above all things. Here Israel gives to the golden calf the honor which belongs to the true God, for He, and not the golden calf, had brought them out of Egypt. 14. Evidently Aaron was alarmed when he saw that the people were getting ready to worship the calf. He did not want them to do that, yet he did not earnestly protest. He surely feared the people more than God. Those who, *out of fear* of what men may do or say, fail to do their duty, or do what is wrong, are transgressing this commandment. The same is true of those who *out of love for earthly goods*, or because of their confidence in money, position, friends, etc., turn from the path of duty. 15. The people loved and trusted in the golden calf more than they loved and trusted in God. Seeing the zeal of the people for the worship of this idol Aaron not only lacked courage to protest, but built an altar for them and thus encouraged them in their sin. It is hard to stop when one has begun to do wrong. 16. Perhaps to-morrow they will see their folly and return to the worship of God, especially should Moses in the meantime return. 17. They were deeply interested. True disciples may often learn from the zeal and liberality of those in error. 18. Worship of the true God and sensual gratification do not belong together. 19. *Thy* people. He did not say *My*. The people for whom God had wrought wonders. 20. Notice the effect of sin. 21. God has marked a way for us as He did for Israel. Are we pleasing or displeasing Him? 22. Moses' anger was a righteous displeasure at Israel's gross wickedness. 23. With this act he meant to impress them with the grievousness of their sin. 24. Probably made of wood and covered with gold, hence would burn. This showed that their god was powerless. 25. They must drink this bitter water that they may more fully realize the bitterness of sin. 26. Aaron, being Israel's leader, was rebuked first. 27. Aaron was in a measure responsible. He had not done his best to suppress the:

sin. 28. Idolatry is indeed a great sin, for it is directly against God. Aaron is blamed for bringing this sin upon the people because he did not use his influence and authority to prevent it. Here we learn that to whom much is given, of him much will be required. 29. He should have been more concerned about God's displeasure than about that of Moses. 30. This saying of Aaron reminds us how natural it is for every one to try to place the blame for his wrong doing on some one else.

QUESTIONS.

1. Whither did Moses go? 2. How long did he remain there? 3. How was he engaged while on the Mount? 4. How did his delay affect the Israelites? 5. What did they demand of Aaron? 6. What commandment were they transgressing? 7. Repeat the first commandment. 8. What does it mean? 9. What do we understand by other gods? 10. How did Aaron become partaker of their sin? 11. What evidently led the people to desire an idol? 12. What else had they learned from the Egyptians? 13. What warning do we find here? 14. In what way are we in danger of breaking this commandment? 15. Mention some ways in which people to-day break this commandment? 16. Instead of trusting in God what were the Israelites ready to do? 17. What makes Aaron's guilt all the greater. 18. What was probably Aaron's hope when he asked for their jewelry? 19. What sacrifice were these people willing to make in order to have a god after their heart? 20. These people clamored for a god to suit themselves, and what do many insist upon to-day? 21. What very likely led Aaron to give the idol the form of a calf? 22. With what words did Israel give to the idol the honor due to God? 23. What is enjoined upon us in the first commandment? 24. Although Aaron evidently did not wish the people to worship an idol, what did he fail to do? 25. Who are to-day guilty of this sin? 26. How did Aaron actually encourage the people in their sin? 27. What proclamation did he make? 28. What did he hope? 29. What can Christians often learn from errorists? 30. By what word did God show His displeasure at Israel? 31. What question should Israel's sin lead us to ask ourselves? 32. How should the breaking of the tables have impressed Israel? 33. Why did Moses burn the idol? 34. Why did he strew the powdered remains of the idol on their drinking water? 35. For what reason was Aaron held especially responsible? 36. Of what does Aaron's reply remind us?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTH. 4, 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

[6. THE THREE MEN IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

DANIEL 3.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS COMMANDED.

I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other gods before me.

What does this mean?

We should FEAR, LOVE and TRUST in God above all things.

The Golden Image Set Up. — Nebuchadnezzar¹ the King made an image² of gold, whose height was three-score cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar, the king, sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up: and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music,³ ye fall down and worship⁴ the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.⁵ Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

The Three God-fearing Jews Accused. — Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans⁶ came near, and accused the Jews. They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree that every man

that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego;⁷ these men, O king, have not regarded thee; they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?⁸ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.⁹ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not,¹⁰ be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Tested and Found Faithful. — Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.¹¹ Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent and the furnace exceeding hot the flame of the fire slew these men that took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery

furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt: and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.¹²

Delivered and Promoted.— Then Nebuchadnezzar came near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake and said, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ye servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. Then Nebuchadnezzar spake and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. ¹³ Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation and language, which speak any thing amiss against the god of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego shall be cut to pieces, and their houses shall be made a dung-hill:¹⁴ because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. Then the king promoted¹⁵ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. King of Babylon 600 B. C. 2. The king hoped, no doubt, that the size of the image—about 100 feet in height—and its costliness, would add to his glory among the nations of the world. He asked the people to worship the image, but was especially anxious to get honor for himself. Satan makes those things attractive which he wants us to worship. 3. God's people enhance and beautify their worship with music, instrumental and vocal. The wicked also use music in the service of Satan. 4. Men can be forced to bow the knees and mumble prayers, but worship that is pleasing to God comes from the heart. 5. This threat was no doubt intended for the Jewish exiles, and reminds us of the persecutions waged by the Romish church against those who would not accept its heresies. 6. Very likely these accusers were moved by envy. Certain Jews had been favored by the king—"set over the

affairs of the province of Babylon." There is scarcely anything too bad for an envious person to do. The names of these three men, as that of Daniel, had been changed when the king decided to use them in his service. 8. How patient God is that He does not smite those who revile Him! He bears a long time with the wicked, but the time of reckoning will come. A few years after this incident God's visitation came upon this bad king—Daniel 4. 9. The firmness and courage of these men puts weak faith to shame. How slow we often are to give up convenience or pleasure for the Lord's sake, but these men were ready to give up life in His service. We *are enjoined* in the first commandment to fear, love and trust in God above all things. That means that we are to stand in childlike awe of God, to regard Him as the highest good, and to look to Him for every blessing. The three words that express our duty toward God are *fear, love* and *trust*. The three men referred to in our lesson stood in such *awe* of God that they would not think of worshipping an image of gold, even though threatened with death. Awe is different from fear. These men had no slavish fear. They manifested remarkable courage. True fear of God makes one careful not to displease Him, just as obedient children do not wish to displease their parents. Joseph had such fear or awe of God. When tempted he said, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? These three Jews and Joseph feared God above all other things. If you would rather do wrong than offend an associate, or lose a job, you are breaking this commandment. 10. They were not sure that God would prevent the wicked king from taking their lives, but they were sure that they were doing right, and that God would not forsake them. God does not always keep threatened trouble from coming upon us when we ask Him to do so, but He never fails to help us bear it, and to overrule it unto good. Should we not therefore love Him? This commandment enjoins that we *love* God above all things. We are to regard Him as the *highest good*. Abraham dearly loved his son Isaac, but he loved God more, and was ready to sacrifice his son when God so commanded. The three men mentioned in the lesson loved life dearly, but they loved God better than life. They were ready to give up life rather than offend God. If we love God above all things we will allow nothing to come between us and our duty to God. If you would rather disobey God than forego a sinful, so-called pleasure you do not love Him above all things. 11. These men were made utterly helpless. God sometimes allows His people to come into such straits in order that when deliverance comes they will give all the glory to Him. These men put their trust in God. We are *enjoined* in this commandment to *trust* in God above all things. God has revealed Himself as ever merciful and all-powerful in order that we may always be ready to trust Him. Moses trusted in the Lord when the Red Sea was before Israel, and the Egyptians behind them. When God said, Go forward, he obeyed. David trusted in the Lord when he went to battle against the God-defying Goliath. Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego trusted in the Lord, although the fiery furnace yawned before their eyes, and said, "He will

deliver us out of thine hand, O king." If you would rather offend God than give money, or make some other sacrifice for His cause, you are not trusting in Him above all things. 12. An angel. In v. 28 the king refers to this deliverer as "His angel." "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them." 13. A splendid example this of fearing, loving and trusting in God above all things. 14. The king's plan of doing missionary work was not good. The only weapon God's children know how to use against their foe is the Sword of the Spirit,—God's Word. 15. God has not promised that His people shall have no trouble in this life, but He has promised to deliver them, and make all things work together for their good.

QUESTIONS.

1. What, evidently, was the King's motive in this strange procedure? 2. In what respect do his methods remind us of Satan's work? 3. Although music is prostituted by the ungodly, what is the Christian's attitude toward the use of it in worship? 4. Of what might the king's efforts to compel the people to worship the image remind us? 5. What very likely prompted these accusers to enter complaint against the three Jews? 6. What may we learn in regard to God's dealings with sinners from His dealings with this king? 7. How should the bearing of these men impress us? 8. What is enjoined in the first commandment? 9. What does that mean? 10. What is the nature of the Christian's fear of God? 11. How did Joseph give expression to his fear of God? 12. How did the three exiles prove that they feared God above all things? 13. What was their comfort in the hour of trial? 14. What does it mean to love God above all things? 15. How did Abraham show that he had such love of God? 16. How did these three men show their love of God? 17. What may we learn from the fact that they were made utterly helpless and then delivered? 18. What in the third place is enjoined upon us in this commandment? 19. Relate an incident in Moses' life that showed trust in God. 20. Mention such an incident in David's life. 21. What did Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego say that proved that they trusted in God? 22. Of what is the bearing of these men an example? 23. What is the difference between Nebuchadnezzar's plan of missionating and that of our Lord Jesus? 24. What does God promise us in regard to trouble?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PROVERBS 3, 5. Trust in the Lord, with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

7. HEROD'S PROFANE OATH.

MATTHEW 14, 8-12.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may NOT CURSE, SWEAR, USE WITCHCRAFT, LIE or DECEIVE *by His name; but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks.*

Celebrating a King's Birthday.—But when Herod's¹ birthday was kept,² the daughter³ of Herodias⁴ danced⁵ before them, and pleased Herod.⁶ Whereupon he promised with an oath⁷ to give her whatsoever she would ask.⁸ And she, being before instructed of her mother,⁹ said, Give me here John Baptist's¹⁰ head in a charger.¹¹

A Coward's Generosity.—And the king was sorry,¹² nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat,¹⁴ he commanded it to be given her.

A Noble Man's End.—And he sent and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.¹⁵ And his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it,¹⁶ and they went and told Jesus.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. This was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great; he was a tetrarch, ruler of a fourth part of his father's kingdom; his domain included Galilee. 2. It is not wrong to commemorate one's birthday with joyous festivities. On such a day, time should be found for a grateful glance over the past, and a fervent prayer for the future. 3. She was the daughter of Philip and Herodias, and her name was Salome. 4. Herodias was the wife of Philip, but left him to unite in an unholy union with her husband's brother, Herod. 5. It is difficult to see any good that comes from dancing, but it is an easy matter to point to much evil that has resulted from it, as in this case. 6. Herod was in mirthful mood, no doubt having been drinking wine to excess. Dancing is often accompanied with the drinking of intoxicants and other

questionable indulgences. 7. An oath is appealing to God, as witness of the truth and avenger of the untruth. Herod's was a thoughtless oath, and therefore profane. This is *forbidden* in the second commandment. We are not to *curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie or deceive* by His name. His name must be held sacred. His name implies All that God has revealed of Himself in the Holy Scriptures, such as His essence, attributes and command. To take God's name in vain is to use it for a useless or a sinful purpose. The first wrong use of God's name mentioned in the meaning given is *cursing*. To curse is to blaspheme God, or by the holy name of God to wish evil to one's self or to our neighbor. To *blaspheme* is to speak sneeringly of God. To *curse* is to wish evil to something in the name of God. God wants us to bless all men, even our enemies. To curse is the opposite of blessing. A person is cursing when he wishes that something may be damned. Surely, one must be very wicked to wish such a dreadful punishment to a brute; how much worse to wish it to a human being!

Herod used the second way mentioned of taking God's name in vain. He *swore*. To *swear* by the name of God means to appeal to God as witness of the truth of what one is saying and avenger of the untruth. Not all swearing is wrong. It is not wrong to swear when the honor of God, our neighbor's need or the court demand it. Herod, however, swore thoughtlessly. Some people fall into the habit of uttering profane oaths, and do so without being conscious of it. It is sad that our merciful God must tell us not to abuse His holy name. May you never be guilty of this sin! To swear falsely means to swear to a lie. That is called perjury. Peter was guilty of that sin when he denied with an oath that he knew the Savior.

The third wrong way of using God's name that Luther mentions is that of *using witchcraft*. That means not only with the help of the devil to harm our neighbor in his person or property, but also by a superstitious abuse of God's name and Word, or other means, seemingly to work good. When a wicked person by a superstitious use of God's name and Word works harm to a neighbor, when sick and injured people allow some one to pow-wow over them, when those in trouble go to fortune tellers for advice, or when bereaved persons permit spiritualists to pretend to receive messages for them from their departed, this sin is committed.

The fourth wrong use of God's name mentioned is *lying* in His name. That is, palming off false doctrine as the Word of God. Let us cling to the truth of God's Word, for that alone can save the soul. Jesus warns us to beware of false prophets. The last wrong use of God's name mentioned is that of *deceiving* by His name. That means to act the hypocrite—to have God's Word on the lips only.

8. The extravagance of this promise was no doubt due to the influence of wine, and the man's desire to make a display before his friends. 9. Pity it was that this daughter had such a mother to whom to look for counsel. It is a blessing of incalculable worth to have devout, god-fearing parents. 10. Herodias, bitter against the faithful preacher for

rebuking her and Herod because of their unlawful union, took this opportunity to seek revenge. 11. A wooden platter. 12. Although Herod had been keeping John in prison for about one and one-half years, it is not likely that he intended to take his life. 13. Herod thought it would be humiliating to break his oath. Some think it wrong to break a sinful oath, but it is a greater sin to keep a wrong oath than to break it. A thoughtful Christian is slow to take an oath. He first assures himself that he will not be doing wrong by taking and keeping the oath he is asked to take. 14. So very careful to have the praise of men, but utterly regardless of God's favor! This is the folly to which sin leads. 15. The human body, having been the tenement of an immortal soul, should never be treated with disrespect. 16. The committing of the remains of our departed ones to the ground is the Scriptural method of disposing of them.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who was Herod? 2. What should not be forgotten when a birthday is celebrated? 3. Who was this daughter? 4. What can you say of Herodias? 5. What about the usual outcome of dancing? 6. What was likely the cause of Herod's mirthful mood? 7. What is an oath? 8. What was the character of Herod's oath? 9. Repeat the second commandment. 10. What does this mean? 10. What is forbidden by this commandment? 12. What does the name of God imply? 13. What do we understand by taking God's name in vain? 14. What does it mean to blaspheme? 15. What does it mean to curse? 16. So far from cursing our neighbor what are we to do? 17. With what word is a curse usually uttered? 18. What does it mean to swear by God's name? 19. What swearing is not wrong? 20. What swearing is forbidden? 21. What habit should Christians earnestly guard against? 22. On what occasion did the apostle Peter break this commandment? 23. What does it mean to use witchcraft by the name of God? 24. Give some examples of this? 25. What does it mean to lie or deceive by the name of God? 26. To what was the extravagance of Herod's promise likely due? 27. What great blessing did Salome not enjoy? 28. What moved Herodias in giving advice to her daughter? 29. How does a thoughtful Christian treat the matter of taking an oath? 30. How about breaking a sinful oath? 31. For what should Herod have had more concern? 32. How should the human body, even after death, be treated? 33. What is the Scriptural method of disposing of the dead?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 4. 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

8. DANIEL'S HABIT OF PRAYER.

DANIEL 6, 1-10.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie or deceive by His name; but CALL UPON IT IN EVERY TROUBLE, PRAY, PRAISE AND GIVE THANKS.

Daniel Honored.—It pleased Darius¹ to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes,² which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents;³ of whom Daniel was first;⁴ that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was preferred above the president and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him;⁵ and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.⁶

The Conspiracy.—Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion⁷ against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.⁸ Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of God.⁹

The Decree.—Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.¹⁰ All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O King, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore King Darius signed the writing and the decree.

Daniel at Prayer.—Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows

being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God,¹² as he did aforetime.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. After Belshazzar was slain Darius the Mede, with the consent of Cyrus, reigned in Babylon. 2. A wise arrangement. Minor details in the government of the provinces would thus receive more attention. 3. In order that any dishonesty or unfaithfulness on the part of either of the princes might be speedily detected. 4. Daniel was chief; even the other presidents were subject to him. Daniel in Persia reminds us of Joseph in Egypt. 5. Daniel was faithful to his ruler because he was faithful to God. We are "to obey magistrates." Men of the world are often compelled to admire the sterling qualities of a man of God. 6. Daniel had been faithful in humbler stations and now the king thought of promoting him. Here is an example for office holders, and all occupying responsible positions. 7. As Joseph's brethren envied their brother, so these subordinate officers envied Daniel. Envy is a kind of selfishness which causes its possessor to feel unhappy when some one else prospers. 8. Daniel must have been an upright man since so many enemies could find no fault in him. Christians should remember that the eyes of the world are fastened on them. Well for us if no one can justly accuse us of doing wrong. 9. Just so Satan tempts good people by trying to make right seem wrong, and wrong seem right. 10. They flattered the king. They professed to be seeking his honor in order that they might gain his signature. 11. They knew that Daniel loved to pray. They knew that if there was anything he would not give up even because of a royal decree, it was prayer. What a grand testimony to the character of the prophet! God wants His people to pray. This is *enjoined* in the second commandment. We are to use the name of God aright; or call upon it in every trouble, *pray, praise and give thanks*. To call upon God in every trouble means in every need to flee to God alone for refuge, and in childlike trust seek help of Him. God says, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Ps. 50, 15. Yes, He says, "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him: He also will hear their cry, and will save them," Ps. 145, 18, 19. 12. Daniel was in trouble. He retired to his room three times a day not to fret and complain, but to pray. Like Daniel we, too, are to pray, praise and give thanks. *To pray* is to ask. It means to lift up our hearts in true devotion to God and ask for every good thing in Jesus' name. Yes, our prayers must always be offered in Jesus' name. Prayer comes from the heart. Daniel went to his room and kneeled. Jesus tells us to enter our closet, and shut the door when we wish to pray. We will more likely keep our thoughts from wandering when alone. Prayer is a solemn service. It is not necessary that we be in any particular place, or in any particular

attitude in order to pray acceptably. It is proper, however, to kneel, fold the hands and close the eyes. In that way we show reverence and devotion.

Daniel prayed three times a day. He was a busy man, yet he found time for prayer. We should not allow the duties, cares and pleasures of life to keep us from praying. It is well to have stated times for prayer, such as when arising in the morning, and when retiring in the evening; however we may pray at any time.

We should *praise* God in prayer. He is *great, good and merciful*. He is such a wonderful Being that we poor sinners should be full of praise for Him at all times.

We should also *give thanks*. Daniel did so. Although in great trouble and imminent danger the prophet thought of many things for which to give thanks to God. It should be so with us. We should thank Him for His manifold blessings. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever." Ps. 106, 1.

QUESTIONS.

1. For what purpose did Darius set princes and presidents over the provinces? 2. To what position was Daniel appointed? 3. Of what other Biblical character does this prophet remind us? 4. What moved Daniel to be so faithful to his king? 5. What further promotion did the king have in view? 6. To whom especially is the prophet a praiseworthy example? 7. What turned the other officials against Daniel? 8. What were these envious men compelled to confess? 9. Mention a reason why Christians should be very careful as to their outward life? 10. What is one of Satan's favorite methods of tempting good people? 11. How did these officials proceed in order to win the king's favor? 12. Since these men could not accuse Daniel of wrong-doing, to what did they resort in order to get him into trouble? 13. In what divine service did they attempt to hinder the prophet? 14. What is enjoined in the second commandment? 15. What do we understand by calling upon God in every trouble? 16. Repeat some Scriptural passages which enjoin prayer. 17. What was Daniel's custom? 18. What does it mean to pray? 19. In whose name must all acceptable prayer be offered? 20. Why is it well to be alone when praying? 21. What can you say in regard to one's attitude in prayer? 22. What must not be allowed to hinder us in offering prayer? 23. Although we can pray at any time what will be found helpful? 24. Besides asking, what else should always characterize our prayers? 25. Because of God's unflinching goodness what, also, should have part in our prayers?

GOLDEN TEXT.

EPHESIANS 5, 10. Giving thank always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. KING JEHOIAKIM BURNS JEREMIAH'S ROLL.

JEREMIAH 36, 9-32.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may NOT DESPISE PREACHING AND HIS WORD; but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

Baruch Reads the Prophet's Words to the People. — And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim¹ the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that they proclaimed a fast² before the Lord to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem. Then read Baruch³ in the book the words⁴ of Jeremiah⁵ in the house of the Lord, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the new gate of the Lord's house, in the ears of all the people.

The Roll is Read to the Princes. — When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the Lord, then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber; and, lo, all the princes sat there, even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. Then Michaiah declared unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people. Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read it in their ears. Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid⁶ both one and other, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words. And

they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book.⁷ Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be.⁸

The King Destroys the Roll. — And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Jehudi⁹ to fetch the roll; and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes, which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month; and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth,¹⁰ until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.¹¹ Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

The Prophet writes Another Roll. — Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them. But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Saraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; but the Lord hid them. Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll¹² which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.

The Prophet Pronounces God's Judgment upon the King and the People. — And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, thus saith the Lord: Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The King of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land,¹³ and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out

in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.¹⁴ Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words.¹⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jehoiakim was a wicked King of Judah, reigning from 609 to 598 B. C. 2. The Jews were in serious trouble. Probably a fast was proclaimed just at this time because of the devastations of the Chaldean army. Fasting, when done with proper motives, "is a fine outward training." 3. Baruch was Jeremiah's faithful attendant—we would say, secretary. 4. This book or roll contained the words that Jeremiah had spoken against Israel and Judah and other nations. It was God's Word delivered through the prophet. 5. Jeremiah prophesied under Josiah, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah, and for some time during the exile. 6. The princes were deeply affected by the prophet's words. They were so frightened that they hastened to repeat the prophecies in the ears of the king. 7. They were the Word of God. The inspired Jeremiah uttered them, and the faithful Baruch wrote them. 8. The princes well knew that these terrible prophecies against Judah would enrage the king, and advised that Baruch and the prophet hide themselves. 9. Jehudi, a page, not Baruch, must read the roll to the king. 10. It was not merely the prophet and his attendant, but the word of God that the king was despising. This is a sin against the third commandment, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. As Luther says, this commandment means, We should fear and love God that we may not *despise preaching and His Word*, but gladly hear and learn it. The king was doing what this commandment *forbids, despising preaching and God's Word*. This is done to-day by those who, without good reason, absent themselves from the services of God's house. Under the Old Testament dispensation God's people were bound to observe the Sabbath. That day was observed until our Savior came. The same was true of the passover, the offering of sacrifices, etc. It was no longer necessary nor edifying to keep the Sabbath after Jesus had come. It was a shadow or type of the Savior, only to be used while awaiting His coming. Now that the Sabbath and other Jewish ceremonies have passed away, we are no longer bound to a fixed day. However God wants us to worship Him, to hear His Word and to sing His praise. To do this in an orderly and edifying way we must have a set time. It is in keeping with good order to have an appointed day for public worship required of God. Sunday has been set apart as a day of rest and public

worship. Sunday was chosen, because it is the day of the resurrection of Christ, and the Church has kept it since the time of the apostles." Every Sunday we commemorate our Lord's triumph over death. 11. The wicked king was determined not to hear any more of the prophet's words. People treat God's Word very much the same way to-day when they will not support the Christian Church with their means, nor sit beneath the preaching of the Word. We do much toward removing the Word that has found a lodging place in our heart by absenting ourselves from church services. We are apt to work harm of that kind to others by the bad example we set. Those who do not attend divine services regularly will do well to examine their excuses for not attending. As the king used his knife in severing the prophet's roll, so there are people who figuratively cut the Bible to pieces. They accept only that portion of the Word of God that suits them, and discard the rest. This is *despising that Word* which was given by inspiration of God. There are Church festival days and seasons that commemorate important events in the life of our Savior, or in the history of the Christian Church. A faithful observance of these festivals will help us to grow in knowledge, faith and love. Every adult Christian should be able to tell what we commemorate on Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Epiphany, Lent, etc. 12. Many bad men have done their utmost to destroy the Bible and overthrow the Christian Church. However, like Jehoiakim, they failed. God has said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." 13. The king undertook to fight against God. The foolish man might have known that he would meet inglorious defeat. 14. God often allows wicked men to go on for some time in their unholy work, but by and by He says, So far, but no further. The time will come when God's patience with the ungodly will cease, and His wrath will descend upon them. 15. The longer the wicked continue in their sins the more dreadful will be their punishment.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Jehoiakim? 2. Why this fast? 3. How do we regard fasting? 4. Who was Baruch? 5. What was written in the roll? 6. When did Jeremiah prophesy? 7. How were the princes affected on hearing the contents of the roll? 8. Why did the roll deserve reverent treatment? 9. Why were the princes afraid? 10. What did they advise? 11. How did the king treat Jeremiah and Baruch? 12. As they were God's appointed messengers or preachers, of what sin was the king guilty? 13. Which is the third commandment? 14. What does it mean? 15. What does this commandment forbid? 16. In what way do some people of our day commit this sin? 17. What can you say of the Sabbath? 18. Why do we no longer observe the Sabbath? 19. However, what does God want His people to do? 20. For the sake of order what is necessary? 21. What day of the week have Christians set apart for public worship? 22. Why was Sunday chosen? 23. What did the king try to do? 24. How do people still try to keep God's Word from reaching them? 25. What harm are Christians likely to do themselves and others by neglecting divine service? Of what does the king's cutting the roll remind us? 27. Mention a benefit of observing the church festivals. 28. Name some of the festival days and seasons of the Church, and tell what each commemorates. 29. Of what does Jehoiakim's failure to accomplish his purpose remind us? 30.

What assurance have we in regard to all such efforts? 31. Although God for a long time bears with the wicked what will surely come to pass?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 8: 47. He that is of God heareth God's words: Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

10. MARTHA AND MARY.

LUKE 10, 38-42.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Remember the Sabbath day to KEEP IT HOLY.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word; but HOLD IT SACRED AND GLADLY HEAR AND LEARN IT.

Jesus in the Family Circle. — Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word.

Martha's Complaint. — But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to Him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Our Lord's Reply. — And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Christ and His disciples. 2. Bethany, on Mount Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. 3. The name means mistress. Martha was very likely the oldest of the three members of the family, and mistress of the house. 4. A hospitable family. Although the Son of God, Jesus had no house of his own. Hospitality is enjoined by the Scriptures, as in Hebrews 13, 2: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." See Genesis 18, 3. 5. The name Mary means *exalted*. Mary was very attentive when Jesus spoke. She was obeying the third commandment which *enjoins* That we re-

member the Sabbath day to keep it holy, or that we hold preaching and His Word sacred and gladly hear and learn it. Of course we no longer observe the Sabbath day. We meet for public worship on the first day of the week, which we call Sunday or the Lord's day. We sanctify this day, or keep it holy. It is the Word of God and prayer that makes the day holy. We are to hold preaching and God's Word sacred, that is, as something holy. Like Mary, we should *gladly hear and learn* it. We should gladly hear it because Jesus says of those who preach, "He that heareth you heareth me." Let us not forget these words. We should regard the preacher as one acting in God's stead, and for God's sake hear him reverently. We are also to *learn* it. Mary sat at Jesus' feet. She was attentive in order that she might remember every word He said. The Apostle James warns us not to be "forgetful hearers." If, after you have returned from the church service, you cannot recall some portion of the text, and some words the preacher uttered, and some impressions his words made on you, there is reason to fear that you did not listen attentively, and are a forgetful hearer. 6. It was commendable in Martha to be concerned about Jesus' comfort, but she was *cumbered about much serving*. She should not have permitted earthly cares and duties to keep her from using a golden opportunity to hear the Word of God. She was not gladly hearing and learning the Word. We gladly hear and learn the Word When we hold God's Word as our highest treasure, and therefore not only make diligent use of it ourselves at home, but also with heartfelt pleasure and devotion hear it in public worship and more and more learn to understand and do it. Mary regarded God's Word as her *highest treasure*. So do we when we do our best to arrange our business matters and household duties so that we can attend divine service. Mary was making *diligent use* of the opportunity to learn God's Word. So do we when we read the Bible and good books and periodicals. Mary was hearing God's Word with *heartfelt pleasure and devotion*. So do we when we attend the public services of God's house as regularly as possible, take part in them, and listen attentively to the preaching of the Word. We have an example in the boy Samuel who, on hearing God's voice, said, "Speak, for thy servant heareth." We have an example in the boy Jesus at the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem. When He was lost His parents found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. 7. It is right to be busy, however we will do well to examine the motives that prompt us to service. Service is best judged by looking at the motive. We can easily make a mistake in judging the work that others are doing. If the motive is not proper, even those who are quite active in church work are not pleasing God. 8. Although Martha was very busy yet she was not serving Jesus as acceptably as Mary. It was right that she attend to her household duties, but it was not right that she attend to them in such a way and at such a time as to keep her from hearing Jesus' words. 9. The interests of the soul should not be neglected, not even if one has company to entertain. 10. Some, like Mary, are making very

little ado in the world, and yet are rendering splendid service. Reverently listening to God's Word is a service pleasing to God, and profitable to ourselves.

QUESTIONS.

1. What village is referred to, and where was it located? 2. Who was Jesus' hostess? 3. In what respect did this family set a good example? 4. What does St. Paul say in the book of Hebrews on this subject? Who entertained angels unawares? 6. In what respect did Mary set us a good example? 7. Which is the third commandment? 8. What does it mean? 9. How is our day for public worship sanctified? 10. How should we hold preaching and God's Word? 11. Which words of Jesus should move us to hear God's Word gladly? 12. How should we regard the preacher? 13. How did Mary show her eagerness to learn the Word? 14. Against what kind of hearers does St. James warn? 15. Mention circumstances under which it would be evident that one is a forgetful hearer. 16. For what is Martha to be commended? 17. What mistake did she make? 18. What did she not do? 19. When can it be said of us that we are gladly hearing and learning the Word? 20. When it is evident that one regards God's Word as his highest treasure? 21. When are we diligently using our opportunities to learn God's Word? 22. When is it evident that one is hearing the Word with heartfelt pleasure? 23. Mention an incident in which the boy Samuel showed himself an attentive hearer. 24. On what occasion did the boy Jesus set a good example in this respect? 25. What should we examine when we are active in church work? 26. Why is it easy to misjudge the service others are rendering? 27. In what respect did Martha come short? 28. What dare not be neglected even when we have company? 29. What may we learn from Mary? 30. Mention a service that all can render.

GOLDEN TEXT.

THESSALONIANS 2, 13. When ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of men, but, as it is in truth, the Word of God.

11. REVIEW OF LESSONS 5-10.

The Sin of Idolatry.— The chosen people of God, highly favored Israel, clamored for an idol. Their leader Moses, was on Mount Sinai, receiving the law at God's hands, and the people had grown impatient at his long absence, and cried to Aaron, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us." They transgressed the first commandment, as we learned in Lesson 5. We, too, are in danger of breaking this commandment, not by fashioning an idol of gold, but by giving to one thing or another the honor that belongs to God alone. When proud people set their heart on clothing, jewelry, etc., when covetous people make the accumulating of wealth their object in life, when vainglorious people long for the praise of men, they are doing

what the first commandment forbids. The Israelites were willing to give up their jewelry in order to have such a god as they craved, so there are many who are willing to give up their Bible and church and hope of salvation for the pleasures and possessions of the world. When out of fear of public opinion, people will not favor a righteous cause, or oppose what is wrong; when out of love of ease, sleep, money, etc., people neglect their Christian duty; when out of confidence in their own views or the views of others, people reject the Word of God—in all these ways they transgress this commandment—give to the creature the honor due to God.

God above All.—When the God-fearing Jewish captives would not worship King Nebuchaduezzar's image, although threatened with death should they not do so, they were obeying the first commandment, which enjoins that we fear, love and trust in God above all things. (Lesson 6.) That means that we are to stand in childlike awe of God, regard Him as the highest good, and look to Him for every blessing. These Jewish captives were not possessed with a slavish fear, for they manifested great courage. God wants us to fear Him in the sense that we stand in awe of Him. Joseph had this kind of fear, and when tempted by Potiphar's wife said, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God. If we would rather do wrong than lose a job we are not fearing God above all things. This commandment enjoins that we love God above all things. Abraham loved his son Isaac, but he loved God more than he loved his son, and was willing to sacrifice his son rather than offend God. The three Jewish captives loved life dearly, but they loved God more, and were willing to give up life rather than offend God. In this commandment we are enjoined to trust in God above all things. Moses trusted in God so implicitly that when God said, Go forward, he obeyed, although the Red Sea confronted him. The three men referred to in this lesson trusted in God even when the king ordered them to be cast into the fiery furnace.

Profaning God's Name.—By binding himself to his foolish promise with a terrible oath King Herod took God's name in vain. In Lesson 7 we learn that God forbids this sin in the second commandment. It is contrary to this commandment to curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie or deceive in God's

name. God's name implies all that He has revealed concerning himself in Holy Scriptures, such as His essence, attributes and command. This command forbids using God's name for a useless or sinful purpose. We are not to curse, that is, not to blaspheme God, or by God's name wish evil to ourselves or our neighbor. It forbids speaking sneeringly of God, which is blasphemy. It forbids swearing when by so doing we take God's name in vain. To swear by the name of God means to appeal to God as witness of the truth and avenger of the untruth. When the honor of God, our neighbor's need, or the courts demand it one may swear without breaking this commandment. It is thoughtless and false swearing that displeases God. It is also wrong to use witchcraft, which is, with the help of the devil, and by a superstitious use of God's name and Word, either to harm our neighbor in person or property, or to seemingly work good. Lying in God's name is also forbidden by this commandment. Palming off false doctrine as God's Word is the sin referred to. Those who act the hypocrite—deceive in God's name—are likewise doing what the second commandment forbids. King Herod ordered the faithful preacher killed rather than break his oath. While it is wrong to break a proper oath, it is better to break a sinful oath than to keep it.

Hallowing God's Name.—The decree of powerful King Darius, threatening death to all who engaged in worship, did not keep Daniel from going to his room and kneeling in prayer three times a day. As we learned in Lesson 8, God would have us call upon Him in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks. To call on God in every trouble is to flee to Him for refuge, and seek help of Him in every hour of need. To pray is to ask. Prayer comes from the heart, and must be offered in Jesus' name. Daniel went to his room to pray, and Jesus tells us to enter our closet and shut the door, when we wish to pray. It is not necessary that we be in some particular place, or in a particular attitude, in order to pray acceptably. Kneeling, folding the hands, and closing the eyes are becoming, since they manifest reverence. Daniel prayed three times daily, and all will do well to have stated times for worship. To praise God is to speak well of Him. To give thanks to God is to express our gratitude for His manifold blessings.

Despising the Word of God.—When King Jehoiakim burned the roll on which Jeremiah had written the Word of God, he committed the sin that is forbidden in the third commandment. In Lesson 9, we considered the sin of despising preaching and God's Word. A proper use of God's Word does not require us to observe any particular day, as was the case in Old Testament times. The Sabbath has passed away, and Sunday is not a divinely appointed day. It is in keeping with good order to have a day set apart on which Christians assemble to hear the Word and worship, and Sunday has been chosen, as it commemorates Jesus' resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Those who will not support the Church by word and deed, those who absent themselves from divine service without good reason, those who do not behave in church, and those who will not humbly accept the Word as God has revealed it to us, are transgressing the third commandment. The Church has festival days and seasons which commemorate events in the life of our Savior, or in the history of the Christian Church. An earnest desire to serve and praise God, and learn His will, moves Christians to observe these church festivals as they annually occur. As God's judgment was visited upon the wicked Jehoiakim, so those who persist in despising His Word will not escape God's righteous wrath.

A Most Precious Treasure.—Mary chose the good part, and sat at Jesus' feet to learn of Him. (Lesson 10.) We follow her example when we hold God's Word sacred, and gladly hear and learn it. That we may have the opportunity to hear His Word the Lord has established the Christian Church, and instituted the office of the ministry. We should regard the preacher as one acting in God's stead and hear him reverently. In order that we may also learn the Word we should be attentive, lowly-hearted hearers, hearing, remembering and accepting the Word that is proclaimed to us. We do this when we hold God's Word as our highest treasure, make diligent use of it at home, with heartfelt pleasure and devotion hear it at the public services, and seek better and better to understand and obey it. He who regards God's Word as his highest treasure will appreciate the services of the Church. He who has heartfelt pleasure in hearing God's Word will attend the services of God's house as regularly as possible. He who

makes diligent use of his opportunities will take time to read the Bible and good books and periodicals.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 5. 1. Of what sin was Israel guilty? 2. What were the circumstances? 3. What did they ask of Aaron? 4. Which commandment did they transgress? 5. What danger confronts us in this respect? 6. How are proud people likely to break this commandment? Covetous? Vainglorious? 7. What sacrifice did Israel make in their idolatrous worship? 8. What sacrifice are modern idolaters willing to make? 9. How are those who fear public opinion likely to transgress this commandment? Those who love ease, etc? Those who rely on the opinions of men?

LESSON 6. 1. How did the three Jewish captives comply with the requirements of this commandment? 2. What is it to fear, love and trust in God above all things? 3. What kind of fear had no place in the hearts of these men? 4. In what sense did they fear God? 5. How did Joseph manifest this fear? 6. Mention a circumstance which would indicate the absence of true fear of God. 7. Mention an incident in Abraham's life that accords with this commandment. 8. How did these men manifest their love of God? 9. Mention an incident in Moses' life that shows his confidence in God. 10. How did these captives show their faith in God?

LESSON 7. 1. By what act did King Herod take God's name in vain? 2. Which commandment forbids this sin? 3. Mention different ways of transgressing this commandment. 4. What do we understand by the name of God? 5. What use of God's name is forbidden? 6. What is cursing? Swearing? Blaspheming? 7. When is it right to take an oath? 8. What kind of swearing is forbidden? 9. What is using witchcraft? Lying? Deceiving in God's name? 10. Under what circumstances should one break an oath?

LESSON 8. 1. Under what circumstances did Daniel continue to pray? 2. What is enjoined in the second commandment? 3. What is it to call on God in every trouble? To pray? 4. How should we pray? 5. In what respect should we follow Daniel's example? 6. What is not essential to prayer? 7. What is becoming while at prayer? 8. Mention another particular in which Daniel's example is praiseworthy? 9. What is it to praise God? To give thanks?

LESSON 9. 1. Which commandment did King Jehoiakim break by burning the roll? 2. What is forbidden in the third commandment? 3. What is not required of us by this commandment? 4. Why have we set apart a day for worship? 5. Why has Sunday been chosen? 6. Mention several ways of transgressing the third commandment. 7. What do we understand by church festivals? 8. Mention some days and seasons that we observe. 9. What should move us to observe these festivals? 10. Of what does the punishment inflicted on the wicked king remind us?

LESSON 10. 1. How did Mary show that she had chosen the better part? 2. How may we follow her example? 3. What opportunities have we for doing so? 4. How should we regard the preacher of the Word? 5. To what should a desire to learn God's Word move us? 6. In what way may we do this? 7. How will we show that we regard God's Word as our highest treasure? 8. How will we show that we have heartfelt pleasure in hearing the Word? 9. To what will diligent use of our opportunities lead us?

12. ABSALOM'S REBELLION.

2 SAMUEL 15.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may NOT DESPISE OUR PARENTS AND MASTERS, NOR PROVOKE THEM TO ANGER; but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem.

Absalom's Treachery. — In all Israel there was none to be so much praised for his beauty as Absalom, the son of David; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.¹ And when he polled his head, the hair of his head weighed two hundred shekels.² And Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.³ And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate; and when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said unto him, See thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed by the king to hear thee. Oh, that I were made judge in the land, that every man might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel; so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.⁴ And Absalom said unto the king, Let me go and pay my vow,⁵ which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.⁶ And the conspiracy was strong: for the people increased continually with Absalom.

David Flees. — And there came a messenger to David saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. And David said unto all his servants, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom; make speed and depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and smite the city with the edge

of the sword. And the king went forth, and all his household after him.⁷ And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over; the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron,⁸ and went up Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot.⁹ And, behold, Shimei of the house of Saul came forth, and cursed still as he came; and he cast stones at David, and said, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial.¹⁰ Then Abishai said, Let me go over and take off his head. And the king said, Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. It may be that the Lord will require me good for his cursing this day.¹¹ And Absalom and all the men of Israel came to Jerusalem.

Absalom Slain. — And David numbered the people that were with him, and set captains over them. And the king commanded them, saying, Deal kindly¹² for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charges concerning Absalom. And the battle was in the wood of Ephriam, where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men.¹³ And Absalom met the servants of David. And he rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. And Joab took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom. And the young men that bare Joab's armor compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him. Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel; for Joab held back the people. And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him; and all Israel fled every one to his tent. And David sat between the two gates. And when it was told David that Absalom was dead he was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son.¹⁴ And the men of Judah sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants. So the king returned.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Beauty and comeliness are dangerous blessings; many sons and daughters have become proud and haughty because of them. One had better be homely in appearance and have a good heart, than to be very beautiful and have a bad heart. 2. Probably about three pounds. 3. Absalom had been indulged and humored until he was thoroughly spoiled. It is not wise, nor in accordance with love, for parents to deal lavishly with their children. 4. By flattery and extravagant promises Absalom stole the hearts of the people from his father and king. He was doing what the fourth commandment *forbids*. By father and mother, or parents and masters, we understand All those whom God has placed over others, particularly natural parents and those who are in their stead, as also civil government. In every relation of life there are *superiors*—those who are over others. In the family the superiors are father and mother. All who take the place of our natural parents, or who are placed over us, or because of their greater age, are included among those whom we are to honor and obey. The Israelites called Abraham their father. Elisha called his teacher, Elijah, father. Servants are enjoined to honor their masters. Besides our natural parents there are many others whom we should honor and obey; as *step-parents, foster-parents, grand-parents, parents-in-law, teachers, foremen*, etc. In the congregation the *pastor* is to receive the honor that is accorded the parents in the family. Christians must not forget that God has placed their pastor over the congregation. In the school-room the *teacher* is to receive such honor. Children who are disobedient and disrespectful at school are transgressing the fourth commandment. In the city, in the community, or in the country at large, the *rulers and others in authority* are to be honored and obeyed. The fourth commandment *forbids* that we *despise* our parents and masters, or provoke them to anger. That means, we should not *make light* of them in our hearts, nor *offend* them in word or act. Absalom despised his father and king when he turned the hearts of the people against him. He provoked him to anger by leading the people to rebellion. He offended his father in word and deed when he found fault with his dealings with the people, and deceived them by his lies. 5. The rebellious son pretended to be very pious. He claimed to have made a religious vow, and asked the king's permission to go to Hebron and offer a sacrifice to God. A lie is always a grievous sin, but to lie in regard to the interests of the soul is especially grievous. No doubt it pleased David to hear his worldly son professing such good intentions. Absalom's sin was like that of Judas Iscariot. He *made light* of his father. 6. He hoped, no doubt, by publishing this news quickly to win many more of the people. 7. David fled because he feared that many of the people had joined in the rebellion, and because he hesitated to have war in Israel and war against his son. Perhaps he looked upon the trouble as a chastening of God for his sins, and preferred to bow beneath the rod. 8. The brook Kidron had its source near Jerusalem, flowed northeast through the vale of Kidron,

between the city and Mount Olives, emptying into the Dead Sea. 9. This incident may have been typical of Jesus' sad journey over this brook when Judas was preparing to rebel and to betray Him. 10. Shimei, of the house of Saul, had no love for David, who had succeeded Saul to the throne, and took this opportunity to give expression to his hatred. Here also we see a shadow of the cruelty the Jews heaped upon David's Son and Lord. Shimei's conduct was forbidden by the fourth commandment. He was despising his superior. 11. Although David had repented of the grievous sins of which he had been guilty he felt that God might justly chasten him. If God meant this as a chastening he would do nothing toward warding it off. He would rather suffer according to God's will than to be relieved contrary to His will. 12. What remarkable patience! What parental love! David was a type of our Savior. In his dealings with rebellious Absalom we have pictured Jesus' patience, compassion and love for rebellious mankind. 13. What suffering and sorrow grew out of the sins of a wayward son! As obedient children bring Heaven's blessing upon themselves and others, so disobedient children bring shame, sorrow and suffering upon themselves and others. 14. Another picture of God's goodness who says, "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord God; and not rather that he should return from his way, and live?" Ezekiel 18, 23.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is better than external beauty? 2. What, very likely, had started Absalom in his wayward career? 3. How did this erratic son steal the hearts of the people? 4. Which commandment was he thus transgressing? 5. Which is the fourth commandment? 6. What does it mean? 7. Whom do you understand by parents and masters? 8. Where do we find superiors, or those whom we are to honor? 9. What may we learn from the fact that Israel called Abraham father? 10. What does Elisha teach us by referring to Eljah as father? 11. To whom are pupils to give the respect due to their natural parents? 12. Mention some persons to whom we owe the honor due to our parents. 13. What is forbidden by this commandment? 14. What does this mean? 15. How did Absalom despise his father? 16. In what way did he provoke his father to anger? 17. What did he do that was offending his father in word or deed? 18. What deception did he practice? 19. Of whose sin does Absalom's remind us? What evidently moved David to flee? 21. Describe the brook Kidron. 22. Of what incident in our Savior's life does this journey of David remind us? 23. Who was Shimei? 24. Of what does the abuse this man heaped upon David remind us? 25. How did David regard Shimei's cursing? 26. Of what is David's patience with his erratic son a faint picture? 27. What promise is given to those who obey this commandment? 28. What is often the result of a wilful transgression of this commandment? 29. David's sorrow over Absalom's death reminds us of what sweet truth?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PROVERBS 30, 17. The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

13. JESUS SUBJECT TO HIS PARENTS.

LUKE 2, 41-52.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger; but GIVE THEM HONOR, SERVE AND OBEY them, and HOLD them in LOVE and ESTEEM.

Jesus Lost. — Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.¹ And when He was twelve years old,² they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days,³ as they returned, the Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem;⁴ and Joseph and His mother knew not of it.⁵ But they, supposing Him to have been in the company,⁶ went a day's journey: and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.⁷ And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him.⁸

Jesus Sitting with the Doctors. — And it came to pass, that after three days⁹ they found Him in the temple,¹⁰ sitting in the midst of the doctors,¹¹ both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.¹²

Jesus' Parents Amazed. — And when they saw Him they were amazed;¹³ and His mother¹⁴ said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.¹⁵ And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?¹⁶ And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them.

Jesus at Nazareth. — And He went down with them,¹⁷ and came to Nazareth and was subject¹⁸ unto them; but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature,¹⁹ and in favor with God and man.²⁰

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The passover was the greatest of the Jewish festivals; it was observed in commemoration of Israel's escape from the death of the firstborn in Egypt, and was celebrated annually. All males twenty years old and above were required to attend; women and children could of course also attend. The lamb was eaten on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, and the feast continued seven days. Since Nazareth was about 70 miles from Jerusalem, Mary manifested her religious character by joining the slowly moving caravan each season. 2. When a Jewish boy was twelve years old he became a "son of the law" and was expected to observe more fully the religious ordinances. This is the first reference to Jesus after His return from Egypt in infancy. 3. They remained the seven days. This was not required—many left after two days. This family loved the house of the Lord. 4. We are not told how it happened that Jesus did not start with the rest of the company. We know that it was not out of a spirit of disobedience. 5. Joseph and Mary were not neglectful of their parental duty. They had such confidence in their son that it never occurred to them to investigate whether He was in the company. 6. The people from the vicinity of Nazareth, and others who had joined them on the way. It was customary to go to the feast in companies or caravans. 7. Had their son been undutiful or untrustworthy such god-fearing parents as Joseph and Mary would not have traveled all day without hunting Him up. They discovered that He was absent in the evening when families were reunited. 8. No doubt they waited until morning. 9. Very likely three days counting from the time they first started for home. 10. In one of the apartments of the temple where the doctors of the law held conferences. 11. He was in the midst of the doctors or scribes—teachers of the Scriptures. He was not there out of curiosity, but as one deeply interested, both hearing them and asking them questions. 12. He showed remarkable familiarity with the Scriptures. His parents had been faithful in instructing Him. 13. No doubt the Boy Jesus was of a retiring disposition, and His parents were amazed to see Him so much at home with strangers. His seeming unconcern at being separated from them also astonished them. 14. His mother did the speaking. Joseph was only His foster-father, and Mary may have felt it to be her special duty to speak at this time. 15. Mary rebuked her Son. Possibly it seemed to her that He was unconcerned. 16. In replying, Jesus reminded His parents that they had no reason to be worried. They should have realized that He must begin to prepare for the work for which He had come to this world. He must be about His Father's business. He already knew that He was called to a great work, and felt that His parents should not expect Him to remain a carpenter at Nazareth. 17. Although, doubtless, Jesus knew that He must by and by spend much of His time in Judea and at Jerusalem. He also knew that the time for withdrawing from His parents had not yet come. 18. He always had been subject to them; but even now, although more fully realizing His great mission, and a "son of the law," He is

still subject to them. The Boy Jesus sets us an example in obedience to superiors. The fourth commandment *enjoins* That we honor our father and mother, or give honor to our parents and masters, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem. This means that we are To hold them in high regard as persons acting in God's stead, to please them, cheerfully be subject to them, and to requite them with all manner of good. Since our parents are acting in God's stead we should hold them in *high regard*. God has placed them over us. God gave us life through our parents. He moves them to provide for our wants of body, mind and soul. He places other superiors over us, too. They also are acting in God's stead.

It was not necessary for Joseph and Mary to urge or force the Boy Jesus to accompany them and be subject to them. Children should *cheerfully* be *subject* to their parents. When boys and girls pout and grumble on being asked to do something they are transgressing this commandment. When children must be coaxed, urged, punished or rewarded before they will obey their parents or other superiors, they are transgressing this commandment.

Should parents or other superiors ask us to do wrong we must disobey them. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were ordered to worship the golden image they disobeyed. We are to obey God rather than man.

The Boy Jesus remained at Nazareth, was subject to His parents, doubtless learned carpentering, and served His parents faithfully. Children should requite their parents with all manner of good. When Joseph heard of the famine in Canaan he sent for his father, had chariots to meet him, introduced him to King Pharaoh, and bountifully provided for him. In order that we may be more careful to honor and obey our parents God has added a promise to this commandment. He says, "That it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth." Joseph experienced how true that promise is. Absalom learned that God's wrath descends on ungrateful, disobedient children. 19. There were no weaknesses and imperfections to keep Him back in His studies. Having no sin His increase in wisdom was rapid. 20. As He was without sin God was pleased with everything that He did and said, and all god-fearing people admired and loved Him.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of the passover? 2. What attests to Mary's piety and devoutness? 3. What is to be noted of this period in Jesus' life? 4. How did Joseph and his family show their deep interest in the service? 5. What would be a wrong explanation of the chief incident in this lesson? 6. What do we understand by the company? 7. How did it happen that an entire day passed before the absence of Jesus was discovered? 8. Where was the lost Boy found? 9. In what was He engaged? 10. What was His purpose in mingling with the doctors of the law? 11. What did He show? 12. Why were the parents amazed? 13. What rebuke did His mother administer? 14. What must have seemed strange to the parents? 15. What was Jesus' reply? 16. What did He mean by "My Father's business"? 17. What should Joseph and Mary have realized? In what respect does Jesus here set children a good example? 19. Which:

Is the fourth commandment? 20. What does it mean? 21. What is enjoined in this commandment? 22. What does that mean? 23. What should especially move us to hold our parents in high regard? 24. In what way should children be subject to their parents? 25. Mention circumstances under which children would not be subject to their parents cheerfully. 26. What is to be done should a superior ask us to do wrong? 27. What do we understand by requiting parents? 28. Relate how Joseph requited his father. 29. What has God added to this commandment that is not found in any of the others? 30. What is the promise? 31. Why did He add this promise? 32. Give an example of a son who experienced the truthfulness of this promise? 33. Give an example of a son who brought grief to himself and others by transgressing this commandment? 34. What advantage did the Boy Jesus have in His studies? 35. What was to His advantage in His growth in wisdom and favor?

GOLDEN TEXT.

COLOSSIANS 3, 20. Children obey your parents in all things; for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord.

14. CAIN MURDERS ABEL.

GENESIS 4, 3-16.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT KILL.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may NOT HURT NOR HARM OUR NEIGHBOR IN HIS BODY; but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

Cain's Envy.—And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

The Murder.—And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

The Punishment. — And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not; am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. God had promised to send a Savior, the Seed of the woman. Eve looked upon Cain as God's gift, possibly as the promised Seed. The name she gave her son means "possession." 2. No doubt God had commanded Adam to offer sacrifices, one purpose of which was to foreshadow the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Adam and Eve instructed their sons in this matter. 3. God accepted Abel's offering but rejected Cain's. The chief reason why one was accepted and the other rejected was that Abel's heart was right and Cain's was not. Besides, Abel brought the "fat," the "firstlings"; his offering was therefore the better. The fact that Abel sacrificed animals, which pointed more plainly to the blood of Jesus Christ, was in his favor. When we attend divine service, pray, give alms, and do the like things, we are bringing a sacrifice to God. Let us see to it that our hearts are right. The pharisee and the publican, of whom Jesus speaks, are New Testament examples of the kind of worshippers represented by these brothers. 4. Cain was angry at God, but the trouble lay in himself. His heart was full of envy. 5. God reproves Cain in order to bring him to repentance. He does not want the wicked man to perish. If Cain will repent his sacrifice also will be accepted. 6. An earnest warning. In His law God warns all men that sin is trying to get the mastery over us. 7. We are not helpless in the clutches of Satan and sin. If we look to God He will grant us strength to overcome temptation. 8. Cain pretended that he was at peace with Abel—talked with him,—yet hated him. He acted the hypocrite. 9. Cain slew his brother without provocation, after having been warned, and while pretending to love him. St. John says:

he slew him because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Cain transgressed the fifth commandment which *forbids killing*; or to *hurt* or *harm* our neighbor in his body. To kill means to destroy life. Human life is referred to. We may take the life of animals when we need them for food and clothing, or when they are dangerous. However in taking the life of animals we should avoid cruelty.

There is a marked difference between man's life and the life of animals. When God created man He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Besides, God created man in His own image. We should place a high value on human life.

We transgress this commandment through *hateful thoughts, words* and *deeds*. Cain cherished *hateful thoughts* against Abel, and these moved him to slay his brother. The apostle says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." 1. John 3, 15. We cannot help but get angry at one another, so sinful are we. However we should try to avoid this, and pray for grace to control our temper. The apostle says, "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Eph. 4, 26. That means, Be reconciled. Do not remain angry at any one.

Cain thought he had a grievance against Abel because the latter's sacrifice was accepted while his was rejected. He foolishly tried to even up matters by taking his brother's life. Whether we have a real or imaginary grievance against one we should not yield to the sinful thought that rankled in Cain's breast. That is desiring *revenge*. The apostle says, "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.'" Rom. 12, 19-20.

We transgress this commandment by *hateful words*. The prophet speaks of smiting with the tongue. Gossiping, slandering, defaming and the like is smiting with the tongue.

We commit this sin through *hateful acts*. David coveted Bathsheba and told his captain to see to it that her husband, Uriah, was killed in battle. David was guilty of that murder, although he did not lay a hand on Uriah. Herod sent his officers to kill the baby boys in the vicinity of Bethlehem, and thus added to his list of murders. Jacob's sons threw their brother Joseph into a pit, and afterward sold him into slavery, and thus transgressed this commandment.

This sin is also committed by him who takes his own life. This is the more terrible because the self-murderer likely deprives himself of an opportunity to repent. When the jailer at Phillippi was about to kill himself the apostle cried, "Do thyself no harm." Those who abuse their bodies by indulgence, over-work, unnecessary exposure, neglect, and the like are transgressing this commandment. 10. God saw this sin. No sin escapes His eye. 11. Cain told a lie to cover up the murder. One sin leads to another. 12. Those who wilfully do wrong can find no peace and happiness while they continue in their sin. Their conscience allows them no rest. 13. It was a terrible curse that rested

on this murderer. This should impress us with the dreadfulness of sin. 14. While God's wrath rests upon impenitent sinners, His mercy is extended to all in and through Jesus Christ. In Christ, Cain and other murderers can find peace. 15. The word Nod means *wandering*.

QUESTIONS.

1. How did Eve regard her first-born? 2. What does the name Cain signify? 3. How did the offering of sacrifices originate? 4. Why was Abel's sacrifice accepted and Cain's rejected? 5. How do we bring sacrifices to God? 6. Of what New Testament characters does the worship of these brothers remind us? 7. What was the beginning of Cain's sin? 8. Why did God reprove Cain? 9. Where do we find God's warning against sin? 10. In what will God give us strength if we look to Him? 11. What else besides envy characterized Cain's sin? 12. What made this sin all the worse? 13. Which is the fifth commandment? 14. What does it mean? 15. What is forbidden in this commandment? 16. What kind of life is referred to? 17. How about taking the life of animals? 18. Why is human life valued so much more highly than that of animals? 19. Mention three ways of transgressing this commandment. 20. What did Cain cherish before committing this wicked deed? 21. What does the apostle say about hating a brother? 22. What should we do in regard to anger? 23. What grievance did Cain cherish against his brother? 24. What was he foolishly trying to do? 25. What does the apostle say on this subject? 26. To whom should we submit all avenging? 27. What is the second way mentioned of transgressing this commandment? 28. Give some examples of this kind of murder. 29. What is the third way mentioned of transgressing this commandment? 30. How did David make himself guilty of this sin? 31. By what act did Herod do so? 32. Relate how Jacob's sons became guilty of this sin? 33. What makes the sin of self-murder especially grievous? 34. Mention some ways by which people do harm to themselves? 35. Of what other sin was Cain soon guilty? 36. What does this show us? 37. What robs impenitent sinners of peace? 38. How should the awful curse that rested on Cain impress us? 39. How may all sinners find peace?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I JOHN 3, 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

15. THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

LUKE 10, 23-37.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body; but HELP AND BEFRIEND HIM IN EVERY BODILY NEED.

Blessed Eyes.—And Jesus turned him unto his disciples.

and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things¹ that ye see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired² to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.³

The Lawyer's Question.—And, behold, a certain lawyer⁴ stood up, and tempted⁵ him, saying, Master,⁶ what shall I do to inherit eternal life?⁷ He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou?⁸ And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.⁹ And He said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live.¹⁰ But he, willing to justify himself¹¹ said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

The Man Fallen Among Thieves.—And Jesus answering¹² said, A certain man¹³ went down from Jerusalem to Jericho,¹⁴ and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.¹⁵ But a certain Samaritan,¹⁶ as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The disciples were highly favored because they saw Jesus the Messiah, heard His words of wisdom and saw His wondrous works. 2. Many people of the Old Testament dispensation ardently longed to see the promised Messiah, and earnestly hoped that He would come in their day. Among these were prophets and kings, such as Abraham, Moses, David and others. 3. All these longed and waited in vain, for four thousand years passed before the fullness of time came, and the

Savior appeared. 4. The lawyers, or doctors of the law, were probably the same as the scribes. They were supposed to be learned in the Scriptures. They were looked up to as leaders of the people. 5. He wanted to test Jesus—no doubt hoped to find some fault with His answer. 6. He addressed Jesus with respect, although as a class the scribes were proud, and did not care to hear Jesus' words of counsel. 7. It is commendable in any one to be concerned about his soul's salvation. This man was self-righteous, however, and expected to be saved by his good works. 8. Jesus saw that the man expected to be saved by obeying the law, and therefore asked him to state what the law demands. Jesus wished to lead him to see that the law asks far more than the sinner can give. 9. The lawyer answers correctly. The law requires perfect love to God and perfect love to one's neighbor. He was made to answer his own question, and his effort to entrap Jesus was thwarted. 10. The Lord said, "Now you have the answer to your question. Go on and do this, and you will live." Of course Jesus did not say that the man would succeed. There are those of our day, too, who are hoping to be saved by what they do—by being honest, truthful, neighborly and the like. How often do we hear it said, "Oh, if a person does the best he can he will come out all right." Such persons are not looking to Jesus for salvation. 11. His effort to entrap Jesus had failed, but he did not wish to admit it. He asks another question to leave the impression that he is sincere. 12. Jesus answered the question by an illustration. He gives an example. This is a splendid hint to teachers. 13. A Jew. One whose misfortune should have appealed to his fellow Jews. 14. A distance of about twenty miles. The road led through a wild, rocky region. At one place there was a ravine that was often used as a lurking place for highwaymen. 15. Many priests and Levites lived at Jericho, and traveled to and from the temple. Of these one would not expect such a want of sympathy. We often fail to find the fruit of faith and love where we expect to see it. Do you see a picture of yourself in either of these men? There are poor, needy, sick and unfortunate ones along the way of life. Are we aiding them? 16. The Samaritans were a mixed race of Israelites and Assyrians. The Jews were bitter against these people. The Samaritan found the wounded man a person who had no love for him or for his people, yet he tenderly ministered to his wants. He was doing what the fifth commandment enjoins, viz.: "That we with kindness and tenderness render assistance to our neighbor in all needs of the body and life." While this commandment forbids that we hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, it commands that we help and befriend our neighbor in every bodily need. The unfortunate victim of the highwaymen was in need. He had wounds to dress, and a weakened body to feed and nourish. The priest and Levite were guilty of hurting and harming the man since they withheld the assistance they could have given him. Not so the Samaritan. He helped and befriended the unfortunate traveler. If we love our neighbor as we love ourselves we will pity him in his troubles. The apostle urges, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and

beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Colossians 3, 12, 13.

The sufferer was a Jew, and the Jews disliked the Samaritans, yet this Samaritan renders him assistance. Jesus says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matthew 5, 44, 45. This commandment *enjoins* that we help and befriend our neighbor in every bodily need. We are to do so even if that neighbor is our enemy.

The love we bear for our neighbor must move us to *serve* him. The apostle enjoins, "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Hebrews 13, 16.

While we are careful not to smite our neighbor, or give him pain in any way, we are also to *help him out of the trouble* he encounters as he journeys through life. We are on our way from the Jericho of this world to the heavenly Jerusalem. There are many along the way needing our assistance. Shall we deal with such unfortunates as did the priest and Levite, or shall we follow the example of the Samaritan?

QUESTIONS.

1. In what respect were the disciples favored? 2. What characterized many of the Old Testament people? 3. Can you mention any prophets and kings who longed to see the Messiah? 4. How many years of waiting were there? 5. What can you say of the lawyers of Jesus' day? 6. How were the scribes as a class disposed toward Jesus? 7. What was the lawyer's question? 8. What was his idea of the plan of salvation? 9. With what question did Jesus reply? 10. What was the purpose of our Lord's question? 11. What was the lawyer's answer? 12. Give the meaning of Jesus' reply? 13. Of what error of our day are we reminded? 14. In order to justify himself what question did the lawyer then ask? 15. What well known parable constitutes Jesus' reply? 16. What can we learn from the character of Jesus' reply? 17. Where is it supposed that this incident transpired? 18. What about the road from Jericho to Jerusalem? 19. How did the priest and Levite transgress the fifth commandment? 20. What aggravated their sin? 21. Of what sad fact does this remind us? 22. What opportunities of this kind are offered us? 23. Who were the Samaritans? 24. How were the Jews disposed toward them? 25. Which is the fifth commandment? 26. What does it mean? 27. What is enjoined in this commandment? 28. By what deed did the Samaritan render obedience to this commandment? 29. Of what were the priest and Levite guilty? 30. Which words of St. Paul to the Colossians are pertinent here? 31. What circumstances made the Samaritan's kind act all the more commendable? 32. Repeat the words of Jesus in regard to the treatment of an enemy. 33. What words of the apostle should make us active in words of love?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 7, 12. All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

16. REVIEW OF LESSONS 12-15.

Despising Superiors.— Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel from his father, the king. He thereby transgressed the fourth commandment which forbids that we despise our parents and masters, or provoke them to anger. (Lesson 12.) By parents and masters we understand all whom God has placed over others, particularly natural parents, and those who are in their stead, as also civil government. In the family the superiors are father and mother, step-parents, foster-parents, grand-parents, parents-in-law, etc. In the congregation the pastor is to receive the honor that is accorded the parents in the family. In school, the teacher; in the city or community or country, those in authority. To despise our superiors is to make light of them in our heart. Absalom despised his father, and provoked him to anger by leading the people to rebellion. He deceived his father, and by so doing made light of him. David was very patient with his erring son. In his dealings with rebellious Absalom we have a picture of Jesus' patience, compassion and love for rebellious mankind. Children who do not obey their parents, and older sons and daughters who will not look to their parents for advice and counsel, are committing these sins. Pupils who make unnecessary trouble for their teachers, wayward Christians who will not heed the warning and admonition of their pastor, citizen who are not loyal to their country, are doing what this commandment forbids.

Honoring Superiors.— Joseph and Mary and their Son were at Jerusalem to celebrate the passover. The Child Jesus was lost, but found in the temple with the doctors and scribes. He went home with His parents and was subject to them. As we learned in Lesson 13, this is enjoined in the fourth commandment. We are to give our parents honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem. We are to hold them in high regard as persons acting in God's stead. God has placed them over us. Through them God gave us life. He moves them to provide for our wants of body, mind and soul. Children should hold their parents in such high regard, and feel so grateful to them as constantly to strive to please them. Children are to be subject to their parents not out of fear or necessity, but cheerfully. Those who render obedience to their superiors only after being coaxed, urged, punished or rewarded

are transgressing this commandment. Of course should parents or other superiors ask us to do wrong we must disobey them, as did the three Hebrew captives. We are to obey God rather than man. Children are to strive to requite their parents. Joseph is an example. In order that we may be more careful to honor and obey our parents God has added the promise, "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the earth." Joseph experienced the truthfulness of this promise. Absalom learned that God's wrath descends on ungrateful, disobedient children.

The Sin of Taking Life.—Cain slew his brother Abel out of envy—because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. He committed the sin that is forbidden in the fifth commandment. We learned in Lesson 14 that we are not to kill, that is, not to hurt or harm our neighbor in his body. It is human life that God would protect by this commandment. It is not wrong to take the life of animals when we need them for food or clothing, or when they are dangerous or destructive, but in doing so we should avoid cruelty. Since God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and thus made him a living soul, and made him in His own image, man's life should be valued highly. We transgress this commandment through hateful thoughts. Such thoughts are wrong in themselves, and they are apt to lead to murder. It was by cherishing such thoughts that Cain was at last moved to slay his brother. They who long to avenge some real or supposed wrong are examples of those who break this commandment by sinful thoughts. We transgress this commandment through hateful words. We can smite with the tongue, as the prophet says. Gossiping, slandering, defaming, etc., is smiting with the tongue. We commit this sin through hateful acts. When David coveted Bethsheba, and told Joab to get Uriah, her husband, out of the way, he was guilty of taking life. When Herod sent his officer to behead John he committed this sin. When Jacob's sons threw their brother Joseph into the pit, and then sold him into bondage, they transgressed this commandment. This sin is committed by him who takes his own life. This is all the more grievous because such an one is not likely to have an opportunity to prepare to meet God. Those who abuse their bodies by indulgence, over-work, and in other ways, are also guilty of this sin.

Helping and Befriending Our Neighbor. — In Lesson 15 we studied the parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus uttered the parable in answering a lawyer who came to tempt Him. The lawyer was self-righteous, expecting to be saved by his good works. Since the man hoped to save himself by obeying the law Jesus asked him to state what the law demands, in order that he might thereby learn that he could not hope to be saved in this way. The law demands perfect love to God and perfect love to our neighbor, and this no man can render. The lawyer did not entrap Jesus as he set out to do, however he asked another question, Who is my neighbor? In answer to this question Jesus uttered the parable of the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan found a wounded man by the wayside who was his enemy, and tenderly ministered to his wants. He did what the fifth commandment enjoins — helped and befriended his neighbor. The priest and the Levite who passed by, rendering the poor man no aid, were guilty of hurting and harming their neighbor. They withheld the assistance they could have given him. The Samaritan helped and befriended the unfortunate traveler. Love of our neighbor will move us to pity him when in trouble, and hasten to his succor. The sufferer was a Jew, and the Jews disliked the Samaritans. Yet the Samaritan aided him. We are not only to assist those of our neighbors whom we like, or who are our friends, but all who are in need, as we have the means and opportunity. We are to assist them even though they are our enemies. The duty of serving our neighbor is also set forth by the apostle. Hebrews 13, 16. "To do good and to communicate, forget not."

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 12. 1. How did Absalom transgress the fourth commandment? 2. What is forbidden in this commandment? 3. What do we understand by parents and masters? 4. Who are the superiors in the family? Congregation? School? City, etc.? 5. What is meant by despising our superiors? 6. How did Absalom despise his father? 7. How did he make light of him? 8. In what may we see a picture of Jesus' patience, compassion and love? 9. How may children transgress this commandment? Older sons and daughters? Pupils? Wayward Christians? Citizens?

LESSON 13. 1. What was the occasion of the incident referred to in this lesson? 2. Where was the Child Jesus found? 3. In what respect did his conduct accord with the fourth commandment? 4. What is enjoined in this commandment? 5. Why should we hold parents in high regard? 6. What have they done for us? 7. Why should children wish to please their parents? 8. How are children to be subject to their parents? 9. When do children, despite their outward obedience, transgress this commandment? 10. What should we do in case a superior asks us to do wrong? 11. Give an example from the Scriptures that is

pertinent. 12. How should children show their gratitude to their parents? 13. Who is an example? 14. What promise has God added to this commandment? 15. With what intent? 16. Mention one who experienced the truthfulness of this promise. 17. Who learned that God's wrath descends on disobedient children?

LESSON 14. 1. What moved Cain to slay his brother? 2. Which commandment did he transgress? 3. What does that commandment forbid? 4. What kind of life would God protect by this commandment? 5. When may the life of lower animals be taken? How? 6. What indicates the value of human life? 7. What is the first way of breaking this commandment mentioned in Luther's explanation? 8. Why should such thoughts be cast out? 9. How was Cain led unto the sin of murder? 10. Give an example of those who are breaking this commandment by sinful thoughts? 11. What is the second way mentioned of transgressing this commandment? 12. What is the third way? 13. By what act did David transgress this commandment? Herod? Jacob's sons? 14. Mention another way of breaking this commandment. 15. Why is this especially to be avoided? 16. What is still another way of transgressing this part of the law?

LESSON 15. 1. What parable is related? 2. Under what circumstances did Jesus utter it? 3. What can be said of the lawyer? 4. Why did Jesus ask him to state the law. 5. What does the law demand? 6. What question did the lawyer ask? 7. What act of the Samaritan accords with the requirements of the fifth commandment? 8. How did the priest and Levite transgress this commandment? 9. What will love move us to do in regard to those in trouble? 10. What circumstance made the Samaritan's act the more commendable? 11. What neighbors are we to assist? 12. Mention a passage that enjoins us to aid those in need.

17. SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

GENESIS 19.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God, that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse.

Sodom's Wickedness. — And there came two angels¹ to Sodom² at even; and Lot sat in the gate³ of Sodom. Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed and said, Behold now, my lords, turn into your servant's house, and tarry all night⁴. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night⁵. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat⁶. But before they lay down, the men of the city of Sodom compassed the house round, both old⁷ and young⁸, and said unto Lot, Where are the men that came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them.⁹ And Lot

went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, and said, I pray you, brethren do not so wickedly.¹⁰ And they said, This fellow came in to sojourn,¹¹ and he will needs be a judge.¹² And they pressed sore upon Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut the door.¹³ And they smote the men at the door with blindness;¹⁴ so that they wearied themselves to find the door.¹⁵

Lot's Deliverance. — And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides in the city? Bring them out of this place; for the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.¹⁶ And Lot went out and spake unto his sons-in-law¹⁷ and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city.¹⁸ But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.¹⁹ And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot; and while he lingered the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters,²⁰ and brought them forth without the city.²¹ And the Lord said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee.²² Escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said, Oh, not so, my Lord. Thou hast magnified thy mercy; and I cannot escape to the mountain. Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. O let me escape thither, and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of this city was called Zoar. The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, and overthrew these cities and all the plain.²³ But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.²⁴ And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord; and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. They had been the guests of Abraham and reached Sodom the evening of that day. 2. A city of ancient Syria in a fertile valley bearing the same name. The inhabitants were prosperous but exceedingly wicked. 3. The gate of a city was a place for public meetings. Judges sat there in court at times. 4. Lot was courteous to the strangers, generously offering his hospitality. The Scriptures highly commend hospitality. Christians should practice it. 5. The angels declined the kind

invitation, perhaps because they wanted a better opportunity of acquainting themselves with the character of the people. 6. Doubtless Lot was so urgent because he feared that his wicked townsmen would abuse the men. 7. It is a shame that older people often set a bad example to those growing up around them. Those who do so will have an account to render. 8. The young are usually quick to walk in the footsteps of ungodly elders. Sin spreads rapidly. The whole city had gone bad. 9. The wicked rabble meant to have shameful sport with the strangers. They were dominated by those unholy passions that lead people to sins of immorality and uncleanness. The people of this city and the region round about were living in the sin forbidden by the sixth commandment — the *sin of adultery*. God created human beings male and female. The difference between these two kinds of beings is called sex. The sixth commandment treats of the relation of the sexes to each other. We call the sin against this commandment *adultery*. When dishonest people mix some inferior article with the good article they sell in order to make larger profits we say they have adulterated the good article. It lost its purity when the cheaper article was added. We say that people who commit the sin forbidden by the sixth commandment have lost their sexual purity. They have committed adultery. This is done by *unchaste thoughts, words and deeds*. This sin begins with bad thoughts. These bad thoughts generally lead to unchaste words and acts. The wicked wife of Potiphar looked with sinful thoughts upon Joseph, and sinful acts soon followed. David looked with sinful thoughts on Bathsheba and sinful acts resulted.

The apostle says, Ephesians 5, 3, 4: "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks." Here he warns against unchaste words. When persons talk a good deal about a sin it soon seems less sinful to them. The use of unchaste words or foolish talking and jesting, is sinful and dangerous.

God has ordained the *marriage estate*. Two persons of opposite sex may unite in this estate and live together. It is God's will that those who thus unite love and honor each other, and remain together, true and loyal to each other until they are separated by death. 10. Lot was very patient, and pleaded earnestly with his wicked neighbors. A good man not only does right, but he strives to influence others to do right. 11. Lot had become a resident of the city after separating from Abraham. 12. Perhaps Lot occupied the office of judge. The fact that he was sitting at the gate points that way. 13. Although Lot was evidently highly respected in the city these men were carried away by their lusts and anger. When not under discipline the sinful passions lead to deeds of shame and folly. 14. These men were morally blind and God punished them with bodily blindness. God does not always punish the wicked in this life, but if they do not repent, He will surely punish them in the life to come. 15. The wicked may be powerful, cunning and determined, but God says, So far, but no further. 16. The angels revealed their identity. God punishes the wicked, but extends His mercy to the god-fearing. This reminds us of the destruction of Jerusalem in

the first century. Christians heeded the warnings given, removed to Pella, beyond the River Jordan, and escaped destruction. It also reminds us of how God sends His angels to guard and protect His people. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Ps. 34, 7. 17. The men to whom his daughters were betrothed. 18. This teaches us that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. God warns all to flee from the wrath to come. 19. Just so God's Word seems foolishness to the worldly. 20. The sluggishness of Lot and his family in escaping from the doomed city remind us of the indifference of many professed Christians in their religious life. 21. The persevering efforts of the angels remind us of God's solicitude and patience in dealing with sinners. 22. Those who renounce the world, and confess faith in Jesus, should not look longingly upon the sinful pleasures of the godless. 23. These cities were actually destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven. In the valley round about the earth was of bituminous formation, and burned readily. This region was afterwards filled with water and is now the lower end of the Dead Sea. 24. The terrible end of Lot's wife, who, while delaying, was encrusted with a salt substance, is a warning to all to bow to the will of the Lord.

QUESTIONS.

1. Whence came the two angels? 2. Where was Sodom located? 3. What can you say of the Sodomites? 4. How did the strangers fare at Lot's hands? 5. What feature of Lot's treatment of the men is especially commendable? 6. Why did Lot urge the acceptance of his hospitality? 7. In what respect are older people often at fault? 8. Why is the bad example of older people especially dangerous to the young? 9. What was the purpose of the wicked rabble? 10. For what sin were the Sodomites notorious? 11. Which is the sixth commandment? 12. What does this mean? 13. Of what does the six commandment treat? 14. Give an illustration of the sin of adulterating. 15. What has an adulterated article lost? 16. What has that person lost who transgresses this commandment? 17. What, then, is forbidden in this commandment? 18. How is this done? 19. How does this sin begin? 20. To what do bad thoughts quickly lead? 21. Give an example from the Scriptures? 22. Against what does St. Paul warn in Ephesians 5, 3, 4? 23. What frequently happens when a person talks a good deal about a certain sin? 24. In what estate may those of the opposite sex live together? 25. What is God's will in regard to those who enter this estate? 26. What else may we learn from Lot's conduct on this occasion? 27. Why was Lot referred to as sojourning in the city? 28. How did God punish these wicked men? 29. What is certain in regard to the wicked in general? 30. What will God eventually say to the wicked? 31. Of what other historical event does God's dealings with the Sodomites remind us? 32. Of what sweet truth does it remind us? 33. What does the warning of the wicked sons-in-law suggest? 34. What warning does God give in His Word to the wicked in general? 35. What do people of the world of all time think of God's Word? 36. Whose conduct resembles that of Lot and his family? 37. Of what does the persevering efforts of these angels remind us? 38. What change took place in the valley in which Sodom once stood? 39. What warning do we find in the fate of Lot's wife?

GOLDEN TEXT.

EPHESIANS 5, 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

18. THE CHASTITY OF JOSEPH.

GENESIS 39.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God, that we may LEAD A CHASTE AND DECENT LIFE in word and deed, and EACH LOVE AND HONOR his spouse.

Joseph Bought.— And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.

Joseph Blessed.— And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him; and he made him overseer in his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass, from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the fields. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored.

Joseph Tempted.— And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused; and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand: There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife; how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And

she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me; and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. There is much in Joseph's life that foreshadows incidents in our Savior's earthly career. As Egypt was to offer a safe place for Jesus, the Savior of sinners, when Herod would seek His life, so Joseph finds protection in this country from his envious brothers, that he might afterwards save the life of his people. 2. Doubtless captain of the king's body-guard, and a man of great influence with the king. 3. The common title for the kings of Egypt. 4. The Ishmaelites were descendants of Abraham by Hagar. They are sometimes called Midianites, although, to speak exactly, these were descendants of Abraham by Keturah. The two races intermarried. It is a company of Ishmaelitic traders, bearing spices from the mountainous region east of Jordan to Egypt. 5. The life of Joseph is full of incidents illustrating how God cares for His people, even under the most trying circumstances. God does not keep trouble from coming to them, but helps them through these troubles. God's blessing rests on them. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich." Proverbs 10, 12. 6. Worldly people are often made to see that all things work together for good to those who love God. 7. Although Joseph was poor, and a slave, he was trusted and honored. We cannot all possess wealth, or occupy positions of rank, but we can all have a good name, which is far better. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." Proverbs 22, 1. 8. Worldly people owe a great deal to their godly neighbor. It pays to surround ourselves with God-fearing people. It is dangerous to live in Sodom. Jesus says to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth." The blessing that this Egyptian enjoyed on Joseph's account reminds us of how Laban prospered for Jacob's sake, and that God was willing to save Sodom if but a few righteous people were found there. 9. Joseph was a handsome man. Those who are blessed in this way will do well to be on their guard. They will be tempted in more ways than one. 10. This woman was bold and shameless. Such a character is dangerous. The young man who is reared amid modest, God-fearing women should be thankful to God, and should be careful never to seek the companionship of the bold and the unchaste. 11. Joseph showed that he *feared, loved and trusted* in God above all things. His first reason for refusing the wicked woman's request was that to do so would be a sin against his master who trusted him so implicitly. His second and chief reason was that this would be a sin against God. The example of Joseph is one that all will do well to study and emulate. Joseph was obeying the sixth commandment. Here God *enjoins* That we lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse. There are three ways mentioned in which we should be *chaste* and *decent*.—in *thought, word* and *deed*. Naturally our hearts are sinful. "Out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts." We can only then live *chaste* in *thought* when we, through the grace of God, subdue all unchaste desires. It is through the grace

of God that this is done, therefore we should say as David did, "Create in me a clean heart. O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51.10. We should avoid any manner of life that will arouse and foster these bad thoughts. When people eat and drink to excess, or spend their time in idleness, they are fostering unholy thoughts. Those who pray for clean hearts should cultivate temperate and industrious habits. Joseph did not entertain the evil thoughts which this unchaste woman's words suggested, and in this respect also he sets a good example. We should also be chaste in our *words*. This is done when we shun all unchaste talk, and strive to be pure in all our words. In Ephesians, 4, 29, we read: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good unto the use of edifying." We are not to use foul language. Since evil communications corrupt we should be careful with whom we associate. One rotten apple in the basket will soon affect the sound ones. A few moments with a companion who uses unbecoming language may ruin one for life. Flee a foul-mouthed person as you would flee from a contagious disease. We are also *enjoined* to be *chaste* in *deeds*. This is done when we shun all unchaste doings, and all opportunity for them. Joseph fled from Potiphar's wife. St. Paul admonishes his young friend Timothy, "Flee also youthful lusts." 2 Timothy, 22, 2. We pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation." In order that this prayer may be answered, we should keep away from places where temptations lurk. The saloon, the dance, and the theater are places where one is likely to meet with temptation to the sin of adultery. We should avoid places where we will see and hear that which suggests unchaste thoughts.

QUESTIONS.

1. Mention an incident in Joseph's life that reminds us of an incident in Jesus' life?
2. To what position had Joseph been promoted?
3. What was his standing in the estimation of the king?
4. Who were the Ishmaelites?
5. How is it that these people were sometimes called Midianites?
6. In what does Joseph's life abound?
7. What can Christians expect in regard to trouble?
8. What must worldly people often acknowledge?
9. What great blessing did Joseph enjoy in spite of poverty and slavery?
10. Repeat one of Solomon's proverbs pertinent to this.
11. Mention a particular in which Christians prove a blessing to their worldly neighbors.
12. In what words did Jesus express this truth?
13. Who profited because of Jacob's godliness?
14. Under what conditions would Sodom have been spared?
15. Who tempted Joseph to transgress the sixth commandment?
16. What was evident from Joseph's conduct?
17. What was his first reason for refusing the woman's wicked request?
18. What was her chief reason?
19. Which is the sixth commandment?
20. What does this mean?
21. How is this done?
22. What is the first respect mentioned in which we should strive to be chaste?
23. How can we live chaste in thought?
24. Repeat David's prayer in regard to this particular sin.
25. What manner of life tends to arouse and foster unchaste thoughts?
26. What kind of habits will we do well to cultivate?
27. What is the second respect mentioned in which we should strive to be chaste?
28. How is this done?
29. What kind of communications does the apostle warn us against?
30. In what should we be careful if we desire to be pure in our words?
31. What is the third respect mentioned in which we should strive to be chaste?
32. How is this done?
33. In

which petition of the Lord's Prayer do we ask for help against this sin?
34. What will we avoid if we are sincere in this petition?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 26, 41. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

19. ACHAN'S THEFT.

JOSHUA 7.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT STEAL.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may NOT TAKE OUR NEIGHBOR'S MONEY OR GOODS, NOR GET THEM BY FALSE WARES OR DEALING; but help him to improve and protect his property and business.

Achan's Sin. — But the children of Israel committed a trespass¹ in the accursed thing:² for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took the accursed thing: and the anger³ of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel.

Israel in Trouble. — And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.⁵ And Joshua rent his clothes,⁶ and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.⁷ And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast Thou at all brought this people over Jordan,⁸ to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!⁹ O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their back before their enemies?¹⁰ For the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land, shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth;¹¹ and what will Thou do unto Thy great name?¹²

The Remedy. — And the Lord said unto Joshua, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel; ¹³ thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you. ¹⁴ In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes; and it shall be, that the tribe which the Lord taketh shall come according to the families thereof; and the family which the Lord shall take shall come by households; and the household which the Lord shall take shall come man by man. ¹⁵ And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel.

The Guilty One Discovered. — And Joshua brought one tribe of Israel after another, and Achan of the tribe of Judah was taken. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him; ¹⁷ and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done. ¹⁸ When I saw among the spoils of goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; ¹⁹ and behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran into the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord.

The Thief Punished. — And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. ²⁰ And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. One man committed the sin, but all became partakers in the sin to a certain extent. Achan was "Israel's troubler." 2. The sin consisted in appropriating treasures from the heathen city in disobedience to God's command and in defiance of His terrible threat. 3. God's anger is a holy displeasure against sin. 4. In this way God would lead His people to see how displeasing sin is to Him. 5. The loss was not great, but it was a surprise, and quite humiliating now that Jericho had fallen. It was an evidence that there was something wrong. 6. He rent an outer garment as a token of his deep sorrow. 7. He fell on his face, indicating thereby how helpless he felt; he placed dust on his head, indicating thereby his penitence. Doubtless he believed that some sin had been committed. 8. In the moment of disappointment Joshua expressed doubt. It was but a temporary wavering. Such manifestations of weaknesses on the part of good men are given in the Scriptures to comfort us in view of our own shortcomings. 9. It was but a short while since he had led Israel over the River Jordan into the promised land. 10. The meaning of this expression is, How can I comfort Israel in view of Thy promises if they thus fall before the enemy? 11. The effect of this defeat will be that the other enemies will be emboldened and Israel will fall before them. 12. If Israel is destroyed then God's name will be dishonored, for His promises will have failed. 13. There was a cause for the disaster. There is a cause for everything that happens, and a purpose in it. Could we see all things as God sees them we would never be distressed with anxious fears. 14. Sin weakens the Christian soldier and turns him into a coward. 15. The care taken in discovering the guilty one shows the justice of God. He makes no mistakes in chastening and punishing. 16. The punishment was to be severe because the sin was grievous. 17. Joshua addressed the erring one tenderly, urging him to make confession, and prepare to meet God. 18. Achan made a full confession. It is folly to try to hide our sins from God. 19. The man was guilty of theft. His sin was especially grievous because it had been especially forbidden by the Lord. He sinned knowingly. He transgressed the seventh commandment which *forbids to steal*; or, to *take our neighbor's money or goods, or get them by false wares or dealing*. Stealing is taking that which does not belong to us. As God forbade Israel to take anything from their vanquished enemy, so He forbids us to **take** anything from our neighbor. God owns everything. "For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." 1 Cor. 10, 26. God entrusts something to every one of us. We get these things by inheritance as Isaac did, or earn them by laboring as Jacob did, or they are given to us. Although for the time being we are the owners of all entrusted to us, it would be more proper to call ourselves stewards. When we secure property in an honest way, by inheritance, or as wages, or as a gift, or by purchase, we can call it our own. What our neighbor thus gains is his. This commandment is meant to protect to one his property. It forbids taking what God has entrusted to another. This

is done 'When we wrongfully desire or appropriate the money or goods of our neighbor. This sin begins by wrongfully desiring our neighbor's property. Achan cast his eyes on the Babylonish garment and silver and wedge of gold that he found among the spoils, and he coveted them. Although God had forbidden it, and threatened dire punishment upon those who would disobey Him, he seized the treasures and carried them to his tent. Achan's stealing began by desiring — coveting. There are bad people in the world who make it their business to steal. They pick some one's pockets, snatch some one's purse, sneak into a dwelling, break into an office or bank, or pounce on some one on the public road, and enrich themselves with the earnings and savings of other people. This commandment is transgressed by getting our neighbor's money or goods by *false wares* or *dealing*. There is much dishonesty and fraud in the world. God says, Proverbs, 28, 8, "He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor." Neighbors may transgress this commandment by *borrowing and not paying back*. Merchants and tradesmen break this commandment when they *misrepresent* the goods they sell, or *charge too much* for them, or *give wrong weight or measure*. Manufacturers and employers are guilty of theft when they *do not properly remunerate their employees*. Mechanics, clerks and servants commit this sin by *not properly doing* the work for which they take wages. Those who *knowingly aid thieves*, or try to *shield them from just punishment*, are partakers with them in their sin. Those who take money from others without giving anything in return, as do *gamblers, bettors* and lazy, extravagant or dishonest *beggars*, are thieves.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was Achan's sin? 2. On whom besides himself did it rest? 3. What do we understand by God's anger? 4. What is shown us by the kindling of God's anger at this time? 5. How did the defeat referred to affect Israel? 6. How did Joshua manifest his feelings? 7. To what did he temporarily give way? 8. What words of lamentation did he utter? 9. What did he mean? 10. How would God's name suffer should Israel fall before their foes? 11. What condition would preserve us from anxious fears? 12. What is seen in God's effort to find the guilty person? 13. In what respect did Achan set a good example? 14. Why was Achan's sin especially grievous? 15. Which is the seventh commandment? 16. What does this mean? 17. What does this commandment forbid? 18. Repeat a passage which declares God the owner of everything. 19. Since God is the owner of everything, strictly speaking, what should we be called? 20. Mention some ways by which we come into possession of property? 21. What is protected to us by this commandment? 22. How does this sin of theft usually begin? 23. Mention some ways by which bad people transgress this commandment. 24. Mention some more common ways of stealing. 25. Repeat Proverbs 28, 8. 26. How may a neighbor transgress this commandment? 27. How may merchants and tradesmen make themselves guilty of this sin? 28. How may those who employ others break this part of God's law? 29. How may those who are employed be guilty of theft? 30. How about those who aid thieves? 31. What is to be said of gamblers, bettors and dishonest beggars?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JEREMIAH 22, 13. Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbors service without wages, and giveth him not for his work.

20. ABRHAM PERMITS LOT TO CHOOSE THE BEST LAND.

GENESIS 13, 1—12.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not take our neighbor's money or goods, nor get them by false wares or dealings; but HELP HIM TO IMPROVE AND PROTECT HIS PROPERTY AND BUSINESS.

Abram's Return to Canaan.—And Abram¹ went out of Egypt,² he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot³ with him, into the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold.⁴ And he went on his journey from the south, even to Bethel,⁵ unto the place where his ten had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first,⁶ and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.

Strife Between Brethren.—And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.⁷ And the land was not able to bear them that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.⁸ And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle.⁹ And the Canaanite¹⁰ and the Perizzite¹¹ dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee,¹² and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we be brethren.¹³ Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me.¹⁴ If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right-hand, then I will go to the left.¹⁵

Lot's Bad Choice.—And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east; and they separated themselves one from the other.¹⁶ Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Abram was a son of Terah, who was a descendant of Shem. 2. He had gone to Egypt because of a famine in Canaan. 3. Lot was the patriarch's nephew, who had accompanied him from their native land, Chaldea, to Canaan. 4. Temporal prosperity was a part of the blessing that God had promised to Abram. 5. The word Bethel means *house of God*. This place was about eight miles north of the site where Jerusalem was built. 6. At this place Abram had stopped while journeying from Chaldea to Canaan, built an altar, and called on the name of the Lord. 7. The blessing of God that descended upon Abram came also upon Lot, his companion. 8. Earthly blessings bring cares with them, because all things on earth are polluted with sin. 9. Note that the strife was between the herdsmen, brought about by the scarcity of pasture. 10. A people inhabiting the western part of Canaan. 11. A tribe dwelling in the southern part of the land. 12. Christians should follow Abram's example, saying to each other, Let there be no strife between thee and me, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen. 13. The fact that Christians are brethren, children of the same Father, and members of the same family, should move them to suffer wrong rather than live in strife. 14. A little thoughtfulness and forbearance will often enable jarring neighbors to live in peace. 15. Although Abram was the older, and the one to whom the promise was given, he generously gave Lot the privilege of choice. 16. His dealings with Lot accord with the seventh commandment which *enjoins*, That we help our neighbor to *improve* and *protect* his *property* and *business*. Abram saw that it was necessary that Lot and he separate, but he wanted this done so that Lot would not be the loser. He desired to help him to improve his property and business. All *money* and *goods* belong to God but He entrusts some of it to each of us. We may use it for the benefit of our bodies and souls. We may use our money to purchase food, drink, clothing, and other necessities of life. We may use it in providing ourselves with comforts and enjoyments. We may use it in surrounding ourselves with the blessings and privileges of the Christian Church. However, we are not to be selfish. If we are so engrossed in our interests that we allow others to suffer, we are transgressing the seventh commandment. There are people all around us whom God wants

us to assist. A husband and father who does not *provide* for the wants of his family is breaking this commandment. Those who neglect to aid the worthy poor are guilty of this sin. It is written 1. John, 3, 17. "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" We are to aid those who are sick, who have suffered loss, or met with misfortune in some other way. We are to do good and to communicate. We are to help those in spiritual need. There are spiritually poor here and in heathen lands. If we are not to be selfish in regard to temporal matters, how much less should we be selfish in those matters which pertain to the soul! God enjoins that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Yes, we are even to love our enemies. We read, Luke 6, 35, "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great." St. Paul urges in Ephesians 4, 28, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." In order that we may be able to assist the needy we should not *squander* what God entrusts to us. This is done when people *spend money foolishly*, or when they are *extravagant*, or when they are *wasteful and careless*. 16. Lot was attracted to the plain of Jordan because of the temporal advantages it offered. He did not consider the character of its inhabitants, and the grave temptations with which he would surround himself. Those who leave their church home and locate in a remote region, or in some part of the city where they will be deprived of the services of the Church and of Christian fellowship, are guilty of this folly. When about to choose a place to live Christians should remember Jesus' words, Matthew 6, 33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." 17. Doubtless their prosperity in temporal matters had much to do with the wickedness of the Sodomites. Prosperity brings temptations that many cannot withstand. Perhaps it is because of God's goodness and mercy that many are blessed with but little of this world's goods.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who was Abram? 2. Why had he gone to Egypt? 3. Who was Lot? 4. What can you say of Bethel? 5. At what other time had Abram been at that place? 6. To what is Lot's prosperity to be attributed? 7. Why are cares to be expected with earthly blessings? 8. What resulted from the scarcity of pasture? 9. In what respect did Abram set a good example? 10. Mention a reason why Christians should strive to live in peace. 11. How did Abram show kindness and sincerity in this matter? 12. With which commandment did all this accord? 13. Which is the seventh commandment? 14. What does this mean? 15. What is enjoined by this commandment? 16. Who owns all money and goods? 17. To what money and goods has one more right than any one else? 18. Mention some purposes for which we may use the money entrusted to us. 19. What must we be careful to avoid in the use of our money? 20. How can a husband and father transgress this commandment? 21. What is here enjoined in reference to the poor? 22. What is said on this subject in 1 John 3, 17? 23. What is here enjoined in reference to the sick, the unfortunate and the like? 24. What is our

duty in regard to those who are spiritually poor? 25. How about helping our enemies, or any one from whom we can expect nothing in return? 26. In order that we may be able to assist the needy what should we avoid? 27. Mention some ways of squandering money and goods. 28. What led Lot to choose the plain of Jordan? 29. What should he have considered? 30. When are Christians guilty of the same mistake? 31. What words of Jesus will help us in deciding where to locate when looking for a home? 32. What, very likely, had much to do with the ungodliness of the Sodomites? 33. In what way does God often show His goodness and mercy?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I JOHN 3, 17. "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

21. FALSE WITNESSES AGAINST STEPHEN.

ACTS 6, 8—15.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.—WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may NOT DECEITFULLY BELIE, BETRAY, SLANDER, or DEFAME our neighbor: but excuse him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.

The Miracles and Preaching of Stephen.—And Stephen,¹ full of faith and power,² did great wonders and miracles³ among the people.

The Opponents and Revilers of Stephen.—Then there arose certain of the synagogue,⁴ which is called the synagogue of the Libertines,⁵ and Cyrenians,⁶ and Alexandrians,⁷ and of them of Celicia,⁸ and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.⁹ Then they suborned men,¹⁰ which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous¹¹ words against Moses,¹² and against God.

The Arrest and Indictment of Stephen.—And they stirred up the people,¹³ and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council.¹⁴

And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law:¹⁵ For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.¹⁶

The Attitude and Appearance of Stephen. — And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly in him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.¹⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The name Stephen means *crown*. He was the first of the seven deacons appointed to look after the bodily needs of the poor.
2. He had a strong faith. He was so full of faith that there was no room in his heart for unbelief. The power to do great things came with the faith.
3. Doubtless healing the sick. He performed these miracles among the people, that is, openly. They were numerous and striking.
4. Synagogues were used as meeting places for teachers and others who wished to discuss the Scriptures. According to the Rabbis there were 480 of them in Jerusalem.
5. Libertines were Jews who had been born in slavery, their fathers having been sold as bondsmen to Rome after Pompey's expedition against Jerusalem, B. C. 53, but had obtained their freedom.
6. Belonging to the city of Cyrene, North Africa, where many Jews had settled.
7. Jews from Alexandria, in Egypt.
8. From the southwest of Asia Minor.
9. They could not prove their own utterances, nor disprove what Stephen said.
10. They bribed them to testify falsely.
11. To blaspheme is to speak irreverently of God or sacred things, or to ascribe to man what belongs to God only.
12. They meant the writings of Moses, and the sacraments and ceremonies which God instituted through him. The Jews were so zealous for the ceremonies and fixed forms of worship of the Old Testament dispensation, that they looked upon it as blaspheming God to say that these would pass away. They believed that God had ordained these things for all time.
13. No doubt they spread false reports, thus turning many against the devout deacon.
14. The council was the Sanhedrim, composed of seventy leading Jews, before which offenders against their laws were brought for trial.
15. This was a severe accusation. Blasphemy is a grievous sin! Stephen, these witnesses declared, was committing this sin unceasingly. They were transgressing the eighth commandment. That which *is forbidden* in this commandment is to bear false witness; or, to deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor. This sin is most commonly committed with the tongue, which is a hard member to control. To bear witness is to say something about a person. What is said may be true or false. This commandment *forbids* bearing *false witness*. By this commandment God would protect our good name. What a precious thing a good name is we learn from Proverbs, 22, 1, "A good name is rather to be chosen than riches, and loving favor

rather than gold and silver." False witness is borne in a two-fold way: in common life and in court. The first way of transgressing this commandment mentioned in Luther's explanation is to *deceitfully belie* our neighbor. A lie is an untruth. In Ephesians 4, 25, St. Paul urges: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." Being members of the same household we should not belie one another. When one tells a lie for the purpose of deceiving others he is deceitfully belying. We transgress this commandment by *betraying* our neighbor. To betray one is to tell something about him that he wishes to keep secret, or the knowledge of which would do him injury. Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus by leading the soldiers to the place where Jesus and the disciples were, and making known which one was He. To betray is also to deliver one into the power of his enemies. Persons who reveal secrets are also called *tale-bearers*. In Proverbs 11, 13, we read: "A tale-bearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter." It is pleasing to God, therefore, when we try to conceal gossip and hearsay that would harm others. One can also bear false witness by *slandering* and *defaming* his neighbor. When the Jews said that Jesus was a Samaritan they were slandering Him. Potiphar's wife slandered Joseph to her husband. All who spread *evil reports* about any one transgress this commandment. We may injure one's good name by *telling* that which is *true* of him, if it is a truth that should *not be made public*. A good man may have yielded to temptation and committed a sin. Those who know this should not make it public, especially if he has repented of his wrong-doing. It would injure his present good name. We can transgress this commandment by *condemning* our neighbor *unheard*. We should not be quick to believe all the evil reports we hear of others. Those who tell us may be misinformed or may not know the whole truth. After we hear our neighbor's side of the incident it will be time enough to form judgment as to how much he is at fault. False witness is borne in court when *knowingly the untruth is told, or the truth is suppressed*. This sin is more grievous when committed in court, because the witness is under oath. He has solemnly sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth as he shall answer to God at the last day. The untruth will do all the more harm when told under such circumstances. The judge, the lawyers, and the members of the jury transgress this commandment when they *suppress the truth, or decide contrary to the evidence given*. 16. Doubtless Stephen had warned the people that if they continued to reject Jesus the wrath of God would come upon them and their city, which came to pass. He had also preached that the shadows and types of the Old Testament were about to give way to the realities of the New Testament dispensation. All this Jesus had taught. See John 4, 21-24. 17. Those who looked at the prisoner expecting to see him overcome with fear and confusion were disappointed. They saw a face serene and radiant, manifesting the peace and joy that dwelt in his heart, and exclaimed, Are these things so?

QUESTIONS.

1. Who was Stephen? 2. What does his name mean? 3. What is said here to his credit? 4. For what were the synagogues used? 5. Who were Libertines? 6. Who were Cyrenians and Alexandrians? 7. What were Stephen's enemies unable to do? 8. To what did they resort? 9. Of what did they falsely accuse him? 10. What is blasphemy? 11. What did the Jews include under blasphemy? 12. By what means did they strive to turn the people against Stephen? 13. Before what body did they take him? 14. Of what commandment were Stephen's accusers guilty? 15. Which is the eighth commandment? 16. What does this mean? 17. What is forbidden by this commandment? 18. With what member of the body is this sin usually committed? 19. What is bearing witness? 20. What kind of witness is forbidden? 21. What would God protect by this commandment? 22. What is said of a good name in Proverbs 22, 1? 23. How is false witness borne? 24. What sin against this commandment is mentioned first in Luther's explanation? 25. Repeat St. Paul's words, Ephesians 4, 25. 26. What does the apostle say should move us to be truthful? 27. What is meant by deceitfully belying? 28. What is betraying? 29. How did Judas Iscariot betray Jesus? 30. What do we learn from Proverbs 11, 13? 31. Give examples from the Scriptures of slandering? 32. Under what circumstances is it wrong to tell the truth concerning our neighbor? 33. What is it best to do when we hear an evil report of some one? 34. How is false witness borne in court? 35. What makes this sin the more grievous when committed in court? 36. Mention two accusations made against Stephen. 37. Who had taught the same? 38. What of Stephen's appearance in the presence of his accusers? 39. What effect did his attitude and appearance have on those present?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PROVERBS 19. 5. A false witness shall not be unpunished; and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

22. JONATHAN DEFENDS DAVID'S REPUTATION.

I. SAMUEL 19, 1-7.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor; but EXCUSE him, SPEAK WELL of him, and PUT THE BEST CONSTRUCTION on every-thing.

Sau!, David's Unreasonable Enemy. — And Saul¹ spake

to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David?

Jonathan, David's Good Friend and Counselor. — But Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David,³ saying, Saul, my father, seeketh to kill thee. Now, therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself, until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself: and I will go out and stand beside my father in the field, where thou art, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see I will tell thee.⁴

Jonathan's Successful Intercession. — And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father,⁵ and said unto him, Let not the king sin against his servant,⁶ against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward very good.⁷ For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel:⁸ thou sawest it and didst rejoice, wherefore, then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?⁹ And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan:¹⁰ and Saul swore,¹¹ As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain.

David Restored to the King's Presence. — And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things: and Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as in times past.¹²

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Saul was Israel's first king. He hated David without cause. David was loyal and faithful to the king, and was honored by the people because of his valor and achievements: Saul was moved by envy. This is a dangerous sin because it is apt to lead to hatred. 2. It is a wicked man who will ask such a service of his household. 3. Jonathan was a noble character. Although the king's son, and heir to the throne, he was not jealous of David when he saw that he was popular with the people. 4. Jonathan's love enabled him to find a way to serve the endangered David. Had he consulted his own interests he would not have gone to any trouble to protect David. Here we have an example of neighborly love. If we love our neighbor as we should there will be plenty of opportunities to manifest it. 5. Jonathan spoke good of David. He saw that his friend was in trouble, and that a kind word would help him. He even spoke well of David to his father who hated him. All this accords with the eighth commandment. That which is *forbidden* here is, to bear false witness, or not to deceitfully belie, betray, slander or defame our neighbor. That which is here *enjoined* is, That we excuse our neighbor, speak well of him and put the best con-

struction on everything. This is done, When we think and speak well of our neighbor, and in all things strive to be truthful. Our duty to our neighbor in this respect begins by thinking well of him. That is we should regard him as honest, good and truthful. We should not regard him otherwise until it is proven to us that he is not what we thought him to be. It is necessary that we think well of our neighbor; if we do not we will not speak well of him. We usually speak what we think.

The first duty toward our neighbor that is *enjoined* upon us here according to Luther's explanation is that we *excuse him*. When we think of Peter's great sin in denying our Savior we always call to mind that he committed the sin through fear, and that he sincerely desired to remain faithful. When we thus think and speak of Peter's sin we are *excusing* him. When one who is in ill health, or in great trouble, displeases us by word or act, we readily find an excuse for him. We know that under more favorable circumstances he would not have mistreated us.

Jonathan spoke good of David unto Saul his father. He reminded the king of what faithful and valuable service the young man had rendered. If we would heed this commandment we must speak well of our neighbor. This was right, since David was not present to speak for himself. When an absent one is criticised or slandered our hearing it is our duty to take his part. This is taught in Proverbs 31, 8, 9, "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy." It is not in accordance with love to discuss our neighbor's faults in his absence. We read in Matthew 18, 15, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." In these words Jesus tells us that the proper place to talk about our neighbor's faults is in his presence, when there is no one else about.

It is also *enjoined* in this commandment, as Luther explains it, that we *put the best construction on everything*. If we do not do so we will soon be entertaining evil thoughts against our neighbor. When we hear loud talking in our neighbor's house we should not conclude that there is a quarrel on hand, but that there is some one there who is hard of hearing. It is not putting the best construction on a brother's conduct if, when he is absent from church service a few times, we accuse him of indifference; he may have a good excuse.

It will help us to order our lives in accordance with this commandment if we do not talk too much. We read in Matthew 5, 37, "Let your conversation be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." What a splendid example our Lord Jesus sets us in this respect. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not."

When we are tempted to transgress this commandment we will do well to call to mind the words of Proverbs 12, 22, "Lying lips are abomination unto the Lord." 6. Jonathan was courageous enough to

tell his father that it would be a sin to carry out his resolution against David. To a child of God that is the strongest argument against any course of action. The Christian does not ask, Will it pay? but, Is it right? If it is not right all arguments in favor of the project are as nothing to him. 7. Jonathan mentions two facts that should make the sin appear all the more sinful: David had done the king no injury, and had rendered him faithful service. Probably Jonathan had in mind the relief David had given his father in his terrible periodical attacks by means of his harp. 8. Here he refers to David's encounter with Goliath by which he saved the king's life and kingdom. 9. It is noteworthy that this intercessor dwells on the sinfulness of the proposed act. It reminds us of Joseph's reply to the unchaste wife of Potiphar: "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God." That the sinfulness of sin should be uppermost in our mind in the hour of temptation is taught by Luther when he begins his explanation to every commandment with the words, "We should fear and love God." 10. The calm counsel of David's friend prevailed. In dealing with angry people, especially with evildoers, it is not only well to be careful *what* we say, but also careful *how* we talk. Proverbs 15, 1: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." 11. It was not necessary for Saul to take an oath. He evidently cared little for the solemnity of an oath, and in this regard reminds us of Herod who swore thoughtlessly. A Christian should take an oath only, When the honor of God, our neighbor's need or the courts demand it." 12. The forgiving spirit that David here manifested is one of the characteristics that fitted him to be a type of David's Son and David's Lord.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Saul and his disposition toward David? 2. What wicked counsel did he give to his son and servants? 3. What can you say to Jonathan's credit? What prompted him in his dealings with David? 4. What did his love prompt him to do? 5. With which commandment does his conduct at this time accord? 6. Which is the eighth commandment? 7. What does this mean? 8. What is here forbidden? 9. What is here enjoined? 10. How is this done? 11. Where are we to begin in dealing with our neighbor according to this commandment? 12. How should we regard our neighbor? 13. When only should we look upon him as untruthful and the like? 14. According to Luther's explanation, what in the first place is enjoined by this commandment? 15. For example, what excuse might be given for Peter who denied Jesus? 16. Under what circumstances should we be especially ready to overlook a neighbor's offense? 17. What good thing did Jonathan have to say about David? 18. What is our duty when we hear an absent one slandered? 19. What is said in this respect in Proverbs 31, 8, 9? 20. When a neighbor has done wrong to whom should we go about the matter? 21. What is enjoined upon us in the third place in this commandment? 22. Give an example of how one could do harm to a neighbor by failing to put the best construction on everything? 23. What will be a help to us in keeping this commandment? 24. Repeat Matthew 5, 37. 25. What is said of Jesus that is pertinent here? 26. What words should we call to mind when tempted to transgress this commandment? 27. What was Jonathan's chief argument against his father's project? 28. What facts did he mention that should have in-

fluenced his father in David's favor? 30. To what act of David did Jonathan refer? 31. How has Luther taught us to think of the sinfulness of wrong-doing when we are tempted? 32. Besides what we say, what is important when we are dealing with angry people? 33. Repeat Proverbs 15, 1. 34. When may a Christian take an oath? 35. What do we see in David's conduct here that reminds us of our Savior's bearing toward sinners?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 5, 37. Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

23. REVIEW OF LESSONS 17-23.

Adultery.—In Lesson 17 we looked at the wickedness of the Sodomites. They were living in the sin that is forbidden in the sixth commandment—the sin of adultery. God created human beings male and female. The difference between these two kinds of beings is called sex. The sixth commandment treats of the relation of the sexes to each other. When a dishonest dealer mixes some inferior article with a good article in order to make larger profits he adulterates the good article. It lost its purity when the cheaper article was added. When persons commit the sin forbidden by the sixth commandment they lose their purity, or, as we say, have committed adultery. This sin begins with unchaste thoughts. These bad thoughts lead to unchaste words and deeds. The wicked wife of Potiphar looked with sinful thoughts on Joseph, and sinful acts soon followed. David looked with sinful thoughts on Bathsheba and sinful acts resulted. Unchaste words are forbidden by this commandment. When one talks a good deal about a sin it will soon seem less sinful to him. There are unclean words, expressions and anecdotes that should not be once named among us, as St. Paul says. Unchaste thoughts and words are likely to lead to unchaste deeds. God has ordained the marriage estate, in which two persons of opposite sex may live together. Those who enter this estate are to love and honor each other, and remain together until separated by death.

Purity in Thought, Word and Deed.—The bold and shameless wife of Potiphar, and the pure-minded Joseph are very opposite characters in Lesson 18. When the latter replied to the bad woman's proposal, How can I do this great wicked-

ness and sin against God? he was obeying the sixth commandment, thou shalt not commit adultery. He gave two reasons for his refusal: first, it would be a sin against his master; secondly, it would be a sin against God. This commandment enjoins that we lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse. God wills that we be chaste in thought. We are chaste in thought when, through the grace of God, we subdue all unchaste desires. Since God must enable us to do this we do well to pray with David, Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. It will also be helpful if we avoid any manner of life that will arouse impure thoughts. Those who pray for clean hearts should cultivate temperate and industrious habits. We are also enjoined to be pure in our words. We are to shun all unchaste talk, and strive to be pure in all our words. It will help us to avoid this sin if we are careful not to associate with those who use foul language. We are also to be chaste in our deeds. To this end we should shun all unchaste doings, and all opportunity for them. We pray for grace to do this in the sixth petition, Lead us not into temptation. If we are in earnest in this matter we will keep away from saloons, dance halls, theaters, and other places where we would see and hear that which suggests unchaste deeds.

Theft. — In Lesson 19 we read of Achan, Israel's troubler. He took treasures from the heathen city although God forbade it, and threatened punishment to all offenders. He transgressed the seventh commandment — thou shalt not steal. We are not to steal, that is, not to take our neighbor's money or goods, or get them by false wares or dealings. God owns everything, however He entrusts something to each of us. Some of our property comes to us by inheritance, some as remuneration for labor, and some may be given to us. We are not to take from our neighbor what God has entrusted to him. This is done by wrongfully desiring and appropriating our neighbor's property. This sin begins by coveting — wrongfully desiring, that which belongs to some one else. Stealing may be done by picking some one's pocket, snatching a purse, looting a house, office or bank, robbing a traveler, etc. It is also done by getting our neighbor's goods by false wares or dealing. Merchants who misrepresent the goods they handle, or overcharge, contractors who slight

their work or use inferior material, laborers who quit working when not watched, transgress this commandment. Neighbors break it by borrowing and not returning the article borrowed. Manufacturers and employers are guilty of theft when they do not properly remunerate their employees. Those who knowingly aid thieves, or try to shield them from punishment, are partakers with them in their sins. Those who take money and give nothing in return, as do gamblers, bettors, lazy and dishonest beggars, are also thieves.

Aiding the Needy. — When Abram suggested a separation between himself and Lot because the land did not offer sufficient pasturage for the herds of both, and gave Lot the choice of location, he dealt with him in accordance with the seventh commandment, as we learned in Lesson 20. While this commandment forbids stealing, it enjoins that we help our neighbor to improve and protect his property and business. God entrusts more or less money and goods to each of us. We may use these for the benefit of our bodies and souls — for necessities, comforts, enjoyments, etc. However there are those around us whom we should assist, and were we to fail in this we would transgress the seventh commandment. Those that are poor in this world's goods, those that are sick, those who have suffered loss or other misfortune, are persons who need our assistance. In order that we may be able to assist those in need we should be industrious, and should not be extravagant, wasteful or careless. Lot abused the opportunity that came to him, and chose to settle among the wicked Sodomites. Many commit the same folly by moving into localities where they have no Christian neighbors or no church home. In choosing a place to live, a business, a companion for life, associates, etc., we will do well to remember Jesus' words as recorded in Matthew 6:3: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Helping Neighbors to Keep a Good Name. — The devout Stephen was accused of blasphemy (Lesson 21). His revilers were transgressing the eight commandment. Here we are forbidden to bear false witness, or to deceitfully belie, betray, slander or defame our neighbors. This is usually committed with the tongue. Bearing witness is saying something about a person. It is bearing false witness that displeases God. By

this commandment God would protect our good name. False witness may be borne in common life or in court. One way of doing so is to deceitfully belie our neighbor, which is telling a lie for the purpose of deceiving some one. We transgress this commandment by betraying our neighbor, that is, telling something about him that he wishes to keep secret, or the knowledge of which would do him injury. Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus. Those who commit this sin are sometimes called tale-bearers. This commandment forbids slandering and defaming our neighbor. We may slander persons by spreading false reports concerning them, and also by telling the truth, when the truth is something that should not be made public. We may bear false witness by condemning our neighbor unheard. When an evil report comes to us concerning our neighbor we should hear his side before condemning him. This sin is more grievous when committed in court, because the witness is then under oath. Judges, lawyers and members of the jury transgress this commandment when they suppress the truth, or decide contrary to the evidence.

Defaming Neighbors.—Lesson 22 gives an account of Jonathan's intercession for David, and shows how to render obedience to the requirements of the eighth commandment. It enjoins that we excuse our neighbor, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything. Our duty to our neighbor in this respect begins by thinking well of him. If we do not think well of him we will soon not speak well of him. We should excuse him. When we read of Peter denying Jesus we should call to mind that he did it through fear, and we will not blame him so severely. That is excusing him. We should speak well of our neighbor. Jonathan did this when he reminded his angry father of the valuable service David had rendered him. It is an act of love when on hearing an absent one criticised or blanded we speak in his favor. We should put the best construction on everything, and we will not be so ready to entertain evil thoughts against others. Since this commandment is usually broken with the tongue we should strive to control this member. When tempted to transgress in this particular we do well to remember that "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." Proverbs 12, 22.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 17. 1. In what sin were the Sodomites living? 2. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment? 3. Of what relation does this commandment treat? 4. What is the consequence when an inferior article is mixed with one of better quality? 5. What has the person lost who transgresses the sixth commandment? 6. How does this sin begin? 7. To what do unchaste thoughts lead? 8. Mention examples. 9. What in the second place is forbidden? 10. Why should we be careful as to what we say? 11. What should not be named among us? 12. What can be said of the marriage estate?

LESSON 18. 1. What characters are the subject of this lesson? 2. What answer did Joseph make on being tempted? 3. With which commandment do his actions accord? 4. What reasons did he give for rejecting the woman's proposal? 5. What is enjoined in this commandment? 6. When do we live chaste in thought? 7. What will be helpful in our efforts to lead pure lives? 8. When are we chaste in our words? 9. What will help us in this respect? 10. In which petition do we pray for help to remain pure? 11. What should we avoid?

LESSON 19. 1. Of what sin was Achan guilty? 2. Which commandment did he transgress? 3. What is forbidden in this commandment? 4. To whom do all things belong? 5. In what ways does God deal out possessions? 6. How can one break this commandment in dealing with others? 7. Mention different ways of stealing. 8. How may merchants transgress this part of God's law? Contractors? Laborers? Neighbors? Employers? 9. How may one make himself a partaker of another's sin? 10. What is the last kind of thieves referred to?

LESSON 20. 1. What dealings of Abram with Lot accord with the seventh commandment? 2. What is here enjoined? 3. How may we use our possessions? 4. How could we break this commandment in dealing with those in need? 5. Mention circumstances under which our assistance should be given. 6. How should we strive to fit ourselves for helpfulness? 7. Of what folly was Lot guilty? 8. How do people make a similar mistake to-day? 9. What should we bear in mind when choosing a location, business, etc.?

LESSON 21. 1. What accusation was made against Stephen? 2. Which commandment was transgressed? 3. What is forbidden in this commandment? 4. What is understood by bearing witness? 5. What kind of witness displeases God? 6. What would God protect by this commandment? 7. In what ways may false witness be borne? 8. What is understood by deceitfully belying our neighbor? Betraying him? 9. What further is forbidden? 10. In what ways may one slander his neighbor? 11. How can we break this commandment in regard to the evil reports we bear of our neighbor? 12. Why is this sin more grievous when committed in court? 13. How can judges, lawyers, etc., transgress this commandment?

LESSON 22. 1. What act of Jonathan accords with the eighth commandment? 2. What is here enjoined? 3. With what does our duty in this respect begin? 4. What soon follows when one thinks evil of his neighbor? 5. What is the first requirement according to Luther's explanation? 6. What excuse may be offered for Peter in regard to his denial of Christ? 7. What is the second requirement given? Third? 8. What members must be brought under control if we would obey this commandment? 9. What should we bear in mind when tempted to this sin?

24. AHAB COVETS NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

I. KINGS 21, 1-16.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT COVET thy neighbor's HOUSE.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we MAY NOT CRAFTILY SEEK to get our neighbor's INHERITANCE or HOUSE, nor obtain it by a SHOW OF RIGHT; but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Ahab Casts Covetous Eyes on Naboth's Vineyard. — And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth¹ the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace² of Ahab³ king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.⁴

Naboth Refuses the King's Offer. — And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.⁵

The Childish King Pouts. — And Ahab went into his house heavy and displeased, because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers.⁶ And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.⁷

Jezebel Comes to the King's Assistance. — But Jezebel⁸ his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou not govern the Kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.⁹ So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and set the letters unto the elders and the nobles that were in the city, dwelling with Naboth.¹⁰

And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.;¹¹ And set two men, sons of Belial,¹² before him to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king:¹³ and then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.

Naboth Stoned. — And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.¹⁴ Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.¹⁵

Ahab Takes Possession of the Vineyard. — And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.¹⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. He was called a Jezreelite because he lived at Jezreel, a city in Samaria. 2. This was the king's favorite palace; he had another at Samaria. 3. Ahab was the seventh king of the ten tribes. 4. Ahab set his eyes and heart on Naboth's vineyard. It was convenient to his palace, and would be a valuable addition to his property; he was very anxious to secure it. He transgressed the ninth commandment which *forbids* that we covet our neighbor's house; or, craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or obtain it by a show of right. We covet something when we desire or long for it. It is right to desire anything that God wants us to have. It was not wrong for David to desire bread when Saul was pursuing him, and he was hungry. It was not wrong for Simeon to long to see the Christ Child. The desires and longings that God forbids are evil desires and longings. Coveting is a sin of the heart. We cannot see it, but God can see it. We can see the sin to which coveting leads. When we see some one steal a dollar we know that he has transgressed the seventh commandment. While that person was just coveting the dollar he was sinning, but we could not know it. God knew it, however. God forbids stealing in the

seventh commandment, and in the ninth He *forbids coveting*. Both stealing and coveting are wrong.

When God tells us not to *covet* our neighbor's house He means, We are not to seek or even wish to bring our neighbor's inheritance or house into our possession in an unrighteous manner. Thus this commandment *forbids* that we *covet or seek to get* our neighbor's house. By house is meant all property.

We call the person who commits this sin a covetous man, or a miser, or a person greedy of gain. The prophet cries out against this sin in Isaiah 5, 8. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." The scribes and Pharisees of our Savior's day committed this sin and Jesus said, Matthew 23, 14, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation." By that accusation Jesus meant that they cheated widows out of their property.

God wants us to be satisfied with our lot in life, and not in an unrighteous manner to long for that which some one else possesses. St. Paul writes, I. Timothy, 6, 10, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." When it is said that these greedy people "fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts" it means that their covetousness leads them into all kinds of sin. This is also expressed by the words, "The love of money is the root of all evil." Covetousness led Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus. It led Gehazzi, Elisha's servant, to lie in order to get the gift which Naaman had offered. It led Ahab and Jezebel to murder Naboth. It led Jacob and his mother to lie and defraud in order that the former might secure the birthright. It led Laban to change Jacob's wages ten times, and to take advantage of him wherever he could. 5. Naboth remembered that God forbade parting with one's inheritance, Leviticus 25, 23. There it is recorded, "The land shall not be sold forever." He looked upon it as wrong, and replied, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." It required courage for Naboth to do his duty with the king urging him to do otherwise. It requires Christian courage for us to stand for truth and right when people of influence are not doing so. 6. Ahab's covetous heart made him discontented. Discontented people are not happy. They are displeasing to God, for they are not trusting in Him. 7. Ahab acted like a spoiled child. In the same manner God's goodness is often despised; and people whine when they should give thanks. 8. Jezebel was from Zidon, a renowned city of Phoenicia. The Zidonians were descendants of Canaan, and were gross idolaters. 9. The queen gave wicked counsel. She advises that the king should abuse his office

as ruler, slay Naboth, and take possession of the vineyard. Job found in his wife also an evil counselor, Job 2, 9. A Christian will not harm his neighbor no matter how much he may seem to gain by it. 10. In carrying out her wicked plot she forged the king's name, this was dishonest and untruthful. 11. In this way the people would be deceived. They would think that the judgment of God was threatened for some reason, and that Naboth was the suspected cause. He is set on high, that is, put on trial. 12. A son of Belial is a worthless person. 13. Since Naboth is to be put to death there must be a show of justice—there must be an accusation. The upright man is declared to have blasphemed God and the king. 14. According to Leviticus 24, 15-16, the sin of blasphemy was to be punished by death. The testimony of the worthless characters was accepted, and the innocent man was stoned to death. 15. The queen was well pleased with the success of her efforts. Her commands had been speedily obeyed, for the subjects feared her. Those who are in authority, and those who exert much influence, will have much to answer for on the day of judgment if they use their authority and their influence for the encouragement of sin. The sins which others commit in obedience to their command, or under their influence, will be charged against them. 16. Evidently Ahab knew how the vineyard had been secured, and perhaps did not sanction the procedure, but he did not use his authority. He was anxious for the property, and hastened to take possession. Covetousness had hardened his heart.

QUESTIONS.

1. Why was Naboth called a Jezreelite? 2. Who was Ahab? 3. Of what sin was Ahab guilty? 4. Which commandment was he transgressing? 5. Which is the ninth commandment? 6. What does this mean? 7. What is here forbidden? 8. What is it to covet? 9. What may we covet or desire? 10. Give examples of longing and desiring that are not wrong? 11. To what sin does coveting frequently lead? 12. What is the difference between coveting and stealing in God's sight? 13. What is included in the word house? 14. By what names may we designate those who transgress this commandment? 15. In what words did the prophet Isaiah warn against this sin? 16. In what words did Jesus warn against it? 17. What did He mean by the expression, "Devour widows' houses?" 18. To what state of mind and heart does the apostle refer as being of "great gain?" 19. What should move us to be contented according to the apostle's words in 1 Timothy 6, 6-10? 20. Under what extreme conditions should we be contented? 21. Why is it foolish to set the heart on acquiring wealth? 22. What is meant by the words, "The love of money is the root of all evil?" 23. Mention the particular sin to which covetousness led each of the following persons: Judas Iscariot, Gehazzi, Ahab and Jezebel, Jacob and Rebekah, Laban. 24. Why did Naboth refuse the King's request? 25. Under what circumstances do we need just such courage as Naboth manifested? 26. What can be said of discontented people? 27. Ahab's pouting amidst abundance reminds us of what sin of our day? 28. Who was Jezebel? 29. Who were the Zidonians? 30. Mention another woman who gave wicked counsel to her husband. 31. What is the Christian's attitude when he sees an opportunity of securing profit to himself by causing some one else harm? 32. What is meant by "setting him on high?" 33. Why was a fast proclaimed? 34. Who were "sons of Belial?" 35. What was done to give a show of justice to the proceedings? 36. What was the penalty for blasphemy? 37. Under what conditions will those in authority and those who wield great influence have much to answer for? 38. Why

is this the case? 39. What must have been the condition of Ahab's heart to enjoy property secured through such wickedness?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ISAIAH 5. 8. Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.

25. ABRAHAM RESCUES LOT'S GOODS.

GENESIS 14.

**THE NINTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS
COMMANDED.**

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God, that we may not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, nor obtain it by a show of right; but HELP and BE OF SERVICE to him IN KEEPING it.

Lot Taken Captive. — And It came to pass, that Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and the kings¹ with him, made war² with the king of Sodom,³ and took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot and his goods and departed.⁴

Abram to the Rescue. — And when Abram heard that his brother⁵ was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, three hundred and eighteen,⁶ and pursued them, and brought back all the goods,⁷ and also his brother Lot.⁸

Melchizedek and Abram. — After Abram's return from the slaughter of the kings, Melchizedek⁹ king of Salem brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the Most High God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.¹⁰ And Abram gave him tithes¹¹ of all.

Abram Refuses the Offer of the King of Sodom. — And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine,¹² lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. King Chedorlaomer had three allies. Usually the domain of a king in those days was a single city. 2. This is the first war of which we read in the Scriptures. The occasion of it was the revolt of five kings from under the government of Chedorlaomer. 3. The Sodomites were descendants of Canaan, while the Elamites descended from Shem. The servitude of the former to the latter was prophesied by Noah. The Sodomites were defeated in this war and thus the servitude was continued. The Sodomites were living in gluttony and excess, abusing the blessings of Heaven, and this defeat was God's judgment upon them. 4. Lot was a righteous man, but he was in bad company. In this sinful world troubles come to the righteous as well as to the ungodly, and especially when they choose to live where the latter are in the great majority. Moreover Lot had been attracted to Sodom by the outward prosperity of these wicked people. He must learn what a foolish choice he made. 5. Lot was Abram's nephew. The word brother is used in the sense of a near relative. 6. That Abram had so many servants shows that he had been richly blessed. That they were *trained* servants shows him to have been wise and orderly. 7. Abram's conduct is that of a brave man, unafraid of those accustomed to war. A good conscience and the assurance of God's favor made Abram brave. 8. Although Lot had selfishly taken first choice of location when they separated, and thus failed to show proper gratitude to Abram, the latter is quick to befriend him. A Christian must not ask if those in need of his service have always treated him right; he is to love and serve his enemies as well as his friends. In this respect we find a good example in the good Samaritan who hastened to help his enemy, the Jew who had been waylaid by a highwayman. Of course, the best example of a meek and forgiving spirit is that of our Savior in His dealings with sinful humanity. Abram was obeying the ninth commandment. This commandment *forbids* that we *covet our neighbor's house, or craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house*. The apostle earnestly warns against covetousness in Hebrews 13, 5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He urges all to be contented. The story of these warring, greedy kings shows us to what discontent leads. 9. The name Melchizedek means *king of righteousness*. He was king of Salem, which means *peace*. Jerusalem was called Salem at that time. He was a priest of the Most High God as well as king. He feared and worshipped God, although but few if any of the original inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem did so. In Psalm 110, 4, and in Hebrews 7, 3, our Lord Jesus is compared with Melchizedek. 10. He ministered to Abram to show their oneness of faith. 11. A tithe is the tenth part. Abram gave one tenth of the captured booty to him as priest of the Lord. Afterwards it became a law in Israel to give one-tenth to the priesthood. See Hebrews 7. We cannot conclude from the tithing system of the Old Testament dispensation that God requires us now to give one-tenth of our income to the work of the Church, or to benevolence. However we should learn from

this and other portions of the Scriptures that God is pleased with liberal and cheerful givers. 12. Abram would not take a reward from the king of Sodom lest he might say, I have made Abram rich. Unlike most of those who went to war in those days he was not after booty. Abram was doing his duty toward Lot. He was being of service to him in keeping his property. This commandment *enjoins* That we help and be of service to our neighbor in keeping his inheritance or house. We are thus serving our neighbor When we are *heartily pleased* at our neighbor's prosperity, and *seek to ward off from him all losses*, just as we would from ourselves. Abraham acted in accordance with the spirit of this commandment in all his dealings with Lot. When there was strife between the herdmen he advised that they separate, and, in order that Lot might be the more certain to sustain no loss, gave him the choice of territory. When Lot was captured Abram hastened to his rescue, and secured for him all his property that had been stolen. Now he shows the same spirit toward the king of Sodom, refusing to accept any of the booty.

We are *enjoyed* to be *heartily pleased* at our neighbor's prosperity. Laban was not heartily pleased with Jacob's prosperity. Jacob's sons were not heartily pleased with their brother Joseph's good fortune in receiving a coat of many colors. The princes of Chaldea did not heartily rejoice that Daniel was highly honored by the king. We are not heartily pleased at our neighbor's prosperity when we feel discouraged on hearing that he is meeting with greater success than we. Abram loved his neighbor. He could not rest on hearing that Lot was in trouble. He not only went to much trouble and expense, but endangered his life in order to *ward off the loss* that had come upon his nephew.

In Philippians 2, 4. we read, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." We are to be concerned about the welfare of our neighbor as well as about our own. We are not living in accordance with this commandment if we do not go to our neighbor when he is sick, or in other trouble, and express our sympathy and offer our assistance.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the probable extent of the domain of each of these warring kings? 2. What can you say of this war? 3. Of whom were the Sodomites and the Elamites respectively descended? 4. What had been prophesied in regard to the descendants of Canaan? 5. What was the character of the Sodomites? 6. How is their defeat in this war to be regarded? 7. What lessons should Lot have learned from his experience in this war? 8. How is the word brother as here applied to Lot to be understood? 9. What characteristics of Abram are indicated by his servants and his conduct? 10. What act of Lot makes Abram's conduct of this occasion the more commendable? 11. What does a Christian not ask when his service is needed? 12. Mention pertinent examples. 13. Which is the ninth commandment? 14. What does this mean? 15. What is here forbidden? 16. In what words does the apostle warn against covetousness? 17. What can we see in the account of this war? 18. What does the name Melchizedek mean? 19. What can you say of this man? 20. What is a tithe? 21. With what incident did the Old Testament tithing system begin? 22. What may we learn from this Old Testament law? 23. What is enjoined in the ninth commandment? 24. What does this mean? 25.

Mention some acts of Abram that accord with the requirements of this commandment. 26. Mention incidents in Biblical history that are not in accord with this commandment. 27. What condition of heart and life would be at variance with this commandment? 28. Repeat Philipplians 2, 4, 29. What does this mean? 30. What is our duty in cases our neighbor is sick or in trouble?

GOLDEN TEXT.

GALATIANS. 5. 13. By love serve one another.

26. DAVID COVETS URIAH'S WIFE.

2 SAMUEL 11.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS FORBIDDEN.

Thou shalt NOT COVET thy neighbor's WIFE, nor his MAN-SERVANT, nor his MAID-SERVANT, nor his OX, nor his ASS, nor ANYTHING that is thy neighbor's.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we MAY NOT ESTRANGE, FORCE or ENTICE AWAY from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle: but URGE them to STAY and DO THEIR DUTY.

David not at His Post of Duty. — After the year was expired¹ David sent Joab,² and his servants³ with him, and all Israel⁴ and they destroyed the children of Ammon,⁵ and besieged Rabbah.⁶ And David tarried at Jerusalem.⁷

David Tempted. — And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David walked upon the roof of the king's house,⁸ and he saw a woman who was very beautiful to look upon.⁹

David Covets Uriah's Wife. — And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah¹⁰ the Hittite?¹¹ And David sent messengers and took her.¹²

David Arranges that Uriah Shall be Slain. — And David wrote a letter to Joab, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten and die.¹³ And Joab assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valient men were: and the men of the city went out and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people; and Uriah the Hittite died also.¹⁴

David's Conscience Sleeps. — Then Joab sent and told David all the things concerning the war. And the wife of Uriah mourned for her husband. And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son.¹⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. At the return of spring, when kings renewed their military operations. 2. A nephew of David, and one of his generals. 3. They were the king's guards. 4. The entire army. 5. The Ammonites were a strong people living east of the Jordan. David had routed them on the battle field, and now sends his army into their country to punish them still further. 6. The Ammonite metropolis, or capital city. 7. David was out of place in Jerusalem while his army was engaging this powerful enemy. 8. This was the custom in those days, especially on the part of the thoughtful and devout who wished to be alone. 9. Had David been on duty he would not have encountered this temptation. As standing waters gather filth, so idle minds harbor sinful thoughts. No one is in greater danger of falling into sin than the one who has nothing to do. 10. One of David's thirty body-guards, and a faithful officer. 11. The Hittites were descendants of Canaan. 12. David's sins grew rapidly. He was transgressing the tenth commandment. This commandment *forbids* that we should covet our neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maid-servant, or his cattle, or anything that is our neighbor's; or estrange, force or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants or cattle. As we have already learned, the word covet means the same as *desire*. It is *evil desires* that are forbidden. First of all we are forbidden to have evil desires against our neighbor's *wife*. David transgressed this commandment when he desired Bathsheba to love him instead of her husband. God says in Genesis 2, 24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." That means that a husband and wife are one in God's sight. They are to cling to each other. No one dare try to separate them. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." David did wrong in separating Uriah and Bathsheba. King Herod committed this sin when he took his brother Philip's wife, Herodias, as his life companion.

We are forbidden to covet our neighbor's *servants*, that is, those who are working for him. When people find faithful employees they desire to keep them. The employee, if properly treated and remunerated, is usually contented and happy. It is wrong for some one to make trouble between a man and his workmen. When employees are not properly treated and remunerated they have a right to throw up their job. It is wrong, however, when dissatisfied workmen strive to force their employers to come to their terms by trying to persuade other employees to quit working, and endeavoring to prevent applicants for work from taking a job under their former employer.

We are also forbidden to covet our neighbor's *cattle*. The animals that a man has in his possession may be valuable. They may be useful for food, clothing or work, or be endeared to him and his family. No one should *covet*, that is, *desire to get* his neighbor's cattle dishonestly. We ought to so love our neighbor that we would not wish to deprive him of anything that gives him pleasure, or brings him profit.

We are forbidden to covet our neighbor's *wife, servants or cattle*. We transgress this commandment when we have even the *least evil*

desire in our hearts for that which is our neighbor's. Of course, these evil desires originate in our hearts. Our Savior says, Matthew 15, 19, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Since our hearts are so bad we should pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." 13. We see the power of sin. The righteous David yields to his strong lusts, and is willing for the time even to commit murder in order that his unholy lusts should be obeyed. He has been made blind, so that he cannot see the sinfulness of sin. Thus sin made the Jews blind and they failed to recognize Jesus as the Savior. Thus sin smites with spiritual blindness those who waste their time, undermine health, squander money, and lose their immortal souls in a mad rush for money or so-called pleasure. 14. His sin continued to grow. It soon led to murder. Joab assigned the faithful officer to a place where he would be killed, but David ordered him to do it. It was David who committed the murder, although Joab was a willing partaker in the sin. 15. David's conscience had gone to sleep. He was seemingly happy, although his soul was in imminent danger. Conscience is a monitor God has given us to warn against sin and encourage in doing right. It is a guide to us. It is a safe guide only when it is enlightened by God's Word, and when it is in good working order.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who was Joab? 2. What is meant by the word servants as here used? 3. Who besides them went to the war? 4. What can you say of the Ammonites? 5. In what respect did David come short of his duty? 6. Where did the thoughtful and devout repair for meditation? 7. To what, in part, may David's temptation be attributed? 8. What condition of life is dangerous to the soul? 9. Who was Uriah? 10. Who were the Hittites? 11. Which commandment did David transgress at this time? 12. Which is the tenth commandment? 13. What does this mean? 14. What is forbidden? 15. What is another word for covet? 16. What kind of desires are here forbidden? 17. In Luther's explanation what is first mentioned that we are forbidden to covet? 18. How did David transgress this commandment? 19. What is said in Genesis 2, 24, in regard to those united in marriage? 20. What is meant by the expression, "they shall be one flesh?" 21. Mention a king of the New Testament who transgressed this commandment. 22. In the second place what are we not to covet? 23. Who are meant by servants in this commandment? 24. What may employees do when dissatisfied with treatment and wages? 25. What method of settling troubles between employers and employees are wrong? 26. In the third place what are we not to covet? 27. When are we transgressing this commandment? 28. Whence come these evil desires? 29. What is recorded on this subject in Matthew 15, 19? 30. In view of this what prayer is always timely? 31. What may we see in this experience of David? 32. What effect of sin is seen in David, also in the Jewish people of Jesus' day? 33. Who are likely to suffer in this way? 34. Who was the more guilty in the murder of Uriah? 35. What useful faculty of David's had temporarily ceased its operations? 36. What is conscience? 37. When is conscience a safe guide?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 5. 8. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

27. PAUL SENDS ONESIMUS BACK TO HIS MASTER.

EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT. — WHAT IS COMMANDED.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we may not estrange, force or entice away from our neighbor his wife, servants, or cattle: but URGE them TO STAY and DO THEIR DUTY.

Paul's Address and Greeting to Philemon. — Paul, a prisoner¹ of Jesus Christ, and Timothy² our brother, unto Philemon³ our dearly beloved, and fellow laborer. And to our beloved Apphia,⁴ and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house:⁵ Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.⁷

A Tribute to Philemon. — I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayer,⁸ hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints: that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation in thy love,⁹ because the bowels¹⁰ of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

A Plea for the Slave, Onesimus. — Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,¹¹ yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee,¹² being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ,¹³ I beseech thee for my son, Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me.¹⁴

The Love of a Great Man for a Slave. — Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels.¹⁵ Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy

stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel;¹⁶ but without thy mind I would do nothing;¹⁷ that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.¹⁸ For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever;¹⁹ not now as a servant, but above a servant, a beloved brother,²⁰ especially to me,²¹ but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord.²² If thou count me therefore a partner receive him as myself.²³ If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account:²⁴ I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: Albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.²⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Paul was at that time a prisoner at Rome, deprived of his liberty because He had preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 2. Timothy, a young man whom Paul had instructed in the saving truth, now his fellow laborer, concurred with him in the writing of this epistle. 3. Philemon was one of St. Paul's converts, a good man and an active Christian—perhaps a minister. 4. Evidently Philemon's wife. 5. Probably a son of Philemon and Apphia, and a minister of Colosse. 6. This was an ideal home. Every member of the household was an active Christian. 7. This was Paul's favorite way of expressing his good wishes to his friends. Grace means favor, good will. Those who enjoy God's favor have peace of heart. 8. The best way to remember our friends is to remember them in our prayers. 9. As Paul rejoiced on hearing of the zeal and activity of his friend, so should we rejoice on hearing such news of our friends. All will do well to ask, What effect has my manner of life on others? 10. The revised version has hearts instead of bowels. Paul meant that other believers are cheered and strengthened by Philemon's good example. 11. Paul's relationship to Philemon was so intimate that it was not improper for him to tell his friend what he considered it best for him to do. 12. For the sake of love Paul entreats when he might have commanded. It is natural for any one to prefer being entreated to being commanded. The law of love demands that we have regard to the feelings of others at all times. 13. The apostle puts his soul into his request. He would say, If you wish to favor one that is old, and deprived of his liberty for Christ's sake, grant my petition. 14. Onesimus had been Philemon's slave. Having committed some offense against his master, he ran away, finally reaching Rome. Here he heard Paul preach, for, although a prisoner, the apostle was permitted to preach. Onesimus was converted. The preacher and the fugitive became fast friends. Being a prisoner Paul found Onesimus quite useful to him. However, on hearing his new friend's story, much as he preferred to keep him, and useful as the new convert

was to him, Paul insisted that the young man return to his master. The apostle was acting in accordance with the tenth commandment. Here we are *forbidden* to covet our *neighbor's wife, servants or cattle*, or not *estrangle, force or entice them away from him*. We are enjoined "to urge our neighbors wife and servants to stay and do their duty." Joseph acted in accordance with this commandment when tempted by Potiphar's *wife*. He reminded her that she was the officer's wife, and should be faithful to her husband. If all Christians would do this there would be fewer unhappy homes, and a much smaller number of husbands and wives refusing to live together. St. Paul was heeding this commandment when he sent *the servant* Onesimus back to his master. When Sarah's *maid-servant*, Hagar, ran away, the angel of the Lord said unto her, "return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." When, at the time of a strike, excited employees use all the persuasion and force they can command to keep others from working where they refuse to work, this commandment is transgressed. In Deuteronomy 22, 1, we are enjoined to drive back our neighbor's *cattle* should we find them straying away. If we love our neighbor as we do ourselves we will do all in our power that his *wife, servants and cattle stay with him*. We fulfill this commandment, "When we are perfectly holy and just, as God originally created us." God is holy. We can not be perfectly pleasing to Him until we are holy. God wants us to be holy. He enjoins, Leviticus 19, 2, "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord thy God am holy." He also says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." God created our first parents in His image, which means that He created them holy, or perfect. God has a right to require of us to be as He created us. As we study this commandment we learn how far we come short in pleasing God. 15. Paul was anxious that Philemon should know all the circumstances, and would accord his returning slave proper treatment. 16. Had Paul consulted his own feelings and interests he would have retained Onesimus at Rome to minister to him, and otherwise help him in his work. 17. The apostle would say, You have more right to him than I, since he is your slave. 18. Here Paul says to Philemon, If you desire to help me through your servant let it be done of your own free will. It is the motive that makes a work pleasing to God. When you attend divine service, or pray, or give alms, do it not because you consider it your duty, or out of necessity, but because love constrains you. 19. Paul means to say that God has overruled all this for good. Now that Onesimus is penitent let him be dealt with in a brotherly way, especially since his running away resulted in his conversion. Christians should be very charitable in dealing with wrongdoers after these have repented. We have an example of this in Jesus' treatment of the "woman that was a sinner." 20. Onesimus was still a servant, but now also a brother. Christians are children of a common Father, and therefore brethren, no matter how differently blessed they may be in matters pertaining to this life. 21. Since Onesimus was one of Paul's converts the apostle was deeply interested in him. 22. To Philemon he should now be doubly dear because he is both his servant

and his brother. 23. Show your love for me by your love for Onesimus. 24. Possibly the fugitive had been guilty of theft, or was in some other way indebted to Philemon. Paul promises to pay the debt. 25. This was a hint to Philemon not to be too exacting. The apostle reminds his good friend that he had received much from him, and on that account could afford to deal leniently with Onesimus whom Paul loves so dearly.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where was Paul when he wrote this epistle? 2. Of what offense had he been guilty? 3. Who was Timothy? Philemon? Apphia? Archippus? 4. What may be said of Philemon's home? 5. How did Paul express his good wishes? 6. What is meant by grace? 7. What is the best way of remembering our friends? 8. What news gave the apostle joy? 9. What question will all do well to ask? 10. What is meant by the word bowels as here used? 11. Why might the apostle have enjoined that which he humbly requested? 12. For what should we have regard when dealing with others? 13. Briefly relate Onesimus's career. 14. What circumstances made it desirable for Paul to keep the new convert with him? 15. Why did he send Onesimus back to Philemon? 16. With which commandment did the apostle's actions accord? 17. Which is the tenth commandment? 18. What does this mean? 19. What is forbidden here? 20. What is enjoined? 21. Mention an incident in Joseph's life that accords with this commandment. In Sarah's. 22. How is this commandment sometimes transgressed during so-called strikes? 23. What is our duty on finding our neighbor's cattle going astray? 24. What is enjoined in Leviticus 19, 2? 25. What was the apostle's concern in regard to the returning slave? 26. Had Paul consulted his own interests what would he have done with Onesimus? 27. Why had Philemon the right to say whom Onesimus should serve? 28. If Philemon saw proper to allow his servant to minister to Paul how should this be brought about? 29. In judging our service to Him to what has God the most regard? 30. What should prompt us to serve God and man? 31. What evidence did Paul see that God had overruled the servant's escapade unto good? 32. How should our dealings with penitent sinners be characterized? 33. Mention an incident in Jesus' life that teaches this lesson. 34. In what respect had the relation between Philemon and Onesimus been changed? 35. In spite of the difference in possessions and rank how are all Christians related? 36. In what way did Paul wish Philemon to manifest his love for him? 37. What offer did the apostle make? 38. Of what did he remind Philemon in order to move him to leniency?

GOLDEN TEXT.

LEVITICUS 19, 2. Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.

28. GOD VISITS THE WICKED WORLD WITH A FLOOD.

GENESIS 7.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE HOLY TEN COM- MANDMENTS.

He says thus: I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, VISITING the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and SHOWING MERCY unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

What does this mean?

God threatens to PUNISH all that transgress these commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath, and not act contrary to these commandments. But He PROMISES grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in Him, and willingly do according to His commandments.

A Gracious Invitation. — And the Lord said unto Noah,¹ Come, thou and all thy house into the ark:² for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

Prompt Obedience to God's Will. — In the self-same day entered Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah unto the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life.³ And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in.

The Flood. — And the flood was forty days upon the earth,⁴ and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. An the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven,

were covered.⁵ Fifteen cubits⁶ upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

The Destruction of Life. — And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth,⁷ and every man:⁸ all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.⁹ And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth:¹⁰ and Noah only remained alive,¹¹ and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.¹²

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Noah was the tenth from Adam. He was 500 years old before he married. He was a good man. St. Peter speaks of him as a preacher of righteousness. 2. The ark was 450 feet by 75 feet, being 45 feet deep. It was oblong in shape, and of three stories. No doubt it was not inviting in appearance, but in it Noah and his family found a refuge from the awful destruction sent upon the earth. It was a type of holy baptism. 1. Peter 3, 20-21. As in it this righteous family found safety so in the Christian Church sinners find salvation from sin and death. 3. God might have created other animals, but He arranged to continue those in existence by preserving a pair of each kind. Of clean animals seven of each were taken, that there might be some to spare for sacrifices. 4. Forty days of incessant rain. 5. The highest elevations were to be covered with water so that no creature would escape. 6. About 22 feet. 7. The curse rested upon all creation and all creation must be partakers in the awful destruction. Even the lower animals were destroyed in order that man might be the more deeply impressed with His wrath against sin. No doubt God's wisdom saw other reasons why the animals should be destroyed. 8. Of course we do not know the population of the world at that time, but it was no doubt large. 9. All men, women and children were destroyed, save those who found refuge in the ark. God thus reminds us that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Wickedness abounded everywhere. St. Peter refers to the people of that day as "the world of the ungodly." In the book of Job the flood is referred to as a warning to the wicked. In the *conclusion* of the law God *threatens* to punish all that *transgress these commandments*. While these words are found after the first commandment in the 20th chapter of Exodus Luther has placed them at the end because they pertain not only to the first, but to all the ten commandments. God would urge us to take each commandment to heart because He is a jealous God and visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him.

This is an earnest threat against all who transgress these commandments. God is a jealous God in the sense that He will not be treated as one among many. He alone is God. His glory will He not give to another. When He threatens to visit iniquity He means that He will punish sin. He will punish in eternity all sin that is not repented of. He often punishes it already in this life. Our lesson relates how He punished the wicked people of Noah's day. In Moses's day He punished the ungodly Egyptians by sending terrible plagues upon them, and at last overwhelming them in the waters of the Red Sea. In Lot's day He punished the Sodomites by raining upon them fire and brimstone from heaven. Cain, who murdered his brother, was "cursed from the earth." God said, "When thou tillest the ground it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." A part of Cain's punishment was an unhappy feeling which he would not be able to get rid of—an accusing conscience. This was the punishment with which Judas the traitor was visited, and which drove him to take his own life. God gives us a conscience to goad us when we do wrong, and lead us to repentance. When, like Judas Iscariot, and the people of Noah's day, sinners go on in sin despite the goading of conscience, God often visits them in other ways. God threatens to punish the wicked unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. God does not punish children for the sins of their parents unless they commit those sins themselves. In this threat He shows that there is great danger of children living in the sin in which their parents lived. He gives us this earnest threat to lead us to fear His wrath, and not act contrary to His commandments. 10. God spared Noah because he was righteous. The world had grown wicked. The descendants of Cain had followed in the footsteps of their wicked ancestor. The descendants of Seth were godly, but by and by they intermarried with the Cainites and became one with them in wickedness. God gave these ungodly people opportunity to repent. A preacher of righteousness labored in their midst for 120 years, but they went on in sin. Noah was an exception. He was spared. God has given a *gracious promise* in the conclusion of His law. He promises to show mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments. He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Therefore we should love and trust in Him and willingly do according to His commandments. He wants all to know how well it pleases Him when His people love and obey Him. For this reason He added a special promise to the fourth commandment and added a general promise in the conclusion. He says, Psalms 19, 11, "In keeping of them is great reward." He refers to the commandments. One of the punishments inflicted on the wicked is a disturbed conscience, and one of the blessings that descends on the righteous is a calm and peaceful conscience. He rewards the faithful in many other ways. In 1 Timothy 4, 8, we read, "But godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Of course the chief reward that God graciously bestows on His people is

eternal life. Jesus says, Matthew 5, 12, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." God does not ward off all trouble and suffering from His people, but He sustains them in their trying experiences, and turns their trials into blessings. St. Paul says, Romans 8, 28. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love Him." We must not forget that this is a *gracious promise* that God has given us. We do not deserve this reward. God owes us nothing. Jesus says, Luke 17, 10, "So likewise ye, when ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say: we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." God added this promise that we may be lead "to love and trust in Him and willingly do according to His commandments." 11. The duration of the flood was one year and ten days.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Noah? 2. Describe the ark. 3. Of what was it a type? 4. In what respect was it typical of the Church? 5. Give some particulars of the flood. 6. Why was the destruction so general? 7. What Scriptural passage should a contemplation of this terrible visitation call to mind? 8. What was the character of the people, with the exception of Noah and his family? 9. What is threatened in the conclusion of the holy ten commandments? 10. At what place in the commandments are these words found in Exodus? 11. Why does Luther assign them a place after the tenth commandment? 12. What kind of a threat has God here made? 13. Against whom is this threat made? 14. In what respect is God jealous? 15. What is meant by visiting iniquity? 16. When will sin that is not repented of be punished? 17. When also is sin often punished? 18. What temporal punishment did God send upon the Egyptians? 19. Mention other instances of sin being punished in this life. 20. Mention examples in which an accusing conscience was a portion of the temporal punishment inflicted. 21. With what end in view does God allow conscience to goad sinners? 22. What often follows when the voice of conscience is not heeded? 23. Under what circumstances will children suffer for the sins of their parents? 24. What may we learn from this threat? 25. Why did God make this threat? 26. How was the wickedness of Cain finally spread over the earth? 27. What opportunity did these ungodly people despise? 28. Who was spared from this visitation of God's wrath? 29. What promise has God added to His law? 30. To what should this promise move us? 31. To what end has God added this promise? 32. What is a part of the reward that God bestows on those who obey His law? 33. What is the chief reward awaiting God's people? 34. What are Christians to expect in this life? 35. How does God show His goodness to us in the midst of these trials? 36. Why is this promise designated as *gracious*? 37. After having done our best what are we to confess? 38. What was the entire duration of the flood?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 10, 28. But rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

MATTHEW 5, 12. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.

29. SIN'S ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD.

GENESIS 3, 1-7.

SIN.

Sin is every transgression of the divine law.

The Tempter's Approach. — Now the serpent¹ was more subtle² than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman,³ Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?⁴

The Woman's Reply. — And the woman said⁵ unto the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the tree of the garden. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden. God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."⁶

The Temptation. — And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely die:⁷ for God doth know, that, in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened;⁸ and ye shall be as gods,⁹ knowing good and evil."¹⁰

The First Sin. — And when the woman saw¹¹ that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave¹² also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.¹³

The Immediate Consequence. — And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked¹⁴; and they sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves aprons.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The devil spoke through the serpent. In Revelation 12, 9, he is called "that old serpent." 2. Because the serpent is subtle or cunning, it was well suited as Satan's tool. 3. He addressed the woman because she would be more easily misled. In I Peter 3, 7, woman is called "the weaker vessel." 4. By these words Satan meant to say, Surely there is some mistake; God would not deny you such precious fruit. He still tries to make people believe that they have misunderstood God, and that certain acts that they consider sinful are right and proper. When one does what God forbids, or does not do what He commands, he is guilty of sin. *Sin is the transgression of the divine law.* When the Jews stoned Stephen they transgressed the divine law. It is not always a sin, how-

ever, when some law which men have made is violated. It is not a sin to eat meat on Friday, since the Roman Catholics, not God, have set up the law forbidding to eat meat on that day. Satan tempted the woman, and she readily yielded. The *cause of sin* is Satan, who of his own free will turned away from God, and the will of man who freely permitted himself to be deceived by Satan. 5. The woman knew that God had forbidden them to eat of that tree, and she should not have tarried to converse with Satan. When tempted we should get away from the tempter and the temptation as quickly as possible. 6. The woman answered well. She showed that she understood God's command and threat perfectly. No evil-doer can blame God for not having made His will plain. 7. Satan bluntly contradicted God. Here we see how rapidly the tempter grows bold in his efforts with those who do not drive him off. At first he asked the woman to doubt God's threat; then he asked her to consider it false. 8. The devil grew bolder. He not only declared that there was no danger in eating of the forbidden fruit, but that great advantage would be derived from doing so. Satan still leads people into wrong doing in the same way. Not the eyes of the body, but the eyes of conscience would be opened by this sin. After the fall the offenders saw their folly and its dire consequences. 9. Of course this was false. Satan usually promises far more than he gives. 10. Our first parents did gain much knowledge through their sin, but that knowledge brought them sorrow and death. He planted the seed of discontent in the woman, and then she readily yielded to him. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." 11. Satan led the woman to look upon the tree; and as she looked the desire to eat of its fruit grew. When sin is attractive we do well to turn away at once. 12. Sin grows. The woman first talked of the fruit, then looked, then took, then ate, then gave to her husband. One of the dangers of sin lies in the fact that one sin leads to another. 13. Adam, who might have withstood the temptation had Satan offered it, yielded when approached by his wife. Satan's shrewdness is seen in the means he selects and the methods he employs. The result of the sin of our first parents is terrible. Their nature was spoiled. It became depraved. This spoiled or depraved nature was handed down from our first parents to all their descendants. The sin that we inherit is called *original sin*. It is the utter depravity of the whole human nature, which, since the fall of Adam, is inborn in all men.

How seriously this depravity affects man is set forth by St. Paul, Ephesians 2, 1, "You were dead in trespasses and sins." Sin makes us spiritually dead. Paul assures us in Romans 5, 12, that sin affects everybody: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This depravity is inborn. David says, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." This depravity consists in this that we have lost the image of God and, consequently, that our reason is darkened and our will perverted. By the loss of God's image is meant the loss of the holiness and righteousness in which God created our first parents. Our reason is darkened so that we cannot know and understand God and

His holy will. St. Paul says, I Corinthians 2, 14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Our will is perverted, so that instead of pleasing God we take pleasure in displeasing Him. St. Paul tells us this in Romans 8, 7, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Yes, our nature is sinful. This sinful nature leads to sinful thoughts, words and deeds. We call that *actual sin*. Actual sin is all that is done contrary to the ten commandments in *thought, word and deed*. As a salty fountain sends forth a salty stream, so our sinful nature manifests itself in a sinful life. First of all we do wrong in our hearts. Our sinful nature awakens sinful thoughts and desires. When we harbor impure thoughts, or allow hatred to rankle in our hearts, we are sinning with our thoughts.

Sinful thoughts readily find expression in words. We read about these sins of the tongue in James 3, 5-6, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." When one utters unkind, bitter, untruthful, profane, or other bad words, he is sinning in word.

We also transgress God's law by sinful deeds. Some of these sins are called sins of *commission*. That is, they are sins we commit or do, such as lying, stealing, and the like. Some of these sins are called sins of *omission*. These sins are done when one *omits* or *fails to do* his duty. In James 4, 17, we read of these sins. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Those who neglect to attend the services of the church, to pray, to help the poor, to visit the sick, and the like, are guilty of sins of omission. 14. Their eyes being opened they saw that which filled them with shame. They got what Satan promised, but it made them unhappy. They and all their posterity must suffer because they disobeyed God. The *consequence* of sin is that God is thereby most deeply offended, and moved to temporal and eternal punishment. The only way to escape the wrath and punishment of God is to obtain forgiveness. This is obtained through faith in our Savior Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who tempted the woman? 2. Why did Satan speak through the serpent? 3. What did he speak to the woman? 4. What words of St. Peter refer to this condition? 5. What is implied in the devil's question to the woman? 6. How does Satan still tempt people? 7. What is sin? 8. What portion of the law did Stephen's accusers transgress? 9. Of what law is sin a transgression? 10. What laws may be transgressed without sinning against God? 11. Give an example of these man-made laws? 12. What is the cause of sin? 13. What should have moved the woman to turn away from the tempter? 14. What should we do when

tempted? 15. What was apparent from the woman's answer? 16. For what can no one blame God? 17. What is seen in Satan's efforts with the woman? 18. What arguments did he advance in favor of his suggestion? 19. What false promise did he make? 20. What were the eyes of the offenders able to see after they had yielded to Satan? 21. What can be said of the knowledge our first parents gained by their sin? 22. What was the beginning of the woman's sin? 23. Describe its growth? 24. Mention one of the dangers of yielding to a temptation. 25. How is Satan's shrewdness shown in the temptation of our first parents? 26. How did this first sin affect human nature? 27. What is original sin? 28. In what words does St. Paul tell us how seriously sin affects our race? 29. What is meant by being dead in sin? 30. How many of the human family are affected by the fall? 31. Repeat a passage pertaining to this. 32. How is this depravity entailed upon each individual sinner? 33. In what does this depravity consist? 34. What is understood by the loss of God's image? 35. How has sin affected our reason? 36. What is the consequence of this? 37. Repeat a passage pertaining to this? 38. How has sin affected man's will? 39. What is the consequence of this? 40. Repeat a pertinent passage. 41. How does this inborn sin first affect the sinner? 42. What is actual sin? 43. Give an example of a sin of thought. 44. What is the second way by which inborn sin manifests itself? 45. Repeat a pertinent passage. 46. Give examples of this kind of sin. 47. What is a sin of omission? 48. Give examples. 49. What is a sin of omission? 50. Give examples. 51. What does St. James say of these sins? 52. What was the immediate consequence of sin to our first parents? 53. Who suffers with them? 54. What is the consequence of sin? 55. How can we escape the wrath of God? 50. How is forgiveness obtained?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I. JOHN 3, 8. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

30. THE PROPHET NATHAN REBUKES DAVID.

II SAMUEL 12. ●

THE USE OF THE LAW.

The Prophet and His Parable.—And the Lord sent Nathan¹ unto David.² And he came unto him, and said unto him,³ There were two men in one city; the one rich,⁴ and the other poor.⁵ The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb,⁶ which he had bought and nourished up; and it grew up together with him, and with his children: it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a

daughter. And there came a traveler⁷ unto the rich man; and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

The King's Judgment. — And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man:⁸ and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:⁹ and he shall restore the lamb fourfold,¹⁰ because he did this thing, and because he hath no pity.

The Prophet's Rebuke. — And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.¹¹ Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house.¹² Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment¹³ of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.¹⁴

The Punishment Threatened. — Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house.¹⁵ Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house.¹⁶ Thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.¹⁷

The King's Confession. — And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord.¹⁸

The Confessor's Absolution. — And Nathan said unto David, the Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.¹⁹

The Chastening of the Lord. — Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme,²⁰ the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.²¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Nathan was a prophet, and David's spiritual adviser. God sent him to speak to David about his sins. The prophet came to the king with the law, which is that portion of the Bible that helps people to see their sins. We cannot perfectly obey the commandments for we are by nature wicked and born sinners. *Yet the law is of great use to us.* 2. David, the king, had committed grievous sins in having Uriah killed, and taking Bathsheba to be his wife; and he was not sorry. The reason David was not sorry was that he did not see and know his sins. We are all like David in this particular, and on this account God gave us

the law. It answers a *two-fold purpose*. God gave it to us first, that by it we may *know our sins*, and secondly, that from it we may *learn the works that are pleasing to God*. The first object which God had in view in giving us the law was that by it we might know our sins. So we read in Romans 3, 20. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." The law may be likened to a mirror. As we look into a mirror to see if there is any dirt or other blemish on us, so we look into the ten commandments to see what sins are lurking in our hearts, or manifesting themselves in our lives. The apostle confesses, "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, thou shalt not covet." Romans 7, 7. God wants us to see our sins, and to see them in all their ugliness, in order that we may feel concerned about them, and seek forgiveness in Jesus Christ our Savior. This is what the apostle has in mind, Galatians 3, 24: "The law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

The law is of use to us also that from it we may *learn the works that are pleasing to God*. As soon as a sinner is sorry for his sins, and has obtained forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ, he is anxious to lead a godly life. He wants to please God. He wants to do the works that God would have him do. The law tells him what to do. In the third commandment it tells us that to hear and learn God's Word is a work that pleases God. The fourth commandment tells us that honoring and obeying our parents and masters is a work that pleases God. Because the law shows us what we should do and what we should not do it is likened to a lamp. What a lighted lamp does for one who is in the dark, that God's law does for the sinner who longs to please God. This we learn from Psalm 109, 105: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." 3. That which Nathan said was a parable—comparison by which things not understood are made plain. 4. The rich man represented David. 5. The poor man stands for Uriah. 6. What the ewe lamb was to this poor man that, and much more, was Bathsheba to Uriah. 7. The sinful desire that came into David's heart is represented in the comparison by the traveler. It was to satisfy this stranger that David robbed Uriah of his wife. 8. David at once saw the wickedness of the rich man's deed, but did not see that it was his own sin that was held up before him. All of us can see other people's sins more readily than our own. The reason for his is that we have less love for other people than we have for ourselves. Love for self blinds us when we turn the light of God's law on our hearts and lives, and we do not see everything that we ought to see. 9. The sin that David could not even see in himself looked so large in the man of whom the prophet spoke that the king ordered the offender put to death. 10. It was written in the law, Exodus 22, 1, that the man who stole a sheep must return four sheep. 11. By these words Nathan tells the king that it is he who has committed the great sin of which he is speaking. 12. The prophet refers to the king's high position, and other blessings he enjoyed, to help him to realize how inexcusable his sin was. 13.

Here Nathan reminds the king that in sinning against Uriah and Bathsheba he had also sinned against God. He had despised God's commandments which forbid adultery and murder. 14. In order that the king may have no trouble in knowing to what special sins the prophet refers, the latter specifies them. 15. David's reign would be one of war. 16. This was literally fulfilled when his favorite but spoiled son, Absalom, rebelled. 17. Although David was very sly in bringing about Uriah's death, all Israel shall see the punishment he must endure because of his sin. 18. Although David had committed great sins he listened attentively to his preacher's rebuke, was quick to see his sins, and humbly confessed his wrong doing. The 51st Psalm was composed by him with reference to this occasion. Let us learn from the example of this great man to humble ourselves when our sins are pointed out, to make full confession, and to pray earnestly for forgiveness. 19. David had committed a grievous sin, yet all he needed do to obtain full forgiveness was to repent and look to God for forgiveness. The Lord says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1, 18. 20. One effect of David's sin was that it gave the enemies of God occasion to blaspheme, that is, to speak disrespectfully of God and sacred things. The sins of professed Christians do great harm to the cause of Christ by leading worldly people to doubt the sincerity of Christians, and to deny the saving power of the Word and sacraments. The sins of Christians do harm also by setting a bad example to others. Every person exerts more or less influence. The wrong-doing of a Christian serves to confirm worldlings in their bad habits, and to put the conscience of weak brethren to sleep. 21. David's sin was not remembered against him, because he repented. Although the sin is forgiven, God sometimes still chastens the sinner.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Nathan? 2. On what mission did he come to David? 3. What portion of God's Word helps people to see their sins? 4. Why can we not keep God's law? 5. Of what sins had David been guilty? 6. In what other respect was the king at fault? 7. Why was he not sorry? 8. In what respect are we like him? 9. What purposes does the law serve? 10. How does St. Paul express the first purpose of the law? 11. To what may the law be likened? 12. Why is the law compared to a mirror? 13. How does the apostle express this? 14. What is God's will in this regard? 15. To what does the apostle compare the law, and why? 16. What is the second purpose of the law? 17. What does a penitent sinner desire? 18. How does he learn what to do? 19. What good work does the third commandment enjoin? The fourth? 20. Why is the law compared to a lamp? 21. What does the psalmist say pertaining to this? 22. What form of speech did Nathan use? 23. What is a parable? 24. Whom does the rich man represent? Uriah? The ewe lamb? The sinful desire? 25. What did David at once see? 26. What did he not see? 27. Why can a sinner see the sins of others more readily than his own? 28. What does self-love do when we look at ourselves? 29. What was the King's judgment in regard to the offender? 30. Why did he decree that fourfold of what had been taken should be restored? 31. What words did Nathan then utter? 32. What did he mean? 33. Why does the prophet

refer to the blessings the king enjoyed? 34. Of what does the prophet remind the king? 35. How had David despised God's commandments? 36. Why does the prophet specify David's sins? 37. How did the king receive the prophet's rebuke? 38. Where can we find a record of at least a part of the king's words on this occasion? 39. What does his example teach us? 40. What was necessary on the part of the king in order to obtain forgiveness? 41. In what words does God declare His willingness to forgive? 42. From what words do we learn that no sin is too grievous to be forgiven? 43. What was the effect of David's sin? 44. In what ways do the sins of believers do harm? 45. Besides being forgiven what else was true in regard to David's sin? 46. Although God forgives the penitent sinner what sometimes follows?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 119, 9. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word.

31. THE SELF-DECEIVED YOUNG RULER.

MARK 10, 17-27.

MAN'S INABILITY TO KEEP THE LAW.

The Rich Young Man's Inquiry.— And when He was gone forth into the way,¹ there came one² running, and kneeled to Him,³ and asked Him, Good Master,⁴ what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?⁵

The Lord's Reply.— And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good?⁶ there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments,⁷ Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother.⁸

The Self-satisfied Hearer.— And he answered and said unto Him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.⁹

The Young Man's Lack.— Then Jesus beholding him, loved him,¹⁰ and said unto him, One thing thou lackest;¹¹ go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven:¹² and come, take up the cross,¹³ and follow Me.

The Aggrieved Hearer.— And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions.¹⁴

A Discourse on Riches.—And Jesus looked round about,¹⁵ and saith unto His disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!¹⁶ And the disciples were astonished at His words.¹⁷ But Jesus answereth again, and said unto them, Children, how hard it is for them that trust¹⁸ in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.¹⁹ And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.²⁰

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. It was along the border line of Samaria and Galilee, while Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, shortly before the last passover. 2. St. Luke tells us that this inquirer was a ruler, probably a ruler of the synagogue, as Jairus was. St. Matthew tells us that he was a young man. 3. The fact that he left the crowd and came to Jesus running shows him to have been eager for instruction. His attitude manifested humility and respect for Christ. 4. Master means teacher. 5. His question showed deep concern for his soul's salvation, but that he hoped to secure it by doing good works. Evidently his doctrine did not comfort him. He felt that his hopes were not well founded. He was uneasy, and came to Jesus for advice. We should be thankful that we have learned the truth as it is revealed in the Scriptures, namely, that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The young man's uneasiness came from the suspicion which he had *that the law required far more than he could give*. This is a truth that all sinners should learn. We cannot keep the commandments of God, "for we are by nature wicked and born sinners." God wants His law kept perfectly. He says in Matthew 5, 48, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." God requires perfection of us because He created man perfect. But we are sinful. In Genesis 8, 21, we read, "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." The same truth is expressed in many passages. Another example is Isaiah 64, 6, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags." 6. Jesus wanted the young man to examine his idea of *good*. Evidently he thought Christ was *good* in the same sense in which he or any upright man is *good*. God only is good. Like the rich young ruler we may to a certain extent render an outward obedience to the commandments, and be in a certain sense good. Jesus was about to show the young ruler that his obedience to the law was far from satisfactory. This is in accordance with His words in Matthew 5, 20, "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Even a Christian does not succeed in perfectly fulfilling the divine law. He still has evil desires within him and therefore sins daily. 7. Jesus would say, "I see you want to enter into eternal life; I see too, that you think of doing so by means of works; there is only one way for you and that is to keep the commandments; keep all of them and keep them perfectly." The thought here is that whoever keeps the commandments is without sin and already has eternal life, for God will not condemn one who has no sin (comp. Romans 10, 5). 8. The commandments to which Jesus calls attention are those of the second table. All are given except the ninth and tenth, which may be taken as included in "thou shalt not steal." These commandments treat of love to our neighbor, and are here referred to because by means of them Jesus can best show the inquirer how little he understood his own heart, and how faulty his good works were. 9. The young man thought he was speaking the truth; he was not a hypocrite, but he did not understand the law which he thought he had kept so well. 10. Jesus saw the young man's heart, saw his good qualities, and was well pleased. Jesus is pleased with His people who try to serve Him in spite of their faults. 11. The young man felt that something was wanting: Jesus tells him what that something is. His stumbling block was his wealth. He was covetous. 12. Jesus does not mean that the young man will save his soul by giving his money to the poor, but that he would thus rid himself of the snares and temptations which were in the way of his salvation. 13. Following Jesus is trusting in Him for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life. It is referred to as taking up the cross because those who follow Jesus must renounce the world, the flesh and the devil. 14. He was sorry that he could not be a follower of Jesus on easier terms. He wanted to serve the Lord and yet continue in the service of mammon. We cannot serve two masters.

Jesus loved the young ruler because He saw that he wanted to please God. Like this man all Christians try to lead a godly life. But like him, too, they fail—they sin daily. This St. Paul confesses, Romans 7, 19, "For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." All must make this confession. "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." Ecclesiastes 7, 20. All are sinners, and it will ever be so in this world. Only sinful children can be born of sinful parents. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job 14, 4.

We not only break the law by doing what it forbids, but also by failing to do what it enjoins. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4, 17.

It is natural for us to break the law. We do not realize how often and how grievously we do wrong. "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." Psalm 19, 12. Even if we have a good conscience, and like the rich young ruler are pretty well satisfied with ourselves, we sin daily. All must confess, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1, 8. 15. After the young ruler left, Jesus proceeded to use him as an example

in warning his followers against covetousness. 16. Riches bring with them many temptations. "The love of money is the root of all evil." It is hard for rich men to enter into the kingdom of heaven. 17. The disciples were astonished. Many others find it hard to see any danger to their souls in setting out to accumulate wealth. 18. Jesus repeats the statement, this time tenderly calling His disciples children, and explaining that it is not riches, but *trusting* in riches that endangers the soul. 19. In order that His hearers may be more deeply impressed He uses this comparison. He thus emphasizes the impossibility of being saved by trusting in riches. 20. While it is impossible, so far as man's power goes, for a man who trusts in riches to be saved, yet it is not impossible for God to save even such a man. His spirit can touch the covetous heart, and lead it to repentance.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where did this incident take place? 2. What can you say of the inquirer? 3. What did he mean by the title Master? 4. What was evident from the young man's question? 5. For what should we be thankful? 6. Whence the young man's uneasiness? 7. Why can we not keep God's law? 8. How does God want His law kept? 9. In what words does Jesus say this? 10. Why may God demand perfection of us? 11. What is taught in Genesis concerning man's sinfulness? 12. How is this expressed by the prophet Isaiah? 13. What wrong idea did the young man evidently have of Christ's goodness? 14. Who only is perfectly good? 15. What of man's goodness? 16. What did Jesus wish to show the young man? 17. What is recorded in St. Matthew of man's righteousness? 18. What can be said of the Christian's efforts to keep the law? 19. What would Jesus say to the young man? 20. What did He mean? 21. To which commandments did Jesus direct His guest's attention? 22. Why did He select these? 23. What can you say of the ruler's answer? 24. Why was Jesus pleased with the young man? 25. With whom is Jesus pleased? 26. What was the trouble with the inquirer? 27. What advice did Jesus give him? 28. What is to be understood by this advice? 29. How is the expression "following Me" to be understood? 30. In what sense can it be said of Jesus' followers that they have taken up the cross? 31. What grieved the young ruler? 32. What did Jesus see in this young man that pleased Him? 33. With what success does the Christian meet in his efforts to lead a holy life? 34. In what words does St. Paul confess this? 35. What must all confess? 36. By what words are we taught that sinful children are to be expected of sinful parents? 37. In what other way do we transgress the law besides doing what it forbids? 38. Why is it so easy for us to do wrong? 40. In what words does the psalmist declare that we do not know how sinful we are? 41. What must all confess? 42. With what words did Jesus address His hearers after the young man had left? 43. What did He mean? 44. How were the disciples impressed? 45. What danger besets those who seek wealth? 46. Why did Jesus use the comparison about the camel and the needle's eye? 47. With what words of comfort did He close His address?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 143. 2. Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.

32. REVIEW OF LESSONS 24-31.

The Sin of Coveting. — Ahab cast his covetous eyes on Naboth's vineyard, as we learned in Lesson 24. He transgressed the ninth commandment — Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house. This commandment forbids that we craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or obtain it by a show of right. Coveting is desiring, longing. It is not wrong to desire anything that God wants us to have. David did not sin when, being very hungry, he desired bread. Coveting is a sin of the heart, and we cannot know who has committed it, or is committing it. We are not to covet our neighbor's house, that is, his property. We call those who are guilty of this sin misers. They are not satisfied with their lot in life — not contented. Those who long for more possessions fall into temptations and snares and hurtful lusts, that is, their covetousness leads them into all kinds of sin. The apostle warns against this sin in the words, "The love of money is the root of all evil." This sin led Judas to betray Jesus, Gehazi to lie to the prophet, Ahab to murder Naboth, Rebekah to defraud Esau, and Laban to change Jacob's wages ten times. We should avoid it not only because it is a sin, but also because, as in this instance, it brings trouble and grief to those who commit it and to others.

Be Helpful. — In Lesson 25 we learn from Abram's dealings with Lot what is enjoined in the ninth commandment. Lot had selfishly taken first choice of location when he and his uncle separated, but when the latter heard that his nephew had been captured and robbed, he hastened to his rescue. We are to help and be of service to our neighbor in keeping his inheritance and house. We will thus help our neighbor to ward off all losses, as we would from ourselves. Abram had his nephew's interests at heart when he suggested a separation, when he gave him choice of location, and when he pursued the enemy to release Lot and recover his property. We are also to be heartily pleased at our neighbor's prosperity. Jacob's sons were not heartily pleased with their brother's good fortune in receiving the coat of many colors. The princes of Chaldea were not heartily pleased when Daniel was honored by the king. We are not

heartily pleased at our neighbor's prosperity if we feel discouraged on hearing that he is meeting with greater success than we. God enjoins all this in Philippians, 2, 4. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

The Sin of Lusting.—Had David been at his post of duty (Lesson 26) he would not have met with the temptation through which he fell into a grievous sin. David coveted Uriah's wife, and thus transgressed the tenth commandment. We are here forbidden to covet our neighbor's wife, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his cattle, or anything that is our neighbor's; or estrange, force or entice away from him his wife, servants or cattle. The word covet means desire. It is evil desires that are forbidden. First of all we are not to entertain evil desires against our neighbor's wife, as David did. A husband and wife are one in God's sight, and He forbids that any one should try to separate them. We are also forbidden to covet our neighbor's servants, that is, those who are working for him. Faithful employees are of great use to their employers, and it is wicked for dissatisfied workmen and others to strive to force employers to do as they wish by urging employees to quit work, or preventing others from entering their employ. We are not to covet our neighbor's cattle. A man's animals are useful to him for food, clothing or work, or may be endeared to him and his family. No one should try to get a man's cattle from him dishonestly, or against his will. These desires that arise in our hearts for our neighbor's wife, servants or cattle are evil. They originate in the heart, and God alone can enable us to keem them in subjection. With David, therefore, we should pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Looking after our Neighbor's Interests.—Our duty toward our neighbor in regard to his wife, servants and cattle is made quite plain in the account of Paul's dealings with Onesimus, set forth in Lesson 27. Through the apostle's preaching the latter had been converted, and was very useful to him in his trying labors. However, on hearing that he had been the slave of Philemon, Paul insisted that his new-made friend return to his master. He obeyed the tenth commandment, which enjoins that we urge our neighbor's wife and servants to stay and do

their duty. We have a like example set us when the angel met the runaway Hagar, and said, "Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." Joseph was heeding this commandment when he told Potiphar's wife to remain true to her husband. In Deuteronomy we are enjoined to drive back our neighbor's cattle should we find them straying. The second table of the law demands that we love our neighbors as ourselves. Having such love we will do all in our power that our neighbor's wife, servants and cattle stay with him. This commandment would have us to be perfectly holy and just, as God originally created us. God is holy. He created us holy. He has a right to demand that we be holy. A study of the requirements of this commandment, and a comparison of these with our hearts and lives, will show us how far we come short of pleasing God.

God's Threat and Promise in Regard to His Law. — God visited the iniquities of the people who lived before the flood upon them, but showed mercy to Noah and his family, who kept His commandments, as we see in Lesson 28. In the conclusion of the law God threatens to punish all that transgress the commandments — He will punish sin. The Egyptians of Mosés' day, and the Sodomites of Lot's day are examples. A goading conscience was a portion of the punishment visited upon Cain and Judas Iscariot. God threatens to punish the wicked unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him. He does not punish children for the sins of their parents unless they commit them, of which there is danger. By this earnest threat God would lead us to fear His wrath, and not act contrary to His commandments. God gives a gracious promise here, namely, to show mercy. He would thus teach us how it pleases Him when people love and obey Him. It is a gracious promise, that is, one that we do not deserve.

About Sin. — Lesson 29 teaches us that sin is the transgression of the divine law. The cause of sin is Satan, who tempted our first parents, and the will of man who freely permitted himself to be deceived by Satan. Through sin the nature of man was spoiled, and this spoiled nature is handed down from our first parents to all their descendants. This inherited sin is usually called original sin. It is inborn, and consists in the loss of God's image, the darkening of our reason, and the perversion of our will. Original sin leads to actual sin, that is, all that is

done contrary to the ten commandments in thought, word and deed. Actual sins may be sins of commission, or sins of omission. The consequence of sin is that God is thereby deeply offended, and moved to temporal and eternal punishment. The only way to escape God's wrath and punishment is to obtain forgiveness through faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Law's Two-fold Purpose. — The story of the prophet Nathan rebuking King David, Lesson 30, teaches the use of the divine law. This part of the Word reveals to us our sins. God wants us to see our sins so that we may be led to seek forgiveness in Jesus Christ. The law also teaches us the works that are pleasing to God. When a sinner through faith in Jesus obtains forgiveness he is anxious to lead a godly life. He then wants to please God. The law tells him what to do. In the third commandment it tells us to hear and learn God's Word; in the fourth, to honor and obey our parents and masters, etc. The law is likened to a lamp because it does for the sinner what a lighted lamp does for one who is in the dark.

A Vain Effort. — The young ruler that came to Jesus learned that the law required far more than he could give. God is holy. He wants His law kept perfectly. No one, not even a Christian, succeeds in perfectly fulfilling the divine law. The Christian still has evil desires within him, and therefore sins daily. We not only break the law by doing what it forbids, but also by failing to do what it enjoins. It is natural for us to do wrong. Like the young ruler, we do not know how sinful we are. We do not realize how often and grievously we transgress the commandments. The young man's besetting sin was covetousness. You and I have some besetting sin, and it were well if we try to learn what it is.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 24. 1. Of what Biblical incident does this lesson treat? 2. Which commandment did Ahab transgress? 3. What is forbidden in this commandment? 4. What is another word for coveting? 5. What is it proper to desire? 6. Give an example of lawful coveting from David's life. 7. Why is it impossible to know who is guilty of this sin? 8. What is understood by the word house as here used? 9. What can you say of covetous people? 10. How do such persons endanger their souls? 11. In what words does the apostle warn against this sin? 12. To what sin did covetousness lead Judas? Gehazi? Ahab? Rebekah? Laban? 13. Mention reasons for avoiding it.

LESSON 25. 1. What may we learn from Abram's dealings with Lot? 2. What act of David accords with the ninth commandment? 3. What is

here enjoined? 4. What will love for our neighbor lead us to do? 5. How did Abram manifest his interest in Lot? 6. How should our neighbor's prosperity affect us? 7. Mention Biblical characters who came short in this respect. 8. What condition would indicate that we are coming short. 9. In what words is this duty enjoined?

LESSON 26. 1. What circumstance led David into temptation? 2. Of what sin was he guilty? 3. Which commandment did he transgress? 4. What is forbidden in this commandment? 5. What kind of desires are forbidden? 6. In what relation do husband and wife stand to each other? 7. What is understood by servants? 8. What is here forbidden in regard to employees? 9. Why is coveting a neighbor's cattle contrary to love? 10. Where do these evil desires originate? 11. How can we hope to subdue them? 12. What prayer is in place?

LESSON 27. 1. What is made plain in the account of Paul's dealings with Onesimus? 2. What can you say of Onesimus? 3. What act of Paul accords with the tenth commandment? 4. What is here enjoined? 5. Mention another incident in which the same example is set us as here? 6. What act of Joseph accorded with this commandment? 7. What is enjoined in this respect in Deuteronomy? 8. What is required in the second table? 9. What condition of heart does this commandment demand? 10. Why has God a right to demand this? 11. What will a study of this commandment reveal?

LESSON 28. 1. How did God visit the wickedness of the people of Noah's day? 2. To whom did He show mercy. 3. Why were these spared? 4. What is the conclusion of the commandments? 5. What does this mean? 6. What is here threatened? 7. Give examples of people punished for their sins. 8. What was a portion of the punishment of Cain and Judas Iscariot? 9. To what extent does God threaten to punish the wicked? 10. Under what circumstances will children be punished for the sins of their parents? 11. What else does this commandment contain? 12. What is this promise? 13. Why is it called gracious?

LESSON 29. 1. What is the subject of this lesson? 2. What is sin? 3. What is the cause of sin? 4. How did sin affect human nature? 5. How is its effect handed down? 6. In what does original sin consist? 7. To what does it lead? 8. Mention three ways by which actual sins are committed. 9. What are sins of commission? Omission? 10. What is the consequence of sin? 11. How can we escape?

LESSON 30. 1. To what Biblical incident does this lesson direct attention? 2. What is here taught? 3. What is the first use of the law? 4. To what would God lead us by holding our sins to view? 5. What further does the law teach? 6. For what is a forgiven sinner anxious? 7. Where can he learn how to do this? 8. What do we learn in this respect from the third commandment? From the fourth? 9. Why is the law compared to a lamp?

LESSON 31. 1. What did the young ruler learn after coming to Jesus? 2. What does God require of us? 3. With what success do we meet this requirement? 4. What is the Christian's condition of heart and life? 5. In what respects does he break the law? 6. In what respect are we like the young ruler? 7. What was his besetting sin? 8. Of what may we be sure? 9. What should we do?

33. ZACCHAEUS.

LUKE 19, 1-10.

THE GOSPEL.

The Gospel is the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has saved us from our sins, and through faith makes us forever blessed.

Who and What Zacchaeus was. — And Jesus entered¹ and passed through Jericho,² And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans,³ and he was rich.

His Determined Effort to see Jesus. — And he sought to see Jesus, who He was;⁴ and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.⁵ And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him; for He was to pass that way.⁶

The Notice he received from Jesus. — And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.⁸

The Welcome Zacchaeus extended to Jesus. — And he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully.⁹

The Fault-finding of the Jews. — And when they¹⁰ saw it, they all murmured, saying, That He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.¹¹

The Evidence Zacchaeus gave of True Repentance.—And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.¹²

The Good Tidings Jesus Proclaimed. — And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house,¹³ forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.¹⁴ For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.¹⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus with His disciples and a large following of people was on His way to Jerusalem. This was His last journey to that place, and but a day or two before His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. 2. Jericho was called the city of palm-trees, is but six miles from the Jordan, and

fifteen miles from Jerusalem. 3. The publicans were tax-collectors among the Jews for the Roman government. For this reason, and because many of them were dishonest and extortionate, they were much disliked. Zacchæus was a chief publican, that is, an overseer of a district, having collectors under him. The trade in balsam was extensive, and therefore Zacchæus had a thriving business, and grew rich. 4. Zacchæus had a strong desire to see Jesus. While he may have been influenced somewhat by curiosity, there was evidently some good motive prompting him, judging from the outcome of the incident. 5. Because of the crowd that surrounded Jesus, and his littleness of stature, Zacchæus was unable to get a sight of Him. 6. The tree here called sycamore was likely a species of either fig or mulberry, having a short trunk and spreading branches. Zacchæus was willing to appear boyish, perhaps be subject to ridicule, if he could but see Him of whom he had heard so many remarkable things. The lesson his example teaches is that we should not allow fear of consequences, such as the criticism or gossip of the world, to keep us from doing our duty. 7. While Jesus may have met Zacchæus before, it was evidently by supernatural power that He knew that the man was in the tree and desired to see Him. When one seeks Jesus he will surely succeed in finding Him. Jesus makes it easy for penitent sinners to come to Him. We need not climb a tree, but simply read and hear God's Word in order to see Jesus with the eye of faith. That portion of God's Word which tells us of Jesus and the way of salvation is called the *Gospel*. It is good news. It is the *glad tidings that Jesus has saved us from our sins*. It brings joy and gladness to sinners. God wants all to hear it. Jesus proclaimed it to this penitent man.

It was the angel who announced the Savior's birth that called the Gospel good tidings, as we read, Luke 2, 10, "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

The Gospel brings us news which we could never find out if it were not told us. The news it brings is the best ever proclaimed. It tells us of Jesus Christ and all that He has done for us. When our first parents disobeyed God they brought His wrath and punishment on themselves and their descendants. God had mercy, however, and promised to send a Savior. This promise was given as soon as sin came into the world, for God said, Genesis 3, 15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." God repeated this promise at different times, as, for example, to Abraham, Genesis 22, 18, "And in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Those promises were the Gospel. They are good tidings. They tell us that through the promised Seed of the woman, namely, through Christ, all sinners are offered salvation. Because in Jesus we have salvation He is called Jesus which means Savior. So the angel directed, Matthew 1, 21, "And she shall bring forth a Son,

and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." 8. Zacchæus wanted to see Jesus and learn about Him, and, lo, Jesus pays him a visit, perhaps spends the night with him. This reminds us of God's manner of answering prayer. He gives to the sincere suppliant far more than he asks or expects. Solomon asked for an understanding heart and got besides the assurance of long life and prosperity. Jesus will, by the power and influence of the Spirit, abide with every sinner. He promises never to leave nor forsake us. 9. Zacchæus gave Jesus a hearty welcome. He made haste and received Him joyfully, not only to his home, but also to his heart. We receive Jesus joyfully when we gladly hear and learn His Word. It will be well for us often to look at our hearts and lives and see how we are receiving Jesus. He does all for every sinner that He did for Zacchæus, He saves us from our sins which would bring damnation. He saves us by taking our place, and suffering the penalty Himself. The moment we believe in Jesus we have forgiveness and the sure hope of salvation. This is the good news the Gospel brings. They that are referred to as murmuring are the people who were present, probably including the disciples. 11. They found fault with Jesus for going to visit Zacchæus who, being a publican, was called a sinner. The Pharisees did nothing to bring salvation to these poor people. It was selfish and cruel of them to deprive the publicans of spiritual privileges and blessings, even if they were as a class dishonest. How different the spirit of Jesus! He spoke kindly to the sinful woman, and went as a guest to the home of Zacchæus. He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. 12. Zacchæus was sorry for his sins, and manifested it by his attitude—he stood—and by the confession that is implied in what he said. He started out to prove his penitence by a change of life, and by striving to undo the wrongs he had committed. So far from robbing any one in the future, he meant to consecrate his possessions to good uses. He would give, not the half of his income, but the half of his property to the poor. As for those whom he had wronged in collecting tax he proposed to make restitution by returning four times as much as he took. This was in accordance with Jewish law, Exodus 22, 1. Zacchæus teaches us that a penitent sinner must be contrite, make confession, strive to undo the wrongs of the past, and lead a better life. 13. When Jesus came to the house of Zacchæus he brought salvation with Him. Those who have Jesus have salvation. 14. Even if Zacchæus was a chief of publicans he was still a son of Abraham to whom the promises were given, and for whose descendants they were also meant. He was a son of Abraham, not an outcast, as the Jews thought. 15. Since the Gospel is good news and brings joy and happiness to sinners, it is God's will that every sinner hear it. He therefore says, Mark 16, 15-16, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Those who believe the Gospel will be saved, those who will not believe it shall be damned. Every Christian should be a missionary, helping to publish the Gospel to all the world.

It is, indeed, tidings of great joy. However, before it will bring us joy we must believe it, as St. Paul says, Romans 1, 16, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of the journey Jesus was making at this time? 2. What about Jericho? 3. Who were the publicans? 4. Why were they disliked by the other Jews? 5. Who was Zacchæus? 6. For what had he a strong desire? 7. What hindered him from seeing Jesus? 8. How did he overcome the difficulties? 9. What consequences might have resulted? 10. What may we learn from his example? 11. How is Jesus' knowledge concerning Zacchæus to be accounted for? 12. What comfort to penitent sinners is there in our Lord's conduct in this incident? 13. Where should we go to see Jesus? 14. What portion of God's Word tells us of Jesus? 15. What is the Gospel? 16. In what words did the angel proclaim the Gospel at the time of Jesus' birth? 17. What condition did the sin of our first parents bring about? 18. What promise did God then make? 19. In what words was this promise first given? 20. In what words was this promise repeated to Abraham? 21. What did God tell the world by these promises? 22. What does the name Jesus mean? 23. In what words did the angel declare this? 24. What did Zacchæus wish? 25. How was his wish gratified? 26. Of what does this remind us? 27. How did this come to pass in the case of Solomon? 28. How did Zacchæus receive Jesus? 29. How can we accord Jesus a like reception? 30. What is it well for us to do? 31. What has Jesus done that we might be saved? 32. When is this salvation made ours? 33. Who murmured on this occasion? 34. What fault did they find with Jesus? 35. How were the Pharisees disposed toward the publicans? 36. What condition of heart did they thus manifest? 37. What is to be said of Jesus in this respect? 38. How did Zacchæus manifest his penitence? 39. How did he propose to prove his penitence? 40. What would he give to the poor? 41. How much would he restore to those whom he had robbed? 42. What is to be expected of a penitent sinner? 43. What did Jesus bring to the house of Zacchæus? 44. Why was his hope of salvation as bright as that of the other Jews? 45. For whom is the Gospel intended? 46. In what words did Jesus declare this? 47. to what should these words move Christians? 48. When will the Gospel give the sinner joy? 49. How does St. Paul express this truth?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ROMANS I, 16. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

34. THE CENTURION'S FAITH.

MATTHEW 8, 5-13.

FAITH.

A Centurion Supplicating for his Servant. — And when Jesus was entered¹ into Capernaum,² there came unto Him a centurion,³ beseeching Him, and saying, Lord,⁴ my servant⁵ lieth at home sick of the palsy,⁶ grievously tormented.

Jesus' Cheering Reply. — And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.⁷

The Supplicant's Faith. — The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof:⁸ but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.⁹ For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.¹⁰

The Lord's Words of Commendation. — When Jesus heard it, He marvelled,¹¹ and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.¹² And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west,¹³ and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob¹⁴ in the kingdom of heaven: But the children of the kingdom¹⁵ shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.¹⁶

The Reward of Faith. — And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou has believed, so be it done unto thee.¹⁷ And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Christ had been going about, delivering the Sermon on the Mount, healing the sick, and doing good in other ways, and now returned to His own city. 2. Capernaum was a city on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus made His home there, probably living with Peter, who had a house there. 3. A commander of one hundred soldiers in the Roman army was originally called a centurion. This man, it is thought, was commander-in-chief of that part of the Roman army that was garrisoned at Capernaum. 4. Although a Gentile, and an

officer in the Roman army, he showed high regard for Jesus by addressing Him, Lord, and *beseeking* Him. 5. It is to this man's credit that he was so much concerned about the health of his servant. 6. The same disease that we call paralysis. It was looked upon as an almost incurable ailment. 7. Jesus, the Great Physician, is both willing and able to heal the sick man, and therefore says, "I will come and heal him." 8. The centurion was humble. He manifested high regard for Christ, and a lowly estimate of self. 9. The centurion showed strong faith in Jesus, believing that He could cure his servant although far distant from him, and that His word would do the work. We have such faith when we accept God's Word just as it is given, and rely upon its promises. We have a short summary of God's promises in the words of the Apostles' Creed. The first words of the creed are, "*I believe.*" We say *I*, not *we*, because each one must believe for himself if he would be saved. As the nourishment that one man takes will not strengthen the body of another, so the faith of one man will not benefit another man's soul. Each one must eat for himself, and each one must believe for himself. This centurion believed for himself. But we must believe. The apostle declares, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." So the Savior declares, Mark 16, 16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

To believe means, first, to accept the Word of God as true; then, secondly, to put our trust in it. First of all we must *hear* the Gospel. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" Romans 10, 14. None of the heathen believe in Jesus because they have not heard of Him. The testimony we have of Jesus is not given to us by God himself. God tells us what we are to believe in the Bible. Since all of the Bible is God's Word we should *regard it as true*. Jesus says, "Thy Word is truth," John 17, 17. Christians must hear of Jesus, and must regard what they hear as true. Those who do not hear and assent to the Word of God have no faith, and, of course, are not Christians. Christians do not wait until they see and understand just everything that God tells them before they accept it. That would not be faith. We do not see God, but we believe in Him. Paul says, Hebrews 11, 1. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen."

A Christian not only hears God's Word and regards it as true, but also *puts his trust in it*. Trusting is the chief part of faith. Our catechism therefore says, To believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is to hold Him alone to be the true God, and to put our confidence in Him and His promises. To believe in God does not mean, therefore, only to believe that there is a God. This even the Devil believes. We read, James 2, 19, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." The devils tremble because they have no confidence, no assurance of forgiveness. We not only believe that there is a God, but we put our trust in Him. The centurion did not ask for some sign or evidence that Jesus would

cure his servant. He had confidence and said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." 10. Here the centurion gives a reason for his confidence. He would say, If the servants under me come and go at my beck, surely bodily diseases will obey Thy command. 11. Jesus knew what faith dwelt in the centurion's heart; he marveled at this manifestation of it that His disciples might understand how well it pleased Him to see such faith. 12. It was to be expected that the most striking examples of faith would be found among the Jews, because they had the writings of the prophets. Let us learn from this expression of Jesus that to whom much is given of him much will be required. 13. Here Jesus declares that not only the Gentile who was in His presence, but many others from all parts of the world, will be saved. 14. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob represent the Jewish nation. The Gentiles will be on an equality with the Jews in the kingdom of heaven. 15. Many of the Jews, who are spoken of as children because of the blessed opportunities they have enjoyed, shall perish, because they rejected the Savior, although He was sent first of all to them. It is true in general that many who enjoy blessed privileges, such as being brought up in a Christian home and in a Christian congregation, will fall away and be lost. 16. By these words Jesus would impress upon us the terrible condition of the damned. They will be in darkness, that is, without hope of relief; they will weep, because they will realize that it is their own fault that they are lost, and because they know that their weeping is to no purpose; they will gnash their teeth, for they will be filled with vexation, spite and envy. 17. The reward of the centurion's faith was the granting of his request, and the commendation of his faith. God assures us that the prayer of faith is never offered in vain. The reward of the prayer of faith is that the worshipper either gets what he asks, or gets something better.

QUESTIONS.

1. What important incident in our Lord's ministry preceded His return to Capernaum?
2. Where was Capernaum located?
3. Why was it called Christ's own city?
4. What can be said of the man who addressed Jesus at this time?
5. How did he show his high regard for Christ?
6. What circumstance is to the supplicant's credit?
7. What can you say of the servant's ailment?
8. What is evident from Jesus' reply?
9. What state of heart is manifest from the centurion's words to Christ?
10. What words of this Gentile visitor manifested strong faith in our Lord?
11. What will such faith lead us to do?
12. Which part of the catechism gives us a short summary of God's promises?
13. Why do we begin the Apostles' Creed with the words I believe?
14. In what words does the apostle declare the necessity of faith with salvation?
15. With what words does Jesus declare the importance of faith?
16. What is meant by to believe?
17. What is first necessary unto faith?
18. In what words does St. Paul teach this truth?
19. On whose testimony does our faith rest?
20. Since the Bible is God's Word, how should we regard it?
21. What is not essential to faith?
22. In what words does the apostle declare that seeing is not necessary to faith?
23. What is the chief part of faith?
24. What is meant by believing in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost?
25. What is

the effect of faith without trust as seen in the devils? 26. How did the centurion show his confidence or trust? 27. How did the centurion illustrate his reason for trusting in Jesus? 28. Why did Jesus marvel? 29. Why was it to be expected that the most striking example of faith would be found in Israel? 30. What may we learn from this expression of Jesus? 31. In what words did Jesus declare that the Gentiles would be saved? 32. In what words did He declare that the Gentiles would be on an equality with the Jews in heaven? 33. Why are the Israelites referred to as children of the kingdom? 34. What is implied here, and taught elsewhere, as to the number that will be lost? 35. What is the condition of the damned as here described? 36. What was the reward of the centurion's faith? 37. What can be said of the prayer of faith?

GOLDEN TEXT.

HEBREWS II, 1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

35. ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

JOHN 4, 24; PSALM 90, 1-2; LUKE 1, 37; PSALM 139, 1-4; JEREMIAH 23, 23-24; ISAIAH 6, 3; DANIEL 9, 7; EXODUS 34, 6-7; PSALM 33, 4.

God is a Spirit, who is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, righteous, merciful and truthful.

God is a Spirit. — God is a Spirit:¹ and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit² and in truth.

God is Eternal. — Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place³ in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting,⁴ Thou art God.

God is Omnipotent. — With God nothing shall be impossible.⁵

God is Omniscient. — O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lyingdown, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether.⁶

God is Omnipresent. — Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?⁷ saith the Lord.

God is Holy. — Holy, holy, holy,⁸ is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.

God is Righteous. — O Lord, righteousness⁹ belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces.

God is Merciful. — The Lord, the Lord God, merciful¹⁰ and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.

God is Truthful. — The Word of the Lord is right and all His works are done in truth.¹¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. In these words God tells us something about Himself as to His *essence*, that is, as to what He is. It is not an easy matter for God

to tell us about Himself. He is infinitely above and beyond us. We may learn of Him from nature. When we gaze at the sun and moon and stars, or study animal and vegetable life as we see it around us, we see that God, who created and preserves all things, is a most wonderful Being. The best knowledge we have of God we obtain from the Bible. Here He tells us that *He is a Spirit*. We know very little about spirits. When Jesus appeared to the disciples after the resurrection He allayed their fears by saying, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Luke 24, 39. From these words we learn that a spirit does not have flesh and bones. God has no body. God speaks of Himself sometimes as though He had a body, but those expressions are not to be understood literally. When He tells us that His eyes are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry He means to assure us that He knows all about us. Since He has no body He does not have eyes and ears as we do, yet He has the power to see and hear—He knows all things. 2. Jesus spoke these words to the woman of Samaria with whom the burning question was, Which is the right place to worship God, Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim? Jesus tells her that worship acceptable to God is not tied to a certain place, but is of the heart, spiritual. 3. Moses here refers to the fact that Israel, who in his day had no home, always had a dwelling place in God. 4. These are remarkable words. They tell us that God never had a beginning and never will have an end. The Psalmist expresses this truth in Psalm 102, 12, "But Thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever, and Thy remembrance unto all generations." Everything around us will sooner or later pass away. Even we are here only for a few years. It is not so of God: He is *eternal*. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." God existed before the beginning, and therefore has had no beginning. Neither has He an end. 5. In these words God tells us that He is *omnipotent*, which means that He has all power. Here St. Luke says, "nothing is impossible with God." We refer to this attribute of God when we confess Him to be the Creator of heaven and earth. It was no hard task for God to create this great universe. When He wanted to make light He said, Let there be light; and there was light. We read in Psalm 33, 8, 9, "Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast." When the angel of God told Mary that Elizabeth would bear a son in her old age, and that of Mary herself, although a virgin, the Savior of the world would be born, it must have seemed passing strange. To comfort here the angel added, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." As we pass through life conditions will often arise when it will be hard for us to understand that all things work together for our good. At such times let us find comfort in the blessed truth that with God nothing is impossible. These words should move us to trust in the Lord at all times. 6. These words tell us that God knows all things—that He is *omniscient*. What the Psalmist says as to God knowing him, compassing his path, and

being acquainted with all his ways, every one can say. God knows the future, and He knows the past, for He is from everlasting to everlasting. He knows the present, as we read in Hebrews 4, 13, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened in the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." As it is comforting to us that God is all powerful, so is it comforting to us that He is all knowing. He knows when we are in want, and He knows how to help us in our hour of need. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him." Matt. 6, 8-7. These are very strange words. Read the last line again. "Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord." Here God tells us that He is *omnipresent*—everywhere present. This we learn also from Psalm 139, 7-10, "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." We should stand in awe of God, since His eyes, the eyes of the almighty, all-seeing One are ever upon us. This should also comfort us, since whatever may betide us in life, we have the assurance of His presence. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Yes, even in that very solemn moment, when no earthly friend can aid us, He is near; "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." 8. God is *holy*. That we may be the more deeply impressed at the thought the prophet repeats the words three times. When God speaks of Himself as holy He means that He is without sin. Being holy God wants His people to be holy. He says, "Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy." Leviticus 19, 2. 9. God is also righteous. He does what is right. He is righteous toward His people and rewards them in love. He is righteous toward the wicked and punishes them for their sin. He judges rightly. "The Lord our God is righteous in all His works which He doeth." Daniel 9, 14. He wants His people to be righteous. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord." 10. God is *merciful*. By this attribute is meant that God pities those who are in trouble. He has given us a picture of Himself in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. As the Samaritan pitied the man who fell among thieves, so God pities poor sinners. What His mercy moves Him to do is expressed in this passage from Exodus, He is long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeps mercy, and is forgiving. 11. The last attribute mentioned is *truthful*. His works are done in truth. It is impossible for God to lie. Since God is truthful we can regard every promise He has made as reliable. His truthfulness should move us to be truthful at all times.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we mean when we speak of God as to His essence? 2. From what sources do we learn of God? 3. From which source do we get the better information? 4. What is God? 5. What does a spirit not have? 6. What about expressions in which God speaks of possessing bodily organs and members? 7. What does God mean when He speaks of possessing eyes and ears? 8. Under what circumstances did Jesus speak the words here recorded? 9. What is the character of acceptable worship? 10. What attribute of God is first alluded to? 11. What is true of all earthly things? 12. What do we mean when we speak of God as eternal? 13. With what word do we express the thought that God is all powerful? 14. In what words does St. Luke express this thought? 15. Under what circumstances and by whom were these words spoken? 16. In what article of the creed do we speak of God as all-powerful? 17. Why is that attribute of God used in this article? 18. How did God give being to all things? 19. When is it especially comforting to a believer to know that God is omnipotent? 20. To what should the knowledge of this attribute of God move us? 21. In what words does the Psalmist declare that God knows all things? 22. By what word do we express this fact? 23. To what end will the knowledge of this attribute of God's serve us? 24. What do we mean when we speak of God as omnipresent? 25. In what words does the Psalmist refer to this attribute of God? 26. Mention a passage from Psalm 145 that is pertinent here. 27. How does the knowledge of this attribute bring comfort to us? 28. In what solemn moment is the Lord surely with His people? 29. In what words does the Psalmist express this truth? 30. What is meant when God is spoken of as holy? 31. What does God will in regard to His people? 32. How does God manifest His righteousness toward His people? 33. How does He manifest it toward the wicked? 34. What does God will in regard to His people in this respect? 35. Who are an abomination unto the Lord? 36. What do we understand by God's attribute merciful? 37. In what parable is our Lord's mercy pictured? 38. What is the character of God's dealings with us in accordance with this attribute? 39. In what words does the Psalmist declare God truthful? 40. In what words does the apostle make this declaration? 41. How does the knowledge of this attribute of God give us comfort? 42. To what should this attribute of God move us?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 48, 1. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness.

36. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS.

MATTHEW 3, 13-17.

THE TRINITY.

Jesus is Baptized. — Then¹ cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan² unto John,³ to be baptized of him. But John forbade⁴ Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee,⁵ and comest

Thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto Him, Suffer it⁶ to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.⁷ Then He suffered Him.⁸

Jesus is Honored. — And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water,⁹ and prayed;¹⁰ and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him,¹¹ and John saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove,¹² and lighting upon Him. And lo a voice from heaven,¹³ saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.¹⁴

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. It was while John was preaching and baptizing at the Jordan; and about six months after he began to preach. Jesus was about thirty years old — the age when priests began service in the temple. 2. Jesus traveled a long distance to be baptized. Let us learn from His example to go to trouble, to a great deal of trouble if necessary, in the interest of our souls. 3. John, called of God to be our Lord's forerunner, that is, to prepare the way for Him, was about six months older than Jesus. He was a man of courage, and a powerful preacher. He suffered martyrdom at the hands of Herod, and at the instigation of Queen Herodias. He had incurred her displeasure by telling her and the king of their sins. 4. In modesty John declares Himself unworthy of the honor of baptizing Jesus. His mother, Elizabeth, when visited by Jesus' mother, said, "Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me." Luke 1, 43. We are also reminded of Peter's words when Jesus was about to wash his feet. John 13, 8. John recognized Jesus as the Messiah. When John said, 'I knew Him not' (John 1, 33), he probably meant that he had not yet received any outward token direct from God that He was the Messiah, such as the descent of the Holy Spirit afterwards proved to be. John and Jesus being related John evidently had some knowledge of Jesus and quite probably at times met Him." *Teachers' Guide.* 5. Although John was a highly gifted and greatly honored man, in these words he declares his need of Jesus. Truly great men are not ashamed to confess that their only hope is in Jesus the Messiah. 6. Jesus does not say that John is mistaken, but insists, "suffer it to be so now." Jesus was passing through the state of humiliation in which, according to His human nature, He did not ordinarily use His divine glory, but took the form of a servant, and became obedient to His Father unto death. 7. Jesus had submitted to the ordinances of the Old Testament dispensation, and now suffers Himself to be baptized. He desires to comply with God's arrangements, and fulfills the law in every particular. 8. John yielded; so we dare not allow our feelings to keep us from doing God's will. 9. Jesus had gone down into the water, and after the ceremony came up out of it. This by no means signifies that He was baptized by immersion. A picture of Jesus' baptism found in the catacombs of Rome, and dated about the

fourth century, represents Jesus and John standing in the water, and the latter pouring the water from a shell on Jesus' head. If it were necessary to the validity of baptism that the water be applied in a certain way it would surely be so stated in the Bible. 10. From this example of Jesus we learn that it is well to pray, and especially to receive the means of grace with prayer. 11. Sin closed heaven to fallen man: Jesus came to open up a way to heaven. The opening of heaven at the moment Jesus enters upon His great work foreshadows the success of His mission. 12. For the comfort and assurance of John and others present the Spirit descended on Jesus in a visible manner—in the form of a dove. The dove was an emblem of purity, gentleness and harmlessness, and in the Church is now looked upon as an emblem of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit's influence. 13. This voice from heaven was the voice of the Father giving further testimony that Jesus is His well-beloved Son, the promised Savior. 14. This lesson directs our attention to the doctrine of the Trinity. The Scriptures plainly teach that there is but one God. In Deuteronomy 6, 4, we read, "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord." St. Paul declares the same truth, "There is none other God but one." 1 Corinthians 8, 4. Yes, we are forcibly reminded of this truth already by the first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

However God has revealed Himself as three persons. This we express by the word *Triune*, literally, *Three-one*. God is one and yet God is three, there being three persons in the Godhead. We learn this from our Lord's baptism. At the baptism of Christ God reveals Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. God the Father made Himself known on this occasion by speaking from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Son stood in the water, being baptized. The Holy Ghost was seen to descend like a dove and light on Him. Here were three distinct persons; the three persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

This doctrine is taught also by Christ's command to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

That there are three persons in the one God is also taught in 1 John 5, 7, "There are three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word (or the Son), and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." These three persons are equal—each has all the divine attributes. In regard to the work especially ascribed to each person, however, there is a difference among the three persons of the Godhead.

The first person of the Holy Trinity is God the Father who created all things and keeps them. He also from eternity begot the Son and in time sent Him into the world to be our Savior.

The second person of the Godhead is God the Son, who is begotten of the Father from eternity, but who in time became man and came into this world and died to save us from our sins.

The third person of the Godhead is the Holy Ghost, who from eternity proceeds from the Father and the Son, and who now through the Word and sacraments brings us to repentance and faith in Christ.

Thus we see that each of the three persons of the Holy Trinity has a part in the work of our salvation. We may say, "The Father planned our salvation, the Son carried it out, and the Holy Ghost applies it to us and enables us to enjoy it."

QUESTIONS.

1. When did the incident here recorded take place? 2. Why did our Savior's baptism take place when He was thirty years old? 3. What does Jesus' example teach us? 4. What can you say of John? 5. Why did John object? 6. Of what incident in his mother's life does this remind us? In Peter's? 7. Why is it likely that John recognized Jesus as the Messiah? 8. How are John's words, "I knew him not," to be understood? 9. What did John declare by the objection he offered? 10. What are truly great men not ashamed to do? 11. Through what state in His earthly mission was Jesus passing? 12. What is meant by Jesus' state of humiliation? 13. Why did Jesus insist, Suffer it to be so now? 14. What may we learn from John's example in yielding to Jesus' wish? 15. What interpretation of the words, "Came up out of the water," is not warranted? 16. Why do we not believe that immersion is the only right mode of baptism? 17. What may we learn from Jesus' example after the ceremony? 18. In what form did the Spirit descend upon Jesus? 19. Why did He descend visibly? 20. Of what is the dove an emblem? 21. What voice was heard at Jesus' baptism? 22. Why did the Father thus speak? 23. To what doctrine is our attention directed by this incident? 24. Mention passages of the Scriptures which teach that there is but one God? 25. However how has God revealed Himself to us? 26. How did the Father manifest Himself at Jesus' baptism? The Son? The Holy Ghost? 27. What important command of our Lord teaches this doctrine? 28. Repeat a passage from John bearing on this doctrine? 29. In what respect are the three persons of the Godhead equal? 30. In what respect do the persons of the Godhead differ from each other? 31. What work is especially ascribed to the Father? To the Son? To the Holy Ghost? 32. In what words might we state the special work of each person of the Holy Trinity looking to our salvation?

GOLDEN TEXT.

1. JOHN 5, 7. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word (or the Son), and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

37. REVIEW OF LESSONS 33-36.

A Happy Host.—The publicans were tax-gatherers. Many of them were dishonest, and were disliked. Zacchaeus, Lesson 33, was a chief publican, that is, an overseer of a district, and had other collectors under him. He had grown rich, but was anxious to see Jesus. He was willing to subject himself to inconvenience and ridicule in order to see Jesus, and in this

respect sets us a good example. He invited Jesus to his house, and heard the Gospel from the lips of his Guest. The word Gospel means good news. It is the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has saved us from our sins, and through faith makes us forever blessed. It is tidings we could never find out if it were not told us. It brings joy and gladness to all who hear and accept it. When our first parents disobeyed God they brought His wrath upon them and their posterity. In great mercy God promised to send a Savior. He made this promise as soon as sin came into the world. That promise is the Gospel. That promise has been fulfilled, and the Gospel as it comes to us not only tells of the promise, but also of its fulfillment. Zacchaeus received Jesus joyfully. We should receive Him joyfully as He comes to us in His Word. What Zacchaeus enjoyed when Jesus went to be his guest, we enjoy, in every essential feature, when we listen to the preaching of the Gospel. We receive Jesus joyfully when we willingly attend divine service, humbly and prayerfully hear the Word, and in childlike faith accept the Savior it reveals to us.

Trusting. — In the centurion, supplicating for his servant, and asking Jesus to “speak the word only” (Lesson 34), we have an illustration of faith. He believed that Jesus could cure his servant although He was far distant, and that His word would do the work. We have such faith when we accept God’s Word just as it is given. We have a short summary of the chief doctrines of God’s Word in the Apostle’s Creed. We begin this confession with the words, “I believe.” We say I, not we, because each one must believe for himself if he would be saved. As the nourishment that one takes will not strengthen the body of another, so the faith of one will not benefit another man’s soul. In order to have faith, or to believe, we must first hear and learn the Gospel. The next step is to accept it — regard it as true. The chief element of faith, however, is confidence, trust. To believe in God does not mean, therefore, only to believe that there is a God. Even the devils have that kind of a faith. To believe in God is to trust in Him. The centurion manifested His faith by saying, “Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.” If we have faith in Jesus we will want to be near Him; we will make our wants known to Him, and we will strive to do His will.

About God. — The passages of Scripture constituting Lesson 35, tell us of the essence and attributes of God. By God's essence we mean what He is. From His attributes we learn many important and wonderful things about God. Of course, since God is infinitely above and beyond us there is much that we will never know of Him in this life. Nature tells us something of God, but the Bible tells us far more. God is a Spirit — a Being that has no body. The angels are created spirits. God is a self-existing Spirit. True, the Bible speaks of God having eyes, ears and other bodily members, but it means that He has the power to do what such members enable us to do. God is eternal, that is, without beginning or end. He is omnipotent — all-powerful. He is omniscient — all-knowing. He is omnipresent — everywhere present. He is holy — altogether without sin. He is merciful. He pities those who are in trouble, as we see in the parable of the Good Samaritan. He is truthful. All His promises are sure.

Three Persons in One God. — We learned in Lesson 36 that Jesus came from Galilee to the river Jordan, and requested John to baptize Him. John was a powerful and successful preacher, but he declared himself unworthy to baptize Jesus. Although highly gifted and greatly honored he declared, "I have need to be baptized of Thee." When Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so," John yielded. We must not allow our feelings to keep us from doing God's will. Jesus went down into the water to be baptized, but that does not prove that He was immersed, much less, that only the Baptism that is by immersion is valid. If immersion were necessary to make baptism valid the Lord would surely tell us. At this service all three persons of the Godhead manifested themselves, the Spirit descending upon Jesus in a visible manner, and the Father saying, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here God revealed himself as three persons, and we say He is Triune. The doctrine of the Trinity is also taught in Christ's command to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. That there are three persons in the one God is also taught in I John 5, 7. "There are three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Spirit, and these three are one." These three persons are equal — each has all the divine attributes. The first person, God

the Father, created all things and keeps them. The second person, God the Son, assumed human nature and suffered and died for our sins. The third person, God the Holy Ghost, comes through the Word and sacraments to lead sinners to repentance and faith. Each person of the Trinity has a part in the work of man's salvation.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 33. 1. What can you say of the publican? 2. What of Zacchæus? 3. In what respect does he set us a good example? 4. What did he hear from the lips of Jesus? 5. What does the word Gospel mean? 6. What is the Gospel? 7. When was the Gospel first proclaimed? 8. What news does the Gospel bring us? 9. How did Zacchæus receive Jesus? 10. In what way does Jesus come to be our Guest? 11. When are we receiving Him joyfully?

LESSON 34. 1. To what incident in Jesus' life does our lesson direct attention? 2. What do we find in this narrative? 3. When are we manifesting such faith? 4. Where have we a short summary of the chief doctrines of God's Word? 5. What are the first words of this confession? 6. Why do we begin with I and not we? 7. What is first necessary to a developed faith? 8. What is the next step in believing? 9. What is the chief element of faith? 10. What would be a wrong definition of faith in God? 11. How did the centurion manifest His faith in God? 12. What will follow if there is faith in Jesus?

LESSON 35. 1. What is shown us in Lesson 35? 2. What do we mean when speaking of God as to His essence? 3. What may we learn from God's attributes? 4. What must we confess in regard to our knowledge of God? 5. From what may all people learn something of God? 6. What is the best source of information concerning God? 7. What do we mean when we speak of God as a Spirit? 8. What is understood by the attribute eternal? Omnipotent? Omniscient? Omnipresent? Holy? Merciful? Truthful?

LESSON 36. 1. Who was John? 2. What did Jesus ask of him? 3. Why did John decline? 4. What did Jesus add? 5. What may we learn from Jesus' example? 6. What interpretation of the words, "Went down into the water", cannot be established? 7. What would be a wrong inference from this? 8. What would be the case were immersion necessary to the validity of baptism? 9. How did each person manifest himself? 10. In what command of Jesus is the doctrine of the Trinity set forth? 11. In what words does St. John declare this doctrine? 12. What work is especially ascribed to the Father? To the Son? To the Holy Ghost?

38. CREATION.

GENESIS 1-2.

GOD, THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

I believe that God has MADE ME AND ALL CREATURES; that He has given me my body and soul, my eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them.

The First Things. — In the beginning¹ God² created³ the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void;⁴ and darkness⁵ was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God⁶ moved upon the face of the waters.

Light Created — First Day. — And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.⁷ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.⁸

The Firmament — Second Day. — And God said, Let there be a firmament⁹ in the midst of the waters. And it was so. And God divided the waters¹⁰ which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

The Waters Gathered Together — Third Day. — And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas.¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind.¹² And it was so. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

Sun, Moon and Stars — Fourth Day. — And God said, Let there be light¹³ in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

The Waters Bring Forth Living Creatures — Fifth Day. — And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life. And God created great whales, and every living creature, and every winged fowl.¹⁴ And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply.¹⁵ And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

Man Created — Sixth Day. — And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth.¹⁶ And it was so. And God said, Let Us¹⁷ make man in Our image,¹⁸ after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them and said, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good.¹⁹ And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

The Seventh Day Blessed. — Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.²⁰ And God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work.²¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. When time began. 2. God, the only uncreated Being. The work of *creation* is especially ascribed to God the Father, but in the Hebrew language the word God is put in the plural, signifying that the three persons of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, engaged in the work. In the first article of the Creed, which treats of creation, the attribute almighty is mentioned because in this work the omnipotence of God most gloriously manifests itself. 3. *To create is to make out of nothing.* Heaven and earth did not always exist, neither did they come into existence by chance, nor were they formed out of matter already existing, but God called them into being by the power of His word. "For every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God." Hebrews 3, 4. "All things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." John 1, 3. Man can construct a machine, build a house, and make many things, but he

must be provided with material. To create is different; God only can create. 4. God might have called everything into existence in an instant, but He first created the material out of which the earth was to be formed. We do not know how long this material was without form and void, but in His own time God gave it beautiful and symmetrical form, and caused it to abound in trees, plants, flowers, animals, etc. 5. Darkness was not a condition God created, but the absence of light. 6. Matter being in existence, the Spirit of God moved, *brooded* upon it, thus making the dead mass to teem with life. 7. On the *first* day God created *light*. What a dungeon this world would be without light! Light is necessary to life, and therefore is first brought forth. He divided the light from the darkness; they cannot exist in the same place at the same time. Darkness represents sin, and light represents truth and righteousness. Like darkness and light, sin and righteousness cannot work in harmony. 8. Although the sun was not created until the fourth day, there was a period of light and one of darkness each day. How this was done we do not know. 9. On the *second* day God created the *firmament*, the extended space around the earth, including the atmosphere, and all the spheres and orbs above, and is called heaven. 10. God arranged that there should be water on the surface of the earth, and also in the clouds and vapor above the earth. 11. On the *third* day God *separated the land from the water*. He prepared a place for the water on the surface of the earth, and gathered it together into seas. In this God shows His love of order. He admonishes us, Let everything be done decently and in order. 12. God's power is seen in this that He caused the new earth at once to abound in grass, herbs and fruit-bearing trees; His wisdom in this that He arranged by means of roots, seeds and fruit to multiply vegetation; His goodness in the variety and usefulness that characterizes the vegetable kingdom. 13. On the *fourth* day God created the *sun, moon and stars*. From that time these bodies have been the means of dividing the day from the night. They were also to bring about the seasons, and to serve as signs. 14. On the *fifth* day God made the *fish and birds*. The power, wisdom and goodness of God is seen in the fact that He caused the water and the atmosphere to abound in animal life, whales being the most prominent of the former, fowls of the latter. 15. Because these creatures were a higher order of life than that of the vegetable kingdom, God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply." 16. God showed His goodness by creating lower animals of great variety, and quite useful to man. 17. That God speaks in the plural is proof that there is more than one person in the Godhead. 18. Man, the chief of the visible creatures, was the last creature God made. *Man* was created on the *sixth* day, and created in the *image of God*. The image of God consists in the perfection of the whole man, chiefly in righteousness and true holiness. 19. Perfection characterized all creation because God said of all of it, It is very good. 20. God finished — completed the work of creation at that time. Nothing new has been added since. Everything that exists today, or ever has existed, is a species of something that God

created at the beginning. 21. God laid a special blessing on the seventh day because on it He rested after the work of creation. The observation of that day is not obligatory under the New Testament dispensation. In Christ Jesus, who has suffered and died to restore to us the image of God that was lost through sin, believers find an eternal Sabbath of rest.

QUESTIONS.

1. What do we understand by "the beginning?" 2. To which person of the Godhead is the work of creation especially ascribed? 3. What indicates that all three persons of the Trinity participated in this work? 4. Why is the attribute Almighty mentioned in this article? 5. What is it to create? 6. How did heaven and earth come into existence? 7. Mention a passage in proof? 8. How is creating distinguished from making or constructing? 9. How did God proceed in the work of creation? 10. What covered the earth at first? 11. How was created matter caused to teem with life? 12. What was created on the first day? 13. To what is light necessary? 14. What do darkness and light respectively represent? 15. What condition in regard to darkness and light prevailed even before the sun was created? 16. What was created the second day? 17. What is to be understood by firmament? 18. What is meant by dividing the waters? 19. What lesson may we learn from God's disposition of the water? 20. How did God manifest His power in this day's work? His wisdom? His goodness? 21. What was created on the fourth day? 22. What purpose do these bodies serve? 23. What was created on the fifth day? 24. What blessing did God pronounce upon the lower animals? 25. What did this indicate? 26. What did God manifest by creating such a variety of animals that are useful to man? 27. What is indicated by the words *us* and *our*? 28. What was created on the sixth day? 29. Why is man chief among the visible creatures? 30. Wherein did this image of God consist? 31. What did God say of all creation? 32. Why are we certain that no new species of creatures have been added since the beginning? 33. What can you say of the Sabbath? 34. To what Sabbath do believers look forward?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 104, 24. O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches.

39. PETER IN PRISON.³

PSALM 34, 7. HEBREWS 1, 14. ACTS 12, 5-11

GOOD ANGELS.

I believe that God has MADE ME AND ALL CREATURES; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them.

The Work of the Angels. — The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them¹ that fear Him,² and delivereth them.³

Are they not ministering⁴ spirits,⁵ sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.⁶

An Example of Angelic Service.— Peter therefore was kept in prison:⁷ but prayer⁸ was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.⁹ And when Herod would have brought him forth,¹⁰ the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison.¹¹ And behold, the angel¹² of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened unto them of his own accord; and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent His angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Here these guardian spirits are compared to the body-guard of a ruler. As soldiers watch lest harm befall their king, so the *angels watch over God's people*. 2. Those who fear God have the least reason to fear any enemy, for the angels protect them. He who fears God need fear nothing else. 3. This body-guard of the Christian can be depended on. The angels not only keep watch, but actually deliver their wards from all harm. If God be for us, who can be against us? 4. It is the business of the good angels to minister, to serve, to help. 5. A *spirit* is a being who *does not have flesh and bones*—has no body. It is true we read of angels appearing in human form, or at least delivering a message for God in human speech, as to Abraham, Lot, Mary, Elizabeth, Peter. In such cases they assumed human form, and used human voice and language in order to make themselves understood. In this respect angels are like God, except that they are created spirits, while He is uncreated and eternal. They are *holy*, which means that they are without sin. They are *blessed*, which means that they are perfectly happy. They *ever praise God*, as we read, Psalm 103, 20, "Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." A host of them came to earth when Jesus was born to praise God. The words they sang are recorded, Luke 2, 13,

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Another hymn that was once sung by the angels is recorded, Isaiah 6, 3, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.” The angels *fulfill God’s command*. The word angel means messenger. These blessed spirits are represented in pictures with wings, indicating that they are ready to go on errands for God. We read of many errands on which angels were sent. The angel Gabriel was sent from God to tell Zacharias that Elizabeth would bear a son, whom they should call John. This angel was sent to Mary to tell her that she would be the mother of Jesus. 6. Good angels *protect the just*. They minister to, or serve, those who shall be heirs of salvation. The just, or heirs of salvation, are those who believe in Jesus our Savior. This part of the work of the angels is described in Psalm 91, 11, 12, “For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” When righteous Daniel would not heed the king’s command to cease praying to God for thirty days, he was thrown into a lion’s den. No harm came to him, and he said, “My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me.” When King Herod, afraid lest the Child Jesus might become a rival for his throne, sent soldiers to kill the infant Savior, God sent His angel, and told Joseph to flee into Egypt with the Child. 7. King Herod killed James the brother of John in his efforts to vex the believers, and seeing that it pleased the Jews, whose good will he wished to keep, he then cast Peter into prison. 8. Christians have confidence in prayer because God has commanded us to pray, because He has promised to hear our prayers, and because the experience of believers proves the efficacy of prayer. The apostle cites an example for our comfort; James 5, 16-18, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. 9. These early Christians by engaging in unceasing prayer for one of their number who was in trouble, set us a good example. God wants us to pray for one another. 10. The answer to the prayer of these devout disciples was delayed. It was not until a few hours before the appointed time for the prisoner’s execution that deliverance came. God delays the answer to prayer to strengthen faith, or for some other good purpose. 11. Herod had done his utmost to prevent the apostle’s escape. There were strong chains and plenty of soldiers and watchmen. God is able to protect His people under any and all circumstances. When God seemingly allows the wicked to have their own way for a while, it is to make their final defeat the more impressive. 12. The angel came well equipped to do the work for which he was sent. Notice how thoughtful he is of Peter’s comfort, even bidding him don his clothing. Notice what power he displays. He filled the prison with light, lifted Peter from between the soldiers, smote off the prisoner’s chains, and

caused the iron gate to open. As this angel visited Peter in his hour of distress and peril, so do these ministering spirits interest themselves in all believers as they pass through life's trials. We are reminded how one came to Jesus in Gethsemane and strengthened Him. The service of these faithful guardians does not cease in the hour of death. They conduct the released and ransomed soul of the believer to its final reward. We read in Luke 16, 22, "It came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."

As the angels had much to do in connection with our Savior's first advent, so will they render great service at the time of His second advent. "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." Matthew 25, 31.

QUESTIONS.

1. To what are the angels compared in these words of the Psalmist? 2. Who need not fear enemies? 3. Besides keeping watch what else do the holy angels do for those who fear the Lord? 4. What is the calling of the good angels? 5. What is a spirit? 6. What of the appearance of angels in human form and with human speech? 7. Mention some instances in which angels appeared to the people? 8. In what respect are the angels like God? 9. What distinction must always be remembered? 10. What do we mean when we speak of the angels as holy? 11. What when we speak of them as blessed? 12. What is the first work attributed to the angels? 13. How does the Psalmist refer to this service which the angels render? 14. Mention an incident in which men heard a host of angels praising God? 15. With what words did these angels praise God? 16. What hymn of the angels is recorded by the prophet Isaiah? 17. In the second place what service do the angels render? 18. How is this indicated in pictures? 19. Mention some services rendered by the angel Gabriel? 20. In the fourth place what do the angels do? 21. Who is meant by the just? 22. How is this part of the work of the angels referred to in Psalm 91? 23. What service did the angels render for Daniel when he was cast into the lion's den? 24. What service for the Child Jesus when Herod determined to kill Him? 25. What prompted Herod to cast Peter into prison? 26. What inspires the believer's confidence in prayer? 27. Cite an incident that proves the efficacy of prayer? 28. How did Peter's fellow believers set a good example to all Christians? 29. With what intent does God sometimes delay the answer to prayer? 30. How does the deliverance of Peter prove that God is able to help us in trouble? 31. For what reason does God sometimes permit the wicked to have their way? 32. How did the angels manifest thoughtfulness and power in dealing with Peter? 33. Mention an instance in which an angel ministered to Jesus? 34. What service do the angels render believers after death? 35. Mention an instance of this. 36. Mention a passage that indicates that the angels will serve our Lord at the time of His second advent.

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 103, 20. Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word.

40. SATAN TRIES JOB.

JOB 1, 6-12; JOB 2, 1-6.

THE BAD ANGELS.

I believe that God has MADE ME AND ALL CREATURES; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them.

The Chief of Bad Angels among the Sons of God. — Now there was a day when the sons¹ of God came to present themselves before the Lord², and Satan³ came also among them.

The Unwelcome Guest Called to Account. — And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou?⁴

Satan's Reply. — Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.⁵

Righteous Job. — And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant⁶ Job,⁷ that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?⁸

Satan's Accusation and Proposal. — Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?⁹ Hast Thou not made an hedge about him,¹⁰ and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land:¹¹ but put forth Thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.¹²

God's Permission to Satan. — And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand.¹³ So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

Satan again with the Sons of God. — Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.¹⁴

The Unwelcome Guest again Called to Account. — And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou?

Satan's Reply. — And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.¹⁵

God's Testimony in Job's Behalf.—And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him,¹⁶ to destroy him without cause.

Satan's Farther Accusation.—And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.¹⁷ But put forth Thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.¹⁸

God's Renewed Permission.—And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.¹⁹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. By Sons of God are meant the angels. 2. As God's messengers they came to make report to Him, and to receive orders and instructions. 3. Satan intruded his presence, seeking to do mischief. He is ever going about, looking for some opportunity to harm man. When Christians meet, Satan comes to distract thought and otherwise disturb the worship. He is the chief among the *bad angels*. *Bad angels are spirits who have fallen from God*. They hate God and strive to offend Him and deceive man. Like good angels, they have no material bodies. Men sometimes represent Satan as having the wings of a bat, also tail and horns. In this way they mean to indicate that he is bent on doing harm. The bad angels were once numbered with the good angels, and like them, were pleasing to God. It is said, Genesis 1, 31, that "God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." The change that came over these spirits is expressed in the words, "fallen from God." This is taught in Jude 6. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." The habitation or home which these angels left is heaven. The Savior tells us something more about the devil in John 8, 44, "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lust of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." So wicked is the devil that he will lie and murder in order to accomplish his purpose.

Satan was the first one to sin, as indicated by the words, "from the beginning." What sin he first committed we do not know. The difference between the fall of Satan and that of our first parents is that Adam and Eve were tempted to do wrong, while Satan did wrong of his own free will. Being the first to sin there was no one to entice him. As long as these angels remained good they were God's friends; after the fall they became God's enemies. At first they loved God, since

the fall they hate Him. The bad angels will never cease to be God's enemies. What awaits them is told us in the last part of the passage quoted above, "He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

The work of the bad angels *is to strive to offend God and deceive man*. Since all sin is displeasing to God, and all that the devils do is sin, they are ever offending God. They make special effort to offend God by deceiving man, because God created man in His own image. Satan's first effort to deceive man was successful, for our first parents yielded to his temptation. Since the fall of man Satan has been successful times without number in deceiving man. However he failed to deceive Jesus. The Lord Jesus resisted every temptation of Satan, drove him off by quoting the Scriptures, and proved Himself more powerful than the Prince of darkness.

Satan is still busy striving to deceive man and lead him into sin, as we read 1 Peter 5, 8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." Jesus teaches us to overcome this tireless foe by being vigilant, and clinging to the Word of God. 4. It was as though God had said, What business brought you here? Give an account of yourself. 5. Satan's answer was true. The earth is his kingdom, and since the Lord is establishing a kingdom here in opposition, that is, the Christian Church, Satan is busy trying to keep his subjects loyal. 6. God was highly pleased with Job because he was His humble servant. Let us learn that we can make our lives pleasing to God by serving Him, and we serve Him by serving our fellowmen. 7. Job was an upright man who lived in Uz, in northern Arabia. He was reputed for his wisdom and wealth, and was referred to as "the greatest of all men of the east." 8. God reminds Satan that with all his shrewdness in striving to deceive men, he is not always successful, and cites Job as an example of those who had remained faithful despite all of Satan's temptations. 9. Satan spoke truly. Job did not serve God for nought, God bountifully rewards all who serve Him. However Satan misjudged Job in claiming that he served God for reward. It is the God-given love that warms a believer's heart and prompts him to service. Christians serve God not because they hope to be rewarded, but because love constrains them. 10. Again the devil spoke truly; God had put a hedge about Job, as He has put one about all His people, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them," Psalm 34, 7. 11. This also was true. God blesses the work of His people. Psalm 128, 1, 2, "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His way. For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee." 12. Satan claimed that Job served God because it was to his temporal advantage to do so. While it is true that God rewards His people, and it pays to be on God's side, the Christian is not actuated by selfish motives in serving God. Satan was wrong in supposing that Job would turn away from God in the hour of trouble. Believers have learned that God can turn trials into blessings. "Beloved, think it not

strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy," 1 Peter 4, 12, 13. We also see here that Satan is well acquainted with Job. He is the more to be feared because he is well acquainted with us. He knows our weaknesses. 13. Satan is powerful, but God is all-powerful. God says to him, So far, but no farther. 14. Satan is accountable to God. 15. We see shrewdness in Satan's answer. He does not tell a lie, but tells only a part of the truth. He said that he was going to and fro on the earth, but did not say that he was doing so to destroy souls. 16. Job remained faithful under severe trial. The trial was sent because of Satan's false accusations against the righteous man. 17. Satan still insists that Job is moved by selfish motives in abiding faithful to the Lord. He claims that he had not as yet tempted him in the weakest point, since men naturally love life better than all things else. 18. Sickness and bodily pain bring a multitude of discouragements, affect the mind, make it difficult to pray, and in various ways unfit the Christian for bearing the trials of life. 19. It is to the believer's comfort to know that even in the hour of sorest trial God still rules.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who are the Sons of God here referred to? 2. For what purpose, evidently, were they assembled? 3. What unwelcome guest intruded? 4. Of what does his intrusion remind us? 5. Who is Satan? 6. What are bad angels? 7. In what respect are they like good angels? 8. How is Satan usually represented in pictures? 9. What is thereby indicated? 10. Who were the bad angels originally? 11. How do we express the change that came upon these angels? 12. Give passages to prove that the bad angels were once numbered with the good angels. 13. From what habitation have they fallen? 14. In what words, according to John 8, 44, does our Savior speak of Satan? 15. What is indicated by the words "from the beginning?" 16. What is the difference between the fall of the bad angels and that of our first parents? 17. What was the original relation of the bad angels to God? 18. What is their relation since the fall? 19. How long will their hatred to God continue? 20. What awaits them? 21. What is the work of the bad angels? 22. Why are their efforts directed especially against man? 23. Whom did Satan fall to lead into sin? 24. How did Jesus overcome Satan? 25. In what words does St. Peter refer to Satan's work? 26. What is meant by the question God asked the intruder? 27. What was Satan's reply? 28. For what purpose is Satan going to and fro on the earth? 29. How may we, like Job, please God? 30. What can you say of Job? 31. Why did God call Satan's attention to Job? 32. In what respect is Satan's first accusation true? 33. In what respect did he misjudge Job? 34. What moves the believer to serve God? 35. What was the second accusation? 36. Mention passages proving that God blesses the work of His people? 37. In what respect did Satan again misjudge Job? 38. What does God teach us in regard to the trials of His people? 39. Why is the arch enemy the more dangerous? 40. What can be said of Satan's power? 41. In what respect was Satan's reply faulty? 42. How did Satan account for his failure in tempting Job? 43. By what means did he expect to meet with better success? 44. What can be said of the trial Satan proposed sending? 45. What is the believer's comfort in the midst of trial?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I. PETER 5, 8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

41. THE CREATION OF MAN.

GENESIS 2, 7. GENESIS 1, 27. PSALM 8, 4-9.

MAN.

I believe that God has MADE ME AND ALL CREATURES; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them.

Man Created.—And the Lord God formed¹ man of the dust of the ground,² and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;³ and man became a living soul.⁴

Man Created in God's Image.—So God created man in His own image,⁵ in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.⁶

The Dignity of Human Nature.—What is man,⁷ that Thou art mindful of him?⁸ and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?⁹ for Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,¹⁰ and hast crowned him with glory and honor¹¹. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things under his feet:¹² All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth.¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. God did not proceed in creating man as He did in the creation of other things on the earth. When He wanted to create vegetation He said, Genesis 1, 11, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." When He wanted to call the lower animals into existence He said, Genesis 1, 24, "Let the earth bring forth the living creatures after his kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after his kind: and it was so." But when He made man God *formed* him. The prophet refers to this, Isaiah 64, 8, "We are the clay, and Thou our Potter; and we are the work of Thy hand." The psalmist says, Psalm 13, 14, "I will praise Thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." While other creatures

were created, man was *formed*, as though made with greater accuracy and exactness. 2. God formed man not of gold and diamonds, but out of the most common of earthly substances, thus impressing him with his lowly origin, and with the unlimited power of His creation. 3. The fact that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and did not simply call him into existence, as He did the lower animals, shows that human life is much more precious than mere animal life. 4. The soul is the chief part of man, possessed of wonderful gifts; the body is but its tenement. 5. An image of a person is a picture or likeness of him—something that resembles him. Being created in God's image man resembled, or was like God. Man did not resemble God in every particular. The *image of God* consists in the *perfection of the whole man*, but chiefly in righteousness and true holiness. This means that God created man a perfect being. He made man of two parts, body and soul. The body was formed out of the dust of the ground. God pronounced it very good. It was perfect. It was composed of many members and organs, and every one did its work perfectly. Man's body being perfect, he was not troubled with aches and pains of any kind. The superiority of man over the rest of the animal creations is seen in the character and usefulness of the members of the body; in the fact that, while other creatures creep or crawl or walk on all fours, man walks upright; but especially in the gift of the soul. Some of the wonderful gifts of the soul are our reason and senses. He gave man five senses through which the soul looks out upon the world, and lays hold of the things around him. He gave man reason by which to think about these things, and memory by which to retain what is grasped through the senses. The *image of God* consists chiefly in *righteousness and true holiness*. In Ephesians 4, 24, the apostle says, "Put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Thus we see that God's image is His righteousness and true holiness. Having been created a holy being man, at creation, was like God. 6. God created man male and female that they might "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." He made but one couple that it might be true that He "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." This man and woman were not ashamed of their nakedness because they were innocent; shame came with sin. 7. The Psalmist has in mind man's weak and sinful condition which makes him unworthy of God's love. 8. It is comforting to know that God is mindful of us, notwithstanding our unworthiness. The Psalmist is amazed as he contemplates God's mindfulness of a creature that is so undeserving. 9. Yes, the Psalmist adds, not only mindful of him, but even "visited him," that is, richly favors him. 10. The angels are highly favored, perfectly holy, dwelling in God's presence, ever praising Him, and doing most important service as God's messengers, yet man, declares the Psalmist, was created but a little lower than they. After this life, however, the righteous will be "equal unto the angels," Luke 21, 36. 11. God has crowned man with gifts and powers that qualify him to have dominion over the inferior creatures. Man was especially crowned

with glory and honor when God became incarnate. See Hebrews 2, 6-8. 12. God has enabled man to "put under his feet", that is, to control and use in his service, not only the lower animals, but the elements and powers of nature. 13. The Psalmist has in mind the honor conferred upon mankind when the Eternal God became man, and in joyous exaltation exclaims, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth."

QUESTIONS.

1. What did God say when He called vegetation into existence? 2. With what words did He cause the earth to teem with animal life? 3. How was man created? 4. To what does the prophet compare the creation of man? 5. What does the Psalmist say of the creation of man? 6. What is implied when it is stated that God **formed** man? 7. How should the fact that we were created out of dust impress us? 8. How did man become a living soul? 9. What is shown by the manner in which man received life? 10. What is the relation of the soul and body to each other? 11. What do we understand by an image of a person? 12. What is meant when it is stated that man was created in God's image? 13. In what does the image of God consist? 14. How did man stand in God's sight after his creation? 15. What can be said of his body after creation? 16. In what is man's superiority over the rest of the animal creation apparent? 17. In what is this superiority especially seen? 18. Mention some of the wonderful gifts of the soul. 19. What purpose do the five senses serve? 20. For what purpose is reason given? 21. How does memory aid us? 22. Besides the perfection of the whole man, in what does the image of God consist? 23. Which words of St. Paul declare this? 24. In what respect was man like God? 25. Since all human beings descended from one couple what can be said of all nations of men? 26. Why were our first parents unshamed? 27. What had the Psalmist in mind when he exclaimed, What is man? 28. How should the fact that God is mindful of man affect us? 29. What amazed the prophet? 30. What is meant by the words, "visitest him"? 31. With what words does the Psalmist express the difference between man and the angels? 32. What will be the relation of the righteous and the angels after the resurrection? 33. In what respect has God crowned man? 34. What especially great honor has God bestowed on man? 35. What further honor has God bestowed on man? 36. What does the contemplation of the Lord's incarnation move the Psalmist to say?

GOLDEN TEXT.

GENESIS I, 27. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

42. REVIEW OF LESSONS 38-41.

In the Beginning. — Lesson 38 is taken from the first and second chapters of the Bible, and gives us an account of the creation. To create is to make out of nothing. This work is especially ascribed to the Father. Man can construct, build, etc.,

but God only can create. The material out of which the earth was to be formed was first created, then in His own time God gave it form, and caused it to abound with animal and vegetable life. On the first day God created light, so that there was first a period of darkness then a period of light, but how it was done we do not know. The extended space around the earth, including the atmosphere, spheres and orbs, which is called the firmament or heaven, was created on the second day. On the third day God separated the land from the water, causing the new-made earth to abound in vegetation. On the fourth day the sun, moon and stars were called into existence, and by means of these bodies the day is divided from the night, and the seasons are made to follow each other. On the fifth day fish and birds were created, and on the sixth day the land animals and last of all man, the chief of the visible creatures. Man was made in the image of God, which consists in the perfection of the whole man, especially righteousness and true holiness. God laid a special blessing on the seventh day — the Sabbath — because on it He rested after the work of creation. The observation of this day is not obligatory under the New Testament

Man's Guardian Spirits. — In the account of Peter's deliverance from prison, Lesson 39, we have some valuable information in regard to angels. They are spirits, but have appeared at different times in human form. God is a Spirit, but the angels are created spirits. They are holy, that is, without sin. They are blessed, that is, perfectly happy. Their work is to praise God and fulfill His command. They are what their name means, messengers. They are represented in pictures as having wings, to indicate their readiness to serve. We are told of some of the services they have rendered as, for example, delivering Israel from the Syrian host and conveying messages to Zacharias, Mary and others. They also protect the just, as example, their services in behalf of Daniel and Peter. The angels are wise and powerful, and always well equipped for the work which they are sent to do. Their services do not cease in the hour of death, as we see in the case of Lazarus. As they served Jesus at the time of His first advent, so will they serve Him at the time of His second advent.

Man's Sworn Enemy. — Satan was determined to turn Job from God. From his efforts with this righteous man, as set forth

in Lesson 40, we may learn a great deal about this arch enemy of our race. He is the chief among the bad angels, all of whom are spirits who have fallen from God. These beings were once numbered with the good angels, and were pleasing to God, but they fell. Satan, their leader, was the first one to sin. The difference between the fall of Satan and that of our first parents is that the latter were tempted, but he did wrong of his own free will. The work of the bad angels is to strive to offend God. They offend God especially by striving to deceive man. That we may not be deceived by this wily foe we are admonished to be sober and vigilant. Job was an upright man, and reputed for his wisdom and wealth. Satan knew that the fall of such a man would be a great gain to his cause. As God put a hedge about Job, and blessed him in many ways, so His favor rests upon His people, and His angel encampeth round about them that fear Him. God overruled Job's trials for his good, and He maketh all things work together for good to them that love Him.

The Chief of Visible Creatures. — Lesson 41 treats of the creation of man. God formed man of the dust, the most common of earthly substances, to impress him with his lowly origin, and with God's unlimited power. The fact that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life indicates that human life is more precious than mere animal life, which was simply called into existence. Man was created in God's image, which consists in the perfection of the whole man. God made man of two parts, body and soul. The superiority of man over the rest of animal creations is seen in the character and usefulness of the members of his body, but especially in the gift of the soul. Our reason and senses are some of the wonderful gifts with which the soul is endowed. Man was created a holy being — in righteousness and true holiness. He was created male and female that they might be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. There was but one couple, for all the nations of the earth were to be of one blood.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 38. 1. What is the subject of this lesson? 2. Whence is it taken? 3. What is it to create? 4. Who only has this power? 5. What was created the first day? The second? 6. What do we understand by the firmament? 7. What was created the third day? The fourth? 8. What purpose do these orbs serve? 9. What was given being on the fifth day? The sixth? 10. What is to be said of man? 11. What is understood by the image of God? 12. What can you say of the Sabbath?

LESSON 39. 1. To what Biblical incident does this lesson direct attention? 2. On what subject does it give us information? 3. What are the good angels? 4. Why do we speak of them as holy? Blessed? 5. What work is intrusted to them? 6. What is indicated by picturing them with wings? 7. Mention some services they have rendered. 8. What is their duty in regard to the just? 9. Mention incidents in which they rendered such service. 10. What about their equipment for service? 11. Mention an incident in which they rendered service after death.

LESSON 40. 1. What was Satan's purpose in regard to Job? 2. What may we learn from Job's trials? 3. What are the bad angels? 4. Who is Satan? 5. What is the difference between the fall of our first parents and that of Satan? 6. To what work do the bad angels devote themselves? 7. In what way of offending God do they especially delight? 8. What admonition will we do well to heed? 9. Why would it have especially aided Satan's cause to have succeeded in this instance? 10. Of what does God's goodness to Job remind us? 11. Although Christians are tried of what are they assured?

LESSON 41. 1. What is the subject of this lesson? 2. How was man made? 3. What feature of his creation should impress man with his lowly origin? 4. What is indicated by the fact that God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life? 5. What do we understand by the image of God? 6. What two parts constitute man? 7. In what may we see man's superiority over the other animal creatures? 8. Mention some of the gifts of soul with which he has been endowed. 9. In what state was man created? 10. With what purpose in view did God make man male and female? 11. Why was but one couple created?

43. GOD LEADING HIS PEOPLE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS.

EXODUS 13 and 14; DEUTERONOMY 8, 3-4.

PROVIDENCE.

And STILL PRESERVES them; also clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and home, wife and children, fields, cattle and all my goods; that He richly and daily PROVIDES me with all that I need to support this body and life; that He DEFENDS me against all dangers, and GUARDS AND PROTECTS me from all evil.

Israel Started for Canaan. — And it came to pass, when Pharaoh¹ had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near;² for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt;³ but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.⁴

God Led the Way. — And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night;⁵ He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.⁶

Pharaoh in Pursuit. — And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled, and Pharaoh and his servants said, Why have we done this, we have let Israel go from serving us?⁷ And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and pursued after the children of Israel, with all his horses, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea.⁸ And the children of Israel were sore afraid,⁹ and cried out unto the Lord.¹⁰ And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show you to-day. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace!¹¹

Israel Crosses the Sea. — And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto Me;¹² Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward;¹³ but lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.¹⁴ And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord. And the Angel of God,¹⁵ which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel;¹⁶ so that the one came not near the other all the night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea.¹⁷

Pharaoh's Army Drowned. — And it came to pass that in the morning watch¹⁸ the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud,¹⁹ and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drove them heavily; so that the Egyptians said, let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for

them.²⁰ And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea. And the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared;²¹ and the Egyptians fled against it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.²² And the waters covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh; there remained not so much as one of them.²³ Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.²⁴

Recalling God's Deliverance.— And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.²⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Pharaoh was the title of the ruler of Egypt. 2. There were two ways from Egypt to Canaan, one was a short cut from the north of Egypt to the south of Canaan, the other was much longer, leading through the wilderness. 3. By the shorter route Israel would have encountered the Philistines, a foe too formidable for the erstwhile bond-people, who were inexperienced in war. 4. To Israel it must have seemed strange to take a round-about route instead of the short one, by which they could have expected to reach their destination in a few days; but to us who know the circumstances, God's wisdom and love are apparent. God leads us, too, through strange and trying experiences, but does so out of wisdom and love. There is always some good reason for God's manner of dealing with us. God's care for His creatures is called *Providence*. The first part of the word is *provide*, which indicates the meaning of the word. We say in the catechism, God *provides* me with all that I need to support this body and life. He provides this daily and richly. He also defends us from the dangers that threaten us on all sides. He guards and protects us from all evil.

This subject is added to the article that treats of creation because God did not forsake His work as an architect leaves the house that he has built. God keeps the things He created, and governs them according to His fatherly goodness and wisdom. God is always near us, as He was with Israel on their way to Canaan.

God keeps and governs all creatures to His glory, and to the salvation of the saints. That God preserves us is taught in Hebrews 1, 3, "He upholds all things by the word of His power." It is also shown in His words to Noah, Genesis 8, 22, "While the earth remaineth seed-

time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." The Psalmist confesses this, Psalm 145, 15, 16, "The eyes of all wait upon Thee: and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

The Red Sea lies between Egypt and Arabia, and receives its name from the red sea grass that is found on its surface. 5. It was an unfamiliar route, and one beset with many hardships and dangers, but by means of the pillar or cloud they were led in the right way. God permitted trials to come to His chosen people. He sometimes humbled them. He gave them little else than manna to eat for years. But all this was for their good, and He did not forsake them. Cares multiply around us also as we journey through life. We are to cast these upon the Lord. He provides for us so far as these are concerned by offering to bear them Himself. "Casting all your cares upon Him, for He careth for you," 1 Peter 5, 7. God even cares for the creatures of less value than man. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

The pillar answered several purposes: by day it protected them from the heat, by night it afforded them light, and it led the way through the dreary region they were traversing. God leads His people through the wilderness of life by His Word, and by His providential dealings with them. 6. God never withdrew this guide. However ungrateful the Israelites often were, and however grievously they provoked Him to wrath by their sins, the cloud never left them until they came to the borders of Canaan. This reminds us of God's constant faithfulness to us along life's journey. He exercises a *special providence over man*. "The Lord directeth his steps," Proverbs 16, 9. "My times are in Thy hand," Psalm 31, 15.

God governs all things according to His fatherly goodness and wisdom. He even overrules evil for the good of His people. Joseph declared, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." Genesis 50, 20. His brethren sold him into bondage out of envy, but God used him in Egypt as a means of preserving many lives from the severe famine that came. St. Paul assures us, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." 7. As Pharaoh and his advisers thought how profitable the Israelites had become they regretted that they had allowed the bond-people to go, but this was from the Lord. God wanted Pharaoh to pursue Israel to his own destruction. 8. Pharaoh had forgotten how God had punished him and his people for resisting His will and oppressing His people. We are like Pharaoh in this that we soon forget the lessons that divine providence teaches us. 9. Israel was afraid because they had never fought a battle, and because they knew something of Pharaoh's cruelty. Faith in God's promises should have strengthened their hearts. 10. Crying unto the Lord is the best thing any one can do in trouble, for God says, "Call upon Me in

the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Psalm 50, 15, 11. Israel had cried unto the Lord and now Moses shows his strong faith by saying, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." In the hour of trouble it is our duty to use the gifts and powers which God has given us, but we must never forget that without God's blessing our efforts would be vain. 12. Moses made no mistake in crying out unto the Lord: he was reproved for being anxious lest God would not help in due time. 13. God had promised to lead Israel safely to Canaan, therefore it was their duty to go forward. God wants His people to walk in the path of duty even when it seems foolish to do so—that is, He wants us always to obey and trust Him. 14. God divided the waters of the sea by means of a strong east wind, so that the people could pass over in safety, walking on dry land. So by His providence God is opening ways for us along the journey of life. 15. This Angel of God was God Himself, who was in the cloud. 16. The cloud was not only to serve as a guide, but also as a protection. It was light to Israel, but darkness to the Egyptians. We see in this how vain were all the efforts of this powerful army in fighting against God. God's promised protection should comfort us for "if God be for us, who can be against us?" 17. The Egyptians being in darkness, evidently did not know that they were rushing into the sea. Those who walk in spiritual darkness, rejecting the light of God's Word, rush into danger and eternal death. 18. The morning watch extended from about 2 to 6 o'clock. 19. The Lord looked upon the Egyptians, that is, in some way manifested His presence—probably turned the cloud and allowed its brightness to shine in dazzling fierceness upon them. 20. Fear and confusion overtook the Egyptians, all manner of mishaps occurred, and they realized what they should have known long before, that God was fighting for Israel. 21. God commanded Moses to stretch forth his hand, the east wind ceased, a west wind arose in its stead, and the water of the sea returned to its place. 22. The frantic but vain efforts of the Egyptians to escape remind us of what Jesus says of the wicked on the day of judgment. 23. The cruel Pharaoh and his people mocked and oppressed God's people, and defied God again and again, but at last God's judgment overtook them. While God is merciful and long-suffering, the time will come when those who will not heed His Word will be given over to the just punishment of their sins. 24. As Israel looked upon their dead enemy upon the sea shore they realized that God's promises will surely come to pass. 25. In these words Moses recalls for Israel's benefit God's dealings with them in the trying experiences through which they had passed. God had led them safely on until they reached Canaan. Thus God leads us, exercising a providence over us to His glory and to the salvation of the saints.

QUESTIONS.

1. By what title were the rulers of Egypt honored? 2. What about the routes from Egypt to Canaan? 3. Why was not the shorter route taken in this instance? 4. What attributes of God are manifest in this prov-

idence? 5. Of what may we be sure even amid the trials of life? 6. What do we understand by the providence of God? 7. How does God provide for us? 8. What more does He do for us? 9. Why is this subject added to the article on creation? 10. Give passages that assure us of God's care for His creatures. 11. Where was this body of water located? 12. Why called Red Sea? 13. What of the route taken? 14. How were the travelers guided? 15. How did they fare? 16. What of our journey through life? 17. How does God exercise His providence in regard to our cares? 18. Over what creatures does God's providence extend? 19. What is said of the sparrows? 20. What purposes did the pillar serve? 21. How does God direct us in life's journey? 22. Under what circumstances even did God continue to care for Israel? 23. Of what does His faithfulness to Israel remind us? 24. Repeat passages referring to this. 25. What should comfort us in regard to providence? 26. In what words did Joseph speak of this? 27. In what words did St. Paul express it? 28. How was God's wisdom and goodness shown in Joseph's life? 29. What change of mind came to Pharaoh? 30. How is this to be accounted for? 31. What made Pharaoh's course the more inexcusable? 32. In what respect are we also guilty? 33. What caused Israel to fear? 34. What should have made them brave? 35. What is it best to do in trouble? 36. In what words does Jesus say this? 37. How did Moses manifest his faith? 38. While using the gifts and powers God bestows, what must we not forget? 39. For what did God reprove Moses? 40. What should have made Israel's duty plain? 41. Under what circumstances even should we obey God? 42. How did God make a way of escape for Israel? 43. Who was the Angel of God? 44. What can you say of the cloud? 45. What should comfort us amid life's trials? 46. How were the Egyptians entrapped? 47. Of what persons do they remind us? 48. How did God deal with the Egyptians in the morning watch? 49. How were the Egyptians affected? 50. What did God bid Moses do? 51. How were the waters restored to their place? 52. Of what do the frantic efforts of the Egyptians to escape remind us? 53. For what sins did this judgment overtake the Egyptians? 54. What warning should all see in this visitation? 55. Of what would Moses remind the people? 56. Of what does God's leading Israel to Canaan remind us?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 145, 15, 16. The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

44. JACOB MEETS ESAU.

GENESIS 32, 1-10.

GOD'S GOODNESS AND MERCY.

And all this purely out of fatherly, divine GOODNESS and MERCY, without any merit or worthiness in me.

Jacob at Mahanaim. — And Jacob went on his way,¹ and the angels of God met him.² And when Jacob saw them he said, This is God's host;³ and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.⁴

Jacob Preparing to Meet Esau. — And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother,⁵ unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.⁶ And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord⁷ Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.⁹

Jacob's Precaution on Hearing that Esau was Approaching. — And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.¹⁰ Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; and said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.¹²

Jacob's Humility and Thankfulness. — And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee;¹³ I am not worthy¹⁴ of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant;¹⁵ for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and Now I am become two bands.¹⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The patriarch overtaken by Laban, when he was escaping with his family from that covetous man, parts with him in peace, and proceeds on his way toward Canaan. 2. That is, he was enabled to see

the angels that were attending him, as Elisha once enabled a young man to do 2 Kings 6, 17. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34, 7. Jacob needed this assurance of protection, being afraid of his angry brother. 3. It is a large number of angels — a *host*, and they are able to protect him, for it is *God's* host. Although we can not see the angels about us in the hour of trouble, we should be comforted as Jacob was, because God says, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91, 11. 4. In order that he might never forget this proof of God's favor the patriarch named the place Mahanaim, which means, *Two Hosts*. Probably these heavenly spirits appeared to him in two companies, one in the front, and one in the rear. 5. Jacob had not forgotten that Esau was angry at him, and had threatened to take his life, and therefore feared to meet him. He sends messengers to gain his favor. Jacob suffered ill-treatment at the hands of Laban, and now, although twenty years have passed, still suffers from fear of his brother. This is an example of the bitterness of sin. 6. He must have heard from home during his long absence, for he knew that Esau resided in Seir. 7. He calls Esau his lord, and himself a servant, to intimate that he did not insist upon claiming all that the birth-right granted him. 8. He wishes his brother to know that he is not coming back a beggar, and that he has not been an idler and profligate during his absence.

It were well if we would often remind ourselves and others of *God's goodness*. This would aid us in keeping a grateful heart. It would impress upon us more deeply a sense of the loving kindness and constant faithfulness of God and enable us better to realize that He does all this for us *purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy*, without any merit or worthiness in us. 9. He is urging that there shall be peace between them. No one should hesitate to take the first step toward securing peace with one with whom he is at enmity. Jesus enjoins this; "If thy brother shall trespass against thee; go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Matthew 18, 15. 10. Evidently Esau was bent upon revenge, and had equipped himself well for that purpose. When anger is allowed to burn on it develops hatred and malice, and is then hard to get rid of. The best time to seek reconciliation is at the time of the trouble. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Ephesians 4, 26. 11. Jacob was distressed because he remembered Esau's threat to kill him. He was a man of faith, yet he was troubled with fears. It is weakness of faith that causes one to be disturbed by doubts and fears. But Jacob also remembered his sin against Esau, and that also troubled him. 12. Although Jacob believed God's promise of protection, he used the means at his command, and his best judgment, that at least a portion of his possessions might escape his brother's violence. We should do our best to bring about the conditions for which we pray. 13. Jacob addressed God in this way for his own comfort; he would also remind God of His faithfulness in the past, of the covenant He had made with his father and grandfather, and of the

command and promise that had been given him. Well for us if when trouble threatens we can declare that we have been walking in the way of His commandments. Let us be sure that, like Jacob, all our hopes are founded on the clear statements of God's Word. 14. From Jacob we should learn that acceptable prayer begins with a confession of unworthiness. The publican began by smiting on his breast, falling on his face, and crying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 15. By *mercies* and *truth* the patriarch refers to God's goodness, and His faithfulness in keeping His promises. 16. Jacob contrasts the poverty and loneliness that characterized his leaving with the favorable conditions under which he was returning to incite his heart to thanksgiving. A review of the past should move every one to give thanks, for even in the experiences of those who have had most trouble the goodness of God is plainly seen. When we contemplate the mercies of the past let us, like Jacob, keep our unworthiness in mind, and we will confess, "He does all this purely out of *fatherly, divine goodness and mercy*, without any merit or worthiness in me." So far from deserving these mercies we have deserved God's anger and punishment. Seeing our unworthiness it is His *fatherly goodness and mercy* that moves God to show us favor. God's goodness is referred to as *fatherly* because the treatment that affectionate parents accord their children is somewhat similar to it. Jacob thought of the blessings he had enjoyed and broke forth in thanksgiving and praise. We should do likewise. It is our duty to our kind and merciful Father "to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him." If courtesy moves us to thank those who accommodate us, surely the love of a believer's heart should move him to thank God. Because it is so easy to be unthankful God sets this duty before us in His Word, and admonishes us to perform it. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; and His mercy endureth forever." Psalm 107, 1. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." Psalm 103, 1, 2.

QUESTIONS.

1. What preceded the incident referred to in the lesson?
2. What transpired as Jacob proceeded on his way?
3. What incident in Ellisha's life corresponded to this?
4. Give a passage that refers to the service of the angels?
5. What comfort was afforded the patriarch by the appearance of the angels?
6. What circumstance caused Jacob to be in need of comfort?
7. What passage from the Psalms is pertinent here?
8. What name did Jacob give that place?
9. What does the word Mahaniam signify?
10. What had Jacob in mind as he neared Canaan?
11. What precaution did he exercise?
12. How did he taste the bitterness of sin?
13. What indicated that he had heard from home during his absence?
14. Why did he refer to Esau as lord, and himself servant?
15. With what intent did he send a message to Esau?
16. Of what should we often remind ourselves and others?
17. What would be the result were this done?
18. What moves God to deal so well with us?
19. For what was Jacob anxious?
20. What should we be ready to do in order to live in peace?
21. In what words does Jesus enjoin this?
22. What, evidently, did Esau have in mind?
23. What is the result if anger is not put down?
24. When is the best time to seek reconciliation?
25. How is the patriarch's distress to be ac-

counted for. 26. Although Jacob had faith in God's protecting care what did he do? 27. What gave him comfort? 28. What will prove comforting to us in time of trouble? 29. How did the patriarch begin his prayer? 30. What New Testament character sets us the same example? 31. To what does Jacob refer by mercies and truth? 32. What will help us to keep a grateful heart? 33. How did Jacob incite his heart to thankfulness? 34. To what should a review of the past move us? 35. What will we confess if we keep our unworthiness in mind? 36. What have we deserved at God's hands? 37. Since God sees our unworthiness what moves Him to show us favor? 38. Why is God's dealings with us termed fatherly? 39. What is our duty in view of God's goodness? 40. Repeat passages in which this duty is enjoined.

GOLDEN TEXT.

GENESIS 32, 10. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant.

45. A PSALM OF PRAISE.

PSALM 103.

OUR DUTY IN VIEW OF GOD'S GOODNESS.

For all which it is my duty to THANK and PRAISE, to SERVE and OBEY Him. This is most certainly true.

The Psalmist Bestirs Himself to a Service of Praise. —

Bless¹ the Lord, O my soul,² and all that is within me,³ bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:⁴ who forgiveth all thine iniquities:⁵ who healeth all thy diseases;⁶ who redeemeth thy life from destruction;⁷ who crowned thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things:⁸ so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.⁹

A Glimpse at God's Goodness. — The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.¹⁰ He made known His ways unto Moses,¹¹ His acts unto the children of Israel.¹² The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.¹³ He will not always chide; neither will He keep His anger for ever¹⁴. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.¹⁵ For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. So far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.¹⁶ For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.¹⁷ As for man, his days are as

grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.¹⁸ But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them.¹⁹

God's Goodness is over All Creatures.—The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all.²⁰

All Creatures Should praise the Lord.—Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His that do His pleasure.²¹ Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion;²² bless the Lord, O my soul.²³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Bless, as used by the Psalmist, is about the same as praise. 2. He is urging himself to the work. It is sinful nature that makes it necessary for Christians to spur themselves on to *praise God*. 3. Like David a Christian must not be satisfied with a lip service, but his praise must come from his inmost soul. David teaches us that we should be deeply in earnest when we praise God. So far from deserving the mercy of the Lord we have deserved His anger and punishment. Since we have not deserved God's kindness, and it is bestowed altogether out of *fatherly goodness and mercy*, we owe God a great debt of gratitude. Therefore it my my duty to *thank and praise, to serve and obey Him*. Common courtesy leads us to thank those who do us a favor, how much more should not love and gratitude move us to thank God for the uncounted blessings we receive at His hand. David's words should be ours, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." We should say to one another as the Psalmist urges in Psalm 107, 1, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever."

Our *praise and thanksgiving* should be expressed in acts as well as in words. It is a common saying that deeds speak louder than words. If our song of praise to God is but a lip service, it is not acceptable, for it is not from the heart. However if our acts are to be an acceptable service of praise to God they must be done, not in a servile way, but willingly and cheerfully. As the Psalmist enjoins, we should serve the Lord with gladness. 4. In these words the Psalmist reminds himself and us of three things: God bestows many benefits on all of us; it is easy to forget this and be ungrateful; we should not allow ourselves to forget God's benefits. 5. David, the author of this psalm, had sinned

grievously, but he comforts himself with the sweet truth that God forgives all sins. No one's sins are so numerous or so great that there is no forgiveness for him. 6. Sin is the disease that afflicts every one, and from it all bodily diseases come. Jesus can cure the disease of sin, and in this sense we can say, He cures all diseases. While Christians use remedies and medical skill for physical ailments, they must not forget to call upon the great Physician in prayer. 7. God protects His people from temporal ills. David experienced this, for he was delivered from a lion, a bear, Goliath, and Saul. God also delivers His people from eternal destruction, that is, eternal death. 8. David not only had reason to thank and praise God for His deliverances from evil, but also for the favors and blessings He had bestowed. 9. Perhaps the Psalmist here refers to the fact that the eagle is a bird of long life, and that by moulting periodically it renews its strength. We should be like the eagle in this that so far from thinking that we have served the Lord long enough, we should daily renew our strength in His service. 10. God extends His goodness to the oppressed by executing righteousness and judgment in their behalf. 11. On Mt. Sinai God revealed to Moses the law, which shows the way in which He would have us walk. 12. The Israelites did not learn directly of God, as Moses did, but by His dealings with them in the wilderness. 13. Here are four properties of God that were shown in His dealings with Israel: Merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and plenteousness in mercy. They are also seen in His dealings with us. 14. Although God does not chide us as often as we deserve, transgressors should remember that His forbearance has a limit. 15. No doubt David, when he wrote these words, was thinking of how richly God had blessed him in spite of his gross sins. Every Christian must make the same confession when he reviews his life. 16. By three striking illustrations David seeks to impress himself and us with the boundlessness of God's goodness: As impossible as it is to measure the distance from earth to the heavens above us so impossible is it to measure God's mercy; as far as the east is from the west so far has He removed our sins; as the pity of a tender parent for his offspring so is God's pity for us. 18. God is moved to be *patient* and *forbearing* in His dealings with us because He knows how frail we are. God would teach us our insignificance by calling us dust. 18. The brevity of human life is pictured by the grass which soon withers; the uncertainty of life is represented by the flower which blooms today, but, touched by some blasting wind, withers tomorrow. 19. In order to show up God's goodness to better advantage the Psalmist has referred to man's frailty and insignificance as a background, then draws a picture of the boundless mercy of God. 20. Here is added a finishing touch to God's mercy, viz., that mercy is over all. 21. Having gazed at the extraordinary mercy of God the Psalmist desires to hold an extraordinary service of praise, and calls on the angels to take part. Their praise will be a great help to this service because they are strong, willing, prompt, and of great number. 22. Though the inferior creatures cannot actually praise God, they do so in a certain sense by fulfilling the purpose for

which they were created. The Psalmist wants all the great universe to take part in this grand concert. 23. David closes the psalm as he began it, as though he would say, *Now, my soul, after looking at this picture, praise the Lord.*

QUESTIONS.

1. What does the word *bless* signify? 2. What purpose has the Psalmist in view? 3. Why is it necessary for Christians to spur themselves to such service? 4. What kind of praise will not satisfy the Christian? 5. In what spirit should we praise God? 6. What makes our debt of gratitude to God all the greater? 7. In view of this what is my duty? 8. What should move us to thanksgiving? 9. What words of David should we make our own? 10. With what words of the Psalmist should we urge one another? 11. With what else besides words should we give expression to our thankfulness? 12. What can we say of praise that comes merely from the lips? 13. What should be the character of our acts in order that they may redound to God's praise? 14. How should Christians serve the Lord? 15. What three reminders does the Psalmist give us? 16. What was David's comfort in view of his sins? 17. What comfort can we find in these words? 18. Of what disease is Jesus especially the Physician? 19. In what sense may we speak of Jesus as healing all diseases? 20. What should we not forget when we have physical ailments? 21. Mention incidents in David's life in which God delivered him from destruction. 22. From what more dreadful destruction does God deliver His people? 23. What kind of blessings has David in mind? 24. In what respect are Christians like the eagle? 25. How does God extend His goodness to the oppressed? 26. How and where did God make known His ways to Moses? 27. How did God reveal Himself to the Israelites? 28. Mention four properties that characterized God's dealings with Israel. 29. What should transgressors bear in mind? 30. What, doubtless, had David in mind when he wrote these words? 31. With what illustrations does David set forth the boundlessness of God's goodness? 32. Why is God so patient with sinners? 33. What would God teach us by referring to man as dust? 34. Why does He compare man's days to grass? 35. In what respect is man like a flower? 36. How does the Psalmist proceed to show God's goodness at a better advantage? 37. What finishing touch does He give to this picture of God's goodness? 38. Having gazed at God's goodness what does the Psalmist wish to do? 39. Whose services does he enlist? 40. Why would the help of the angels be of great avail? 41. In what respect can the inferior creatures join in this service? 42. How does David close the psalm?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 107, 1. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever.

46. REVIEW OF LESSONS 43-45.

His Fatherly Care. — God cared for the captive Israelites, gave them a leader, delivered them from bondage, and led them to Canaan (Lesson 43). God's dealings with them often seemed strange, even wrong, from man's point of view, but they were always right. From God's dealings with these people we may

learn much in regard to Providence. This subject is added to the first article of the creed because it shows how God cares for and governs the creatures he has called into existence. God keeps and governs all creatures to His glory, and to the salvation of the saints. His loving care is not only over the chief creatures, but over all; even over those of least value. He exercises a special providence over man. He rules and governs all things according to His fatherly goodness and wisdom. He even overrules evil for the good of His people, as we see in the life of Josep. The Israelites had some trying experiences, but they cried to God in their troubles, and He delivered them again and again. Christians will always meet with trials. They must not consider their sorrows, sufferings, hardships, disappointments, etc., as evidence that God does not love them, for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. Like Moses and the chosen people we should call on God in the day of trouble, as He enjoins. As God divided the water of the Red Sea, and made a way of escape for Israel, so by His providence He is ever opening ways in which we are to walk. The powerful Egyptians could not harm Israel, for God was on Israel's side. His promises protection should comfort us. "If God be for us who can be against us." As God finally "looked upon the Egyptians", and visited His wrath upon them, so will He punish all those who oppose Him, and vex His people.

His Fatherly Favor. — Lesson 44 tells of the fear and anxiety of the patriarch Jacob as he was about to meet his brother Esau, of the protection God promised him, and of the happy issue out of the threatened troubles. A host of angels appeared to him to strengthen his heart. We are promised the guardianship of the same messengers. Although we cannot see the angels, as God enabled Jacob to do, we are assured that they encamp round about them that fear God. All God's dealings with His people are purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy. Whatever betide us in life we should never lose sight of the fact that God rules, and that He is good and merciful. God's constant goodness to us should make us grateful and humble, so that, like Jacob, we will not wish to grieve God by living at enmity with some one, or by doing anything else that displeases Him. Jacob sought to be at peace with Esau, and we are not to let the sun go down upon our wrath. Although Jacob believed God's promise of protection, he used the means at his command,

and his best judgment that he might escape his brother's wrath. We are to do all we can to bring about the answer of our prayers. Jacob contrasted his poverty and loneliness when he left home with the favorable conditions under which he was returning. We, too, should review the past, contemplate the mercies and favors we have enjoyed, and keep our unworthiness constantly before our eyes. So far from deserving the goodness and mercy of God, we have deserved His wrath and punishment. God's goodness and mercy is fatherly because the treatment that affectionate parents accord their children is somewhat similar to it.

A Song of Praise. — We have much for which to thank and praise God. (Lesson 45.) We should recall the deliverances from sickness, trouble, misfortune, etc., that we have experienced, the patience and forbearance with which our heavenly Father has dealt with us, and the innumerable blessings of body and soul we have enjoyed. Because of our sinfulness we must urge ourselves to this service. We must not be satisfied with praising God with our lips. Like the Psalmist we should call upon our soul to bless the Lord. The words of David teach us to be deeply in earnest when we praise God. We will praise God all the more earnestly when we bear in mind that His favor is shown us out of fatherly goodness and mercy, and in no sense is it merited. Our praise and thanksgiving should be expressed in acts as well as in words. That our acts may redound to God's praise they must not be done in a servile spirit, but willingly and cheerfully. We are to serve the Lord with gladness. It will aid us to do so if we ever keep our unworthiness in mind. The inferior creatures cannot actually praise God, yet they do so in a certain sense by fulfilling the purpose for which they were created. This thought should spur us to more frequent and more hearty services of praise and thanksgiving.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 43. 1. Of what does this lesson treat? 2. How must God's dealings with the Israelites often have seemed to them? 3. On what subject does the history of this people throw light? 4. Why is this subject added to the first article? 5. With what end in view does God rule His people? 6. To what portion of creation does God's care extend? 7. Over which of His creatures does He exercise a special providence? 8. How does He manifest His power and love in our behalf in regard to the ills that come? 9. In what respect did Moses and His people set us a good example? 10. What would be a wrong view of the trials that beset us in life? 11. Of what is God's chastening an evidence? 12. Of what does God's opening a way for Israel to escape remind us? 13. Of what promise does the deliverance He wrought for Israel remind us? 14. What can they expect who oppose God, and vex His people?

LESSON 44. 1. To what incident in Jacob's life does this lesson direct us? 2. What filled Jacob with anxious fear? 3. What transpired to strengthen his heart? 4. Of what should this remind us? 5. What evidence of the presence of the angels are we denied? 6. What, however, should assure us that they are with us? 7. What characterizes God's dealings with us? 8. How should this affect us? 9. If we are truly grateful for what will we strive? 10. What may we learn from Jacob's precautions? 11. What did Jacob recall that aided in making him humble and grateful? 12. In what respect should we follow Jacob's example? 13. Why is God's goodness and mercy termed fatherly?

LESSON 45. 1. What should move us to services of thanksgiving and praise? 2. What kind of services should not satisfy us? 3. What words of the Psalmist are pertinent? 4. What spirit should characterize our services of praise? 5. What in regard to God's favors should move us to earnestness? 6. How must acceptable praise be expressed? 7. In order that our acts should give praise to God how should they be done? 8. In what spirit does God want us to serve Him? 9. What will aid us in making our praise more pleasing to God? 10. What condition in nature should prompt us to praise God? .

47. THE TRANSFIGURATION.

MATTHEW 17, 1-8.

JESUS CHRIST IS TRUE GOD.

And in Jesus Christ, HIS ONLY SON, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe that Jesus Christ, TRUE GOD, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.

The Circumstances under which the Transfiguration Took Place.—And after six days¹ Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John² his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,³ and was transfigured⁴ before them: and His face did shine as the sun,⁵ and His raiment as white as the light.⁶

Two Celestial Visitors.—And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias,⁷ talking with Him.⁸

Peter's Proposal.—Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus,⁹ Lord, it is good for us to be here:¹⁰ if Thou wilt, let

us make three tabernacles;¹¹ one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

The Father's Testimony. — While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them;¹² and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;¹³ hear ye Him.¹⁴

The Disciples Filled with Fear. — And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face and were sore afraid.¹⁵

The Assuring Words of the Master. — And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise and be not afraid.¹⁶

Jesus Only. — And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.¹⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. It was six days after Jesus had a solemn conference with His disciples, in which He told them of His approaching sufferings and death. 2. These three disciples were especially favored, as they were the only witnesses of the raising of Jairus' daughter, of the agony in Gethsemane, and of the transfiguration. They beheld Jesus' glory in the last named incident to prepare them to see His deep humiliation that followed but a short time later. 3. Early tradition pointed to Mt. Tabor, located about six miles east of Nazareth, as the scene of this incident, but it is not considered trustworthy. From the narrative it would seem that the incident transpired near Cæsarea, Phillippi, probably on some spur of Mt. Hermon. 4. Jesus was engaged in prayer when He was transfigured, literally "changed in form." His inward divine glory which mortals could not ordinarily see, manifested itself to the disciples. 5. From this expression we learn something of the glory of heaven—it is brightness so intense that with unchanged eyes mortals could not gaze upon it. We are reminded of the shining of Moses' face after he had communed with God on Mt. Sinai. 6. The glory of His person shone through His garments. This reminds us of the Psalmist's words, "Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment." Psalm 104, 2. 7. Moses represents the Law, for through him the law was given. Elias, or Elijah, represents the Prophets. Moses and the prophets wrote of Christ, and now Moses and a representative of the prophets bear witness for Christ by their presence. These men were two of the most remarkable of men as to their character, the important work they did in their day, the special gifts with which they were endowed, and the manner in which they left this world. In the appearance of these men we have most reliable and comforting evidence that the souls of departed believers have not perished, neither are they asleep, but are safe and happy in God's keeping. 8. They were not talking with the disciples but with Jesus. St. Luke tells us that the subject of their conversation was the death of Jesus which was soon to be accomplished at Jerusalem. 9.

After the disciples gazed upon the scene of dazzling brightness that unfolded to their wondering eyes, and just as the two visitors were about to leave, the impulsive Peter could no longer keep quiet. 10. It is comforting for us to see that instead of being overwhelmed with fear the disciples were delighted at beholding the glory of Christ. The Master was giving them more evidence of His divinity. In this manifestation they could see what they were soon to hear, *This is My beloved Son*. Henceforth they must firmly believe that *Jesus is true God*. 11. St. Peter desired to accord a hearty welcome to the distinguished visitors, and possibly detain them. The tabernacles he had in mind probably were sheltering places made of boughs of trees and shrubs. While Peter was confused, and wist not what to say, he was careful to submit his proposition to the Lord's will, saying, "If Thou wilt." 12. The disciples were deeply impressed by the incident. St. Peter refers to it in the first chapter of his second epistle, declaring that he was permitted at that time to be an eyewitness of Jesus' majesty, and John refers to it in his gospel, and begins his first epistle by saying that he was writing of that which he had seen and heard, evidently having this incident in mind. 13. It was God that was speaking with human voice. The words spoken are the same that were heard at Jesus' baptism. God knew that many would deny the divinity of Jesus, and so in this impressive way declares it twice. We confess this truth in the creed when we say, "I believe in Jesus Christ, *His only Son, our Lord*." In these words we declare our belief that *Jesus is true God*, begotten of the Father from eternity. We believe this because Jesus is here declared to be the Son of God and because elsewhere in the Scriptures so many things are said of Him that can be said only of God. In Holy Scriptures the names which pertain to God only are expressly ascribed to Christ. Thomas called Him "My Lord and My God." John 20, 28. Jesus did not reprove him for so doing, but on another occasion declared, "I and my Father are one." John 20, 30.

This truth is declared again and again in the Scriptures. St. Paul says, "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." Romans 9, 5. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Timothy 3, 16.

That Jesus is true God is taught wherever the attributes of God are ascribed to Christ. God is eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, holy, righteous, merciful and truthful. The prophet refers to Jesus as eternal; "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." We also read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." John 1, 1-2. Paul says, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." Hebrews 13, 8.

Our Lord ascribed the divine attributes to Himself. He declared

Himself eternal when He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." John 8, 58. He declared Himself omnipresent when He said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18, 20. Also when He promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He declared His omnipotence when he said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28, 18. We learn that He is omniscient from John 2, 25, "He knew what was in man," or from Peter's confession, "Lord, Thou knowest all things." Our Lord's divinity is declared in the Holy Scriptures wherever divine works are ascribed to Him. The work of creation is such, but we read, John 1, 3, "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." St. Paul writes, "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

Jesus performed divine works when He dwelt here in the flesh, and thereby proved His divinity. The raising of Jairus' daughter, and of Lazarus and of the son of the widow of Nain; the healing of the ten lepers; the restoring of sight to blind Bartimaeus are examples.

Our Lord's divinity is declared in the Holy Scriptures wherever the power to forgive sins is attributed to Him. God only can forgive sins, yet "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins," Matthew 9, 6.

Our Lord's divinity is taught in the Holy Scriptures wherever divine honor is ascribed to Him. In reference to this Jesus said, "All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent Him." John 5, 23.

Many do not honor Jesus now; but the day is coming when all must do so. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." Philippians 2, 10. Yes, even the angels are to worship Jesus. "When He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, He saith: And let all the angels of God worship Him." Hebrews 1, 6. All who accept the Bible as God's Word must confess that Jesus is true God. 14. By these words God would say, the world has been hearing Moses and the prophets, now let it hear Jesus, Him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote. 15. It was sin that filled the disciples with fear at the sound of God's voice. In mercy God ordinarily speaks to us through men, or through providential acts. 16. Jesus manifested His compassion by hastening to relieve the disciples of their fear. While God wants all to stand in awe of Him, He would have no one terrified in His presence. 17. When the disciples looked up, Moses and Elias had disappeared, but Jesus was at their side. Moses and the prophets were great and good, but they were men. *Jesus is God*, the same yesterday, today and forever. He will never forsake us.

QUESTIONS.

1. What conference had Jesus held with the disciples six days prior to this incident? 2. In what respect had Peter, James and John been favored? 3. Where, is it thought, did Jesus' transfiguration take place? 4. What does the word transfigured signify? 5. What may we learn from this incident concerning heaven? 6. What incident in Moses' life teaches the same? 7. Of what words of the Psalmist are we reminded by the shining of Jesus' garments? 8. Of what were Moses and Elias respectively representatives? 9. For what purpose did these ancient worthies manifest themselves to the disciples? 10. In what respects had these men been remarkable? 11. Of what blessed truth is the appearance of these departed ones an evidence? 12. Of what were they conversing with Jesus? 13. To what was Peter moved by the vision? 14. How were the disciples affected on seeing Jesus' glory? 15. What did Peter propose? 16. What motives prompted him? 17. What is especially commendable in his proposition? 18. How did Peter and John, in after years, show that this scene deeply impressed them? 19. What did the disciples hear? 20. What can you say of the words that they heard at this time? 21. Why did God speak these words on two occasions? 22. In what words do we confess our belief in Jesus' divinity? 23. Why do you believe that Jesus Christ is true God? 24. What is one proof of our Lord's divinity? 25. Mention an incident in which Jesus was called God. 26. Give passages from St. Paul's epistles pertinent to this subject. 27. Mention some of God's attributes. 28. What proof of our Lord's divinity do we see in the use of these attributes in the Scriptures? 29. Give passages which refer to Jesus as eternal. 30. In what words did Jesus declare Himself eternal? 31. In what words did He declare Himself omnipresent? Omnipotent? Omniscient? 32. Mention another proof of our Lord's divinity found in the Scriptures. 33. Mention a passage in which the work of creation is credited to Christ. 34. Mention some evidences that Jesus gave of His divinity when He was here in the flesh. 35. Give a passage which ascribes the power to forgive sins to Christ. 36. In what words did Jesus claim divine honor for Himself? 37. Repeat a passage which declares that all must some day give divine honor to Jesus. 38. What does St. Paul say in regard to the angels worshipping Jesus? 39. What must all who believe the Bible to be true confess in regard to Jesus? 40. What words were heard from the cloud, and what do they signify? 41. How does God ordinarily make His will known to man? 42. Why not directly? 43. How did Jesus manifest His compassion for the disciples? 44. While men of God pass away what is true of Jesus?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 5, 23. All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent Him.

48. JESUS CHRIST IS TRUE MAN.

1 TIMOTHY 2, 5, 6; MATTHEW 26, 38; LUKE 24, 39; LUKE 2, 52; MATTHEW 26, 37; LUKE 19, 41; JOHN 19, 28-30; MATTHEW 11, 19.

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also TRUE MAN, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.

Jesus is Called Man.— For there is one God,¹ and one Mediator² between God and men, the man³ Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all,⁴ to be testified in due time.⁵

Jesus Has the Essential Parts of a Man— Soul and Body.— My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.⁶

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have.⁷

Human Attributes and Acts Were Ascribed to Jesus.—

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.⁸

And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.⁹

And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it.¹⁰

Now Jacob's well was there, Jesus being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well; and it was about the sixth hour.¹¹

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.¹²

The Son of Man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. In St. Paul's day many believed in idols and gods of all kinds, and the apostle had good reasons for declaring the truth on this subject. 2. A mediator is a peacemaker. Because of sin there is enmity between God and man, and Jesus Christ came down from heaven to effect peace. A mediator is necessary only when persons are at enmity. When the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf God was angry with them, and Moses was the mediator who interceded and prayed for the people. What Moses did for the chosen people Jesus did for all mankind. Moses was a type of Christ. 3. Paul refers to Jesus as a *man* and thereby gives another evidence that He is the Mediator sent of God. Jesus was declared to be a man at the time of His crucifixion, for we read, "Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man." Luke 23, 47. God's people expected the Savior to come as a man, for God had told them so. The first promise, recorded in Genesis 3, 15, declared that the Savior would be the *Seed of the woman*. That promise was repeated by the prophet; "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah 7, 14. The promise given to Abraham was, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Genesis

22, 18. The promise concerning the Savior as given to David was, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy Seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish His kingdom." Since Jesus was to be the Seed of the woman, a descendant of Abraham and David, *He must be a man*. 4. This means that He took man's place and did all that divine justice demanded. 5. What Jesus must do and suffer as man's Redeemer was more plainly revealed after He came—in due time. 6. Jesus spoke these words in the garden of Gethsemane. The name Gethsemane means *olive-mill*—so called because olives were there pressed. It was on the evening before His crucifixion. He had assumed the sins of all the world, and they were weighing upon His righteous soul. These words teach us that Jesus had a human soul. While hanging upon the cross a few hours later He uttered the same truth, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit, and having said this, He gave up the ghost." Luke 23, 46. These words indicate the intensity of our Lord's soul-sufferings. 7. This transpired on the first Easter. There is record of five appearances of Jesus on that day; to Mary Magdalene, to the women who had visited the sepulchre, to Peter, to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and to the group to whom He uttered these words. Jesus bade the disciples to behold His hands and feet, and handle Him, thus showing that He had a human body. Having a human body *Jesus is true man*. Here He speaks of a spirit. We know but little of spirits. God tells us but little of what spirits are, since we could not understand Him if He did, but here Jesus tells us what they are not—they are not beings who have flesh and bones. 8. We believe that Jesus is true man not only because He is called man, and has the essential parts of a man, but also because the attributes and acts of a man are ascribed to Him in the Scriptures. After returning with His parents from Jerusalem to Nazareth, when He was twelve years old, He "increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." Luke 2, 52. We read in Luke 2, 40, "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." From these words we learn that the Child Jesus grew in size and in knowledge, which is proof that He was human. That He increased in favor with God and man means that as He grew older He was still pleasing to God, and His acquaintances found more and more in Him to admire. We, too, should strive so to live that God's blessing will ever rest upon us, and that our neighbors and friends will find more and more reasons for esteeming us highly. 9. The two sons of Zebedee were James and John. All the disciples except Judas had accompanied Jesus to Gethsemane on that solemn occasion—the evening of His betrayal—but only three, Peter, James and John, were taken to this place of retirement. The sorrow and suffering He endured at that time were evidences of His humanity. His sorrow is referred to as very heavy, indicating the intensity of His sufferings. A contemplation of our Lord's indescribable passion should reveal to us that sin is most displeasing to God. 10. The city of Jerusalem is meant. He was probably approaching it from the Mount of

Olives, and had a full view of it. He wept not because of His approaching sufferings which would be endured there, but at the thought of the terrible destruction that the people of that city were preparing for themselves by rejecting Him. His weeping reveals His compassionate heart, and proves that He was human. 11. Jesus was passing through Samaria on His way from Jerusalem to Galilee, and had reached Sychar, probably the same as Shechem. He stopped to rest at Jacob's well near-by. and did some splendid missionary work while resting and conversing with a Samaritan woman. This was called Jacob's well because that patriarch had digged and used it. Travelers say that it is yet about seventy-five feet deep. That Jesus was in need of rest proves that He was human. As we think of our Lord wearied in the service of man we should ask ourselves how often we have tired limbs and aching muscles in the service of Jesus. 12. It was while hanging upon the cross in utmost agony that Jesus uttered the words, I thirst. His sufferings were about ended. All that had been foretold concerning His sufferings, and recorded in the Scriptures, was fulfilled. It was in fulfillment of the prophecy, "My tongue cleaveth to my jaws," Psalm 22, 15, that Jesus suffered thirst. This was also proof that He was human. 13. Jesus came unto His own—the chosen people, and they received Him not. They found fault with Him because He came eating and drinking, but by so doing Jesus was giving proof of His humanity. They shamefully accused the pure and holy One of being a glutton and a wine-bibber, or drunkard. That was an expression of contempt in use among the Jews, but they showed their evil-mindedness by applying it to the Lord. They were determined to find fault. John came neither eating nor drinking and they accused him of having a devil. That Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners was to His honor. It is for our comfort that He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

QUESTIONS.

1. Of what important truth were many people of Paul's day ignorant?
2. What is a mediator? 3. Under what circumstances is a mediator necessary? 4. Who was the mediator of the Old Testament dispensation? 5. Of whom was Moses a type? 6. What name does St. Paul ascribe to Christ?
7. Why do you believe that Jesus Christ is true man? 8. Give a reason for believing this. 9. Give another passage in which Jesus is called man.
10. What did the chosen people believe in regard to the promised Savior?
11. Give passages from the Old Testament that declare this truth. 12. Give three proofs from the Old Testament that Jesus is true man. 13. What is understood by the word ransom as applied to our Savior? 14. What was more plainly revealed after Christ came? 15. What does the word Gethsemane signify? 16. Why was it so called? 17. Why was Jesus sad and oppressed at that time? 18. What is taught us by Jesus' reference to His soul? 19. What words spoken on the cross set forth the same truth? 20. What do these words indicate? 21. What appearances of Jesus took place on the day of His resurrection? 22. With what words did Jesus refer to His body? 23. What is evident from these words? 24. What do we understand by a spirit? 25. What is a further reason for believing that Jesus is true man? 26. What was said of Him when a child that proves Him to be human? 27. What is understood by the expression, Increased in favor

with God and man? 28. What should be our desire? 29. Who were the sons of Zebedee? 30. What especial privilege was accorded Peter, James and John on the evening of our Lord's betrayal? 31. By what words is the intensity of Jesus' soul-sufferings indicated? 32. What should a contemplation of our Lord's sufferings reveal to us? 33. Why did Jesus weep as He gazed at Jerusalem? 34. What does His weeping reveal? 35. Of what does it give evidence? 36. What can you say of Jacob's well? 37. What missionary work did Jesus engage in there? 38. What evidence of His humanity did He give at that place? 39. What question should we ask as we think of our Lord being weary in the service of man? 40. What words of Jesus on the cross manifested His humanity? 41. In what words did the Psalmist foretell that this would be a part of Jesus' sufferings? 42. Why did the Jews refer to Jesus as a glutton and wine-bibber? 43. What is indicated by the fact that He ate, and drank? 43. How should the fact that Jesus was a friend of sinners affect us?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ISAIAH 7, 14. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

49. JESUS PREACHES IN NAZARETH.

LUKE 4, 16-30.

JESUS CHRIST IS OUR PROPHET.

Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Jesus Preaching in His Native Town. — And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up,¹ and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue² on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read.³

His Text. — And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written,⁴ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,⁵ because He hath annointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor;⁶ He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.⁷ To

preach the acceptable year of the Lord.⁸ And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down.

An Attentive Congregation. — And the eyes of them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.⁹ And He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.¹⁰ And all bore Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?¹¹

The Preacher Predicts that His Hearers will Find Fault with Him. — And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto Me this proverb, Physician, heal Thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Thy country.¹² And He said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.¹³ But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, save Naaman the Syrian.¹⁴

The Effect of His Preaching. — And all in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath.¹⁵ And rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong.¹⁶

Jesus Escapes from His Persecutors. — But He, passing through the midst of them, went His way.¹⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. He came to Nazareth from Capernaum, where He had been preaching and performing miracles. 2. The synagogues were public meeting places for religious purposes, found in every town where there were ten men who were heads of families. In some places, such as larger cities, there were a number of synagogues. A Jewish legend represented that there were 460, another 480, in Jerusalem. There was but one temple among the Jews, that at Jerusalem, where sacrifices were offered. The synagogue was to the Jews much the same that our churches are to us. 3. Jesus stood up to read. He had been only the carpenter's son in His home town. The people had heard that in Capernaum and elsewhere He had shown himself a learned Rabbi. Of course all were anxious to hear Him. He stood up and thus sets us an ex-

ample of being reverent when reading or hearing God's Word. He had been brought up in that town and from childhood faithfully and regularly went to the synagogue on the Sabbath. It was His custom. A question in place for each of us is, How does my life correspond with that of Jesus in this respect? The services in the synagogue consisted in responsive service, reading two Scripture lessons, one from the Law and one from the Prophets, and the comment or sermon by the reader, or some other person appointed by the ruler of the synagogue. Jesus read the Scriptures in the synagogue. He was a prophet. He came to this world to teach us. His purpose in general was to reconcile us with God and save us from our sins. With reference to His work the Scripture ascribes three official names to Jesus, namely, Prophet, High Priest and King. *Jesus is our Prophet.* Moses was the greatest prophet of the Old Testament dispensation, but he taught the people to look forward to a *much greater Prophet, the Savior.* He said, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto us; unto Him ye shall hearken." That Moses referred to Jesus we are assured in Acts 3, 22. "Moses truly said unto the fathers, 'A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you.'" We learn this also from John 1, 45, where Philip speaks of Jesus as the One of whom Moses wrote.

A Prophet is a teacher. The prophets of the Old Testament times were to the people of that day what ministers of the Gospel are in our time. Since Christ had not yet come the Old Testament teachers were gifted with the power to foretell that which was to come. 4. The book of Isaiah was handed to Him. It was in the form of a roll, or scrolls. He opened—unrolled, the book and found the text He wished, perhaps the lesson for that day. The text is recorded in chapter 61, 1-2. After reading the text He said, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. 5. The prophet declared that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the Messiah. This was fulfilled in Jesus, for the Spirit rested upon Him without measure, John 3, 34. 6. Jesus was called Christ, the One anointed or commissioned. He was commissioned to preach the Gospel (good tidings) to the poor—the spiritually poor. The spiritually poor are those who through the Law have learned to know their sins. 7. In these words the prophet describes sinners for whose sake Jesus was promised. They are poor, having nothing for the payment of their debt to God. They are heartbroken, for sin and the Law have robbed them of all comfort. They are captives held in bondage by Satan. They are blind, unable to see God or themselves or their sins aright. 8. The prophet alludes to the year of jubilee—the fiftieth year. On that year servants were set free, debts were cancelled, and those who had given up their property received it back. All that the jubilee year was in regard to temporal matters, the Lord Jesus is to sinners in regard to spiritual matters. 9. It was quite natural that the people of Nazareth would be deeply interested in the much talked of Teacher who had grown up in their midst, and listen attentively to all that He said. 10. In these

words Jesus tells us plainly that it is He to whom the prophet alludes. It was a golden opportunity that was afforded the people of Nazareth when Jesus stood in their midst and proclaimed himself the promised Messiah. How did they use it? A golden opportunity comes to us every time the Gospel is preached in our vicinity. How do we use such opportunities? 11. The sermon that followed is not given, but from what is recorded here, what Jesus said must have gone to the hearts of His hearers. They "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." Jesus was the greatest of all teachers. He is called our Prophet because He reveals to us the will of His heavenly Father and teaches us the way unto salvation. It was foretold already in Moses' day that Jesus would do this. We read in Deuteronomy 18, 18-19: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will requite it of him." God sent Jesus into this world to teach us what we need to know concerning Him unto the saving of our souls. Of this we read in Luke 10, 22: "All things are delivered to Me of My Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and He to whom the Son will reveal Him." God has made it clear to us in many ways that Jesus is the Teacher or Prophet promised of old. He even declared this by a human voice as we read in Matthew 17, 5: "While He yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."

Jesus fulfilled His prophetic office when He lived visibly upon earth. He spent three years in teaching and preaching. "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. He arranged that this work should go on until the end of time. He gave us the Bible, He also appointed men to preach in His name—the ministers of the Gospel. He gave command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark 16, 15. The apostles were careful to obey this command. "They went forth, and preached everywhere." The office of the ministry has been continued ever since, and will continue unto the end. Through this office Jesus is teaching the world, for He says: "He that heareth you heareth Me." Luke 10, 16. 12. Jesus saw that His hearers were looking for miracles. In their hearts they were saying: Physician, heal thyself, that is, If Thou art a physician then heal the sick of thine own neighborhood. They and persons like them will say when He will be seemingly helpless in the hands of those who will crucify Him, Physician, heal thyself. 13. In these words Jesus tells the reason why the people of Nazareth were not impressed by His preaching as were they of Capernaum. Thinking of Him as the carpenter's son they could not accept the truth at His hands. Because the people of Nazareth were thus prejudiced against Him He declined to work miracles in their midst.

14. Jesus gave examples of two great prophets of the Old Testament times who pursued the same course in the matter of working miracles as He. Elijah chastised the idolatrous people of his time by calling upon God to withhold rain, and a terrible and protracted famine ensued. There were many widows and other needy people in Israel in those days, but it was a widow of Sarepta, a city of Sidon, to whose wants the prophet miraculously administered. There were many lepers in Israel in the days of Elisha, but it was Naaman the Syrian whom that prophet cleansed. 15. What filled the people with wrath was that Jesus the carpenter's son should compare Himself with Elijah and Elisha, and especially that He referred to instances in which God showed favor to Gentiles. 16. Here, in His native town, by the people who knew Him from childhood, the prophecy was fulfilled: He came unto His own and His own received Him not. They rose up in tumult, thrust Him out of their synagogue, and hurried Him to the brow of a hill with murderous intent, as though He were a dangerous character who did not deserve to live. 17. His time had not come; He therefore escaped from them unharmed, as He escaped at different other times after that from those who meant to do Him harm.

QUESTIONS.

1. Whence did Jesus come to Nazareth? 2. What can you say of the synagogue? 3. Why were these people anxious to hear Jesus? 4. What example did Jesus set by His attitude in reading? 5. What example by His attendance upon the services of the synagogue? 6. In what did the services of the synagogue? 7. What was a part of Jesus' mission to this world? 8. What is the office of Christ? 9. What was Jesus' work in general? 10. What official names are given to Him? 11. Who was the greatest prophet of the Old Testament? 12. To whom did Moses direct the people? 13. By what words did he do so? 14. Prove from the New Testament that Moses referred to Jesus. 15. What office of our time corresponds to that of the prophets? 16. Why was it necessary for the teachers of the Old Testament to foresee the future? 17. What book was handed to Jesus? 18. In what form were the Scriptures in those days? 19. How did Jesus begin? 20. What had the prophets foretold concerning Christ? 21. How were the several utterances of the prophet fulfilled in Jesus? 22. Who are meant by the poor? 23. Whom is the prophet describing? 24. In what respect is a sinner poor? Heartbroken? A captive? Blind? 25. With what are the conditions brought about through Christ compared? 26. What was the year of jubilee? 27. What was to be expected of the people of Nazareth in regard to Jesus? 28. What golden opportunity came to them? 29. When does a golden opportunity of this kind come to us? 30. In what words are we told how they received Jesus' sermon? 31. In what words did Moses foretell Jesus' prophetic office? 32. In what words did Jesus claim to be our Teacher sent of God? 33. In what way did God declare Jesus to be our Prophet? 34. How did Jesus fulfill this office when here in the flesh? 35. In what way does He continue to teach man? 36. What command did He give in reference to this work? 37. How did the apostles obey this command? 38. What does Jesus say for the comfort of those who teach? 39. What is to be said of those who heard Jesus at this time? 40. Why were they not impressed as they were at Capernaum? 41. Why did Jesus do no miracles at Nazareth? 42. What prophets pursued the same course? 43. Give the circumstances as regards Elijah? Elisha? 44. What incensed the people of Nazareth? 45. What words concerning

Jesus were there fulfilled? 46. To what extremity did their anger lead them? 47. Why were they powerless to put Him to death?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN I, 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.

50. JESUS CHRIST PAYS TRIBUTE.

MATTHEW 17, 24-27.

JESUS CHRIST, OUR HIGH PRIEST, FULFILLED THE LAW.

Who has REDEEMED me, a lost and condemned creature, PURCHASED and WON me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent SUFFERING and DEATH, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Christ asked for Tribute.— And when they were come to Capernaum,¹ they that received tribute money² came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute?³ He saith, Yes.⁴

The Claim Disputed.— And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him,⁵ saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?⁶ Peter saith unto Him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto Him, Then are the children free.⁷

The Tribute Paid.— Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them,⁸ go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for Me and thee.⁹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. During His public ministry Christ usually resided at Capernaum, probably at the home of Peter. 2. The tribute money asked was not the tax imposed by the Roman government, which was exacted by the publicans, but the money required of every male Jew over twenty years of age toward the maintenance of the temple and its service. 3. The

collectors asked Peter, not Christ, because they were acquainted with Peter, probably also because Christ lodged at Peter's house, but especially because they stood in awe of the great Teacher. 4. Peter answered promptly and affirmatively, for he was sure that if the authorities had any just claim upon Jesus, He would pay it. Jesus complied with the requirements of the law in all particulars. He came to be our *High Priest*, and as such to *fulfill the law for us*, and give himself as a sacrifice for our sins, and then intercede for us before His Father. There were high priests under the Old Testament dispensation. They represented the people of Israel before God. Aaron was the first high priest, but he and his successors were only types of the true High Priest, Christ. That Jesus was the true High Priest St. Paul tells us, Hebrews 7, 26-27, "Such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the people's, for this He did once, when He offered up himself." St. Paul also reminds us in the above words how infinitely superior our true High Priest is to all the Old Testament priests, namely, He is holy and therefore does not need to offer a sacrifice for himself; He is divine, and therefore His one sacrifice answers for all sinners of all time. 5. This means that Jesus spake before Peter had time to lay the matter before Him, for He knew what was on the disciple's mind. 6. He appeals to the way earthly rulers impose tax. They do not expect their own children to pay tax, but exact this of their subjects, who may be called strangers—persons outside of the family. 7. As the children of earthly rulers are free from taxation, so Christ, the Son of God and Heir of all things, should be free from contributing to the support of the temple. The temple is His Father's house. The Son should not be taxed to uphold its service. 8. Jesus meant, Lest they should misunderstand the matter, and be led to do wrong because of My example, it shall be paid. We can not afford to do wrong, or to neglect our duty, in order to keep from offending people, but we can afford to yield our rights rather than do something which will cause some one to fall. 9. Here we see the poverty of Jesus, and can be sure that, while poverty is not a virtue, it is not a disgrace to be poor in this world's goods. The piece of money Peter found in the fish's mouth was a *stater*, equal to about 64 cents, and enough to pay the tribute money for both. Peter went angling at Jesus' command and in His service, and was rewarded by finding money enough to pay what was asked of his Master, and his own tribute. While we should serve Jesus, as Peter did, out of love, it is comforting to know that He graciously rewards those who serve Him. Jesus was free from taxation, however He paid what was asked, He paid for Peter also. Jesus is above the law, for He gave it, but He put himself under it as our substitute. He is our High Priest. The first respect in which He took our place was in this that *He fulfilled the law for us*. God gave the law. He has a right to do so because He is the Lord. The law is holy because God who gave it is holy. God requires of us obedience to His law. He says, "Be ye

therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5, 48. Since God created man perfect He has a right to require of him perfect obedience to His law. However we all break God's law, for we are by nature wicked and born sinners. God can have no pleasure in us so long as we stand before Him as transgressors of His holy law. Since God loves us, and has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, He sent Jesus to be our substitute, and fulfill the law in our stead. He fulfilled it perfectly. He led a sinless life. He could challenge His bitter enemies, Which of you convinceth Me of sin? The all-seeing eye of God could find no fault in Him. "We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4, 15. He took our place under the law and rendered perfect satisfaction. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4, 4-5. Jesus himself says this, "Think not that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Through the sin of our first parents all have become sinners, now through the obedience of Jesus all are made righteous. St. Paul writes to the Romans, chapter 5, verse 19, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The law cannot accuse us now, and say, You are sinners; God does not love you. Its demands have been met by One who took our place, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Romans 10, 4.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where did Jesus usually reside during His three years of public ministry?
2. What was the tribute that was asked of Him?
3. Why did the collector address Peter?
4. How did Peter reply?
5. Of what office of Christ does this incident remind us?
6. Why is Jesus called our High Priest?
7. What was the duty of the Old Testament high priests?
8. Who was the first Old Testament high priest?
9. What was the relation of the Old Testament priests to Jesus?
10. In what words did Paul speak of Jesus as our High Priest?
11. In what respect was Jesus superior to the Old Testament high priests?
12. What service did Christ first render for us as our High Priest?
13. What is meant by the expression, Jesus prevented him?
14. To what did Jesus appeal?
15. What would He in this way show?
16. Why did He pay the tax?
17. What will we not do even if it offends others?
18. What should we do rather than cause some one to fall?
19. What condition is here made apparent?
20. What is to be said of poverty?
21. What can you say of the piece of money?
22. What motive should prompt us to serve Jesus?
23. What comforting assurance is there for those who serve?
24. Whence comes the law?
25. Why do we speak of it as holy?
26. What does God require of us in regard to the law?
27. In what words does Jesus say this?
28. Why has God a right to demand of us perfect obedience?
29. How does it come that we cannot keep the law?
30. How do we stand in God's sight by nature?
31. What has God provided for sinners?
32. How did our Substitute keep the law?
33. What challenge could He give His enemies?
34. How does St. Paul refer to Jesus' fulfillment of the law?
35. What does Jesus say on this subject?
36. What is man's condition since the fall?
37. Through what are we restored to righteousness?
38. How does St. Paul declare this truth?

39. Why do we not need to fear the law? 40. In what words does St. Paul say this?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 5, 17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill.

51. THE GREAT SACRIFICE.

HEBREWS 10, 1-18; JOHN 1, 29.

JESUS CHRIST, HIGH PRIEST, GAVE HIMSELF AS A SACRIFICE.

Who has REDEEMED me, a lost and condemned creature, PURCHASED and WON me from all sin, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious BLOOD, and with His innocent SUFFERING and DEATH, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Old Testament Dispensation a Shadow of Good Things to Come. — For the law,¹ having a shadow² of good things³ to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect!⁴ For then would they not have ceased to be offered, because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.⁵ But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.⁶ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.⁷ Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared me: In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure.⁸

Jesus Christ God's Promised Sacrifice for Sin. — Then said I, Lo, I come,⁹ in the volume of the book it is written of Me,¹⁰ to do Thy will, O God.¹¹ Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that He may establish the second.¹² By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the

body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, which can never take away sins;¹³ but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God;¹⁴ from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.¹⁵ For by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them; and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.¹⁶ Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.¹⁷

John's Testimony. — The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.¹⁸

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Not the ten commandments, but the Old Testament dispensation. 2. As a shadow shows but the outlines of the object that casts it, so the Old Testament dispensation did not give "the very image," that is, salvation itself; it only pointed to that salvation. 3. The good things to come are the spiritual blessings we enjoy under the New Testament dispensation; not only a fuller knowledge of Christ and the plan of salvation, but salvation itself. 4. The offering of animals as sacrifices did not atone for sin. 5. Had the sacrificing of animals atoned for sin, then it would not have been necessary to continue offering such sacrifices year after year. 6. The Old Testament worshippers offered many sacrifices, but these services, so far from bringing them comfort, reminded them again of their sins. 7. God had said, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die. Death was the penalty man had to pay for his sins. The death of an animal, or of millions of animals, would not satisfy, since the penalty must be offered by man. 8. The sacrifices and offerings of the Old Testament did not satisfy divine justice, but Jesus Christ, having assumed human nature, thus being both God and man, was an acceptable sacrifice unto God. 9. The apostle represents Christ as speaking, and declaring His willingness to undertake the work which the sacrifices of the Old Testament could not do. As our *High Priest* Jesus not only fulfilled the law and intercedes for us before the Father, but *gave Himself as a sacrifice for our sins*. He did this by suffering and dying for us. In Luther's explanation of the second article of the Creed we confess, Christ has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death.

That Christ suffered and died for our sins the Scriptures plainly

teach. The prophet in Isaiah 53, 4, 5, declared this sweet truth long before Jesus came, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him, stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 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." What the prophets foretold of Jesus the apostles declared of Him after all was fulfilled. How plainly John sets forth this truth in the words of our lesson! We read in Philippians 2, 8, "Being found in fashion as a man He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." In Galatians 3, 13, it is said, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" In 1 Peter 2, 24, the apostle writes, "Who His ownself bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 10. The volume of the book referred to as telling of Christ is the Old Testament, although special reference is had to Psalm 40. Beginning with the promise, The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, the Old Testament abounds in prophecies concerning Christ. 11. The Son of God, seeing man's hopeless condition, offered to come to his rescue. Christ was a *willing sacrifice* for our sins. Our Lord's work in behalf of sinners is altogether a work of love. 12. Since the Old Testament priesthood with all its sacrifices and ceremonies could not atone for sin, Christ took it away, and himself became our High Priest. Although there were many priests under the Old Testament dispensation, and they offered many sacrifices, still all their offerings did not blot out one sin. For an instance showing the large number of animals offered under the Old Testament we direct your attention to the service in connection with the dedication of the temple in Solomon's day. There were 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep offered on that occasion. Jesus offered up himself an infinite sacrifice, when He gave himself unto death. It was once for all, atoning not only for the sins of the people of His day, or for those of the ages preceding Him, but for all the human race of all time. Because Jesus was God, the infinite Being, the sacrifice He brought was sufficient for all sins of all time. 14. Jesus ascended on high and was received at the right hand of the Father—God's declaration that the sacrifice He offered was satisfactory. By the right hand of God we understand the infinite power and majesty of God whereby He works, governs and fills all things. 15. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, which signifies that He now exercises dominion over all things with divine power and majesty. His enemies shall be made His footstool. He will rule them, so that they shall no longer oppose Him, nor harm His people. He will also overrule their wickedness to His glory. 16. The apostle refers to the words of the prophet, Jeremiah 31, 31, in which the activity of the Spirit under the New Testament dispensation, and other favorable conditions of that dispensation, are referred to. 17. Since in Jesus Christ all sinners can find remission of their sins, there is no longer any necessity of offering sacrifices. 18. The people of the Old Testament offered lambs in their morning and

evening sacrifices, and when they were in bondage the paschal lamb was slain, its blood sprinkled on the door-posts, and Israel was saved from the destroying angel's visit. The lambs of the Old Testament were shadows of the Sacrifice that God would make in the fulness of time. When John, who was sent to prepare the way for Jesus, beheld Him, he cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He meant that *Jesus is the sacrifice for sin* that God had promised to send—→ the One of whom all other sacrifices had been types, and for whom the devout of all ages were waiting. He differed from the Old Testament lambs in this that He was not a sacrifice brought by men, but one provided by God; and in this that He was not a shadow to remind the world that a better and more perfect sacrifice would some day be offered, but was that better sacrifice itself.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is understood by the word law as here used? 2. In what respect may the Old Testament dispensation be termed a shadow? 3. Of what good things was the Old Testament a shadow? 4. For what were the Old Testament sacrifices not sufficient? 5. Had these sacrifices been sufficient what would not have been necessary? 6. Of what did these sacrifices remind the Old Testament worshippers? 7. What was the penalty threatened for disobedience to God? 8. Who only could pay that penalty? 9. Why was the sacrifice that Jesus offered sufficient to atone for sin? 10. In what words did Jesus express His willingness to become a sacrifice for sin? 11. What does Jesus do for us as our High Priest? 12. How did He offer himself as a sacrifice? 13. In what words does Luther refer to this work of Jesus in his explanation of the second article? 14. In what words did Isaiah foretell this high priestly work of Jesus? 15. In what words is it referred to in our lesson? 16. Repeat the familiar words of St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians on this subject. Those on this subject in his letter to the Galatians. Those in which Peter refers to this work. 17. Where was Jesus' high priestly work foretold? 18. In what words was His atoning work first foretold? 19. What moved Christ to offer himself for man's sins? 20. What fact shows the insufficiency of the Old Testament sacrifices? 21. What offering did Solomon make at the dedication of the temple? 22. In what respects was the sacrifice Jesus offered better than those of the Old Testament? 23. Of what are our Lord's ascension and reception of the Father an assurance? 24. What is understood by the right hand of God? 25. What is meant by sitting at the right hand of God? 26. How are Jesus' enemies made His footstool? 27. What gracious promise did God make through the prophet Jeremiah? 28. In what do we see a fulfillment of that promise? 29. What animal that was frequently sacrificed by Israel is referred to as a type of Christ? 30. At what service were lambs sacrificed? 31. What was the paschal lamb? 32. Under what circumstances did John refer to Jesus as the Lamb of God? 33. What did he mean? 34. In what respects did Jesus differ from the Old Testament sacrifices?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ISAIAH 53, 4, 5. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 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.

52. REVIEW OF LESSONS 47-51.

Beholding His Glory. — We are told of a truly wonderful incident in Lesson 47, viz., our Lord's transfiguration. It was while engaged in prayer, in the presence of Peter, James and John, that Jesus was changed in appearance. His inward glory which mortals could not ordinarily see, manifested itself to the disciples. Moses, one of the two men who appeared and talked with Jesus, represented the Law, while Elijah, the other man who appeared to the astonished disciples, represented the Prophets. Moses and the prophets wrote of Christ, and now the former, and one of the latter, bear witness for Him in the presence of these representatives of the New Testament. The disciples were not overwhelmed with fear, but were delighted at beholding the glory of Christ. A voice out of the cloud that finally overshadowed them declared, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him." These words were heard from the same source at Jesus' baptism. They were spoken by God with human voice. We therefore confess and believe that Jesus Christ is true God. This truth is taught in many passages of the Bible, and especially wherever the attributes of God are ascribed to Jesus. The divine works — miracles — He performed also testify to His divinity:

The Son of Mary. — That Jesus is true man is clearly set forth in the passages to which Lesson 48 directs our attention. In order to be a mediator between God and man it was necessary that Christ be true man. Had He not been a man He could not have represented man in His mediatorial work — could not have fulfilled the law for man nor offered an atonement for his sins. He was born of a woman, and was therefore human. Jesus had soul and body, which are the essential parts of a man. He directed attention to His hands and feet, thus showing that He had a human body. He increased in wisdom and stature and in knowledge, thus also giving evidence of his humanity. The fact that He was at times sorrowful, that He wept, that He grew weary, became thirsty, ate and drank, are all evidences that Jesus is true man.

Our Teacher. — When Jesus preached in the synagogue at Nazareth, of which we read in Lesson 49. He was showing himself a Prophet. The prophets of the Old Testament were

types of Jesus, and foretold Him. He was the greatest of all the prophets, for He was divine as well as human. He spent three years on earth teaching and preaching. He arranged that this work should go on until the end of time. He gave the Bible, and instituted the office of the ministry, and commanded that the Gospel should be preached to all the world. The apostles were careful to obey this command in their day. The office of the ministry has been continued and will be continued unto the end. Through this office Jesus is teaching all the world, for He says, "He that heareth you, heareth Me."

Our Righteousness. — God's law had been broken. The penalty must be paid, and the law obeyed. Lesson 50 reminds us that Jesus became our Substitute. As He paid the tax for Peter, so He complied with the requirements of the law for us and all sinners. Jesus was our High Priest. The high priests of the Old Testament dispensation represented the people of Israel before God, and were types of Jesus, the true High Priest. The Old Testament high priests complied with the requirements of the law daily. Jesus offered a sacrifice once for all. The first respect in which Jesus took our place was in this that He fulfilled the law for us. The law is holy, because God who gave it is holy. God requires perfect obedience to His law. He has a right to do so since He created man holy. Being by nature sinful, man cannot obey the law. This cannot be said of our Substitute. He obeyed the law perfectly. He obeyed it not for himself, for He gave the law; He obeyed it in our stead. His righteousness is offered to all, and every believer has accepted it. So as by the disobedience of our first parents many were made sinners, by the obedience of Christ many are made righteous. He is our High Priest.

Our Sacrifice. — For centuries Jewish altars were crimson with the blood of animal sacrifices. These sacrifices did not comfort the worshippers, but rather held their sins the more plainly to view, as we are told in Lesson 51. They did not atone for sin, but foreshadowed the Lamb of God who, in the fulness of time, would be offered once for all. To this John referred when on seeing and recognizing Jesus, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." As our High Priest Jesus not only fulfilled the law and intercedes for us before the Father, but gave himself as a sacrifice for our sins. He differed from the Old Testament sacrifices in this that

He was not a sacrifice brought by men, but one provided by God. He suffered and died for our sins. The prophets foretold this office of Christ, and the apostles declared it of Him after all had been done. Christ was a willing sacrifice. His suffering and death for sinners were altogether a work of love. There were many animals offered, but Christ by the one sacrifice atoned for all sin. Being a man He was able to be man's substitute; being God, His sacrifice was great enough to atone for all sin. Since Jesus Christ has been offered for the sins of the world there is no longer any need of offering sacrifices for sin.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 47. 1. What wonderful incident is recounted in Lesson 47? 2. What does the word transfiguration mean? 3. Give some particulars of this incident. 4. What men appeared in conversation with Christ? 5. What did they represent? 6. Of whom did they bear witness? 7. How were the disciples affected? 8. What evidence of Christ's divinity was given? 9. At what other time was a similar testimony borne? 10. Whence this voice? 11. What do we therefore believe? 12. Mention some of the proofs of Christ's divinity.

LESSON 48. 1. How many natures had Christ? 2. Why was it necessary that He be human? 3. Why did the fact that He had soul and body prove Him to be a man? 4. In what way did He allay the doubts and fears of the disciples? 5. What condition in His childhood bore witness of His humanity? 6. What evidence of His humanity did He give in the presence of Peter and the sons of Zebedee? 7. What evidence did He once give while gazing at Jerusalem? 8. What conditions in His life proved His humanity?

LESSON 49. 1. Which of His three offices did Jesus fulfill in the synagogue at Nazareth? 2. How was this office typified under the Old Testament dispensation? 3. How did Jesus differ from the Old Testament prophets? 4. How long did Jesus publicly teach? 5. What arrangement has He made for the continuation of this office among men? 6. Who were the first to prosecute this work under the New Testament? 7. What words of Jesus should move us to respect this office highly?

LESSON 50. 1. What is the consequence now that man has broken God's law? 2. Who has taken our place? 3. Of what does the service Jesus rendered Peter remind us? 4. What office is Jesus fulfilling by rendering obedience to the law and offering a sacrifice for sin? 5. What can you say of the Old Testament high priests?—6. In what particular did their sacrifices differ from that offered by Christ? 7. What is the first respect in which Jesus took man's place? 8. What kind of obedience does the law require? 9. Why has God a right to demand this? 10. What can be said of man's efforts to comply with the law? 11. What of the efforts of Jesus? 12. To whom is His righteousness offered? 13. Who possesses it? 14. What can be said of all believers?

LESSON 51. 1. What is to be said of the Jewish sacrifices? 2. What purpose did they serve? 3. In what words does John refer to Jesus as a true sacrifice? 4. Besides fulfilling the law and interceding for us what does Christ our High Priest do? 5. In what respect does the sacrifice Christ offered differ from the sacrifices offered by men? 6. How has the world been kept informed in regard to Christ's high priestly work? 7. What prompted our Lord to this sacrifice? 8. What did His sacrifice avail? 9. Why is the sacrificing of animals no longer needed?

53. THE HIGH-PRIESTLY PRAYER.

JOHN 17, 6-26.

JESUS CHRIST, HIGH PRIEST, INTERCEDES.

Who has REDEEMED me, a lost and condemned creature, PURCHASED and WON me from all sin, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious BLOOD, and with His innocent SUFFERING and DEATH, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Jesus Commends His Disciples to the Father's Care.— I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world¹: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word². Now they have known that all things, whatsoever Thou hast given Me, are of Thee. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me³, I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine⁴. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine⁵; and I am glorified⁶ in them.

Jesus Invokes Various Blessings upon His Disciples.— And, now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept⁷ and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition⁸; that the Scripture might be fulfilled⁹. And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves¹⁰. I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world¹¹, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world¹².

Jesus Prays that His Disciples May be Sanctified.— Sanctify¹³ them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth¹⁴. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world¹⁵. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Jesus Prays for the Church Universal.— Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word¹⁶; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I am in Thee, that they may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them¹⁷; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me¹⁸.

Jesus Prays that All Who Have Been Given to Him May be Glorified.— Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world¹⁹. O righteous Father²⁰, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, that is, those who saw Jesus saw God. He manifested God's name to His disciples—by His life and teachings revealed to them what God is. This lesson is a portion of the most fully recorded prayer of Jesus, offered after He had delivered one of His most fully recorded sermons. It is thought that this prayer was offered on the evening of His betrayal, after the institution of the Lord's Supper. 2. The disciples kept the word which Jesus made known to them—that is, they accepted it and continued to accept it, despite the opposition of the world. A discouraging feature of church work is the failure on the part of many believers to continue in the Word. 3. The disciples were yet weak in the faith and there was much for them to learn, however they had acquired much valuable knowledge. They had learned to know and believe that Jesus was sent of God. 4. Jesus does not mean that no prayers are to be offered for the world. We are to pray for all men. 1 Timothy 2, 1. This intercession for the disciples was but a prelude to the intercession which Christ forever makes at the right hand of the Father. *Jesus as our High Priest* not only fulfills the law and offers himself as a sacrifice for our

sins, but now *intercedes for us before the Father*. The priests of the Old Testament prayed for the people thus foreshadowing our Lord's intercession. As the high priest entered the most holy part of the temple to pray for the people, so Jesus has ascended on high, and now at God's right hand intercedes for His people. To this office of Christ St. Paul refers, Romans 8, 34, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Another pertinent passage is that of Hebrews 7, 25, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us." In reference to this work of Christ in our behalf He is called our *Advocate*. He will continue to be our Advocate, as He promised, John 14, 16, "I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever." The prayer that Jesus was offering for His disciples, that He should be glorified in them, could not be offered for the world, 5. These words teach us that God the Father and God the Son are one in essence. Jesus says, "I and My Father are One." 6. Jesus' disciples had their weaknesses, yet they glorified Jesus by serving Him. Although sinners, we too may glorify Jesus by being faithful to Him in our several stations. 7. Jesus had kept the disciples, but would soon withdraw His visible presence from them; He now commends them to the Father's care. He prays that they may be one, that is, knit together in the bonds of love. Then only would they acceptably serve Him. 8. Judas Iscariot is meant. He is called a son of perdition because as a wicked man he would perish. 9. The treachery of Judas was foretold by the Psalmist, as, for example, in Psalm 41, 9, "Yea, Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread, hath lifted up his heel against Me." The fact that the sin of Judas was foretold had nothing to do in leading him to commit it. The prophecy was not the cause of his fall. 10. Christ begins His intercession for His disciples while visibly with them, for their comfort, and joy. 11. The Lord has given God's Word to His disciples, and entrusted to them the duty of proclaiming it to all the world. They who accept God's Word must renounce the world, for the world hates God's Word. Of course the world hates those who renounce it. 12. Christians are not to be of the world, that is, not like it, and not a part of it. Christians, however, are to be in the world. It is not necessary for a Christian to shut himself away from the world in order to serve God acceptably. We serve God by serving our fellowmen, but we must mingle with men if we would serve them. He who shuts himself away from his fellowmen is not likely to serve them well. 13. Having prayed that they might be kept from evil, in these words Jesus prays that they may be made good—pleasing in the sight of the holy Father. 14. The means through which God sanctifies us is His Word. Christians should ever bear in mind that there is no better way to lead people to hate sin, to love the right, and to do right than that of bringing to them God's Word. 15. Jesus refers to the work for which He had prepared His disciples, that of preaching the Word.

The work of a minister of the Gospel is like our Lord's prophetic office in this that he teaches the Word, and like His high-priestly office in this that he intercedes for his people in prayer to God. 16. Jesus prays first for His disciples. In a certain sense they were His household, and He had a special interest in them. We should follow Jesus' example and pray for those in whom we are interested. The early Christians prayed for one another. When Peter was imprisoned they met to unite their prayers in his behalf. Jesus also prayed for all His disciples of all time. He teaches us how believers are made, namely, through the Word, and He teaches us to pray for believers in general, whether they are especially near to us or not. We should be careful lest we lose faith in the efficacy of prayer, or for any reason neglect to pray. 17. The glory which the apostles received was not the empty praise of the world, for the world despised them, but that of bearing Christ's name, of being His servants, and of aiding in establishing His kingdom on earth. 18. Christians should live in harmony with each other for their own good, that the Spirit's work may not be hindered by strife and contention; they should do so for the good of the Church in general, because the world is influenced very much by the life of professed Christians. 19. In these words Jesus declares that it is His will that all who have been given to Him shall be with Him and behold His glory, that is, be saved. All the joy of heaven is included in being with Christ and beholding His glory. Jesus calls the blessedness of heaven glory. What word could better express it? 20. The language here used indicates intense earnestness, and should inspire us with zeal. Our hearts should be in our prayers.

Believers find much comfort in the message which this lesson brings, that Jesus is our Advocate. God is well pleased with our Advocate, and for His sake will hear our prayers, as Jesus says, John 16, 23, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name He will give it you."

QUESTIONS.

1. What is understood by the expression, "God manifest in the flesh," as applied to Christ? 2. How did Jesus manifest God's name to His disciples? 3. What can you say of this lesson in general? 4. How did the disciples keep Jesus' word? 5. What condition is especially discouraging in church work? 6. What important knowledge had the disciples gained? 7. For whom are we to pray? 8. What is understood by Jesus' words, I pray not for the world? 9. What is the second of the official names ascribed to Christ? 10. Why is He called our High Priest? 11. Besides fulfilling the law and offering Himself as a sacrifice, what does Jesus do for us as our High Priest? 12. In what way was this foreshadowed in the Old Testament dispensation? 13. In what words does St. Paul refer to our Lord's High Priestly office? 14. By what name is Jesus called in respect to this feature of His High Priestly office? 15. For whom could Jesus not offer the prayer that He here offered for the disciples? 16. With what words does Jesus teach that He and the Father are one? 17. How did the disciples glorify Jesus? 18. How may we glorify Him? 19. What moved the Lord at this time to commend the disciples to the Father's care? 20. For what does Jesus entreat the Father in behalf of the disciples? 21. What is to be understood by that petition? 22. Who is referred to as lost? 23. Why is Judas called the son of perdition? 24. In what words was

Judas' sin foretold? 25. What had this prophecy to do in bringing about his fall? 26. What did Jesus at this time begin? 27. What duty had Jesus entrusted to His disciples? 28. What is required of all who accept God's Word? 29. How is the world disposed toward the Christian? 30. What is understood by not being of the world? 31. What is not necessary to acceptable service of God? 32. Having prayed that the disciples should be kept from evil for what does Jesus then plead? 33. Through what means is sanctification brought? 34. For what work had Jesus fitted the disciples? 35. In what respect does the work of the ministry resemble the Lord's prophetic office? 36. In what respect does it resemble His High Priestly office? 37. Why did Jesus have a special interest in the disciples? 38. What may we learn from this? 39. What example of the early Christians teaches us the same lesson? 40. For whom else did Jesus pray? 41. What may we learn from these words of our Lord? 42. What glory fell to the lot of the apostles? 43. What should move Christians to strive to live in peace? 44. How did Jesus express His will concerning those who had been given to Him? 45. With what word does He express the blessedness of heaven? 46. What comfort do believers find in the fact that Jesus is their Advocate?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I John 2, 1:2. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

54. CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

MATTHEW 21, 1-9.

JESUS CHRIST IS KING.

Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and REIGNS to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

Preparatory Arrangements for the Triumphal Entry.— When¹ they drew nigh unto Jerusalem,² and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her:³ loose them, and bring them unto Me. And if any man say aught unto

you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.⁴

The Prophecy Fulfilled by this Entry. — All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet,⁵ saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion,⁶ Behold, thy king⁷ cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

The Lowly King's Equipment for the Entry. — And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set Him thereon.⁸

The Honor Bestowed on the King. — And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.⁹ And the multitudes that went before, and that followed cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David;¹⁰ Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.¹¹ Hosanna in the highest.¹²

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. It was on the Sunday preceding Jesus' crucifixion. This is called Palm Sunday because the people honored Jesus on that day by cutting down branches and strewing them on the road as He went to Jerusalem.
2. The procession began at Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem.
3. After reaching Mount of Olives two disciples were sent for the ass and her colt. We are not told which two they were. The village referred to was probably Bethphage, house of figs. The messengers would find an ass and her colt. They were to bring both, but it was the latter on which Jesus meant to ride. St. Mark tells us He wished an animal "whereon never man sat." This would represent Jesus as a new king with a new kingdom. Very likely both animals were to be brought because they had not yet been separated.
4. The disciples were to loose the animals without asking permission, and if challenged, to say, "The Lord hath need of them." The owner was no doubt a believer, and understood what the messengers meant by "the Lord." Of course it was expected that the animals would be returned. We are taught in God's Word that "the wicked borroweth, and payeth not again."
5. The passage referred to is quoted from Zechariah 9, 9. The first words are taken from the prophecy in Isaiah 62, 10. The writers of the New Testament often remind us that this or that in our Savior's life was a fulfillment of prophecy because God, who inspired them, wants us to believe firmly that Jesus is the Messiah.
6. By "daughter of Zion" are meant the people of Jerusalem.
7. This was the first occasion on which Jesus plainly put forth His claim to royalty. Jesus is not only our Prophet and High Priest, but also *our King*. We read in Psalm 2, 6,

"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. Jesus claimed to be King. He said, "To this end was I born." John 18, 37. As a mediator He has a threefold office, namely, *Prophet, High Priest and King*. He is called our *King* because He rules over all creatures; He protects and governs His Church; and He lives and triumphs forever with His saints in heaven. From these words we see that our Lord has three kingdoms. The subjects over whom He rules in the first kingdom referred to are all creatures. Jesus claimed to be King over all creatures, for He said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28, 18. He exercised His authority at times when He was here on earth. When overtaken by a storm on the sea He commanded the winds and waves to be calm, and the storm ceased. The men who witnessed this manifestation of power said, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" He exercised His authority over the devils, also. When a man with an unclean spirit cried, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of God." Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." Jesus also rules over the lower animals, for the Psalmist says, "Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under His feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field." Psalm 8, 6-8. 8. The Disciples, anxious to serve and honor Jesus, brought the animals, fixed a saddle on the colt out of their garments, and placed Jesus on the animal. Jesus submitted to this because He was making this entry into the capital city as a king. In this hour of triumph He sets us an example of meekness and humility. 9. The people were at this time flocking to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, hence "the very great multitude." Some went before and some followed Jesus, all intent upon honoring Him after the manner of honoring kings in those days. It was only branches of trees and outer garments that were used, but it was the best the people had, and Jesus was pleased. If the motive that prompts us to service is right we will do the best we can. If we cannot do much, yet the service is acceptable, because the motive is right. 10. Hosanna means, *Save, I pray*, and is an expression of welcome and well wishing. The people sang a portion of the Psalm selections that they were accustomed to sing at the Passover festival. Since the Savior was to be a descendant of David the fact that these people called Jesus the Son of David indicated that they believed Him to be the Savior. 11. This great multitude was honoring Jesus as kings were honored. The prophet foresaw that Jesus would be a King, and wrote, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him, and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Daniel 7, 13-14. Since Jesus rules with power over all creatures we speak of this Kingdom as the Kingdom of Power. The second kingdom over which Jesus rules is the Church. This is called the

Kingdom of Grace. The Church is the company of believers or saints. It is called the communion of saints. All Christians are in this kingdom. It is called the Daughter of Zion in our lesson. Jesus refers to this kingdom when He says, "My kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My Kingdom not from hence." John 18, 36. In this kingdom the subjects obey their King, not because they must, but because they want to do so. Realizing that Jesus, out of love, has suffered and died to save them, they take pleasure in doing His will. Jesus loves His people, and His love begets love in their hearts for Him. In the Church Jesus rules by His love and mercy, and therefore this is called the Kingdom of Grace. In this Kingdom the Lord protects His subjects from the devil and wicked men. He also governs His Church. Christians do not look to men for direction as to what they are to believe and do; Jesus in His Word gives them a rule. 12. Hosanna in the highest is a prayer supplicating the richest blessings of Heaven. Jesus not only reigns in the Kingdom of Power and in the Kingdom of Grace, but also in the Kingdom of Glory. This Kingdom is without end, as the angel said, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." This Kingdom has its seat in heaven, and its citizens are the saints of glory. Every citizen is perfectly happy, for the King shall say unto them on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Matthew 25, 34. This is called the Kingdom of Glory, because in it Christ shall triumph with His saints over the devil and all evil.

QUESTIONS.

1. When did Jesus' triumphal entry take place? 2. Why is that Sunday called Palm Sunday? 3. Where did the procession begin? 4. What transpired when the procession reached Mount of Olives? 5. To what village were the disciples sent? 6. On what animal did Jesus propose to ride? 7. What is the significance of His riding on a colt? 8. What answer were the disciples to give in case they were challenged? 9. Why would the words, "The Lord," give assurance to the owners of the animals? 10. What are they termed who borrow and do not return? 11. What prophets foretold this triumphal entry? 12. Why do the New Testament writers tell us that certain incidents took place in accordance with prophecy? 13. Who are meant by the words; "daughters of Zion?" 14. What is the third official name given to Jesus? 15. What words of the Psalmist declare Jesus a King? 16. In what words did Jesus claim to be a King? 17. Why is Jesus called our King? 18. What do we glean from these words? 19. Who are the subjects in the first kingdom mentioned? 20. In what words did Jesus declare Himself King over all creatures? 21. Mention an instance in which Jesus exercised authority over the elements. 22. Mention an instance in which He exercised authority over devils. 23. In what words does the Psalmist declare Jesus' authority over the lower animals? 24. In what words did the prophet foretell Jesus' kingly office? 25. What service did the disciples render Jesus at this time? 26. In what respects did Jesus set us an example in His triumphal entry? 27. What circumstance helped to swell the crowd at this time? 28. What did the people do in their effort to honor Jesus? 29. On what condition does the acceptableness of service depend? 30. What can you say of the word hosanna? 31. How did the

people indicate that they believed Jesus to be the Messiah? 32. In what words does the prophet refer to this kingdom? 33. In what words does Jesus refer to it? 34. What is this kingdom of our Lord called? 35. By what name is Jesus' second kingdom called? 36. Who are citizens of this kingdom? 37. What moves the subjects of this kingdom to obedience? 38. Why is it called the kingdom of grace? 39. From what does the Lord protect His subjects in this kingdom? 40. Where do the citizens of this kingdom find their rule of faith and life? 41. What do the words, "hosanna in the highest" signify? 42. What is our Lord's third kingdom? 43. In what words did the angel refer to this kingdom? 44. Where does this kingdom have its seat? 45. What words assure us of the happiness of the citizens of this kingdom? 46. What is this kingdom called? 47. Why is it called the kingdom of glory?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 18, 37. Pilate therefore said unto Him: Art Thou a King then? Jesus answered: Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.

55. REVIEW OF LESSONS 53-54.

Our Advocate. — During His public ministry Jesus spent much time in prayer. In Lesson 53 we have the most fully recorded prayer of our Lord. It is thought that it was offered on the evening of His betrayal, after He had instituted the Holy Supper. This intercessory prayer which Jesus offered in behalf of His disciples was a prelude to the intercession He is ever making for His people at the right hand of the Father. As our High Priest Jesus not only fulfilled the law, and offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins, but also intercedes for us before the Father. This part of His high-priestly office was foreshadowed when the priests of the Old Testament offered prayers for the people. They entered the most holy part of the temple, and Jesus ascended on high to intercede for us at the right hand of the Father. It is in reference to this work of Christ in our behalf that He is called our Advocate. In His intercessory prayer Jesus pleaded that His disciples might be kept from evil, and then prays that they might be pleasing in the sight of the Father — diligent in doing His will. The work of a minister of the Gospel is like our Lord's prophetic office in this that He preaches the Word, and like His high-priestly office in this that he intercedes

for the people in prayer to God. It is the Lord's will that we should pray for one another, as also for the conversion of the wicked. The early Christians set us an example in this as in many other respects. When Peter was imprisoned they met to unite their prayers in his behalf. Our prayers are not always answered when we prefer and as we wish, but this should not cause us to doubt the efficacy of prayer, or to neglect praying. God is well pleased with Jesus our Advocate, and for His sake will hear our prayers.

Our King.— On the Sunday preceding His crucifixion Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. A procession was formed near Bethany, two miles from the city, and the people honored the Nazarene by cutting down branches and strewing them on the road before Him. Two of the disciples were sent for an ass and her colt, and on the latter Jesus rode into the capital city. Lesson 54 relates this incident, and shows that Jesus at this time desired the people to give Him royal honors. He was proclaiming His kingly office. As our mediator He is not only a Prophet and High Priest, but also our King. He is truly a king, because He rules over all creatures, protects and governs the Church and lives and triumphs forever with His saints in heaven. He has, as these words indicate, three kingdoms. One of these is called the Kingdom of Power. In this He rules over all creatures. He exercised His authority in this kingdom at times when He was visibly present on earth, as, for example, when He commanded the winds and the waves, and they obeyed. The second kingdom over which Jesus rules is the Church. It is called the Kingdom of Grace. The Church is the company of believers or saints, and is known as the Communion of Saints. All Christians are in this kingdom. In our lesson it is referred to as the Daughter of Zion. It is called the kingdom of grace because in it Jesus rules His people by love and mercy, protecting all His subjects from the devil and wicked men. He governs. Christians do not look to men for directions as to what they are to believe and do, but find their rule of faith and life in the Word. Jesus has a third kingdom which is called the Kingdom of Glory. It is without end, has its seat in heaven, and its citizens are the saints of glory, all of whom are perfectly happy. It is called the kingdom of glory because in it Christ shall triumph with His saints over the devil and all evil.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 53. 1. What can be said of the prayer of Jesus found in this lesson? 2. Of what may it be considered a prelude? 3. Why is Jesus called our High Priest? 4. How did the priests of the Old Testament foreshadow this part of Jesus' office? 5. What feature of their service reminds us of Jesus' ascension to the right hand of the Father? 6. What name is given to Christ because of this part of His high-priestly office? 7. What was the burden of Christ's intercessory prayer? 8. What services do ministers of the Gospel render that reminds us of those Jesus rendered as our prophet? As our High Priest? 9. What may we learn in regard to prayer from the early Christians? 10. What conditions should not cause us to doubt or make us indifferent in prayer? 11. In what may we find comfort in regard to the answering of our prayers?

LESSON 54. 1. When was Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem made? 2. On what Sunday do we commemorate this? 3. How did the people at this time honor Jesus? 4. What was Jesus proclaiming by this procedure? 5. What three-fold office does He fill as our Mediator? 6. Why is He called our King? 7. Over what kingdoms does He rule? 8. What is His kingdom of power? 9. Give an instance in which He exercised His authority in this kingdom while visibly on earth. 10. What is His second kingdom called? 11. What do we understand by the kingdom of grace? 12. Who are the subjects? 13. Why is it called a kingdom of grace? 14. Since Christ is their king what is the Christians' rule of faith and life? 15. What is His third kingdom called? 16. What can be said of it? 17. Why is it called the kingdom of glory?

56. THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.

LUKE 22, 39-46.

JESUS' HUMILIATION.

Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His HOLY, PRECIOUS BLOOD, and with His INNOCENT SUFFERING AND DEATH, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Journey to Gethsemane.— And He came out,¹ and went, as He was wont, to the Mount of Olives;² and his disciples³ also followed Him.

Timely Counsel.— And when He was at the place He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.⁴

Jesus' Prayer in Gethsemane. — And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast⁵ and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will but Thine be done.⁶

A Heavenly Visitor. — And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him.⁷

Jesus' Agony in Gethsemane. — And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.⁸

Earnest Words to the Sleepy Disciples. — And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow.⁹ And He said, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus and His disciples had assembled in some room in which they celebrated the Passover, and He had instituted the Lord's Supper. 2. Matthew tells us that it was Gethsemane, a sort of park across the brook Kidron, and at the foot of Mount Olivet, but a short distance from the city, to which Jesus led the way. He was accustomed to visiting this retired spot, and His people will do well to follow His example, and have some place for meditation and prayer. The place received its name from the fact that there was an olive oil press there, the word *gethsemane* meaning oil press. 3. All but Judas, who had gone to arrange for the betrayal. 4. Jesus well knew that a sore trial of faith awaited the disciples, and admonished them to pray that they might be kept from sin. This is the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer, in which Jesus asks all His followers to pray that they may be kept from sin. The disciples did not know what temptations would come to them in the following hours, and we do not know when we begin the day what trials await us. We do well to offer this petition with fervor. 5. About fifty or sixty paces. Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him. 6. The attitude of Jesus while praying in Gethsemane, "kneeling down," falling "on His face," indicates how grievously He was affected. It matters little as to one's attitude in prayer so long as it is reverent. Closed eyes and folded hands are becoming to a devout worshipper. By "this cup" Jesus meant His suffering. This did not mean that Jesus wanted to withdraw from the work He had undertaken. He was true man; it was His human will that shrank from the terrors which lay before Him. (See Hebrews 5, 7-10). He left the matter altogether with the Father, "If Thou be willing," or, as we find it in Matthew and Mark, "If it be possible." We see in this the perfect submission of His human will to the Divine will. Here Jesus teaches us to pray the third petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Our Lord was in the *state of humiliation*. By this state we mean that Christ, according to

His human nature, ordinarily did not use His divine glory in the days of His flesh, but in the form of a servant became obedient to His Father unto death. Of course our Lord submitted to this humiliation only according to His human nature, for as to His divine nature He is unchangeable. It was while in the flesh that Jesus suffered this humiliation. Sometimes He manifested His glory. We read, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1, 14. When He wrought miracles, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, etc., he showed forth His glory. On the occasion of His transfiguration He gave a wonderful manifestation of His glory, as we read in Matthew 17, 1-2. "After six days Jesus taketh Peter, James and John, his brother, and bringeth them up unto a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." Ordinarily, however, *Jesus did not manifest His glory*, as we read in Philippians 2, 5-8. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He had the form of God, yet took the form of fallen man. He was equal with God and yet was made in the likeness of a servant. He made himself of no reputation. Of course that does not mean that He did something wrong, for He was not a sinner, but that He gave up every thing for us, and was treated as though He was not worthy to live. He did not suffer all this because He was forced to do so, but of His own will—*He humbled himself*. There was no requirement too much for Him to meet in the work of atonement. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. That is, He permitted His enemies to put Him to a shameful death,—by crucifixion. That Jesus entered upon the work of redeeming the world of His own free will is seen in Paul's words, Hebrews 12, 2. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus himself declares that He undertook the work voluntarily. John 10, 17-18. "Therefore hath my Father loved Me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." The words of the second article of the Creed that treat of our *Lord's humiliation* are, Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. Jesus' humiliation began with His conception and birth. When we confess that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost we mean that He did not have an earthly father. Joseph was His foster-father. As to the human nature the Holy Ghost is Jesus' Father, as we read in Luke, 1, 35, "The angel answered and said unto her, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;

therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The Virgin Mary was Jesus' mother, and we commemorate His birth on Christmas. We confess that He suffered under Pontius Pilate, by which we mean that His sufferings took place when this man was Roman ruler at Jerusalem. Before He fell under this ruler's hands He suffered poverty, hunger, and the ingratitude of men. Under this ruler He suffered arrest, imprisonment, scourging, buffeting, mockery and other abuse. His humiliation ended with His death upon the cross and His burial. We commemorate His death on Good Friday.

7. Notice that the cup was not removed, but an angel was sent to strengthen Him. This reminds us of the answer to Paul's prayer for the removal of the thorn that pierced him. The thorn was not removed, but grace sufficient was afforded. Thus God still answers prayers. Because that which we ask is not good for us, He gives us something better; or because the trial we are enduring is for our good He does not withdraw it, but enables us to bear it. As this angel ministered to Jesus so do these unseen beings minister to us. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them." Psalm 34, 7.

8. The intense earnestness of our Lord in this prayer is seen in the fact that He repeats it three times, and that He sweat great drops of blood. It is not wrong to repeat our petitions if it is not done in a rebellious spirit. Jesus teaches us to continue pleading, by the words, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Luke 11, 9.

9. The disciples had made splendid promises. Peter had been bold in declaring that he would die rather than deny Jesus, and John's heart was so warm with love that one would think it impossible for him to sleep while His Master suffered. All this teaches us the frailty of the flesh.

QUESTIONS.

1. Whence came Jesus and His disciples? 2. To what place did He lead the way? 3. What can you say of Gethsemane? 4. Which disciple was absent? 5. Why did Jesus admonish them to pray as He suggested? 6. In which petition do we offer this prayer? 7. Why was this a timely prayer for the disciples? 8. Why will we do well to use it daily? 9. What is the length of a stone's cast? 10. Who accompanied Jesus? 11. What attitudes did Jesus assume while praying in Gethsemane? 12. What is thereby indicated? 13. What may be said of attitude in prayer? 14. What is meant by "this cup?" 15. What would be a wrong inference from the words of Jesus' prayer? 16. What is the correct explanation? 17. What is especially praiseworthy about His prayer? 18. Where are we taught thus to pray? 19. To what state of our Savior did His experience in Gethsemane belong? 20. What is the state of humiliation? 21. According to which nature did Jesus humble Himself? 22. In what words does John tell us that Jesus sometimes manifests His glory while here in the flesh? 23. Mention incidents in which Jesus showed forth His glory. 24. On what occasion did He give an especially wonderful manifestation of His glory? 25. In what words does Matthew refer to this incident? 26. In what words does St. Paul tell us that Jesus did not ordinarily manifest His glory? 27. What form did Jesus take? 28. Though equal with God in whose likeness was He made? 29. What is meant by making himself of no reputation? 30. To what extreme was He obedient to the Father? 31. In what words

does St. Paul assure us that Jesus' sufferings were voluntary? 32. In what words does Jesus tell us the same? 33. What words of the Creed speak of our Lord's humiliation? 34. With what did Jesus' humiliation begin? 35. Who was His Father according to His human nature? 36. In what words did the angel declare this? 37. How are the words, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, to be understood? 38. In what respect did He suffer prior to this? 39. With what did His humiliation end? 40. For what did He pray? 41. How was this prayer answered? 42. Of what experience of St. Paul does this remind us? 43. Why does God at times answer prayer in this way? 44. What words of the Psalmist assure us of angelic ministrations? 45. In what words does Jesus tell us to repeat our petitions? 46. What circumstances show the frailty of human nature?

GOLDEN TEXT.

2. CORINTHIANS 8, 9. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.

57. JESUS' RESURRECTION.

MATTHEW 28, 1-10.

EXALTATION OF JESUS.

Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

A Visit to Jesus' Sepulchre. — In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.¹

The Appearance of an Angel. — And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.² His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:³ and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.⁴

The Heavenly Visitor's Message. — And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus,⁵ which was crucified. He is not here; for He is

risen, as He said.⁶ Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead;⁷ and, behold, He goeth before you unto Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you.⁸

Prompt and Joyful Obedience.—And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy,⁹ and did run to bring His disciples word.¹⁰

Meeting the Risen Savior.—And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them,¹¹ saying, All hail.¹² And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell My brethren¹³ that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me.¹⁴

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus died upon the cross on Friday afternoon, about three o'clock. The evangelists give ample testimony of His death. We read in Matthew 27, 50, "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." It is recorded in St. Luke, 23, 46, "When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, 'Father, unto Thy hands I commend my spirit'; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost." Shortly after His death His body was placed in the new grave or sepulchre which was in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. It was about 36 or 38 hours after His burial, at the dawning of the day after Saturday, or Sabbath, as it was then called, that devout women visited His sepulchre. Very likely Mary Magdalene came first, for John writes that she came while it was yet dark. Jesus appeared ten times that we know of, five of these appearances taking place on the first day, and the first of the five was to Mary Magdalene. St. Mark tells us that the "other Mary" was the mother of James, and that Salome accompanied her. He also tells us that the purpose of these pious women was to anoint, or complete the embalming of the body of our Savior. St. Matthew says they came to see the sepulchre—perhaps to see if the body had been disturbed. It is not wrong for Christians to visit the resting place of the bodies of their departed loved ones, but they should guard against aggravating their grief, lest they weep as they who have no hope, or weep in rebellion to God's ways. 2. Since angels foretold Jesus' coming, announced His birth, attended Him in His temptation, and strengthened Him while in agony, it was befitting that they should be near in His hour of victory. 3. The angels are ever in the presence of God, and since Moses' face shone so brightly, after spending but forty days with God, that Israel could not look upon it, it is not strange that the angels are dazzlingly bright. The brightness of the angels gives us a hint as to the glory and splendor of heaven. 4. The consternation and fright which overtook these keepers at sight of the angels, remind us of the terror that shall take possession of the ungodly when summoned by the angels before the

judgment seat of God. 5. The angel exhorted the women not to fear. While the unbelieving keepers shook with fright the women had no need to fear, because they sought Jesus; they were Jesus' friends. 6. With the words, "which was crucified," the angel gives expression to the thought that was weighing on the hearts of these pious souls in order that they may the more rejoice over the news he brought, "*He is risen.*" "He is risen, as He said." The angel would say, It is wonderful, but you should not hesitate to believe it, for He said that He would rise. It was the first day of the week, Sunday, on which *Jesus rose*. We commemorate *His resurrection* every Sunday, but especially on Easter Sunday. These devout women not only heard the glad news from the lips of the angels, but they met Jesus himself, who greeted them with the words, "All hail." Others also saw the risen Lord. On the afternoon of that day He appeared to two of the disciples who were going to Emmas, talked with them, accepted their invitation to tarry at their home, and made himself known to them by blessing the food while a guest at their table. On the evening of that day He appeared to the eleven disciples as they were assembled, and greeted them with the words, "Peace be unto you." He also appeared to them the next Sunday when they were met in a closed room, and greeted them in the same way. St. Paul tells us that He appeared at other times: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Yes, we have plenty of evidence of our Lord's resurrection. Jesus arose from the dead on the third day, to show that He is the Son of God, and that He rendered satisfaction for our sins, and won for us the righteousness that avails before God. Jesus rose by His own power as we learn from John 10, 17-18. "Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father." Since Jesus rose by His own power His resurrection proves that He is the Son of God. The Lord Jesus was sent into this world to perform a great work. He was sent to be man's substitute, and in His place obey the law and die to atone for sin. Did He succeed? Had He remained dead we would have no certainty that the ransom which He offered was sufficient for our redemption. *His resurrection proves that His mission was fulfilled.* St. Paul assures us of this. Romans 4, 25. "Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." His resurrection is God's declaration that man's debt is paid. In Christ's resurrection we have proof that He rendered satisfaction for our sins, and won for us the righteousness that avails before

God. A sad condition would ours be had Christ not arose. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15, 17, 18. We would still be in our sins, and would perish. If death had held Christ then it would also hold all who die, that is, eternal death would be our doom. Then we would not enjoy the blessed hope that we and all men shall rise from death. As Jesus came forth from death so will we who believe in Him, as we read in John 11, 25-26, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." This assurance is also given in Romans 8, 11. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." The people of God of the Old Testament also had this sweet hope as we see from Job 19, 25-27, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." This ancient man of God knew that he would die, and that his body would return to dust, yet he confidently expected to see God in his flesh. Of course; then, he looked forward to the resurrection of his body.

7. The disciples were to be told at once. St. Mark tells us that the angel mentioned Peter's name in particular. The disciples, and especially Peter, needed the message because they were worried with doubts and fears. Peter was especially unhappy because he had denied His Lord. Jesus wished to remove these fears and doubts as soon as possible. This incident shows that our Lord is deeply interested in His people.

8. Jesus had promised the disciples, "After I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee," and the angel here assures them that their Lord will keep His promise. Jesus arranges to meet his disciples in Galilee, at a place about eighty miles distant, which was a long journey in those days, evidently because many of His disciples lived in Galilee and He desired that some of them also should see Him.

9. They were filled with fear because they realized that they were in the presence of God. Their fear was a holy awe, a devout reverence, not terror. They were joyful because their Lord was risen even as He promised.

10. The running of these devout women to bring the glad news to the disciples is an example to all Christians. It is urgent now as it was then that the good news of Jesus' victory over sin and death should be published. Are we as deeply interested in the cause of missions as we should be?

11. There is no time when a believer is so sure to meet Jesus as when he is earnestly serving Him. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.

12. Jesus' word of greeting. All hail, means about the same as Peace be unto you.

13. Christians are Jesus' brethren, because by virtue of their faith in Him they are the sons of God.

14. In order that believers might have perfect assurance that He had really conquered death Jesus abode on earth forty days after His resurrection, and permitted hundreds of them to see Him.

QUESTIONS.

1. At what hour did Jesus' death occur? 2. Mention passages that testify to His death. 3. What disposition was made of His body? 4. How long after the burial did devout women find the sepulchre empty? 5. Who, is it thought, was first to reach the sepulchre? 6. What other women joined Mary Magdalene? 7. What purpose did the women have in view? 8. What is to be said of visiting the resting places of our loved ones? 9. Why was it befitting that an angel should announce our Lord's resurrection? 10. What was striking about the appearance of the angel? 11. Why is it to be expected that the angels are of bright countenance? 12. Of what is this a hint? 13. How were the keepers affected? 14. Of what does this remind us? 15. Why had the women no cause of fear? 16. By what reference did the angel make his message seem the more joyful? 17. Why should the believers have expected our Lord's resurrection? 18. On what day of the week did Jesus rise? 19. When do we commemorate our Lord's resurrection? 20. Besides hearing the angel's words what other evidence was given the women? 21. How did Jesus greet them? 22. Relate how the risen Savior appeared to the disciples who were going to Emmaus. 23. On what occasion did Jesus appear to the disciples assembled? 24. With what words did He greet them? 25. Of what other appearances of Jesus does Paul make mention? 26. Why did Jesus rise from the dead? 27. By what power did He rise? 28. In what words does St. John declare this? 29. What does Jesus' resurrection therefore prove? 30. On what mission was Jesus sent to this world? 31. What assures us that He fulfilled His mission? 32. In what words does St. Paul tell us this? 33. What does God declare by Christ's resurrection? 34. How does Paul describe the condition man would be in had not Christ been raised? 35. If death had held Christ in its grasp what would await the sinners? 36. In what words does St. John express the Christian's hope in view of our Lord's resurrection? 37. How does St. Paul express the same thought? 38. In what words did Job confess that He believed Jesus would rise from death? 39. What hope cheered this ancient believer's heart? 40. Why did Jesus want the disciples to hear of His resurrection at once? 41. Why did Peter especially need comfort? 42. To what promise of our Lord did the angel refer? 43. Why did Jesus propose to meet the disciples in Gallilee? 44. How were the women affected by the appearance of the angel? 45. What good example do these women set all believers? 46. Of what are we reminded by the fact that they met Jesus? 47. What is meant by the words, All hail? 48. Why did Jesus tarry on earth forty days, and appear to so many disciples before ascending on high?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN II, 25. 26. I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.

58. JESUS' ASCENSION.

Acts 1, 1-11.

EXALTATION OF JESUS.

Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

A Reference to the Gospel of St. Luke.—The former treatise¹ have I made, O Theophilus,² of all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up,³ after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen.⁴

The Risen Savior's Forty Days on Earth.—To whom also He showed himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God;⁵ and being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, Ye have heard of Me;⁶ for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.⁷

The Disciples' Question.—When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?⁸

The Master's Answer.—And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power.⁹ But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you;¹⁰ and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.¹¹

The Lord's Visible Ascension.—And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.¹²

The Angelic Visitors and their Message.—And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;¹³ which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?¹⁴ This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so, come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.¹⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The former treatise was the third Gospel, of which St. Luke, the writer of *Acts*, is the author. 2. He addresses this epistle to Theophilus who, very likely, was a Gentile Christian, a man of high social rank, and an inquirer after truth. 3. Here the author states what the former treatise, the Gospel according to St. Luke, contains, namely, an account of all that Jesus did and taught until the day of His *ascension*. This took place forty days after His resurrection. Like His descent into hell and His resurrection *Jesus' ascension* belongs to His exaltation. The disciples were permitted to witness it, as we read, *Acts* 1, 9, "When He had spoken of these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." 4. The command that Jesus gave to the apostles was the commission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 5. Before His ascension Jesus gave His disciples the strongest evidence of His resurrection—infallible proofs. They not only saw Him alive after His death, but saw that it was no other than He who was before them. He was seen of them forty days. He did not mingle with them during these days as He did before His crucifixion, but manifested Himself to them at different times. The topics on which He conversed with them at their meetings pertained to the Kingdom of God. This does not mean that He revealed mysteries to His disciples that are hidden from us, but that He explained and expounded the truths He had already taught them. 6. Although Jesus commanded the apostles to preach the Gospel to all nations they were to tarry at Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the Father's promise of which He had already spoken to them, before going forth to this work. The promise was that of the gift of the Holy Spirit. That was the special preparation God meant to give them for the great work entrusted to them, without which they would have been poorly fitted for the task. They had been baptized by John the Baptist, but another and far better baptism should be administered, even the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon them. 7. This was the last meeting of the risen Lord with His disciples, and took place at Jerusalem. Evidently the matter of asking Jesus concerning the restoration of the Jewish Kingdom had been talked of and discussed by the disciples, and they came to that meeting with the intention of asking for information on the subject. The question shows that they did not yet fully understand that Jesus' Kingdom was not a temporal and external, but a spiritual and internal kingdom. Like the most of the Jews they were weary of Roman rule and hoped that the

time had come to throw off the yoke of bondage. 9. Jesus replied by saying that it was not necessary that they know these things. Christians should learn from these words of Jesus not to seek after the things which God has not been pleased to reveal. 10. The disciples are not to bother themselves with useless anxiety about the future, but rest assured that God is ruling and all is well. They will have power sufficient after the Holy Spirit descends upon them. This reminds us of God's answer to St. Paul's prayer for the removal of the thorn, "My grace is sufficient for thee." 11. These timid disciples are told what a remarkable power will be bestowed upon them. They will have grace and courage to bear witness for Christ in Judea where He was hated, in Samaria whose people the Jews despised, and even to all the Gentile nations of the world. The testimony for Christ was borne to the nations in the order that He here mentioned. The disciples began work in Jerusalem, then traveled through Judea, thence to Samaria, and so on until their line had reached the uttermost parts of the inhabited earth. 12. While the meeting of Christ with the disciples took place in Jerusalem Jesus had led the way to Bethany, about two miles distant, whence He ascended. Before ascending He conversed with the disciples concerning the Kingdom of Heaven, and gave them the command to go forth and witness for Him. After He had finished speaking He was taken up. He did not vanish from their sight, but permitted himself to be seen as He ascended until a cloud received Him. It was not one or two persons, but the entire company of His disciples who witnessed *His ascension*. By ascending into heaven Jesus returned again to the position of glory which He had with the Father from the beginning, there to intercede for us. We read in Mark 16, 19, "So the Lord, after He had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." Jesus withdrew His visible presence only. He did not forsake His people. He says, Matthew 28, 20, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Stephen beheld Him, as we read, Acts 7, 55, 56, "He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God,'" Jesus has not forgotten His people, although He is no longer visibly present on earth; He is with them invisibly. He has ascended into heaven in our interests. He wills that "where I am, there shall also My servant be." John 12, 26. He has gone to prepare a place for His people. We therefore think of our ascended Lord with the sweet hope that some day we will go to heaven to be with Him. That this hope may be realized Jesus continues His high-priestly office in our behalf. He represents us before God as our Mediator and Advocate. This we learn from 1 John 2, 1, 2, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." He is our Advocate before the Father. We can be sure, therefore, that when we pray God hears us, for Jesus is at God's right hand interceding for us. For Jesus' sake, therefore, our prayers are heard. We speak

of Jesus as having ascended, and being seated at the right hand of God. By God's right hand we do not understand a place. We must not think of God as a human being having hands and feet and eyes: God is a spirit. By God's right hand we understand the infinite power and majesty of God, whereby He works, governs and fills all things. God's right hand stands for His almighty power. It represents majesty, also. "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power." Exodus 15, 6. When the Scriptures tell us that Jesus is seated at the right hand of God they mean to indicate how highly He has been exalted. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Of course, as to His divine nature Jesus always had divine power and majesty, but He did not ordinarily make use of these in the days of His flesh; having ascended He has entered into the full use of His power and majesty according to His human nature. 13. The two men were angels. Angels are spirits, and can not be seen by mortal eye. God enables them to appear in human form—to assume a human body, for the time being, when they have dealings with us. 14. Possibly the amazed disciples hoped that Jesus might grant them another sight of Him, or perhaps they hoped that He would soon return. The angels meant to tell them that they were looking in vain. 15. The coming again of Jesus to which the angels referred is the Lord's coming to judge the world on the last day. Jesus will then be seen as these disciples saw Him. He will also be heard, for even those who are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is meant by the author's former treatise? 2. To whom is this epistle addressed? 3. What does the former treatise contain? 4. What command of Jesus is referred to? 5. What infallible proofs were given the Lord's disciples? 6. How long did Jesus remain on earth after His resurrection? 7. To what state does Jesus' ascension belong? 8. Of what did He converse at His meetings with the disciples? 9. How is this to be understood? 10. For what purpose were the disciples to remain in Jerusalem after Jesus' ascension? 11. What promise had the Father given? 12. For what would the fulfillment of this promise prepare them? 13. What can you say of the meeting here referred to? 14. What question did the disciples ask? 15. What is indicated by the question? 16. What condition awakened such thoughts and hopes? 17. What was the Lord's reply to the disciples' question? 18. What should comfort Christians in looking forward to the future? 19. When would power sufficient be afforded the disciples? 20. Of what does this answer of Jesus remind us? 21. What work will the disciples be able to do? 22. In what order did they proceed to testify to the nations? 23. Whence did Jesus ascend? 24. What command did He give before ascending? 25. How did the ascension take place? 26. Why did Jesus ascend into heaven? 27. What does Mark record concerning our Lord's ascension? 28. In what respect has Jesus withdrawn from earth? 29. How is He still present? 30. What believer was permitted to see Jesus in heaven? 31. In what words did Stephen declare this? 32. Whose interest has Jesus ascended? 33. For what purpose did Jesus ascend as stated by St. John? 34. Of what sweet

hope should the thought of our Lord's ascension remind us? 35. In what respects does Jesus represent His people in heaven? 36. In what words does St. John declare this? 37. Since Jesus is our Advocate before the Father, of what may we be certain? 38. What is understood by the right hand of God? 39. What is meant by sitting at the right hand of God? 40. Of what are the words "right hand of God" expressive? 41. Of what are we reminded when we read of Christ sitting at the right hand of God? 42. In what words does St. Paul refer to this exaltation of Jesus? 43. According to which nature is Christ exalted? 44. Who were the two men who appeared? 45. How is the fact that they appeared and conversed with mortals to be explained? 46. Of what did these messengers remind the disciples? 47. What can you say of Christ's second coming?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 68. 18. Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men: Yea for the rebellious also.

59. JESUS' RETURN TO JUDGMENT.

MATTHEW 25, 31-46.

EXALTATION OF JESUS.

Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Judge. — When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.¹

The Subjects to be judged. — And before Him shall be gathered all nations.²

The Separation of those to be Judged. — And He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:³ and He shall set the sheep on His right hand but the goats on the left.⁴

The Judgment as it respects those on the Right Hand. — Then shall the King⁵ say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;⁶ for I was an hungered,

and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.⁷ Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?⁸ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.⁹

The Judgment as it respects those on the Left Hand. —

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;¹⁰ for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.¹¹ Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.¹² And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus Christ will be the *judge*. He will come in heavenly divine glory, not in humiliation as He came to redeem us; the holy angels will accompany Him. 2. All nations will be gathered before Him for *judgment*. Two most remarkable things will take place previous to the judgment: *All the dead will be raised*, and the living will undergo a change something similar to death, taking place in the twinkling of an eye. 3. It is the separation of the wicked from the godly. It will not be a slow or difficult process because the Lord knows them who are His, and every one's heart will assure him at that hour to which class he belongs. It is an event to which all should look forward, since it will be a separating never again to meet. 4. Jesus compares Himself to a shepherd. By the sheep He means the righteous, by the goats, the wicked. He uses this form of speech because many of the people of that day were shepherds; His words were therefore readily understood, and the truth He uttered was the more impressive. 5. Jesus is here called a King because He will then bestow the kingly inheritance upon His followers. 6. The godly are described as "blessed of My Father," for

they have accepted the blessings offered to sinners in and through Christ. The Kingdom they then and there receive is not merited by them, but it is theirs by inheritance—a gift. It has been prepared from the foundation of the world, that is, before time began—from all eternity. The happiness awaiting the redeemed is called a kingdom to impress us with its great worth. 7. These words of the Judge do not mean that sinners are justified by deeds of love and mercy, nor good works of any kind. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ. Ephesians 2, 8. 9. However our good works show where there is true faith. They are the fruits of faith, and Jesus says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Those who profess to believe in Jesus will do well to note if their faith is bearing fruit, since it is a living, and not a dead faith that saves. It is to be noted that the good works that are referred to as so pleasing to God are not deeds that are striking, but every day kindnesses that any one can do. 8. This reply of the righteous indicates that Christians do deeds of love and mercy as a matter of course. Love constrains them. They cannot help but do them. It does not enter their mind that they are deserving special credit for their good deeds. 9. Jesus no longer needs such service as believers rendered when He dwelt here in the flesh, but His cause and His people need our services. When we serve even the humblest of the Lord's followers, or in any way aid His cause, it is credited to us as so much service rendered to Jesus. 10. Those on the left, the wicked, were to depart from the Lord's presence. They were to exist henceforth and forever apart from God's gracious presence and favor. They are cursed in this that they have chosen sin and evil, and cast their lot with Satan. The punishment that awaits them is the same that was prepared for the devil and his angels. They chose to follow Satan, and must therefore share his fate. Their punishment is of the nature of fire, a prepared fire, and it will never be quenched. 11. They are cursed because they did not minister to Jesus. Our Lord tells us why people are not saved, namely, because they reject Him in whom alone salvation is to be found. "He that believeth not shall be damned." 12. These unfortunates are represented as complaining that they had no opportunity to serve Jesus, but His brethren were all around them, and they did not serve them. Of course, so long as they did not love Jesus they could not serve Him acceptably, however moral and obliging they might have been. Worldly people may give to the poor, visit the sick and contribute to the work of the Church, but only those works that are done out of faith in Jesus, and from love to Him, are pleasing to God. 13. The punishment of the wicked will be eternal, just as is the happiness of the righteous, the same word being used in the original in each case, not two different words as in the English.

This ushering of the godly into the happiness prepared for them, and casting out the wicked into the endless punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, will take place when our Lord returns to this earth. When Jesus ascended into heaven two angels appeared to the disciple and promised that Jesus would return. We confess our faith on this subject

in the words, "*From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*"

Jesus tells us of the *manner* of His coming in Matthew 25, 31, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." This coming of our Savior is also described in Matthew 16, 27, "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works."

He will come to *judge*, for He says, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John 5, 22. This truth St. Paul tell us, "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Acts 17, 31.

Of the *time of our Lord's coming to judgment* He himself says, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mark 13, 32. Since our Lord declares that no man knows the time of His coming, we need not be disturbed when so-called prophets declare that He will come on a certain date. However, we know that He will come, and therefore we should be prepared at any time. So Jesus admonishes. Luke 21, 34-36. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon your unawares. For as a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Very earnestly does our Lord admonish us on this subject in the parable of the ten virgins. The foolish virgins made no preparations, and when the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, the door was shut." Because we do not know the time when our Lord will come to judge the world we should ever keep in readiness, especially so since we know that the time is near at hand. We read in 1 Peter 4, 7, "The end of all things is at hand." St. John writes, chapter 2, 18, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."

In order that we might not forget to prepare for our Lord's coming He has told us of certain *signs* that will appear, which are to remind us of His coming. When these signs appear with greater frequency it will indicate that the end is drawing near. St. Paul refers to one of these signs in the above passage. St. Paul refers to the same sign in 1 Thessalonians, 2, 3. 4. In the Roman Catholic Church we have revealed to us the man of sin foretold.

The Savior tells us of other signs in Matthew 24, such as wars and rumors of wars, persecutions, the multiplying of false prophets, and the fact that the Gospel is preached in all the world. From the appearance

of these signs we should take warning that the coming of the Lord to judgment is not far off.

Strange sights and sounds will be in evidence on that day. We read of some of these in 2 Peter 3, 10, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. In Revelation 21, 1, we read of other changes that will then occur. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

All will be called into the Lord's presence for judgment. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5, 10. As here stated, we shall be judged according to our manner of life. "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12, 14. "I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matthew 12, 36. The thought of being judged by the All-seeing One on that great day in regard to our thoughts, idle words, and manner of life in general should make us thoughtful and prayerful.

It is comforting to us to know the rule by which we will be judged, namely, God's Word, "the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12, 48. St. Paul declares the same truth, Romans 2, 16, "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

Jesus gives us the rule of judgment in a few words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16.

Those who believe in Jesus will be on the right hand, and to them the King will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Those who do not believe in Jesus will be on the left hand, and to them the King will say, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, unto everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

QUESTIONS.

1. Who will come to judge the world? 2. In what manner will He come? 3. Who are to be judged? 4. What will take place just before the judgment? 5. What may be said of the separation that shall then be made? 6. What comparison did our Savior use in picturing the judgment? 7. Why should this have been readily understood by the people of that day? 8. Why does Jesus speak of the Judge as King? 9. Why are the godly referred to as blessed of the Father? 10. Why is the blessing awaiting the righteous called a kingdom? 11. How will it come into their possession? 12. What would be a wrong interpretation of the Judge's words? 13. What alone saves us? 14. What is the relation of good works to faith? 15. What should concern all believers? 16. What is to be noted concerning the good works which our Lord here commends? 17. What is indicated by the reply of the righteous? 18. How may believers serve Jesus to-day? 19. What will be the fate of those on the left? 20. What is to be understood by being cursed? 21. What can be said of the punishment

awaiting the wicked? 22. Why will the wicked be cursed? 23. What answer will the wicked make? 24. What can be said of their reply? 25. What works are pleasing to God? 26. What will be the duration of the punishment of the wicked? 27. When will the judgment take place? 28. On what occasion did two angels foretell our Lord's return to judgment? 29. In what words of the creed do we confess this doctrine? 30. Mention passages describing our Lord's second coming. 31. Mention passages which declare that Jesus will judge the world. 32. What does Jesus say in regard to the time when the judgment will take place? 33. Why need we not be disturbed by the predictions of men in regard to the date of our Lord's coming? 34. To what should the promise of our Lord's coming move us? 35. In what words does Jesus admonish us to prepare for His coming? 36. What parable of our Lord earnestly admonishes us in this matter? 37. What fact should especially move us to stand in readiness for our Lord's coming? 38. What words of Scripture assure us that the coming of our Lord is not far off? 39. What will indicate that the end is drawing near? 40. Mention some of these signs. 41. What will be in evidence on the last day? 42. In what words does St. Peter refer to this? 43. What changes are referred to in Revelation 21, 1? 44. According to what will all be judged? 45. What facts in reference to the judgment should make us thoughtful and prayerful? 46. What will be the rule or law of judgment? 47. In what few words does Jesus give us the rule of judgment? 48. What words will the King address to those on His right hand? 49. What words to those on His left hand?

GOLDEN TEXT.

2. CORINTHIANS 5, 10. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

60. REVIEW OF LESSONS 56-59.

The Lowly Nazarene. — The experience of the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane, as it is related in Lesson 56, should impress us with the deep humiliation He suffered in our behalf. Jesus did not ordinarily use His divine glory in the days of His flesh, but took the form of a servant, and was obedient to His Father unto death. Our Lord submitted to his humiliation only according to His human nature: as to His divine nature He is unchangeable. Sometimes He manifested His glory, as, for example, when He wrought miracles, or when He was transfigured, but ordinarily He acted as though He was but a man. He made himself of no reputation — humbled himself. In the Apostles' Creed we confess that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin

Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. Jesus' humiliation began with His conception and birth. He was born of the Virgin Mary, however He had no earthly father, and is therefore not sinful. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, that is, when that man was the Roman ruler at Jerusalem. During His life here on earth He suffered poverty, hunger, the ingratitude of men, mockery and abuse. His humiliation ended with His death and burial.

Death Conquered. — Lesson 57 tells us of the visit of pious women to the sepulchre of Jesus on Easter morning. They found the tomb empty, but an angel appeared and said, "He is not here, for He is risen; as He said." Jesus had come forth from death on the third day after His crucifixion, as He had promised. That there might be no doubt that He had overcome death Jesus tarried on earth forty days before ascending on high, and appeared to His disciples and many others, at different times during this interval. We commemorate His resurrection every Sunday, but especially on Easter Sunday. The devout visitors not only heard the angel message, but beheld Jesus and heard His word of greeting. Jesus arose from the dead to show that He is the Son of God, and that He had rendered satisfaction for our sins, and won for us the righteousness that avails before God. He arose by His own power, and thus proved himself the Son of God. Having taken man's place, and died to atone for man's sin, His resurrection proved that His mission was fulfilled. He was sent by the Father to save sinners, and His resurrection is God's declaration that this was done. It is our assurance that our debt has been paid — full satisfaction for our sins rendered. St. Paul assures us of this in Romans 4, 25, "Christ was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." His resurrection also assures us that death is overcome, and that all who believe shall pass through death to life eternal.

The Conquerer Returned in Triumph. — After tarrying on earth forty days, permitting Himself to be seen at times, Jesus ascended to heaven, Lesson 58. When Jesus appeared to His disciples during these forty days, He conversed with them concerning the kingdom of God. He had a great work for His disciples to do pertaining to His kingdom here on earth, and by His conversation with them, and later by sending them the Holy Spirit, and endowing them with special gifts, He prepared them

to do it. Before leaving them He led them to Bethany, about two miles distant from Jerusalem, whence He ascended. His last words to them were a command to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. They were to be witnesses unto Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. After uttering these farewell words He was taken up. He did not vanish out of their sight, but permitted himself to be seen as He ascended, until a cloud received Him. He returned again to the position of glory which He had with the Father from the beginning. It was only His visible presence that was withdrawn from earth, for He is ever with His people. He has ascended to heaven in the interests of His people, that is, to intercede for them, and to prepare a place for them. He represents us before God as our Mediator and Advocate. He is seated at the right hand of God, which means that He, as to the human nature, has been highly exalted. His visible presence has been withdrawn but temporarily, for He will come again, when those that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth, and the living shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye. Then all shall be gathered into His presence for judgment.

The Great Day.— Jesus' return to judgment is the intensely interesting subject of which Lesson 59 treats. At that time Jesus will be accompanied by the angels, and will come to heavenly divine glory. He will come to judge all men. Of the time of His coming "knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Because of this all are urged to keep themselves in readiness at all times. In order that we may not forget it signs appear to remind us of His coming. Two remarkable things will take place previous to the judgment: All the dead will be raised, and the living will undergo a change something similar to death. All will be gathered into the presence of the Lord for judgment. This will not be a slow or difficult process for the Lord knows who are His, and every one's heart will assure him at that hour where he belongs. One of the two classes into which all will be divided are the godly, who will be declared eternally blessed of the Father, and will inherit the kingdom prepared for them. The other of the two classes will be the ungodly, who will be cast out of God's presence into the eternal punishment prepared for them. The rule by which all shall be judged is God's Word. Jesus gives the

rule in a few words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 56. 1. Relate our Lord's experience in Gethsemane? 2. Through what state was He then passing? 3. What form did He take? 4. To what extent was He obedient? 5. According to which nature did He humble himself? 6. How did He at times manifest His glory? 7. Which words of the Apostles' Creed refer to Jesus' humiliation? 8. What was the beginning of His humiliation? 9. With what did it end?

LESSON 57. 1. What is the subject of this lesson? 2. What disappointment did the women suffer? 3. What good news did they bear? 4. What special evidence of His resurrection did Jesus give His disciples? 5. What to these women? 6. When does the Church commemorate our Savior's triumph over death? 7. Why did Jesus rise from the dead? 8. Why does His resurrection prove Him to be the Son of God? 9. Why is His resurrection a source of comfort to Christians? 10. Of what does it assure us? 11. In what words does St. Paul express this truth? 12. What assurance as to the future does it give?

LESSON 58. 1. What privilege did Jesus' disciples enjoy during the forty days following our Lord's resurrection? 2. Of what did the risen Savior speak to them? 3. To what work was He about to call them? 4. How did He prepare them for that work? 5. Where did His ascension take place? 6. What were His last words? 7. How did His ascension take place? 8. In what respect only did He withdraw from earth? 9. For what purpose did He ascend? 10. What do we understand by sitting at the right hand of God? 11. What promise did the Lord give before ascending? 12. What can you say of His second coming.

LESSON 59. 1. To what coming event does Lesson 59 direct our thoughts? 2. Mention some particulars of our Lord's second coming. 3. What of the time? 4. To what should the uncertainty of the time move us? 5. What are intended as helps in keeping the coming of the Lord in mind? 6. What will take place previously? 7. Humanly speaking, what conditions will render the judging of the world an easy matter? 8. Into what two classes will all men be divided? 9. What will be the rule of judgment? 10. In what words does Jesus express this rule?

61. THE HOLY SPIRIT, GIVEN.

Acts 2, 1-13.

THE THIRD ARTICLE.

I believe in the HOLY GHOST; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Time and Place of the Descent of the Holy Ghost. — And when the day of Pentecost¹ was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.²

The Manner in Which the Holy Ghost's Descent took Place. — And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting,³ and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.⁴

The Effect of the Spirit's Descent upon the Disciples. — And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance,⁵

The Effect of the Occurrence upon the Strangers at Jerusalem. — And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.⁶ Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded because that every man heard them speak in his own language.⁷ And they were all amazed, and marvelled saying one to another, Behold, are not these which speak Galileans?⁸ And now hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Capadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia and Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful work of God.⁹ And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?¹⁰

The Scorn with which Some Treated the Matter. — Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.¹¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Pentecost is a Greek word meaning fiftieth. This day was observed under the Old Testament in remembrance of the giving of the

law upon Mount Sinai, which occurred fifty days after Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The name therefore reminded Israel of their deliverance as well as of the giving of the law. Under the New Testament dispensation Pentecost comes fifty days after Easter, and commemorates the outpouring of the *Holy Ghost* on the waiting disciples at Jerusalem. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, like the resurrection of Jesus, took place on the first day of the week; so Christians have good reasons for meeting for worship on Sunday. 2. The persons assembled were not only the twelve, Matthias having been elected to fill Judas' place, but all the believers in Jerusalem, which a day or two previous were one hundred and twenty. They met with one accord. Jesus had told them to remain in Jerusalem until they had received the promise of the Father, and with one mind and purpose they obeyed the Lord's mandate. Christians of all time will do well to follow the example of the first disciples in preserving peace and harmony in their midst. There is no certainty as to the place in which they met, except that it was in Jerusalem. 3. *The giving of the Holy Spirit* was preceded by a sound from heaven, indicating whence the Spirit came. It was such as a mighty, rushing wind would make. Jesus when conversing with Nicodemus had likened the operation of the Spirit to wind. Like wind the Spirit is *invisible, all-pervading* and *powerful*. As we are often amazed at the changes wrought in a city or landscape by wind, so are thoughtful people amazed at the changes which God's Spirit effects in people, communities and nations. The fact that the sound filled all the house reminds us that the Spirit is not confined to any locality. 4. *The workings of the Spirit* are compared with fire, as, for example, when John says of Christ, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. As fire gives light, warms and purifies, so the Spirit enlightens, enthuses and purifies those in whom He dwells. The Spirit came in the form of *cloven tongues*, thus indicating that the disciples would be gifted with the power to proclaim the Gospel, and that through the Word, to which tongues give utterance, the Spirit would accomplish His great mission. A tongue of fire sat upon each of them, so the Spirit must be personally and individually bestowed—a personal gift enjoyed by every believer. 5. They were filled with the Holy Ghost. That is, the Spirit was upon each of them in the fullest measure, fitting them for faithful and telling service. They spoke in other tongues, that is, languages, of which they knew nothing before. They spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance, that is, the Spirit guided and directed them so that they spoke only that which was right and befitting. They were able to speak unto edification, although unlettered men. Of course what they spoke pertained to the kingdom of God.

The Holy Ghost is now also at work in the world. We confess in the creed, *I believe in the Holy Ghost*. We do not believe the Holy Ghost to be an attribute of God, or a power or influence exerted by God, but that He is *the third Person of the Godhead* and therefore *true God*. The third article of the creed treats of the Holy Ghost and His work. We confess I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church; the

Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting, Amen. All this work of the Spirit may be expressed in the one word sanctify. That word means to make holy. Because it is the office of the third person of the Godhead to sanctify we usually prefix the attribute holy when referring to Him, as Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost. 6. There was an unusually large concourse of people at Jerusalem for it was the time of the feast of Pentecost. These were devout men, fearing God and anxious to know His will. There was at that time a general expectation of the appearing of the Messiah, and this brought many devout people to Jerusalem, the capital city of the chosen people. There was also a mixed multitude from the various nations lying around Palestine and further away, some of whom, no doubt, were enemies of Christ. 7. The sound that came from heaven was probably heard in all parts of the city, and the people hastened to the place where the disciples were assembled, which was likely in or near the temple. They were amazed to hear, each in his own language, the believers speak of things pertaining to God's kingdom—the wonderful works of God. God miraculously enabled the apostles to speak different languages in order at once to fit them to carry the Gospel message to the different nations of the world. 8. The apostles were referred to as Galileans, and such they were. They were doubtless doing most of the speaking, but using not their mother-tongue, but the languages of the different nations represented in the concourse. 9. The fifteen nations mentioned as being represented lay around Palestine. The writer begins with Parthia in the northeast, and goes from country to country almost in the order in which they were located. Rome and Cyrene were the countries most remote from Judea. While there may have been a different dialect for each nation, no doubt some of them were similar to each other. That the unlettered men were able to use these several languages and dialects so satisfactorily to those who heard them, was astounding, and inclined the people to hear the speakers attentively. Strangers from Rome were Jews whose home was in Rome, but who were at Jerusalem for a time. The words, Jews and proselytes, means that both classes were among the representatives of the different nations. A proselyte was a convert from the Gentiles.

The wonderful works of God of which these believers spoke were, no doubt, those works directly concerned in the salvation of the world, such as sending forth His only Son to redeem us, raising Him up from death, and offering forgiveness of sins to all through the Gospel. 10. Since it was so generally thought that the promise concerning the coming Messiah would soon be fulfilled, and many were expectant, it is not surprising that the people asked each other, "What meaneth this?" 11. These mockers were doubtless enemies of Christ. The new wine to which they refer was a peculiarly intoxicating drink made of dried grapes. This incident shows us how easily it is to blame people unjustly. We are taught by the eighth commandment to excuse our neighbor, speak well of him and put the best construction on everything.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say in regard to the word Pentecost? 2. What did the Old Testament Pentecost commemorate? 3. Why was that festival called by this name? 4. What can you say of the New Testament Pentecost? 5. On what day of the week did it occur? 6. What good reasons were there for selecting Sunday as our day for public worship? 7. Who were assembled at this time? 8. In what spirit were they gathered together? 9. What can be said as to the place? 10. By what was the descent of the Spirit preceded? 11. What was thereby indicated? 12. To what was the sound likened? 13. To what does Jesus liken the operations of the Spirit? 14. In what respects is there similarity? 15. What can be said as to the changes wrought by the Spirit? 16. What is indicated by the fact that the sound filled all the house? 17. To what else are the operations of the Spirit compared? 18. In what respects is there similarity? 19. In what form did the Spirit descend? 20. What was thereby indicated? 21. What is shown by the fact that a tongue rested on each disciple? 22. What is understood by the expression filled by the Holy Ghost? 23. How did Spirit's presence manifest itself in the disciples? 24. In what words do we confess our faith in the Holy Ghost? 25. Whom do we believe the Holy Spirit to be? 26. What are the words of the third article? 27. Of what does this article treat? 28. By what word may we express the work of the Spirit? 29. Why were there so many people at Jerusalem at this time? 30. What very likely moved the people to hasten to the place the disciples were assembled? 31. What amazed them on reaching the place? 32. Why did God bless the disciples with the gift of tongues? 33. How many nations are referred to as being in the concourse? 34. Who were meant by strangers from Rome? 35. Who were proselytes? 36. Of what did the disciples speak? 37. Of what works of God did they most likely speak? 38. What question did the people ask? 39. What thought must have been uppermost in the minds of the devout? 40. What words of scorn and mockery were used by the enemies? 41. What does this incident show? 42. What is taught in the eighth commandment bearing on this subject?

GOLDEN TEXT.

2. CORINTHIANS 4, 6. God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus.

62. ANANIAS LIES TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Acts 5, 1-11.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TRUE GOD.

I believe in the HOLY GHOST; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Sin of Ananias and Sapphira. — But a certain man named Ananias,¹ with Sapphira² his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.³

Ananias called to Account. — But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?⁴ While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?⁵ Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.⁶

The Death and Burial of Ananias. — And Ananias hearing these word, fell down, and gave up the Ghost;⁷ and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.⁸

Peter's Reckoning with Sapphira. — And it was about the the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me, whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.⁹ Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.¹⁰

Sapphira's Death and Burial. — Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.¹¹

The Impression the Incident Made upon the People. — And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.¹²

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The word Ananias is perhaps the same as Ananiah, signifying *the mercy of God*. 2. The word Sapphira is possibly from the Greek word that means sapphires. 3. The believers were so nearly of one heart and soul that they sold their possessions and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet, distribution being made from the common treasury as each had need. Ananias and Sapphira sold their property but brought only a part of the proceeds to the common treasury. 4. Ananias and Sapphira did not sin by failing to give all their money to the Lord's treasury, but in pretending to do so when they kept back a part. They desired to be credited with giving as much as the others. Giving that is done with a view of getting the praise of men is not pleasing to God. Jesus says, "When thou doest alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." The besetting sin that had most to do in leading them into wrong-doing was covetousness—love of money. We are warned against this sin by the words, "The love of money is the root of all evil."

The most serious feature of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira was their lying. They pretended to be so completely under the influence of the Holy Ghost that they must sell their property and give the proceeds to the church. They were not dealing with the apostles but with the Holy Ghost. Their efforts to deceive the apostles were really efforts to deceive God. In our dealings with those who receive and dispense money for church and benevolent purposes we should bear in mind that it is a serious matter to come short of our obligations and promises, since we are dealing with God's representatives. 5. These people had no excuse for their sins. They might have kept all the property, or any part of it. They were not constrained to do as their brethren did. Their sin was not that they did not give enough, but that they practiced deception. Our giving should be a free will offering. While under the Old Testament it was required to give one-tenth to the Lord, there is no law of this kind under the New Testament. God does not require His people to give all, or a certain portion of their possessions. The New Testament rule in regard to giving is, "As God hath prospered him." While we are told that the liberal soul shall be made fat, God does not specify how large our offerings must be. That is to be decided by the law of love and the need of those to be helped. 6. Peter did not say, Thou hast lied to us, the apostles, but, Thou hast *lied unto the Holy Ghost*. The apostles were God's representatives. We should look upon those selected to manage the finances of our congregation, or of synod, just as these persons were to look upon the apostles, as persons acting in God's stead.

The apostle accuses Ananias and Sapphira of *lying to the Holy Ghost*, and then added, "Thou hast not lied unto men but *unto God*. Since lying unto the Holy Ghost is lying unto God, the *Holy Ghost must be God*. This we believe because in the Holy Scriptures the names, attributes, works and honor, which pertain to God only, are expressly ascribed to Him. As seen in the words addressed to Ananias, the Holy Ghost is called God. The same truth is set forth by the apostle in I

Corinthians, 3, 16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" If those in whom God's Spirit dwells are the temple of God, then the Holy Ghost is God.

But not only *divine names* but also *divine attributes* are ascribed to the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures. The attributes are eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, holy, righteous, merciful and truthful. In Psalm 139, 7-10, we are told that the *Holy Ghost is everywhere*. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." Since God only is omnipresent the Holy Ghost must be God.

In 1 Corinthians 12, 10, we are told that the Spirit *knoweth all things*. "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Since God only is omniscient the Holy Ghost must be God.

In 1 Corinthians 12, 11, we are told that the Spirit *worketh all things*. "All these things worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Since God only can do all things the Holy Ghost must be God.

In Matthew 12, 28, we are told that the Savior *cast out devils* by the Spirit of God. Since the devils are subject to no one but God the Holy Ghost must be God.

In 1 John 5, 7 we read, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." Here the Holy Ghost is placed on a level with the Father and the Son, and is therefore true God.

The Holy Spirit has not only divine names and attributes ascribed to Him, but also *divine works*. In John 33, 4 the work of creation is ascribed to Him: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Since God only can create the Holy Ghost must be God.

In John 3, 5 we read that the Holy Ghost *regenerates*: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Since God only can regenerate the Holy Ghost must be God.

The Holy Ghost is mentioned with, and put on the same level with the Father and the Son in the work of *building up the Kingdom of God* on earth: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Since the Spirit is thus honored alike with the Father and the Son He must be true God. 7. Gave up the ghost means that he died. By this punishment God would show how displeasing to Him is the sin of hypocrisy. From this incident we learn that covetousness is dangerous to the soul. 8. The young men referred to were the younger persons among the believers, whose business it was to render assistance wherever they

were needed. It is an honor to all concerned, and a great help in church work, when the younger people are looking for something to do. 9. The apostle gave Sapphira a splendid opportunity to confess her sin, but she added to her guilt by lying, and doing so without provocation. When a sin is committed unexpectedly under stress of a strong temptation, with no opportunity for reflection, there is some excuse for it. It is not so bad as one committed deliberately. 10. The sin of this man and woman was not committed in haste. They agreed together, planned and prepared—studied over the matter, and with determination continued in it. Their sin was, in this respect, like that of Judas Iscariot. A Christian will not remain a child of God if he wilfully does what he knows to be wrong. 11. The fate of these greedy hypocrites should impress us with the dreadfulness of sin, and move us to examine our hearts and lives, lest, like them, we be members of the church only in name. 12. The fear that came upon the believers was a sense of awe at the evidence so forcibly given of God's all seeing eye, and unerring judgments. It was plain to all that nothing could be concealed from God, and that unrepented sin will surely be punished.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of the names Ananias and Sapphira? 2. How did the believers of that time manifest their oneness and sincerity? 3. Of what were Ananias and Sapphira gully? 4. In what did their sin consist? 5. For what did they wish credit? 6. What is to be said of giving in the hope of receiving praise? 7. What did Jesus say pertinent to this? 8. What besetting sin was at the bottom of the downfall of this man and woman? 9. Mention a Scripture passage warning against this sin. 10. What was the most serious feature of their sin? 11. With whom were they really dealing? 12. What should we bear in mind when dealing with those who manage church and synodical finances? 13. What rendered these persons without excuse? 14. In what spirit should we give? 15. What law prevailed in reference to giving under the Old Testament? 16. What is the New Testament rule in regard to giving? 17. What decides the size of a Christian's gift? 18. To whom did Ananias and Sapphira make false statement? 19. How can it be said that they lied to the Holy Ghost? 20. What position did the apostles occupy? 21. Who among us occupy a similar position? 22. After accusing the offenders of lying to the Holy Ghost what did the apostle add? 23. Why do we believe that the Holy Ghost is true God? 24. What name did Peter ascribe to Him? 25. How did St. Paul express this truth? 26. What besides divine names are ascribed to the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures? 27. In what words does the Psalmist ascribe omnipresence to the Holy Ghost? 28. What does he thereby declare? 29. In what words does he ascribe omniscience to the Holy Ghost? 30. What does he thereby declare? 31. In what words does he ascribe omnipotence to the Holy Ghost? 32. What is thereby proved? 33. By whom is Christ said to have cast out devils? 34. What does this prove concerning the Holy Ghost? 35. In what words does St. John place the Spirit on a level with the Father and Son? 36. Besides divine names and attributes what also is ascribed to the Holy Ghost in the Scripture? 37. In what words is the work of creation ascribed to Him? 38. In what words is the work of regeneration ascribed to Him? 39. Since God only can regenerate what follows? 40. In what command of Jesus is the Spirit placed on a level with the Father and Son? 41. What must we

therefore believe in regard to the Holy Ghost? 42. What do the words, gave up the ghost, signify? 43. What would God show us by the punishment inflicted on these offenders? 44. What does this incident teach in regard to covetousness? 45. Who were the young men referred to? 46. How can our young people be an honor and a help to the church? 47. What is to be said of Sapphira's sin? 48. When is there some excuse for wrong doing, although not a justification of it? 49. What aggravated the sin of these people? 50. Of whose sin does their sin remind us in this particular? 51. What will be the consequence when a Christian sins wilfully? 52. To what should this incident lead us? 53. How were the believers affected by it?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I. CORINTHIANS 3, 16. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.

63. PETER'S PENTECOSTAL SERMON.

ACTS 2, 14-41.

THE CALL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has CALLED me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith, even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Peter called for Attention. — But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you and hearken to my words.¹

Peter Repelled the Charge of Drunkenness. — For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.²

Peter Explained the Mystery of the Cloven Tongues. — But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel:³ And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old

men shall dream dreams; and on My servants, and on My handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy; and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.⁴

The Apostle's Sermon. — Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:⁵ Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,⁶ ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:⁷ Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it.⁸ For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope; Because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption.⁹ This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses.¹⁰ Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted,¹¹ and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.¹² For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand. Until I make Thy foes Thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.³

The Effect and Result of the Preaching.— Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?¹⁴ then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.¹⁵ And with many other words did He testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.¹⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. All the disciples had been speaking; after all were silent Peter stood up as spokesman for all. The eleven stood with him to show their agreement with him, and to add to the impressiveness of the service. He addressed not only the natives of Jerusalem, but also the foreign Jews who were sojourning there. 2. The third hour was nine o'clock in the morning. No one was likely to be intoxicated at that hour; besides the Jews never ate or drank before that hour on festival occasions. We can learn here that it is easy to make a mistake in judging people by what we see and hear, and it is often easy also to find an excuse for suspicioning our neighbor's conduct. 3. Peter knew that the people would be more ready to believe the prophets than to believe Jesus. As they were supposed to be well acquainted with prophecy they should not have been so much amazed at the remarkable things they had seen and heard. 4. In these words from the pen of the prophet, recorded in Joel 2, 28-32, the Holy Spirit was promised. He was to come after the Messiah had accomplished His redemptive work. Jesus had made this promise to the disciples again and again, and now Peter reminds his hearers that the prophets had made that promise. The Old Testament writer declared that the coming of the Spirit would be in the last days, that is, in the last dispensation of God's kingdom among men. From the beginning the Holy Spirit had wrought in the hearts of God's people, and will do so until the end. The work of the Holy Ghost is fourfold; *He calls and gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and keeps us.* It is the office of the Spirit to *call and gather us.* Not one sinner would be saved were it not that the Spirit is sent on this mission. I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel. At the time to which the prophet referred the *Spirit would be poured out*, and would be active not only among the Jews, but among all people. In that day handmaidens would be under His extraordinary influence. As example of the fulfillment of this part of the

prophecy is the prophesying of the four daughters of Philip the evangelist. The wonders and signs to which the prophet alluded were not wanting. Historians tell of terrible thunders, lightnings, earthquakes, etc., in the period following the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, until at last Jerusalem was overthrown, and the Jews were captured, scattered or slain. The prophet foretold, however, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. This came to pass, for before Jerusalem was destroyed the Christians left the doomed city, and none of them perished in the dreadful overthrow. 5. The apostle refers to the Savior as "Jesus of Nazareth" to show that believers were not disturbed because He was of Nazareth. The miracles that Jesus wrought marked Him as one approved of God. They proved that He was of God, for no man could do such things unless God were with Him. He reminded his hearers that they were eye-witnesses of these God-given proofs of the Lord's divinity, as though challenging them to deny what he was saying. 6. That He was delivered into the hands of men and put to death is not against Jesus, for all this was determined and fore-known of God, and had to be in order that sinners might be redeemed. 7. Although it was God's plan and will that Jesus should die, this did not excuse those who shamefully abused and crucified Him. The hands that were lifted against innocent One were wicked hands. 8. God's approval rests upon Jesus of Nazareth because He raised Him from death. It was impossible for death to hold Jesus Christ because He is God. 9. Peter reminds His hearers that Jesus' resurrection was according to the Scriptures. He refers to Psalm 16 in which David speaks of the Lord's resurrection. David not only foretold Jesus' resurrection but declared that it would take place before the fourth day—before the body would see corruption. Peter's hearers had great respect for the prophet David, and for this reason he shows that Jesus' death and resurrection were in accordance with David's prophecies. Peter wishes first of all to impress on his hearers the truth that Jesus is the promised Messiah, and that however strange the manner in which He accomplished His mission, it all accorded with the prophecies of David. Like Peter all preachers should be sure to direct their hearers to Jesus. 10. Peter emphasized the truth He was proclaiming by reminding his hearers that the disciples were witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. No one was called to be an apostle who was not a witness of Jesus' resurrection. Even Paul was permitted to see the resurrected Jesus before commissioned. 11. Jesus' ascension, which had but recently occurred, was also an evidence of His Messianism foretold by David. 12. Jesus had declared that the Holy Ghost would be poured out upon His people. This was promised of the Father, and the fulfillment of this promise is the Father's declaration that He is well pleased with Jesus. 13. Peter would say, You have made a terrible mistake. The one whom you rejected and crucified is no other than the promised Messiah. God had made Him both Lord and Christ, that is, God had given such proofs of His divine mission, and glorified Him to such a degree, that it would be the greatest folly not to believe. 14. Many took the apostle's words to

heart, saw and felt their sins. The expression "pricked in their heart" means that they were sorry for their sins. They asked, What shall we do? Conscience was troubling them. They realized the enormity of their sin. They were anxious for peace. All penitent sinners ask this question, meaning, What shall we do to get rid of our sins and secure forgiveness and peace? 15. Peter's answer was, Be sorry for your sins, turn from them, accept Jesus as your Savior and be baptized. Having done this they could rest assured that they would receive forgiveness of sin, which includes salvation.

When these people heard the Gospel from the lips of Peter they heard the voice of God the Holy Ghost. God is our Father. Just as an earthly father calls to his child when he sees that it is in danger, so *God the Holy Ghost calls to sinners, for they are in danger.* The Holy Ghost calls and gathers us, by offering to us the grace of God and giving us the power to accept it in faith, by which we become members of the Christian Church. When we say that the Spirit offers us His grace we mean that He offers to forgive us. He not only calls us, and offers His grace for Christ's sake, but He *gives us power to accept it in faith.* We are so sinful by nature that we would never answer the Holy Ghost's call of ourselves. Yet many will not heed the Spirit's call under these favorable circumstances. It was so with the people of Jerusalem, and Jesus wept as He thought of it. God tells us in Isaiah 65, 21 that many will not hear the Spirit's call. "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good after their own thoughts."

Let us not forget that *the Holy Ghost calls us through the Gospel.* Every time we read or hear God's Word His voice is ringing in our ears.

When we obey the voice of the Spirit we become members of the Christian Church—are numbered with God's people. The Holy Ghost has called and gathered us. The Spirit is promised to all. God is no respecter of persons. His Spirit always accompanies His Word, earnestly offering His grace. 16. Peter's preaching bore much fruit. Few if any sermons have been so fruitful as was this one, but for our comfort God declares that His Word shall not return unto Him void. That means that no preaching of God's Word is vain.

QUESTIONS.

1. Under what circumstances was this sermon delivered? 2. To whom was it addressed? 3. What facts made it evident that the disciples were not intoxicated? 4. What can we learn from this incident? 5. To what prophecy did the apostle refer? 6. Why did he refer to the prophet's writings? 7. Why was their amazement scarcely to be expected? 8. What promise was contained in this prophecy? 9. What is understood by "the last days?" 10. When did the Spirit begin His work? 11. How manifold is His work? 12. What is the first work of the Spirit here mentioned? 13. What would be the consequence were He not sent on this mission? 14. Why would this be the consequence? 15. What is to be understood by the expression the "Spirit will be poured out?" 16. On whom would the

Spirit be poured out? 17. Give an example of handmaidens or daughters who prophesied? 18. What were some of the wonders and signs predicted? 19. In what would these strange happenings finally end? 20. Who would be spared from this destruction? 21. How did the Christians escape the destruction that came upon Jerusalem? 22. How did the apostle refer to the Savior, and why did he thus refer to Him? 23. What proved that Jesus was approved of God? 24. Why were those people without excuse in rejecting Jesus? 25. Why had they no cause to be offended at Jesus' death? 26. What besides the miracles He wrought declared God's approval of Jesus? 27. What made this proof all the stronger? 28. Mention a psalm in which Jesus' resurrection was foretold. 29. What particular in regard to Jesus' resurrection did the Psalmist foretell? 30. Why did the apostle refer to what David said on this subject? 31. In what particular did he set preachers an example? 32. How did the apostle emphasize his argument in regard to Christ's resurrection? 33. What were all the apostles able to confess? 34. Mention another evidence of God's approval of Jesus. 35. What promise of the Father is alluded to? 36. What did Peter say to these people? 37. How were many affected by his words? 38. What is meant by being pricked in their hearts? 39. What question did they ask? 40. Who also asked this question? 41. What did they mean by it? 42. What was the apostle's answer? 43. What arrangement has God made that all sinners may receive the blessings that these people received? 44. What would be the consequence if the Spirit did not call and gather us? 45. What did these people hear while listening to Peter? 46. How does the Holy Ghost call and gather us? 47. What is meant by offering us His grace? 48. Why does He make us this offer? 49. Besides offering His grace what does the Spirit give us? 50. What is the result so far as many are concerned? 51. How was Jesus affected by the conduct of the Jews in this particular? 52. In what words did the prophet Isaiah express this truth? 53. What should we bear in mind? 54. When is the Spirit calling a sinner? 55. What is the result when one obeys the Spirit's calling? 56. How many of those who hear God's Word are called? 57. What has God promised in regard to His Word? 58. What does this mean?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I. PETER 2, 9. Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

64. THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

Acts 8, 26-40.

THE MEANS OF GRACE.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has CALLED ME BY THE GOSPEL, ENLIGHTENED me with His gifts, SANCTIFIED and KEPT me in the true faiths even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

The Angel directing Philip. — And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.¹ And he arose and went.²

The Eunuch. — And, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning; and, sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet.³

Philip and the Eunuch in Conversation. — Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.⁴ And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, understandest thou what thou readest.⁵ And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.⁶

The Prophecy which troubled the Eunuch, and which Philip Expounded. — The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: In His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? for His life is taken from the earth.⁷ And the Eunuch answered Phillip and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.⁸

The Eunuch Baptized. — And as they went on their way,

they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.⁹ And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.¹⁰ And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.¹¹

The Evangelist and His Convert Parted.— And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.¹² But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Philip was the second of the seven deacons who had been appointed to look after the poor. Later he left Jerusalem for Samaria where he preached with great success. At the time referred to in our lesson he was directed to go to the road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza, a city of Philistia. A strange command! A preacher to go to a road that led through a desert! God gave directions to the prophets and the workers of the primitive Church by means of angels, or in dreams and visions. Now that the Church is established He gives directions through the congregation or other bodies of the Church.

2. Philip was not told for what purpose he was to go to this isolated region, and it is not likely that he was able to see any need of going to such a place, but the fact that the Lord wanted him there was sufficient. He obeyed. His example teaches us to obey God's commands and submit to His will even if we cannot understand why He so commands and wills.

3. Ethiopia was the country south of Egypt. Its inhabitants were descendants of Ham, and belonged to the black race. The Ethiopians were not in good repute as a nation in those days. Eunuchs were a class of men usually employed as chamber-servants in royal households, but often, as in this case, rising to higher positions. This man held a responsible position, having charge of the queen's treasures. Candace was the common title of the queens of Ethiopia. This eunuch stood high among the people, and being in authority, was no doubt a busy man; yet he was so much concerned about the affairs of his soul that he undertook the long journey from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship. He had learned of the true God and the religion of the Jews, and wishing to get the best information, journeyed to the capital of Judea. He also showed his earnestness of purpose by reading from the book of Isaiah while sitting in the chariot on his way home. The book in which he read is a part of the inspired Word of God. It was through it that God had begun His work in the eunuch's heart. God works through

means in the natural world. To preserve our life food, clothing and shelter are the means used. It is to be expected therefore that means must be used in the spiritual world. The means through which the Holy Ghost works are the *Word of God* and the *Holy Sacraments*. We call these *the Means of Grace*. In Romans 10, 17, Paul tells us how God works faith in our hearts: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." If one would believe in Jesus he must hear the Word of God. He must hear it not only with the bodily ears, but also with the heart, as we learn from Luke 11, 28, "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it." On the day of Pentecost three thousand people became Christians and were added to the Church. How was this done? The apostles preached God's Word to them, and they listened to it. Yes, they not only heard it with their bodily ears, but "received it gladly." In 1 Peter 1, 23, the apostle assures us that such results may be expected, wherever the Word is preached: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. 4. Having reached his destination the Spirit then gave him further instructions, directing him to the eunuch in the chariot. He was not told what to do on meeting the eunuch for God had already called him to preach. While God does not give us information and direction in the way in which this was done to Philip, yet He makes the path of duty plain to all. 5. Philip was an obedient workman. He obeyed promptly and without asking any questions—he ran. He found the stranger reading the prophecy of Isaiah. No one is too busy, or has such important matters to look after, that he should not take time to read the Bible. Bible readers should wish to understand what they read. It will help us to understand if we read slowly, prayerfully and in an humble spirit. 6. The Bible has some difficult passages, but all that we need know unto the saving of our souls is plainly revealed. As the Lord provided help for this anxious eunuch so he has arranged that all may hear and learn His Word. To this end He has instituted the office of the ministry. By attentively and prayerfully hearing the preached Word, and making good use of Church literature, all may grow in a knowledge of the truth. 7. This prophecy is recorded in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and refers to our Lord's meekness before His enemies. It is remarkable how fully our Lord's sufferings accord with this and other prophecies. 8. The eunuch's question, Of whom does the prophet speak? gave the evangelist an opportunity to preach Jesus to him. As Philip embraced the opportunity to fulfill the mission to which he was called, so will all true ministers of the gospel. Such an opportunity is afforded a minister when a congregation assembles to hear him preach. He does not understand his calling or feel his responsibility if he fails to preach Jesus. 9. Philip's message was, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." On reaching a suitable place the eunuch requested Baptism. Having come to faith in Jesus he desired Baptism because it is the Lord's will that all be baptized, and because Baptism is a means of entering into fellowship with God's people. Since he was

already a believer Holy Baptism was not necessary so far as kindling faith in his heart was concerned, but as a means of sealing his faith, and because Christ commands that all should be baptized. Faith was awakened in the eunuch's heart through the hearing of God's Word. The Holy Ghost had begun His work in this man's heart.

To the eunuch's question Philip replied, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

We baptize children to kindle faith in their hearts, and this is the only means we know of whereby to do this. Adults, however, must be brought to faith through the Word before they may be baptized. It would be mockery to baptize an unbeliever. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." 10. The eunuch's confession was brief, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Of course there can be no true faith where there is no sorrow for sin and an earnest purpose to amend our lives. 11. The mode of applying the water in this baptism, nor in any other referred to in the Scripture, is not mentioned. The only direction given is, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Were the mode of applying the water an essential feature the directions would not be wanting. That Philip and the eunuch went "into the water" and "came up out of the water" does not prove that this Baptism was by immersion.

The Holy Sacraments also are means of grace. They are the Word of God united with visible means. The visible means in Baptism is water, in the Lord's Supper, bread and wine. That God's grace is bestowed through holy Baptism we learn, for example, from Titus 3, 5 and 6: "Not by words of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." We believe that His grace is bestowed in the Holy Supper also, for He says, John 6, 55, "My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." Therefore we go to the Holy Supper to refresh our hungry and thirsty souls through the enjoyment of the blessings of Christ. 12. The evangelist was caught away by the Spirit so that the eunuch might realize the more keenly that Philip was a special messenger sent to him for his salvation. 13. The evangelist made a long missionary journey, preaching in all the cities, and finally settled down in Cesarea.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Philip? 2. What strange command did the angel give him? 3. How did God usually give directions to the prophets and early New Testament writers? 4. How does He direct His workmen to-day? 5. What fact was sufficient to lead the evangelist to obey? 6. What does His example teach us? 7. What can you say of Ethiopia and its people? 8. Who were eunuchs? 9. What responsible position did this one occupy? 10. By what title were the Ethiopian queens known? 11. What is commendable in the eunuch? 12. How did he manifest his earnestness of purpose? 13. Of what is the book of Isaiah a part? 14. Why is it to be expected that God will accomplish His work in the heart through

means? 15. Through what means does the Holy Ghost operate? 16. What are these called? 17. According to Paul's words how is faith wrought? 18. What must one do in order that he may believe in Jesus? 19. What beside bodily hearing of the Word is necessary? 20. How is this expressed in Luke 11, 28? 21. How was the conversion of three thousand souls brought about on Pentecost? 22. On what words are we assured of such results from preaching the Word to-day? 23. What directions did the Spirit give the eunuch when he reached his destination? 24. What does God make plain to all of us? 25. What example did the evangelist set us? 26. How did he find the eunuch engaged? 27. What question did he ask him? 28. What will aid us in understanding the Scriptures? 29. What may be said of the Bible as to its plainness? 30. What helps to an understanding of the Word has God given? 31. Where is the prophecy in question recorded? 32. To what does it refer? 33. What is remarkable in regard to the prophecies concerning our Lord's sufferings? 34. How did the eunuch give the evangelist an opportunity to preach to him? 35. What was likely the substance of Philip's message? 36. What did the eunuch request? 37. Why did he desire Baptism? 38. Why should adults be baptized? 39. How had faith been kindled in the man's heart? 40. On what condition could the eunuch be baptized? 41. What was the eunuch's confession? 42. When only should an adult be baptized? 43. What else is present where faith exists? 44. What indicates to us that the mode of applying the water is not an essential feature of Baptism? 45. What proof is there here that the eunuch was baptized by immersion? 46. What also are means of grace? 47. In what way is the Word brought to us in the sacraments? 48. Give a passage proving that God's grace is bestowed through Baptism? 49. What can be said of the Holy Supper in this regard? 50. Why should we partake of the Holy Supper? 51. Why was the evangelist caught away by the Spirit?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ROMANS 10, 17. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

65. REVIEW OF LESSONS 61-64.

Pentecost. — The Old Testament Pentecost was observed in commemoration of the giving of the law. The New Testament Pentecost falls on the same day, and commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the disciples at Jerusalem (Lesson 61). This occurrence was preceded by a sound from heaven as of a mighty, rushing wind. Like the wind the Spirit is invisible, all-pervading and powerful. The workings of the Spirit are compared with fire. The Spirit resembles fire in this that He enlightens, enthuses and purifies those in whom He dwells. The Spirit came in the form of cloven tongues, thus indicating that the disciples would be gifted with the power to proclaim the Gospel, and that the Spirit would operate in the hearts of men through the Word. A tongue sat upon each of them, so the Spirit must be personally and individually bestowed. The Holy Ghost is not an attribute of God, but the third Person of the Godhead, and therefore true God. The work of the Spirit may be expressed in the one word sanctify. It is His office to make holy. He still comes, and will ever come, through the Word and Sacraments. We therefore confess, I believe in the Holy Ghost.

The Third Person of the Godhead. — In Lesson 62 we have St. Peter's words of reproof to Ananias, who was guilty of the sin of lying, even lying to the Holy Ghost. The apostle said, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Since lying to the Holy Ghost is lying unto God, the Holy Ghost must be God. This truth is plainly set forth in the Holy Scriptures for there the names, attributes, works and honor which pertain to God only are expressly ascribed to the Holy Ghost. God is omnipresent, and the Psalmist says of the third person of the Trinity, "Whither shall I go from Thy presence." God is omniscient, and Paul declares of the Holy Ghost, "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." God is omnipotent, and the apostle declares, "All these things worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will," Divine works are also ascribed to the third person of the Trinity. He is credited with the work of creation when St. John says, "The Spirit of God hath made me," and of regeneration when He declares that a man must be born of water and the Spirit if

he would enter into the kingdom of God. The Holy Ghost is mentioned with and put on the same level with the Father and the Son in the work of building up the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus commands, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost is true God.

The Spirit's Work. — The prophet Joel, as we learn in Lesson 63, foretold the wonderful work the Holy Spirit would accomplish in the hearts and lives of young and old in the last days — after the coming of the Messiah. There always has been a Holy Spirit, and He has always wrought in the hearts of God's people, and will do so until the end. The prophet foresaw, however, that the Spirit would be more active and effective after the completion of our Lord's redemptive work than ever before. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to call and gather, enlighten, sanctify and keep us. As an earthly father calls to his child when he sees that it is in danger, so God the Holy Ghost calls to sinners, for they are in danger. He not only calls us and offers His grace for Christ's sake, but also gives us power to accept it in faith. Not one sinner would be saved were it not that the Spirit is sent on this mission. When we obey the voice of the Spirit we become members of the Christian Church — are numbered with God's people. The Spirit through the Word begins and carries forward His work, so that the sinner is gradually enlightened. Having learned to know God's will, and being led by the Spirit to love God's will, the work of sanctification is begun in the believer's heart. He then begins to hate what is wrong, to love what is right, and receives more and more power to eschew the wrong and do the right, and is kept by the Spirit's influence unto life everlasting.

The Word and Sacraments. — We read in Lesson 64 that the Ethiopian eunuch was concerned about the affairs of his soul, and God sent Phillip to make known to him the way of salvation. The evangelist did this by proclaiming to the enquirer the Word of God. It was through this means that the Holy Spirit worked in the eunuch's heart. The Holy Ghost still works through these means, that is, the Word and the Sacraments. We call them the Means of Grace. St. Paul tells us this in the words, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." If one would believe in Jesus He must hear the Word of God. The

opportunity that the eunuch enjoyed those enjoy who read the Bible, or sit within the sound of the preached Word. Having been brought to faith in Jesus the eunuch was baptized. God wants all believers to be baptized unto the sealing of their faith. He also wants children baptized, for through this Sacrament the Holy Spirit regenerates them. Of this we are assured by the apostle's words, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Supper is also a means through which the Spirit works, for Jesus says, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 61. 1. What did the Old Testament Pentecost commemorate? 2. What can be said of the New Testament Pentecost? 3. What preceded the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Ghost? 4. In what respects may the Spirit be compared with the wind? 5. In what respects may its operations be compared with fire? 6. What was indicated by the cloven tongues? 7. What was indicated by the fact that a tongue sat upon each? 8. What do we believe concerning the Holy Ghost? 9. What work is attributed to Him? 10. What is not to be expected now concerning the work of the Spirit? 11. Through what means does He operate?

LESSON 62. 1. What Biblical narrative is presented to us in Lesson 62? 2. By what words did Peter declare that the Holy Ghost is true God? 3. How else is this taught in Holy Scriptures? 4. Mention attributes of God that are ascribed to the Spirit? In what words is the work of creation ascribed to the Holy Ghost? The work of regeneration? 6. In what relation is He placed in the Scriptures to the other persons of the Trinity? 7. Give an instance.

LESSON 63. 1. What prophecy is referred to in this lesson? 2. When did the Holy Spirit's work begin? 3. What did the prophet foresee? 4. What is the office of the Holy Ghost? 5. How does the Spirit begin His work with the sinner? 6. What does the Spirit do besides calling us and offering us His grace? 7. What would be the consequence did He not call us? 8. How does the Spirit continue His work in the heart? 9. What is the result? 10. What is the purpose of the Spirit in regard to all whom He calls?

LESSON 64. 1. On what mission was Philip sent? 2. How did he accomplish his work? 3. Through what means does the Spirit accomplish his work in the hearts of sinners? 4. How does Paul express this? 5. How can a sinner be brought to faith? 6. When is the opportunity of enjoying the Spirit's influence brought to us? 7. Through what other means than the audible Word does the Spirit work? 8. Why should believers be baptized? 9. Why should children be baptized? 10. What words assure us that the Holy Supper is also a means of grace?

66. SAUL'S CONVERSION.

ACTS 9, 1-19.

CONVERSION.

I believe that I CANNOT BY MY OWN REASON OR STRENGTH BELIEVE in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the HOLY GHOST HAS CALLED ME BY THE GOSPEL, ENLIGHTENED me with His gifts, SANCTIFIED and KEPT me in the true faiths even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Saul the Persecutor.—And Saul¹ yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.²

Saul Struck Down.—And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven,³ and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?⁴ And he said, Who art Thou, Lord?⁵ And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.⁶

Saul Humbled.—And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?⁷ And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.⁸ And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

Saul Taken to the City.—And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

The Word of the Lord to Ananias.—And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias: and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.¹⁰ And the Lord said unto him. Arise, and go unto the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath

seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.¹¹

The Objections of Ananias and the Lord's Answers to them.— Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name.¹² But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the children of Israel:¹³ For I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake.¹⁴

Saul's Baptism.— And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hand on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized.¹⁵ And when he had received meat he was strengthened.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Saul was a man of remarkably small stature, and a Pharisee of the strictest sect. He was born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, of Jewish parents, of the tribe of Benjamin. Gamaliel was his tutor. 2. Saul had started in the work of opposing the cause of Christ by taking care of the garments of the men who stoned Stephen, and had helped in scattering the congregation at Jerusalem. He threatened believers in order to frighten them from the faith, and when that did not answer, he put them to death. He says, "I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women." Acts 22, 4. He did not confine his efforts to Jerusalem, but persecuted Christians wherever he found them. He decided to go to Damascus, the ancient capital of Syria, 133 miles northeast of Jerusalem. Many Jews, over whose synagogues the high priest at Jerusalem exercised a certain authority, lived there, and some of them had accepted the Gospel. In order that he might be able to show the rulers of the synagogues in Damascus that he came with authority to seize Christians he secured letters from the high priest at Jerusalem. It was his purpose to bring his prisoners to Jerusalem where the council would pronounce their condemnation. 3. From verse 17 and from chapter 22 we learn that it was the Lord Jesus that appeared to the persecutor. It could therefore be said in chapter 22, 14 that Paul had seen the Just One. 4. It is quite likely that the traveler was riding and fell from the beast to the

ground. From chapter 26, 14 we learn that those who accompanied him also fell to the earth. The voice informed him that by persecuting believers he was persecuting the Lord. He was called by his name, which reminds us that God knows us intimately. The repetition of the name indicates deep interest—solicitude. 5. Saul's question implies that His conscience had been aroused; he suspects that it is Jesus that is addressing him, and longs to come to a knowledge of the truth. The Holy Spirit had entered his heart, and he longed for light. The Spirit alone can give the light for which the awakened sinner sighs. I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him. **We cannot believe of ourselves because of original sin,** by which is meant the utter depravity of the whole human nature, which, since the fall of Adam, is inborn in all men. When it is said that man is utterly depraved it is meant that we have lost the image of God, and, consequently, that our reason is darkened and our will depraved. Man's reason being darkened he cannot understand the truth that he needs to know in order to be saved. In 1 Corinthians 2, 14 Paul says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto Him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Man's will being perverted he does not wish to believe in Christ and be saved. That is what the apostle means when he says, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2, 13. Since man's reason is darkened and his will perverted *conversion is solely the gracious work of the Holy Ghost.* When we say *solely* we mean that He does it alone. The prophet says, "Turn Thou me and I shall be turned." Jeremiah 31, 18. The apostle says, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Corinthians 12, 3. David therefore prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51, 10. These and many other passages of Scripture teach us that God begins, carries on and finishes the work of conversion, 6. The reply reveals to him that it is Jesus, whom he hates and whom he has been persecuting, that is addressing him. Pricks were the pointed ends of ox-goads used for driving oxen; when the animal kicked it hurt itself. Saul was injuring himself by persecuting believers. 7. His cry, What wilt Thou have me to do? indicates penitence, and a sincere desire to know and do his duty. 8. Saul was directed to go to the city where he would be told what to do. God still reveals His will to us through others, not directly. Saul started to Damascus to persecute believers; now he goes there that he himself may become a believer. 9. Saul's companions saw the light, were overcome with fright, stood speechless, but heard not the voice. Saul was struck blind—a strong reminder to him of the spiritual blindness of which he was about to be healed. He was led by his companions into Damascus where he was to receive his spiritual sight. God had sent His Spirit to lead the spiritually blind to Him who can give them sight.

Paul's blindness reminds us of the punishment with which doubting Zacharias was visited. 10. Ananias was a Jewish convert and a devout man. The Lord called him by name as he did Saul. The answer of Ananias was like that of Samuel, and showed a readiness to do God's will. The Lord makes known to us where He would have us serve Him, and what he would have us do. Like Ananias let us ever be in readiness to obey Him. 11. The directions were very plain. He is even told that he will find Saul praying, in order that he might not fear to meet the former dangerous man. God has revealed his will in general in plain words so that all may understand all that they need know. 12. Ananias had heard of Saul's fierce persecution, and had heard that he was coming to Damascus with authority from the high priest to arrest believers, and drag them to Jerusalem, and therefore feared to meet the man. 13. It was strange news that Ananias heard. Saul no longer a persecutor but the Lord's chosen vessel, or servant! The Lord must have told Ananias of Saul's vision on the way for he refers to it in addressing him. It must have sounded strange to this Jew to hear that Saul was to bear the name of Jesus to the Gentiles. Yes, he was to preach this rejected and crucified One to kings, and also to the children of Israel. 14. Saul had caused many believers to suffer for Christ's sake. Now the Lord will lead him into suffering for the sake of this same Christ. The Lord permits His servants to suffer. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." 15. Ananias addressed the penitent as Brother Saul, and deals with him in a kind and brotherly way. Saul is to receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost. All this took place at once. Through the Word which Ananias preached to Saul the Spirit entered his heart, and he believed. Saul the persecutor became Paul the Christian. This was the work of the Holy Ghost. Saul was converted. He saw things differently; he was now *Brother Saul*.

To be converted, which is the same as to repent, means *to be contrite* for one's sins and *to believe in Jesus Christ*. This is taught, for example, in Mark 1, 15, "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel." We have an example of a penitent sinner in the publican of whom we read that he stood afar off, and would not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. He was sorry for his sins and he expected to be forgiven—he had faith. Another example is that of the prodigal son. He felt sorry, and went home and asked forgiveness. He had contrition and faith. A third example is that of Peter, who denied the Savior. He was so sorry that he wept bitterly, yet he did not despair. He believed that Jesus would forgive him and save him.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Saul? 2. How did he begin his opposition to Christianity? 3. What method did he pursue later? 4. What has he recorded in reference to his persecutions? 5. To what city did he finally direct his steps? 6. What can you say of Damascus? 7. Why did he

secure authority from the high priest at Jerusalem? 8. What was his purpose? 9. Who appeared to him on the way? 10. What immediate effect did the vision produce? 11. What did the voice say? 12. What was indicated by the mentioning of his name? 13. What did the repetition of his name signify? 14. What question did he ask? 15. What did the question imply? 16. What change had taken place? 17. Whence the light for which the awakened sinner sighs? 18. Why must the Holy Ghost work this change in the sinner? 19. What hinders the sinner from coming to faith by his own efforts? 20. What is original sin? 21. What is meant by being utterly depraved? 22. What is the result now that man's reason is darkened? 23. How does St. Paul express this? 24. How is man's will affected by original sin? 25. What does it mean to be converted? 26. Whose is the work of conversion? 27. Why do we say it is solely the work of the Holy Ghost? 28. How is this expressed in Scripture passages? 29. What was revealed by the reply? 30. What were pricks? 31. What is meant by the words, "It is hard to kick against the pricks"? 32. What did Saul then ask? 33. What did this question indicate? 34. What directions were given him? 35. How do they accord with God's methods to-day? 36. How did Saul's companions fare? 37. What punishment did Saul suffer? 38. Of what should it have reminded him? 39. What became of him after he was stricken? 40. What can you say of Ananias? 41. What answer did Ananias make the Lord? 42. Of whom are we reminded by his answer? 43. In what respect did he set us a good example? 44. Why was all this told him? 45. How was Ananias affected on hearing that Saul was coming? 46. What had he heard that filled him with fear? 47. How must the news he received concerning Saul have seemed to him? 48. In what respect was this news strange? 49. How did Ananias address Saul? 50. How was this spiritual change wrought in Saul? 51. What does it mean to be converted? 52. Repeat a pertinent Scripture passage. 53. Give examples from the Scripture of converted or penitent sinners.

GOLDEN TEXT.

PHILIPPIANS 2, 13. It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

67. JESUS DINES WITH A PHARISEE.

LUKE 7, 36-50.

REPENTANCE.

I believe that I CANNOT BY MY OWN REASON OR STRENGTH BELIEVE in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the HOLY GHOST HAS CALLED ME BY THE GOSPEL, ENLIGHTENED me with His gifts, SANCTIFIED and KEPT me in the true faith: even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Christ Entertained by a Pharisee. — One of the Pharisees desired Him that He would eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.¹

Christ Honored by a Penitent Woman. — And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,² and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.³

Christ's Host Offended. — Now when the Pharisee which had bidden Him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him; for she is a sinner.

Christ Justified the Woman and Himself by the Story of Two Debtors. — And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.⁵ And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty: And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.⁶ Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.⁷

Christ Praises and Forgives the Woman. — And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this

woman?⁸ I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint.¹⁰ Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.¹¹ And he said unto her. Thy sins are forgiven.¹² And they that sat at meat with Him began to say within themselves Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And He said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The Pharisees were the most important religious sect among the Jews; the word means "separatists." They were self-righteous, satisfied by outward conforming to the law and tradition. This Pharisee was not a believer, and, it seems, was moved by pride or some other unworthy motive to invite the great Rabbi to his table. The fact that Jesus accepted the invitation, although He knew the man's heart, manifests His love for sinners. 2. The woman was a sinner, that is one who had broken the sixth commandment. The fact that persons took a reclining posture at table in those days made the washing and anointing of a guest's feet less difficult and embarrassing than it would be in our day. Meals were often eaten in a somewhat public place, so that an uninvited person could readily gain access to the guests. Alabaster was a fine quality of gypsum, usually white, and often made into vases which were filled with ointment. 3. The woman had learned to see her sins. Perhaps she had heard the preaching of John the Baptist or of Jesus. She was by this act showing *her penitence* of heart and her love for the Savior. In want of water and towel she washes the Lord's feet with her tears and wipes them with her hair—a beautiful example of consecrating one's self to Jesus. We learn from her example that those who love Jesus will find some way to show it. 4. The Pharisees took offence at Christ for permitting a sinful woman to anoint His feet, and thought if He were a prophet He would know that this woman is a sinner, and would not allow her to approach Him. The Pharisee thought he knew the woman, and adjudged her a bad character, while she, being penitent, was pleasing to the Lord. We may learn from this how easy it is to be mistaken in judging others. The people looked down upon this woman but Jesus saw her heart and knew that she was a child of God. It is comforting to know that the Lord knows and accepts all who are penitent, no matter what the world may say or think of them.

There are two parts to *repentance, sorrow for sin and faith in Christ*. From this penitent woman we learn what it is to be sorry for sins. We usually express this condition of heart by the word *contrition*. Contrition is the sorrow of the heart for sin. Of this condition David speaks in Psalm 57, 17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." A heart that is sorry for sin is called a broken heart. This weeping woman had a broken heart. It was not some disappointment she had experienced, some serious bodily ailment, some great loss, but her sins that made her sorry. She had learned that her sins were grieving and offending God. She knew that God was good to her and that she ought to be pleasing Him, but instead of pleasing Him she was grieving Him. *She was sorry*.

Because of our sins we deserve punishment. God has threatened to punish sin. We learn from the conclusion of the Ten Commandments, I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments. Here God threatens to punish all those who transgress His commandments, therefore we should fear His wrath. God's threat is an earnest threat. He punishes sin. At the time of Noah He punished the whole world because of sin. Entire cities, as, for example, Sodom and Gomorrah, have been destroyed by Him because of the wickedness of the inhabitants. God punishes sin in this life, and also in the life to come. Of the wicked and impenitent He says, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." Matthew 25, 46. So we should be sorry for our sins, not only because *they grieve and offend God*, but also because *God threatens to punish them*.

Some people, like the Pharisee, are not sorry for their sins. David sinned grievously, and was not sorry until God sent the prophet to show him his sins. After David saw his sins he was sorry, and cried, "O Lord, rebuke me not." This woman, weeping because of her sins, reminds us of the penitent Psalmist, who expresses his sorrow in Psalm 130. She also reminds us of the publican who fell upon his face, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." She reminds us of the prodigal who returned after wasting his substance in riotous living, crying, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." She reminds us of Peter who having denied Jesus, went out and wept bitterly. 5. Jesus read the heart of His host, and proceeds to give him much needed counsel. Let us not forget that the Lord knows our thoughts. 6. The debtors of whom Jesus speaks are sinners. In these debtors we see a picture of ourselves. We have broken God's law and therefore are His debtors. Our sins are our debts. So these debtors had nothing to pay so we can do nothing toward meriting forgiveness. As one of these debtors owed much more than the other, so the sins of some are more grievous than those of others, but all are hopelessly in debt. Like these debtors our only hope is in obtaining forgiveness. 7. One who has been relieved of a

debt that he could not pay will surely love the benefactor who cancels his obligations. The greater his debt has been the more reason he has for loving the one who came to his rescue. If we realize the dreadfulness of sin we will love our Lord, because He redeemed us from sin. 8. Jesus bade the proud Pharisee to take notice of the woman whom he despised. A man may learn valuable lessons from those whom he considers his inferiors. 9. This self-satisfied Pharisee had come far short of doing his duty toward Jesus. Those who feel well pleased with themselves will do well to ask Jesus to help them to see themselves. This Pharisee had been very strict in outward fulfillment of the law, but he was not prompted by love. If the motives are wrong the deeds will not please God. The Pharisee had omitted many duties, but did not feel concerned. It is easy to overlook our sins of omission, or not to feel concerned about them, because they do not look as bad as sins of commission. 10. The lowly service this woman rendered Jesus seemed quite insignificant compared with the rigid life of a Pharisee, but it pleased the Lord, because it was prompted by love. God looks less at the greatness of the service than at the motive prompting it. 11. This woman was forgiven not because her sins had been of little consequence — for they were grievous sins — but because she had a penitent and believing heart. Her sins were forgiven because she loved much. Her love was not the ground or cause of her forgiveness but the evidence of that penitence of heart and childlike faith through which the chief of sinners can find forgiveness.

Simon was comforting himself by the thought that his sins were insignificant compared with those of the woman, but Jesus reminded him that since he manifested so little love, even if his sins were comparatively less grievous than those of the woman, he had less reason to rejoice than she — his heart was not as near right as hers. 12. As Jesus declares to this woman her forgiveness in order that in hearing His words she might have greater comfort, so through the preaching of the Gospel He brings comfort to penitent sinners to-day. The Gospel, though preached by a sinner, is the voice of Jesus. 13. Jesus can forgive sins because He is true God. He forgave this woman because she felt her sins, was sorry for them, and believed that Jesus was the Savior sent of God. With forgiveness comes peace and hope and salvation.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of the sect of the Pharisees? 2. What evidently moved Simon to invite Jesus to his table? 3. How did Jesus manifest His love for sinners? 4. What had been the character of this woman? 5. What circumstance made it less difficult and embarrassing for her to wash Jesus' feet there? 6. What circumstance gave her ready access to Jesus? 7. What was alabaster? 8. In what condition of heart did this woman approach Jesus? 9. How was this change probably brought about? 10. How did she manifest her penitence? 11. What does her example

teach us? 12. How was the Pharisee affected by the incident? 13. What gave him offense? 14. What may we learn from Simon's mistake? 15. What comfort do we find here? 16. What does it mean to repent? 17. In which part of repentance was this woman especially exemplary? 18. By what word do we usually express sorrow for sin? 19. In what words did the psalmist refer to this condition of heart? 20. What does he mean by a broken heart? 21. What caused this woman's sorrow of heart? 22. What thought especially grieved her? 23. What do we deserve because of sin? 24. What is said on this subject in the conclusion of the Ten Commandments? 25. What does God here threaten? 26. How has God proved that this is an earnest threat? 27. To what kind of punishment of sin is God moved? 28. In what words is eternal punishment threatened? 29. When only was David sorry for his sins? 30. Of which penitent sinners does this woman remind us? 31. What can you say of the publican? 32. What can you say of the prodigal son? 33. What can you say of Peter? 34. How did Jesus know Simon's thoughts? 35. Of whom are these debtors a picture? 36. In what way are we indebted to God? 37. Of what should the inability of these debtors to cancel their debt remind us? 38. Of what does the difference in the amounts of their indebtedness remind us? 39. How can we escape God's punishment for our sins? 40. To whom did Jesus direct the Pharisee for a lesson? 41. What may we learn from this? 42. What was wrong about the Pharisee's life? 43. What kind of sins did he not see? 44. Why is it easy to underestimate sins of omission? 45. Why was the woman's service more acceptable than that of the Pharisee? 46. Why was this woman forgiven? 47. How is the expression, "forgiven, for she loved much" to be understood? 48. Why had Simon less reason to rejoice than this woman? 49. In what way is the comfort this woman received brought to sinners to-day? 50. Why could Jesus forgive sins? 51. Why did this woman find peace?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 51, 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

68. MANY OF THE APOSTLES' HEARERS BELIEVE.

ACTS 17, 1-12.

FAITH.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the TRUE FAITH: even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Paul and Silas Reached Thessalonica. — Now when they¹ had passed through Amphipolis and Appollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews.²

Paul Preached in the Synagogue. — And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures,³ opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.⁴

His Success among the Thessalonians. — And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.⁵

Paul and Silas in Trouble. — But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.⁶ And when they found them not they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also; whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.⁷ And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things, and when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.⁸

They Proceed to Berea. — And the brethren immediately

sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Their Success among the More Noble Bereans.— These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed: also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.¹⁰

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Paul and Silas are referred to. They had visited Philippi of Macedonia, to which Paul was called by a messenger who appeared to him in a vision. He and Silas got into trouble when Paul healed an afflicted damsel. They were cast into prison, an earthquake loosened their bonds and opened the prison doors. The jailor was converted, but the magistrates besought the missionaries to leave their city. Having comforted the believers, they proceeded on their way. They had suffered much abuse, and passed through thrilling experiences, but willingly continued in the work. 2. Amphipolis was 30 miles from Philippi, Appollonia was 30 miles further on their way, and Thessalonica was 20 miles from the last named city—80 miles from Philippi. 3. Although Paul was called to preach to the Gentiles, he did not forget the Jews. It was his custom to go first to the synagogue of the city in which he stopped, where, of course, he met Jews only. He spent three Sabbath-days reasoning out of the Scriptures with the Jews of Thessalonica. He acted discretely, for his efforts among the Gentiles would be the more successful if the Jews were cooperating with him. 4. The purpose of Paul's preaching was to prove to his hearers that Jesus is the Christ. The Jews could not think that Jesus was the Christ, since He was so shamefully abused, and put to an ignominious death. Paul set about to convince his Jewish hearers that "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." Had the Jews been more familiar with the prophecies they would have understood that Jesus' sufferings, death and resurrection, even as to many details, were foretold. 5. Although the Jews were prejudiced against Christ, and hated Him, many believed after hearing the apostles, and consorted with, or, attached themselves to, these men. This means that these people were not only willing to hear the apostles, but also became their helpers—co-laborers. The preaching of Paul and Silas bore fruit among the Gentiles also, for many of the devout Greeks believed. From Paul's first epistle to the congregation established at this place we learn that some turned from their idols to God. Of the women who became converts some were of the chief women, and there were not a few. Through the preaching of the apostles *faith* had been kindled in their hearts. *Faith is the confidence of the heart that we through Christ have*

forgiveness of sin and a gracious God. In Hebrews 11, 1 we are told what faith is: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." It deals with things not seen. It takes God at His word, and does not ask to see and understand. One of God's promises is that He will forgive us because Christ has obeyed the law, and suffered and died to atone for our sins. Faith accepts this promise as true. Faith is the chief part of repentance. It is called *confidence*. Without the confidence which clings to Jesus no one can be saved. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16. 6. The Jews who believed not made the apostles trouble. They were the more bitter against them because so many of their number had become Christians. There is no more bitter hatred than that which a Jew bears to one of his race who has become a Christian. They enlisted the baser sort, those of no reputation, to aid them. Since the heart is naturally inclined to the bad it is not difficult to get plenty of help in wrong doing. Jason was a convert with whom the apostles lodged. 7. The accusation that the apostles had turned the world upside down had some truth in it. Nothing has wrought such changes in individuals, in communities, in nations and in the world as has the Gospel. Since these changes are all for the better, it is foolish and sinful to oppose the Christian Church. By the accusation, "these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar," there was a reference to the confession that Jesus is a king and has a kingdom. It is false, however, that He is a hindrance to the earthly powers. He is not an earthly king, and His kingdom, so far from being a hindrance to the kingdoms of this world, is the greatest possible help to them. 8. This matter vexed the rulers for they saw no reasons for suspecting or fearing the apostles, but, since the enemies represented them as being opposed to Caesar, they were under the necessity of getting rid of them. 9. A great and good work had been started in Thessalonica, but because a large number of the Jews were bitter against them it was considered best that the apostles leave. Jesus had said, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another." The brethren sent them away by night, for their lives were in danger. Reaching Berea they went to the synagogue and began work there. They were persecuted at Philippi and Thessalonica, and had to leave both places as though they were evil-minded, dangerous men, and yet they hastened to the work at Berea. Let us learn from them to be more earnest in the work of the Lord, and less easily discouraged, for our discouragements as comparatively insignificant. 10. At Berea the apostles met with encouragement, these people being more noble than were the Jews of Thessalonica. The Bereans received the Word with all readiness of mind—that is they were not biased with prejudices. They did more—they searched the Scriptures daily. The Lord asks us to do this. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." John 5, 39. They searched the Scriptures daily. We have the same Scriptures. They are the revelation of God's will for the saving of our souls. "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it."

We do well to ask, How do we compare with the Bereans? These people searched the Scriptures so faithfully because they now believed in Jesus. They had not listened in vain to the preaching of the Word. They had learned that they were sinners and were sorry for their sins. But sorrow for sin will save no one. Judas Iscariot was sorry that he betrayed Jesus but died in despair. He lacked *faith*. Faith was not lacking in the Thessalonians and Bereans.

In order that they might have this faith the apostles *preached the Gospel to them*. In order that sinners everywhere may have faith Jesus commands, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Gospel is the glad tidings that Jesus Christ has saved us from our sins and through faith makes us forever blessed. It declares, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 16. It cries to all, Believe! Believe! He *who believes in Jesus is a Christian*—a converted person. All that Jesus has done is credited to him. God is pleased with believers because the righteousness of Jesus covers all their sins. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Romans 10, 4. Believers thus have comfort, and can say, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Timothy 1, 12. It is a glad day for the sinner when, like these Thessalonians and Bereans, faith is kindled in his heart. Having faith he need not fear sin, death nor Satan. "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8, 38. 39.

QUESTIONS.

1. What apostles are referred to? 2. Through what experience had they passed? 3. What of their journey to Philippi? 4. To whom especially was Paul to take the Gospel? 5. What was his custom upon reaching a city? 6. Why was this discrete? 7. What was his purpose when preaching to the Jews? 8. What was one of the objections of the Jews to accepting Jesus as the Christ? 9. Under what conditions would this have given the Jews no difficulty? 10. What was the result of Paul's preaching in Thessalonica? 11. What is understood by consorting with the apostles? Who especially swelled the number of converts? 12. What had been kindled in their hearts? 13. What is faith? 14. How does St. Paul define it? 15. Mention a promise of God especially sweet to sinners. 16. What is another word for faith? 17. In what words does Jesus assure us that faith is necessary unto salvation? 18. What made trouble for the apostles? 19. What caused these Jews to be especially bitter? 20. Whom did they enlist in their opposition? 21. Why is it easy to get plenty of help in wrong doing? 22. What accusation did they prefer against the apostles? 23. In what respect is this true of the preaching of the Gospel? 24. Why is it foolish and sinful to oppose the Christian Church? 25. To what did they refer when they accused the apostles of opposing Caesar? 26. What is Jesus' attitude to earthly powers? 27. How were the magistrates affected by this persecution of the apostles? 28. Why were they

moved to yield to the opponents? 31. What was it thought best for the apostles to do? 32. What words of Jesus were pertinent at this time? 33. Whither did they go? 34. What might have discouraged them from continuing the work? 35. What does their example teach us? 36. With what success did they meet in Berea? 37. What is said of the Bereans? 38. In what words does Jesus tell us to do what the Bereans did? 39. What question is it well for us to ask? 40. Why were the Bereans so interested in the Scriptures? 41. What condition of heart is brought about by hearing the Word, especially the law? 42. What besides sorrow is necessary unto salvation? 43. How were these people brought to faith? 44. What arrangement has God made that sinners everywhere may be led to believe? 45. What is the Gospel? 46. What does the Gospel declare to the sinner? 47. What does the Gospel urge all to do? 48. What follows when a sinner believes in Christ? 49. How does St. Paul express this? 50. In what words of St. Paul can believers express the comfort that faith gives them? 51. In what words did the apostle declare that he did not fear sin, death nor the devil?

GOLDEN TEXT.

2. TIMOTHY I, 12. I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

69. LIFE AMONG THE FIRST BELIEVERS.

Acts 4, 32-37.

NEW OBEDIENCE.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, SANCTIFIED and KEPT me in the true faith: even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and SANCTIFIES the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

The First Believers Lived in Harmony. — And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul:¹ neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common.²

The Apostles were Fired with Zeal. — And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.³

Grace was upon them. — And great grace was upon them all.⁴

They were active in Deeds of Love.— Neither was there any among them that lacked:⁵ for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.⁶ And Josés, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The little band had become a multitude, three thousand having been added on Pentecost. There were about five thousand at this time. They had been reared under different circumstances, came from different sects among the Jews, were of different ages and tempers, yet, faith having been kindled in their hearts, they were of one heart and one soul. It becomes Christians of our day to follow the example of these pioneers. Being members of one great family, perhaps members of the same congregation, Christians should exercise forbearance and patience with each other so that harmony may be preserved amongst them. 2. They sold their lands and houses and other possessions and placed the proceeds at the apostles' feet. Not one of them said that ought of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. They did this not from a sense of duty, or because God so commanded, but out of love to God and one another. Having a common treasury did not become a fixed rule in the Church; in fact there are reasons to believe that this condition did not prevail very long. There is nothing in God's Word making the establishment of a common treasury obligatory upon Christians. In the matter of giving Christians are governed by the law of love. 3. The apostles were warm with love, and alive with enthusiasm in their work—their example should urge ministers of the Gospel of all time to push forward in their calling with intense earnestness. The doctrine on which these early preachers dwelt most was that of the resurrection of Christ. They did so not only because they had seen the resurrected Jesus, but also because the fact that our Lord arose from death is a most powerful confirmation of the Gospel. 4. Grace means favor—the favor of God. God's favor rested on the apostles and on all the believers in a remarkable manner. What is meant is that God was very near these people in their trials, and helped them to labor and suffer to His glory. He gave them grace sufficient unto their day as He did to Paul and as He does to us. 5. No one lacked. The poor we have always with us, and the Lord wills that we care for them. He says, "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." In order to encourage us in caring for the poor Jesus says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto Me." Individual Chris-

tians should examine themselves in regard to what they are doing for the poor. Congregations should take this matter under consideration and see how the poor in their midst are provided for. These people were interested in each other, and in mankind in general. Their faith moved them to service. Faith bears the fruit of *obedience*. Believers will long to do God's will. Through faith the Holy Ghost gives them delight in holy or *good works* and power to do them.

Good works are all that a Christian thinks, speaks and does from faith according to God's command and to His honor and glory. No one but a Christian can do a good work for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11, 6. Our Savior utters the same truth, recorded in Matthew 7, 17-18, "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Christians are trees of the Lord's planting and He looks to them for fruit—for a new manner of life. As it is natural for a good tree to yield good fruit, so, now that he is regenerated, it should be natural for the child of God to do good works. If the branch abides in the vine it will bear fruit. Christ is the vine, Christians are the branches. The Savior says, John 15, 5, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." When a branch is severed from the vine it bears no fruit, but withers and dies. When a Christian does no good works he is spiritually dead. "Faith if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." James 2, 17.

If a tree is *not good* it not only bears no good fruit, but does *bear evil fruit*. The man who has no faith not only does no good works but he is doing wrong, he is displeasing God. His works may appear to be good. He may give to the poor, attend divine service and sing edifying hymns, but all this is prompted by wrong motives, and does not please God. God judges our works by the motives that prompt them." "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans 14, 23. "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the heart." 1 Samuel 16, 7. 6. Here we see the *fruits of faith*. Where there is faith in the heart the life will show it. No doubt there were many poor persons among the first converts, and the believers, moved by faith, and longing to do something, saw an opportunity to serve God. Spheres of usefulness will be opened to every one who is anxious to serve God and prove his faith. The Christian is not at a loss to know what to do in order to please God. God gives us plain directions as to what He would have us do. *Good works are works done according to God's command.* When men lay down rules, we can do as we please about observing them. Roman Catholics make rules in regard to eating meat, but we may eat no meat as long as we live and yet not have done a good work. Unless our works are in accordance with God's commands they are not pleasing to Him. Jesus says, Matthew 15, 9, "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

Good works may be in the form of *thoughts, words and deeds*. When we are thinking and contriving how to do some kind and charitable deed, we are doing a good work. When we are speaking words of encouragement, advice, comfort, reproof, etc., we are doing a good work. When we pray, read our Bible, visit the sick, help the needy, etc., we are performing good works. Much depends on the motive prompting our works. Those only are good works which are done to God's honor and glory. He who attends divine service to display his clothing, or gives money to some cause in order to receive praise, or sings hymns or preaches sermons in the hope of being flattered, etc., is not doing a good work. He is not doing these things to the glory of God. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10, 31.

The Christian's best works are not perfect, and yet our good works are pleasing to God. They are pleasing to God because Christians are God's dear children, and He is pleased with what they do because they love Him and believe in Him. Paul tells us this in Romans 8, 1, "There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

We must be careful *not to trust in our good works*. They do not merit the favor of God and the forgiveness of sin. We do not do good works in order to be saved by them, but to show our love and thankfulness to God. When one does good works in the hope of thereby saving his soul he is deceiving himself. Good works have nothing to do with the soul's salvation. By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2, 8-9. But there is no better way for a child to show its gratitude to its parents than by obeying them. We are obeying God when we do good works. We do good works also in order to prove our faith. The world cannot see unto our hearts, but it does see our lives. Our good works show to those about us that we are Christians. Therefore Jesus says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5, 16. 7. Joses was another name for Joseph, also Barnabas. He was referred to as a son of consolation because of the sympathetic character of his discourses. Later this man became Paul's companion in his missionary travels. He was a Jew, born in Cyprus. He sold his farm and laid the money at the apostle's feet, not because urged or coerced to it, but of his free will. Barnabas was a liberal giver; he gave himself and all his property. Notice is taken of this good deed because he is so well known for his service to the Church in carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can be said of the growth of the primitive church? 2. What spirit prevailed among the believers? 3. What circumstances made this remarkable? 4. Why should we expect such a spirit among Christians generally? 5. What should they do to bring this about? 6. To what

extraordinary measures did they resort in their efforts to do good? 7. What moved them to this? 8. What can be said of the measures they adopted? 9. What law governs the Christian in giving? 10. How did the apostles proceed with their work? 11. What effect should their example have on ministers of the Gospel? 12. On what doctrine did they dwell? 13. What led them to do this? 14. What do we understand by grace? 15. In what sense did God's grace rest on these people? 16. What may we learn from their treatment of the poor? 17. In what words are we urged to be active in good works? 18. What words of Jesus should encourage us in this? 19. To what should individual Christians be moved by this example? 20. What should congregations be moved to do? 21. Of what were these deeds the fruit? 22. What longing finds place in every believer's heart? 23. How do Christians come to delight in good works, and receive power to do them? 24. What are good works? 25. Who only can do good works? 26. How does Jesus express this truth? 29. What does Jesus expect of believers? 30. To what does Jesus compare Christians? 31. When will a branch bear fruit? 32. What is the consequence if a branch is severed from the vine? 33. What is a man's condition if he does no good works? 34. What is said of the faith that has no works? 35. Besides that it bears no good fruit, what can be said of an evil tree. 36. What can be said of one who has no faith? 37. What is often true of the works of such a man? 38. What is wrong with his works? 39. How does God judge a work? 40. What difference is there between God's way and man's way of judging people? 41. What circumstance led them to this particular kind of good work? 42. What will be the consequence if one is anxious to prove his faith? 43. What directs a Christian in his efforts to do good works. 44. What condition must be observed in order that a work may be good? 45. What authority do man-made rules for living have over us? 46. What does Jesus say of those who teach for doctrine the commandments of men? 47. What three forms of good works can you mention? 48. Give an example of each. 49. Mention one more characteristic of good works. 50. Give illustrations of how some good works are robbed of their goodness. 51. In what words does the apostle urge us to do all to the glory of God? 51. Against what must we guard? 53. Why should we do good works? 54. Give a passage proving that we are saved alone through faith. 55. In what words does Jesus urge us to do good works? 56. What can you say of Joses or Barnabas?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 13, 35. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.

70. REVIEW OF LESSONS 66-69.

From Darkness to Light. — In the remarkable experience of Saul of Tarsus, as related in Lesson 66, we may learn much about conversion. In Saul's spiritual blindness we have a picture of man's condition by nature. As Saul thought by persecuting, imprisoning and slaughtering Christians he was doing God's will, so, having lost the image of God, man's reason is so darkened, and his will is so perverted, that he does evil rather than good. He does not even wish to believe in Jesus Christ and be saved. His conversion is solely the gracious work of the Holy Ghost. So the prophet declares, "Turn Thou me and I shall be turned." The first step in conversion is contrition. The sinner must learn to know his sins, feel them, be sorry for them, and desire to be rid of their burden before he will wish to forsake them. Sorrow or contrition must be followed by faith. The contrite sinner must look to Jesus in childlike faith for forgiveness, and then the work of conversion is completed. He is then a believer. We have examples of penitent or converted sinners in the publican and prodigal son.

Through Sorrow to Joy. — From Lesson 67, which tells us of a woman who was sorry for her sins, and Jesus' dealings with her, we may learn what is meant by repentance. We usually express this condition of heart by the word contrition — sorrow of the heart for sin. Sorrow in itself is not contrition. It is not sorrow on account of the consequences of sin, but because of the sinfulness of sin. We should be sorry for our sins because they grieve and offend God, and because God threatens to punish them. The Pharisee mentioned in our text was not sorry for his sins. David had sinned greatly but was not sorry until the prophet came and told him of his wrong-doing. A sinner must first learn to know his sins, and then learn how displeasing they are to God, and what consequences will follow if they are not forgiven, before he will be truly sorry. As God sent Nathan to show David his sins, so He gives us the law to teach us how we stand in His sight, and lead us to repentance. The penitent woman found peace in the assurance that her sins were forgiven. This will be the experience of all who, being penitent, look to Jesus for forgiveness. Through the preaching of the Gospel

Jesus brings comfort to all penitent sinners. The Gospel is to us what the voice of Jesus was to the penitent woman.

Confidence in Jesus. — The preaching of Paul and Silas bore fruit among both Jews and Gentiles, as we learn from Lesson 68. Many of their hearers, men and women, believed in Jesus whom the apostles preached. After the law leads a sinner to penitence of heart the Holy Spirit, through the Gospel, kindles faith. The soul then has peace, for faith is the confidence of the heart that we through Christ have forgiveness of sin and a gracious God. Faith is the chief part of repentance. It is called confidence. It accepts the Savior whom the Gospel reveals to us, and relies upon Him for forgiveness and salvation. The Bereans received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily. They did this because faith had been kindled in their heart. Faith cometh through hearing the Word. In order that sinners everywhere may have faith Jesus commands, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel unto every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." He who believes in Jesus is a Christian — a converted person. All that Jesus has done is credited to the believer. God is pleased with those who have faith because the righteousness of Jesus covers all their sins. Having faith even the chief of sinners need not fear sin, death nor Satan.

Faith's Fruit. — No better illustration of faith's power over the life can be shown than that referred to in Lesson 69 — life among the first believers. The faith of these pioneers moved them to service. It bore the fruit of obedience. Through faith the Holy Ghost gives believers delight in good works, and power to do them. No one but a Christian can do good works, for without faith it is impossible to please God. All Christians will do good works. As it is natural for a good tree to yield good fruit, so it is natural for the child of God to do good works. The man who does no good works is doing wrong — bearing evil fruit. The works the man of the world does may look good but they are not good. All good works must accord with God's command. The works that men demand of us may or may not be good, but what God commands is always right. Good works may be in the form of thoughts, words and deeds. The Christian's best works are not perfect, but all of them are pleasing to

God. They please Him because Christians are His dear children. We should beware of trusting in our good works, since none of them are meritorious. Good works have nothing to do with the soul's salvation. The apostle says, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." By our good works we show our gratitude for God's goodness, and prove our faith.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 66. 1. What is taught by the experience of Saul as related in this lesson? 2. What is pictured to us in Saul's spiritual blindness? 3. In what respect did Saul resemble the natural man? 4. Whose is the work of conversion? 5. In what words does the prophet declare this? 6. What is the first step in conversion? 7. What is included in contrition? 8. What must follow contrition? 9. How is the work of conversion completed? 10. Mention examples of penitent and converted sinners.

LESSON 61. 1. What is to be learned from this lesson? 2. By what word do we usually designate sorrow for sin? 3. What kind of sorrow is understood? 4. Why should our sins work sorrow in our hearts? 5. Mention a worshipper who had no sorrow for sin. A king who had sinned grievously. 6. How was sorrow awakened in David's heart? 7. When will the sinner be sorry for his sins? 8. What has God sent to work sorrow for sin? 9. In what did this penitent woman find peace? 10. What will be the consequence if a penitent sinner looks to Jesus? 11. How has Jesus arranged to bring peace to sinners to-day? 12. In what may we hear the voice of Jesus?

LESSON 68. 1. What fruit did the apostles' preaching bear? 2. Where did it bear this fruit? 3. What fruit does the preaching of the Law bear? 4. What is then done through the Gospel? 5. What is the consequence, and why? 6. What can you say of faith? 7. What can you say of the Bereans? 8. How is faith wrought? 9. What is to be done in order that sinners may be led to believe in Jesus? 10. Why is faith precious? 11. How is God disposed toward those who believe? 12. What is the consequence where faith has been kindled?

LESSON 69. 1. What is illustrated by the life of the first believers? 2. What fruit did their faith bear? 3. What does the Holy Spirit do for believers? 4. Who alone can do good works? 5. Of what is he guilty who has no good works to his credit? 6. What can be said of the so-called good works of people of the world? 7. What works are good in God's sight? 8. What several forms may good works assume? 9. What can be said of a believer's good works? 10. Why are they precious? 11. Of what must we beware? 12. What have good works to do with the soul's salvation? 13. How does the apostle express this truth?

71. PETER'S CONFESSION.

MATTHEW 16, 13-20.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith: even as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole CHRISTIAN CHURCH on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

Jesus Inquires as to Men's Opinion of Him. — When Jesus come into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?¹

The Answer the Disciples Gave. — And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.²

Jesus Inquires as to the Thoughts of the Disciples in Regard to Him. — And He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?³

The Answer Peter Gave. — And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.⁴

Jesus' Words concerning the Foundation of the Church and the Keys. — And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.⁵ And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon 'his rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.⁶ And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.⁷

Jesus' Charge to the Disciples. — Then charged He His disciples, that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.⁸

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Caesarea Philippi was a city erected by Philip, a son of King Herod the Great, and situated near Mt. Hermon. Jesus had been teach-

ing, preaching and performing miracles, and, now that His public ministry was drawing to a close, He asks, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? He calls himself Son of Man, it is said, fifty-five times. As a descendant of David Jesus was the Son of Man, and He was such as the promised Seed of the woman. The prophet Daniel had referred to the Messiah by this name. Jesus did not ask this question for information, for He knew the thoughts of men, neither did He ask it because He was concerned as to public opinion, for He sought not the honor of men, but to draw a confession from His disciples. 2. Some, as, for example, Herod, who had beheaded the great forerunner of Christ, thought that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Others declared Him to be Elias, or Elijah. The prophet Malachi had said, Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. That prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah as the Lord's forerunner. Seeing that Jesus was so mighty in word and deed some thought He might be the great Elijah returned to earth. Others thought Him to be Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets. They were willing to believe Him to be almost anybody rather than to accept Him as the Messiah, since His Kingdom was not of this world. 3. That was a pointed question that Jesus asked the disciples. They had enjoyed golden opportunities, and now they asked to make confession. Jesus wants all to confess Him, and declares, "Him that confesseth Me not before men, him will I not confess before My Father which is in heaven." 4. Peter answered for all. He was the most ready speaker among them at that time, and frequently acted as their spokesman. The disciples believed Jesus to be more than a prophet, even the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed of God, the Savior of whom Moses and the prophets spoke.

The expression, "living God," indicates that God is life, has life, and bestows life. 5. Addressing Peter Jesus calls him Simon Bar-Jonah, the last name meaning, son of Jonah. The word blessed means happy. Peter was blessed because his faith was not the revelation of flesh and blood, that is, of human reason and understanding, but of God. 6. Jesus reminds the speaker that his name is Peter. Two years previous, when Andrew led Simon to Jesus, the Savior said, Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone, a rock. It was because the Lord foresaw that this man would become a firm believer, and a tower of strength to others, that He gave him this name. The truth which Peter uttered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," is the great foundation truth of which Jesus says, "Upon this rock I will build my Church." By the *Church* we understand the *communion of saints*, or all those who truly believe in Christ. A saint is a believer in Christ. When we speak of the Church being the communion of saints we mean that all true believers belong together in one great family.

The Church is referred to in the Bible as a temple, a building. That on which a building rests is called the foundation. It is important that a building have a good foundation, otherwise it would soon be blown over, or washed away. The apostle speaks of the *foundation of the Church* in

Ephesians 2, 19-22. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom the whole building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." When he speaks of the foundation of the apostles and prophets he means the teachings of the apostles and prophets. The words of Peter are a summary of what the apostles and prophets taught, viz.: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. The chief topic in all the writings of the inspired men is Jesus Christ, and to this the apostle alludes when he says, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. There are many stones in a building but the cornerstone, which binds the walls together, is the chief. There are many characters and subjects referred to in the Bible, but Jesus is the chief. All the truths of the Bible center in Jesus Christ. The Church therefore does not rest upon Peter, but upon the truth which Peter confessed, namely, that Jesus is the Christ.

By gates of hell are meant the most powerful forces of the kingdom of Satan. The evil one and his subjects are in constant conflict with the Church: this expression means that although Satan and his host do their utmost the Church will still stand secure.

The Christian Church has *passed through trying times*. In the days of the apostles, in the times of bitter persecutions that followed the apostolic period, in the days of the Reformation, it seemed, as man judges, that the Church would surely be overthrown, yet it lives and prospers. That the Church could not be overthrown the angel declared when he announced the birth of Jesus, Luke 1, 33, "And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

The *prophet foresaw that the Church would stand forever* and declared, Daniel 7, 14, "And there shall be given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The time will never come when there will be no Church on earth, for "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Timothy 2, 19. 7. *Kingdom of heaven* is another name for the Christian Church. To this kingdom there are two keys. *The office of the keys* is the peculiar Church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to *forgive the sins of penitent sinners* and to *retain the sins of the impenitent* so long as they do not repent. The first is called the *loosing key*, the second, the *binding key*. What Jesus gave to Peter and his fellow believers He has given to the entire Church on earth, viz., the power to open and close the door of heaven. Of course, God only can do this, but God delegates the power to His people. This power is simply the power to preach God's Word. When some one says to a penitent sinner that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and that by believing in Him he

can have forgiveness and salvation, he is opening heaven to that sinner as surely as his hearer believes the message. When some one says to an impenitent man that he that believeth not shall be damned he closes heaven to that man so long as his hearer continues in unbelief. 8. Why did Jesus charge His disciples to tell no man that He was the Christ? First, since the people were expecting the Messiah, and many were ready to follow Him as soon as they were assured of His presence, there was danger of an uprising among the people, for they still thought that His kingdom would be an earthly kingdom. Then Jesus wanted men to be led to believe in Him not by His declaration that He was the Messiah, but through the influence of His teachings and works.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Caesarea Phillippi? 2. What did Jesus ask the disciples? 3. By what name does He refer to Himself? 4. In what sense is Jesus the Son of Man? 5. Why did He ask that question? 6. What did Herod and others say? 7. What led Herod to this view? 8. What was another answer given? 9. What led to this view? 10. Whom did the prophet refer to as Elijah? 11. What did a third class think of Christ? 12. Why were people so slow to believe that Christ was the Messiah? 13. What did Jesus ask the disciples? 14. For what reason might Jesus have expected a good answer? 15. What is the Lord's will in regard to confessing Him? 16. What is threatened against those who will not confess Him? 17. Who replied to Jesus' question? 18. Why did Peter act as spokesman? 19. What did the disciples believe concerning Jesus? 20. What does the expression, living God, signify? 21. What does the name Bar-Jonah, signify? 22. In what respect was Peter blessed? 23. Under what circumstances did he get the name Cephas? 24. Why was this name given to him? 25. What do we understand by the Church? 26. What is a saint? 27. To what is the Church often likened? 28. What is the rock on which the Church is founded? 29. What is meant by being founded on the apostles and prophets? 30. Which words of Peter may be considered the sum of what these men taught? 31. What is the chief topic of all the inspired writings? 32. Which is the chief stone of a building? 33. In carrying out this figure what does the apostle call Jesus? 34. What is meant by the expression "gates of hell"? 35. What promise is given concerning the Church? 36. Give some historical evidences of the certainty of this promise? 37. How did the angel, when announcing the birth of Jesus, express this promise? 38. In what words did Daniel foretell what is here promised? 39. What is another name for the Christian Church? 40. What is the office of the keys? 41. To whom did the Lord give this power? 42. What power did the Lord bestow when He gave to the Church the office of the keys? 43. How does the Church exercise this power? 44. How may one administer the loosing key, or open heaven to a sinner? 45. How may one administer the binding key, or close heaven to a sinner? 46. Why did Jesus charge His disciples to tell no man?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 16, 18. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

72. SEVEN THOUSAND FAITHFUL.

1 KINGS 19, 9-18.

THE INVISIBLE CHURCH.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith: even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole CHRISTIAN CHURCH on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

God's Question to the Discouraged Prophet.— And Elijah came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?¹

The Prophet's Account of himself.— And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away.²

God Manifests Himself to the Prophet.— And He said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks, before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire: but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.³ And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave.⁴

God's Question and the Prophet's Answer Repeated.— And, behold, there came a voice unto him, What dost thou here, Elijah,⁵ and he said, I have been very jealous, for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword' and I, even I only, am left: and they seek my life to take it away.⁶

Instruction and Comfort for the Discouraged Workman.

— And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat, of Abel-meholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.⁷ Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.⁸

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Fleeing from Ahab and Jezebel, who threatened his life because he had slain the false prophets whom the latter had brought to Samaria, Elijah came to Mount Horeb. This was called the Mount of God because it was there that God manifested His glory to Moses. Nourished by the food an angel had provided for him he had traveled forty days and nights before reaching his destination. He lodged in a cave but the Lord came to him. Christians have the assurance of God's presence wherever they go, for He is everywhere. God asked, What dost thou here? possibly as a mild reproof. God would remind him by this question that there was much work needed among his people, and that He was able to protect him from the wrath of the wicked Jezebel.

When we leave the path of duty, or neglect the work which God assigns us, we, like Elijah, will be called to give an account.

2. The prophet meant to say that he had remained at his post of duty as long as there was any hopes of doing good. He does not suspect that he has made a mistake. We are reminded by this that it is not an easy matter to see and confess our mistakes and shortcomings: our sinful nature objects to doing so. While excusing himself the prophet complains of the people that they had all gone wrong—he was the only one that remained faithful. In this also he was mistaken. We are reminded that it is easy to misjudge others. Israel as a people were not innocent, but the prophet's accusations were too sweeping. They had not all forsaken God's covenant; it was Jezebel that threw down Israel's altars; it was Jezebel, not Israel, that had slain God's prophets.

There were still many faithful souls in Israel. No mortal can tell who are and who are not God's children. This being the case we speak of *the Church as Invisible*. Of course in a certain sense the Church is *visible*. In that sense it may be compared to a field in which both wheat and tares are growing, as Jesus says, Matthew 13, 38, "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one." Here believers are compared to wheat, and hypocrites to tares. Hypocrites and other bad people who unite with

a Christian congregation are not Christians. While we cannot see into a person's heart yet if one professes to be a Christian we should in charity believe him to be one. If one is a hypocrite God knows it, and does not own him. He owns only those as members of His Church who believe in Jesus. So we speak of the Church as *visible* and *invisible*. To the *invisible Church* those only belong who are believers. Since we cannot see into the hearts of people, we cannot know who do and who do not belong to the Church in this sense, and therefore called it the *invisible Church*. 3. Elijah had made the mistake of judging from appearances. Ahab and many of his people were under the influence of Jezebel, and the prophets of the Lord seemed as nothing in the presence of the prophets of Baal. Elijah concluded that God's cause was lost.

When the prophet stood before the Lord he could not see Him in the strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire: he found God in the still small voice. By this God meant to teach the prophet not to judge from appearances. He would also show him that he must not expect to win in the conflict with false teachers by wonderful measures: he was to go on preaching the truth. The results would be seen in God's time.

The Lord's workmen today will do well to stand before God and learn the lesson that was taught the prophet. They must not be too ready to conclude that their work is in vain. They may be accomplishing great good although no results are to be seen. In the still small voice of the preached Word God is present today as of old. God's work is being done in the hearts of those who hear the Word although the preachers of the Word can see little if any evidence of it. 4. Elijah recognized the still small voice as God's voice. He realized that God was near, and with a feeling of awe wrapped himself in his mantle and left the cave. When the still small voice of God's Word sounds in our ears we should be attentive and reverent. 5. By this question the Lord meant to remind the prophet that he had left his post of duty. He had confessed that a sad condition of affairs existed in Israel and the Lord would say: This is no place for Israel's prophet: you are needed among your people, and there is where you ought to be. 6. Elijah's repetition of his excuse reminds us how anxious we are to justify ourselves when we come short of our duty, and how difficult it is to acknowledge our sins. 7. In the answer given to the prophet we see God's patience and forbearance. Instead of rebuking the despondent prophet God would say to him: "Be content; it will come right yet." He was to anoint Hazael king of Syria, and that ruler will wage war against this wayward people. He was to anoint Jehu king of Israel and he will settle accounts with the royal family that has introduced idolatry among the chosen people. Jehu will destroy Ahab and his house. He will anoint Elisha to succeed the prophet. He will strengthen the discouraged man's heart and hands, and carry on the work after Elijah is called away. 8. As if he had not already given the prophet plenty of encouragement God adds that so far from being the only one left in Israel he has seven thousand brethren there—those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. It was an easy matter for the prophet to make that mistake because to be a child of God is to be in a

certain state of heart, and no man can see into another's heart. A Christian or saint is one who believes in Jesus. Those who do not believe, no matter what they may say or do, are not Christians. Paul tells us this in Romans 8, 9, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Although we cannot see into the hearts of men we believe there are some Christians in the world "because the Word of God testifies, that at all times there is a communion of saints, and yet we cannot see their faith with our eyes." It is because the Church is a matter of faith and not of sight that we confess, "I believe in th holy Christian Church."

The Church has passed through great trials, and its members have been scattered and put to death, but it never has ceased to exist. Elijah thought that he was the only child of God in the world, but God assured him that there were 7,000 others. We know that there are Christians in the world because the Word of God is still preached, and the Lord says, Isaiah 55, 10-11, "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Since God's Word will never return void we know that there are Christians in every congregation where that Word is proclaimed,

QUESTIONS.

1. What caused Elijah to flee? 2. How long was he on the way? 3. How was he strengthened for the journey? 4. Where did he lodge? 5. Why was Horeb called the Mount of God? 6. Who visited him? 7. What assurance have believers in this regard? 8. What question did God ask? 9. Of what would God remind him? 10. Of what can those be assured who leave the path of duty? 11. What is the prophet's reply? 12. What does he mean by his answer? 13. Of what does the prophet's self-satisfaction remind us? 14. Of what does he complain? 15. In what respect was he mistaken? 16. Of what do his mistakes remind us? 17. To what may the Church as we see it be compared? 18. Whom does the wheat represent? 19. Whom the tares? 20. What should charity lead us to believe in regard to those who profess to believe? 21. Who only knows who are believers and who are hypocrites? 22. By what word do we designate the Church as God sees it? 23. By what word do we designate it as we see it? 24. What difference, then, between the visible and invisible Church? 25. What mistake had Elijah made? 26. To what conclusion had he come? 27. What summons reached him? 28. In what did he not see God? 29. In what did God reveal himself? 30. What lesson is thus taught? 31. What else would God teach him by this incident? 32. What will all workmen do well to learn? 33. In what still small voice is God present to-day? 34. What did Elijah realize? 35. How was he affected? 36. How may we follow his example? 37. What had he confessed? 38. What does the repetition of the question signify? 39. Of what are we reminded by the repetition? 40. What attributes of God are manifest in His dealings with the prophet? 41. What was God saying to him? 42. What instruction and what promises were given him? 43. What word of comfort did God yet add? 44. Why was it an easy matter for the prophet to make the mistake of which he was guilty? 45. What makes one a Christian?

46. Who are not Christians? 47. What assurance have we that there are Christians in the world? 48. Where are they found? 49. What passage of Scripture gives us this assurance?

GOLDEN TEXT.

EPHESIANS 5, 25-27. Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish.

73. TARES AMONG THE WHEAT.

MATTHEW 13, 24-30.

THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith: even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole CHRISTIAN CHURCH on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

The Scattering of the Seed.— Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:¹ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.²

The Appearance of the Plants.— But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.³

The Suggestion of the Servants.— So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? He said unto him, An enemy hath done this.⁴ The servants said unto him, Wilt thou that we go and gather them up?⁵

The Householder said: Let both grow together.— But He said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.⁶ Let both grow together until the harvest.

The Separation at the Time of Harvest. — In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. A parable is a narrative in which divine truths are set forth by examples from every day life. Our Savior spoke in parables because the time had not yet come for the clearer and fuller explanation of the mysteries of His Kingdom. However there is an advantage in this form of speech. Some truths pertaining to God and the Church are made plainer to us by being compared with things with which we are familiar. The Lord uttered many parables, only thirty of them, however, are recorded. By the kingdom of heaven He means the Christian Church, God's kingdom on earth. In this parable He refers to the Church as man sees it, viz., *the visible Church*.

The householder who scattered the seed is *Jesus himself*, the *good seeds* are the children of the kingdom — Christians, the *tares* are hypocrites and unbelievers, and the *field* is the world. 2. The enemy referred to is Satan. He is not only God's enemy, but also our enemy. The time when people slept is night. The devil does much of his mischief under cover of darkness. He is called the prince of darkness. Bad men and women are especially active in their deeds of evil at night.

Tares are weeds of very little value. This enemy sowing tares in the grain field reminds us of Satan's work of suggesting evil thoughts to those who have fallen into the sleep of indifference. Since the enemy is watching for a chance to do mischief of this kind it behooves Christians to remain awake and to be vigilant. 3. The tares were in the field a good while before the householder discovered them, for at first they looked much like the wheat. This reminds us that *hypocrites often pass for Christians*. The tares were not recognized until they began to yield fruit. The *fruits* by which hypocrites are known are their teachings and manner of life.

In spite of the fact that there were tares all around the wheat yielded a harvest; so Christians will teach the truth and lead upright lives in spite of the fact that there are hypocrites around them. 4. It is *not the fault of God's Word*, or of those who proclaim it, that there are tares, for God has arranged for the sowing of nothing but good seed. The devil and his servants have done the mischief. 5. The servants who wished to pull out the tares remind us of those people of our day who claim that there is something wrong with Christianity because there are hypocrites and other kinds of bad people outwardly connected with our congregations. As not the householder but the enemy sowed the tares, so *it is not God and His Church, but the devil* who is to blame for it that there are hypocrites in our congregations. In *the invisible Church*, the Church as God sees it, there are no hypocrites. God sees into the heart

and knows who are His. In this sense *the Church is the communion of saints*, none but saints, believers, being in it. We cannot see into the heart. We learn who are members of the Church by listening to the confession people make. When a person confesses faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior of the world we call him a Christian. As we see the Church it is composed of all who profess to be Christians. Some of these are hypocrites, but we do not know which are the hypocrites and which are the believers. The Church as we see it is therefore composed of believers and hypocrites. This is called *the visible Church*. There may be a large number of hypocrites in the visible Church but we know that not all are hypocrites. We know that there are believers where the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution. Wherever people are joined together in a congregation, and meet to hear the Word, there Christians are to be found. It is recorded in Isaiah 55, 10-11, "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

In the parable of the sower, Luke 8, 11-15, the Lord tells us that some of the seed fell by the wayside, some fell on stony ground, and some fell among thorns, but not all of it was wasted. Some fell on good ground and brought forth fruit, even a hundredfold. This assures us that there will always be some who believe God's Word. By this mark the Church is made *visible*, that is, *we know where it is*. 6. This answer of the householder does not mean that no effort should be made to convert hypocrites and other bad people who are connected with our congregations, nor that we are to do nothing to correct the erring. We are to go to the erring church member and tell him of his faults and endeavor to lead him to repent and forsake them. We are not to let hypocrites and erring ones alone in the sense that we do not try to show them their sins and lead them to repentance. The answer of the householder means that we are not to be discouraged because, in spite of our efforts, there will still be hypocrites in our congregations. While they may succeed in keeping an outward connection with the Church here on earth, the time will come when God will see to it that they are separated from His people, that is, on the day of judgment.

Because we cannot see into a man's heart, and therefore cannot tell certainly who is a hypocrite and who is not, we would make serious mistakes were we to go to work rashly and try to rid the Church of all hypocrites. We might suspect a Christian and cast him out of the congregation, or we might be deceived by a sly hypocrite and allow him to remain in the congregation.

Another reason why we should be careful in dealing with hypocrites and other errorists is that by the exercise of patience and forbearance some such may be brought to repentance.

We have an example of men trying to do what our Savior here forbids in the persecutions that were carried on by the Romish church years ago. In their efforts to rid the visible church of those whom they considered tares they put many devout Christians to death, drove others into distant lands, and greatly hindered the work of the Church in other ways. The persecutions through which the Church has passed are proof sufficient that when men try to pull up the tares they root out the wheat likewise. 7. The *harvest* is the end of the world—the day of judgment. The *reapers* are the angels. The *terrible doom* awaiting the tares refers to the punishment that has been prepared for the devil and his angels, and all the lost. The *place of punishment* is hell, which is a place of torment where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. The punishment of the lost will never end, “for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh.” Isaiah 66, 24. The *gathering of the wheat* into the householder’s barn refers to the blessedness prepared for God’s people in heaven, of which it is said, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

QUESTIONS.

1. What is a parable? 2. Why did our Savior speak in parables? 3. What advantage is there in this form of speech? 4. How many of our Lord’s parables are recorded? 5. What is understood by the kingdom of heaven? 6. In what respect is the Church referred to in this parable? 7. Whom does the householder represent? 8. What do the seed, the tares and the field respectively represent? 9. Of what does this enemy’s work remind us? 10. To what should the enemy’s determination move us? 11. How were the tares finally recognized? 12. What is the fruit by which hypocrites may be recognized? 13. What is to be expected of Christians in spite of the fact that there are many hypocrites? 14. Whence came the tares? 15. Of whom do these servants remind us? 16. What is the invisible Church? 17. What is not found in the invisible Church? 18. How do we learn who are Christians? 19. What should we in charity believe in reference to all who profess to be Christians? 20. However of what are we assured? 21. What do we understand by the visible Church? 22. Of whom is it composed? 23. Why are we sure that not all church members are hypocrites? 24. Where are Christians to be found? 25. How is this expressed by the prophet? 26. What becomes of much of the good seed of the Word as shown in the parable of the sower? 27. How does this parable assure us that there will be some Christians in the world? 28. What would be a wrong interpretation of this parable? 29. What is our duty toward the erring? 30. What are we to learn from the householder’s answer? 31. What will eventually be the fate of the hypocrites? 32. Why should we not try to separate the hypocrites from the believers? 33. What might be the result of such an effort? 34. Why is it well to be patient with the erring? 35. In what historical event can we see an example of men trying to root out the tares? 36. What was the result? 37. Of what are the Romish persecutions a proof? 38. What is the harvest? 39. Who are the reapers? 40. Of what does the burning of the tares remind us? 41. What punishment is prepared for the wicked? 42. What can be said of this punishment? 43. Of what does the garnering of the wheat remind us? 44. Mention a passage that describes the blessedness awaiting the faithful.

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 8, 31, 32. If ye continue in My Word then are ye My disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

74. FALSE PROPHETS.

MATTHEW 7, 15-20.

CHURCHES TEACHING FALSE DOCTRINE ARE TO BE AVOIDED.

Even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the ONE TRUE FAITH.

A Word of Caution and a Reason for it. — Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.¹

A Rule for the Exercise of this Caution. — Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?² Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit,³ neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.⁴ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.⁵ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. A prophet was one who declared the will of God and who often foretold things to come. The preachers of the Old Testament were blessed with the gift of prophecy because they were to preach of a Savior who had not yet come. Since the Old Testament preachers were called prophets, this name is used in the Scriptures for preachers in general. The term *false prophet* means a preacher of false doctrine. The word beware is a cry of warning, a signal of danger.

A sheep is a harmless animal. False teachers come in sheep's clothing in the sense that they look harmless. A man who seems pious, prays, sings and preaches, does not look dangerous. One is apt to think, Surely such a man can say nothing that will injure any one.

A wolf, especially a ravenous wolf, is a dangerous animal. He raves because he is angry or hungry, and is therefore to be feared. A ravening wolf is all the more dangerous should it come in sheep's clothing, for then the sheep will look upon it as a sheep, and it can readily approach them and do them harm. The *preachers of false doctrine* are compared to a wolf in sheep's clothing because they look and act like earnest Christians, and people run after them, gather around them, and listen to them because they think they are preachers of the truth. Too many people accept what a man preaches as true without searching the Scriptures for themselves. It is the preaching of the truth that does good; all other preaching is not only useless, but sinful. Jesus says, John 8, 31, 32. "If ye continue in my Word then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." These words show how important it is that God's Word be preached in its purity.

The *visible Church* is divided into many denominations such as Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists. It should not be so. There is but one Bible, one plan of salvation, and but one Church, therefore it is not pleasing to God that there are such divisions among professed Christians. In Ephesians 4, 4-5, we read, "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." We see that these divisions are wrong from Paul's words found in 1 Corinthians 1, 10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

When Jesus sent out His disciples He told them *what to preach*, as we read in Matthew 28, 19-20, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

That denomination in which the Word of our Lord is preached in its purity, and willingly received, is the true visible Church of Christ on earth. Jesus says, John 10, 27-28, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

Because the Gospel is preached in our Church we call it *Evangelical*, for that word means Gospel. It is called Lutheran after Dr. Martin Luther, the name having been given to her by the Romanists. He was the reformer whom God raised up in the sixteenth century to restore to the Church again the Word of God and the Sacraments. The marks of the Church are the preaching of God's Word in its purity, and the administration of the sacraments as Christ has instituted them. There are two sacraments, the Sacrament of the Altar, or Lord's Supper, in which, under the bread and wine, the Lord gives His people His true body and blood; and holy Baptism, of which Paul says, "As many as have

been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Since in the Evangelical Lutheran Church the Word is preached in its purity, and the Sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ, we believe *it to be the true visible Church of Christ on Earth.*

There are many other churches, and all of them preach more or less of God's Word, but every one of them depart from its teachings in some particulars; in so far they are in error. In so far *they preach false doctrine.* Is it then a matter of indifference to which visible church we belong? By no means; for *churches teaching false doctrine are to be avoided.* Jesus says, as we find in our lesson, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

Some people think it unkind to speak of anyone being in error, and selfish not to bid every preacher and every denomination Godspeed; however they must settle the matter with God. Jesus says, "Beware of false prophets." St. Paul says, Romans 16, 17. "I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; *and avoid them.*" We read in 1 John 4, 1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Again in 2 John 10, 11, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed: for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds."

We do not claim that our church is the only saving church, nor do we claim that all the Christians of the world are found in the Lutheran Church. We believe that there are Christians in all churches where Jesus Christ is preached. However we cannot accept any doctrine that is not taught in the Bible, and therefore admonish all to do as Jesus enjoins, "*Beware of false prophets.*" 2. A thorn is a prickly plant from which no one expects to gather fruit. The thistle referred to is a prickly water plant that bears no fruit. A tree is known by its fruit. The fruit by which a Christian is recognized is his teachings and his manner of life. 3. As a good tree will naturally yield good fruit so a Christian wills to teach the truth as it is found in God's Word, and lead a Godly life. As a corrupt tree yields evil fruit so a man who is bad at heart will show it by what he says and does. 4. This does not mean that a Christian will not make mistakes or commit sins, but that he does not do so wilfully. The Christian sins out of weakness, but not knowingly and deliberately.

As for what is said of the corrupt tree, that is, of hypocrites and worldlings, it does not mean that they do no moral deeds, and no acts of kindness and even generosity, but that these outwardly good deeds of theirs are not pleasing to God. Such people cannot please God because they do not believe in Jesus. "That which is not of faith is sin." Those who have no faith in Jesus cannot do good works. 5. As a tree-grower looks for fruit from the trees he has planted and watered and pruned, so God expects His children to prove their faith by a holy life. As the tree-grower will by and by cut down the fruitless trees and burn them,

so God will by and by summon all into His presence, and all those who will not accept salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ and whose life was wayward and wicked, He will condemn to the punishment prepared for the devil and his angels.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is a prophet? 2. Why was it necessary for the Old Testament preachers to have the gift of prophecy? 3. To whom also is the name prophet given? 4. What is a false prophet? 5. What does the word "beware" signify? 6. In what sense do false teachers come in sheep's clothing? 7. What are we apt to think in regard to one who preaches? 8. Why is a ravening wolf to be feared? 9. Under what conditions is it the more dangerous? 10. Why are false prophets compared to a wolf in sheep's clothing? 11. What can be said of many hearers? 12. What kind of preaching does good? 13. What must be said of the preaching of error? 14. Whom does Jesus own as His disciples? 15. In what words does Jesus declare the importance of pure preaching? 16. What can be said of the visible Church? 17. Why are these divisions displeasing to God? 18. What does Paul say pertinent to this in his letter to the Ephesians? 19. In what words does he warn against divisions? 20. What did Jesus commission His disciples to preach? 21. Which denomination can claim to be the true visible Church? 22. What does Jesus say of His sheep? 23. What is meant by hearing His voice? 24. Why do we call our church Evangelical? 25. How did she receive the name Lutheran? 26. Who was Dr. Martin Luther? 27. By what marks is the visible Church known? 28. What are the Sacraments of the New Testament? 29. What is the Sacrament of the Altar? 30. What do the Scriptures say of holy Baptism? 31. Why do we call the Lutheran church the true visible Church? 32. What can be said of the other churches? 33. Is it a matter of indifference to which visible church we belong? 34. What warning pertaining to this matter does Jesus give? 35. What admonition does St. Paul give on this subject? 36. Since there are many false prophets what should we do? 37. Why, according to the apostle, should we not wish false teachers Godspeed? 38. What claim do we not put forth for our church? 39. What is our duty in regard to false teachers? 40. What is a thorn? A thistle? 41. How are trees known? 42. What is the fruit by which a Christian is known? 43. What is to be expected of a Christian? 44. How is a bad man to be recognized. 45. What would be a wrong interpretation of the words, A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit? 46. What is the character of a Christian's sins? 47. What would be a wrong interpretation of the words, An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit? 48. How are these words to be understood? 49. What does God expect of His people? 50. What awaits the wayward and wicked?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ROMANS 16, 17. I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned: and avoid them.

75. REVIEW OF LESSONS 71-74.

The Rock on which the Church Rests. — The Christian Church is the most wonderful institution on earth. In no other is the thoughtful, devout child of God so deeply interested. It is called the communion of saints, or all who truly believe in Christ. When we speak of the Church being the communion of saints we mean that all true believers belong together in one great family. It is referred to in the Bible as a building, and, of course, as having a foundation(Lesson 71). The Church's foundation is referred to in Peter's confession, and, as plainly indicated, is Jesus our Savior. When it is said that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the Church, the meaning is that the Church has such a good foundation that hell's most powerful forces cannot overthrow it. The prophet Daniel foresaw that the Church would stand forever. He declares that Christ's kingdom shall not be destroyed. The kingdom of heaven is another name for the Christian Church. It has two keys: the loosing key, through which the sins of penitent sinners are forgiven, and the binding key, through which the sins of the impenitent are retained against them. God only can open and close heaven, that is, forgive and retain sins, but He has delegated this power to His people. This power is exercised by the preaching of God's Word.

The Church as God Sees It. — The prophet Elijah fled for his life from the wicked king and queen, Ahab and Jezebel, sad and discouraged. He was grieved not so much for himself, but because the children of Israel, under the leadership of their ungodly rulers, had forsaken God's covenant, thrown down His altars, and slain His prophets, while he, it seemed, was left alone

(Lesson 72). He was mistaken. There was another prophet in readiness to take his place, another king ready to take the throne and punish Israel's foes, and seven thousand Israelites left who had not bowed the knee to Baal. No mortal can tell who are and who are not God's children. The Church is invisible. When we speak of the Church as visible we refer to it as it appears to us, embracing all who profess to believe in Christ. When we speak of the Church as invisible we refer to it as it is in God's sight, embracing only those who believe. It is because we cannot look into any one's heart, and do not know who have faith, that it is called invisible. Although we cannot see into the hearts of men we believe there are some Christians in the world, because the Word of God testifies that at all times there is a congregation of saints, and yet we cannot see them with our eyes. It is because the Church is a matter of faith and not of sight that we confess, I believe in the holy Christian Church. Since we are assured that God's Word never returns void we even believe that there are Christians in every congregation where the Word is preached.

The Church as Man Sees It. — In the householder's field, Lesson 73, in which there were tares as well as wheat, the Lord Jesus gives us a picture of the visible Church. The householder who scattered the seed is Jesus. The good seeds are Christians, while the tares are hypocrites and unbelievers. The enemy who scattered the bad seed is the devil. The tares were in the field some time before the householder discovered them, for at first they looked much like the wheat. This reminds us that hypocrites often look like Christians, and pass for Christians. The tares were recognized by their fruits. The fruits by which hypocrites are known are their teachings and manner of life. The wheat kept on growing and yielding in spite of the tares; so Christians keep on teaching the truth and leading upright lives in spite of the hypocrites around them. The householder said, "Let both grow together until the harvest." He did not mean that we are to put forth no efforts to convert hypocrites, but that we are not to be discouraged because of their presence in the Church. The tares could not be pulled out until harvest time lest the wheat should be disturbed. If we were to try to cast the hypocrites out of the Church we would make many mistakes, for we cannot tell

who are and who are not hypocrites. By exercising patience with them perhaps some of the hypocrites in the Church may be converted. The harvest is the day of judgment, the reapers are the angels, the place of punishment is hell, and the gathering of the wheat refers to the blessedness prepared for God's people in heaven.

A Word of Warning. — The preachers of the Old Testament were blessed with the gift of prophecy, and were therefore called prophets. Preachers of the New Testament, although not endowed with the gift of foretelling, are also called prophets. Lesson 74 sounds a warning against false prophets — preachers who proclaim error. They are said to come in sheep's clothing, which means that they look harmless. They are called wolves because they do much harm. As a wolf in sheep's clothing is the more dangerous because it looks like a sheep, so false prophets are the more dangerous because they look and act like Christians. They do mischief because, instead of preaching God's Word, they proclaim the ideas of men. It is the truth that saves. Since our Lutheran Church preaches the Word of God in its purity and administers the Sacraments according to the institution of Christ, we believe it to be the true visible Church of Christ on earth. It is not unkind to warn against the errors of those who misinterpret God's Word, for Jesus says, "Beware of false prophets." We do not claim that our church is the only saving church, and that all Christians are found in its fold, but that there are Christians in all churches where Jesus Christ is preached, but, since the truth alone saves, and error is dangerous, we echo Jesus' words of warning, "Beware of false prophets."

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 71. 1. What is to be said of the Christian Church? 2. By what other name is it called? 3. What is meant by speaking of the Church as the communion of saints? 4. How is it referred to in the Bible? 5. What according to Peter's confession is its foundation? 6. What is meant by the assertion the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? 7. What did the prophet Daniel foresee and how did he declare it? 8. What peculiar church power has God given to the Church? 9. What keys has He entrusted to His people? 10. Who only can forgive sins? 11. To whom has God delegated this power? 12. How is this power exercised among men?

LESSON 72. 1. What is said here of the prophet Elijah? 2. What especially grieved him? 3. Of what sins had the rulers been guilty? 4. To what extremity had God's cause come as the prophet thought?

5. In what respect was he mistaken? 6. What is apparent from the prophet's experience? 7. What is meant by the Church visible? Invisible? 8. Why is the Church called invisible? 9. What, however, do we believe? 10. Why do we so believe? 11. What do we confess? 12. Why do we believe that there are Christians in every congregation where the Word is preached?

LESSON 73. 1. What picture is held before us in this lesson? 2. Who scattered the seed? 3. For what do the good seeds stand? 4. Who are meant by the tares? 5. Who the enemy? 6. What circumstance shows that hypocrites outwardly resemble Christians? 7. How were the tares recognized? 8. What fruits do hypocrites and unbelievers bear? 9. What is indicated by the fact that the wheat continued to grow in spite of the tares? 10. What would be a wrong interpretation of the householder's suggestion? 11. What did he mean? 12. What would have been the consequence had the tares been cast out? 13. What would be the consequence were efforts made to cast out the hypocrites from the Church? 14. What is meant by the harvest? The reapers? The place of punishment? The gathering of the wheat into garners?

LESSON 74. 1. What gift was bestowed upon the Old Testament preachers? 2. To whom is the name they bore now applied? 3. What warning is sounded in this lesson? 4. What is meant by the prophets coming in sheep's clothing? 5. Why are they called wolves? 6. What makes them the more dangerous? 7. How do false prophets do great mischief? 8. Why do we believe that the Lutheran Church is the true visible church on earth? 9. Why is it not unkind to warn against errors and errorists? 10. What do we not claim? 11. Why do we sound forth the warning Jesus gave?

76. THE MAN SICK OF THE PALSY.

MATTHEW 9, 1-8.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN. (A).

In which Christian Church He daily and richly FORGIVES ALL SINS TO ME and ALL BELIEVERS, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

The Faith of those in Trouble. — And He entered into a ship and passed over, and came into His own city.¹ And behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed.²

Jesus Speaks the Word of Forgiveness. — Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.³

The Scribes Find Fault. — And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.⁴

Jesus Heals the Sick Man, and Proves that He can Forgive Sins. — And Jesus knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?⁵ For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then said He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.⁶ And he arose and departed to his house.

The Impression left on the Multitude. — But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus had been on the other side of the sea of Galilee, but had now crossed over to Capernaum. Capernaum was called "His own city" because during His years of public ministry He made it His headquarters.
2. Palsy is the same as paralysis. The sick man was carried by his friends. We glean from St. Mark's account that when the friends of the paralytic could not reach Christ through the door, they ascended to the roof of the house by an outside stairway, broke a hole through the roof, and let their helpless friend down into Christ's presence by

means of ropes. The roofs of the houses being flat, and in this case a sort of tile or slate, the undertaking was not so great. 3. Jesus saw their faith. Of course Jesus can look into the heart, and see one's faith there, but at this time He saw it in what they did. They overcame one obstacle after another until they had the helpless paralytic before Jesus' eyes. These people set us an example in believing. As they would not give way to doubt, but persevered until they obtained what they wished, so we should accept God's Word even if we cannot understand it. If we have faith in our heart it will soon manifest itself in our daily life. Jesus addressed the man as Son because He saw his faith. If we have faith in Jesus, God is our Father. He owns us as His children, and we are God's sons.

Jesus first paid attention to the man's spiritual needs because his sins were his chief trouble. All earthly trouble and suffering are the result of sin. We should learn from this act of Jesus to be especially concerned about our spiritual needs.

Jesus said, Be of good cheer. God can bestow nothing upon the sinner that is more joy-giving than *forgiveness*. There is no sweeter truth revealed to us in Scripture than that which we confess in the third article: *I believe the forgiveness of sins*. According to God's Word I most assuredly hold, that God in His Christian Church daily and richly *forgives all sins* to me and all believers. Yes, that God daily forgives all our sins is not an idea that men have conceived, but it is taught in God's Word.

Since every one sins daily, and because of his sins deserves God's wrath, it is most comforting to know that there is forgiveness for every sin of every sinner. It is *necessary* that we receive forgiveness because I then only become just before God, when God forgives to me my sins. As long as sin is not forgiven the sinner is not right with God, but is under condemnation. Thus the prophet says, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags." Man's hopelessness so far as his own efforts are concerned is plainly set forth in Job 25, 4-6, "How can a man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in His sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?" We read in Psalm 130, 3-4, "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." If God would hold our sins against us we would be lost. The only hope of every sinner is that he receives forgiveness, for, like David, all must pray, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." Psalm 143, 2.

It is for *Christ's sake* that God *forgives sinners*. By His sufferings and death Jesus Christ has paid the penalty of all sin. We are now justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The sinner who truly believes in Jesus stands forgiven in the sight of God. Paul declares this in Acts 13, 38-39, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you

the forgiveness of sin; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." The same apostle writes, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Well could Jesus say to the paralytic, "Be of good cheer." He forgave the man. He declared him free from guilt and justified in the sight of the Father. This man's good fortune is described in Psalm 32, 1-2, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." The same truth is set forth by St. Paul in Romans 4, 6-8, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." 4. The Scribes found fault in their hearts. They did not know that their hearts are open to the eye of Jesus. It becomes us to be watchful, since God is all-seeing; our thoughts and all our acts are known of Him.

The Scribes accused Jesus of blaspheming. Blasphemy is saying that which is unworthy of God, or to ascribe to man what belongs to God only. They looked upon Jesus as being only a man, and therefore accused Him of blasphemy because He said, Thy sins be forgiven thee. Since Jesus is God as well as man, of course their accusation was false. 5. Jesus at once proved to these Scribes that He was God by showing that He knew their thoughts. He called their thoughts evil because they were thoughts of bitterness and hatred. The Scribes being students of God's Word and teachers of the people should have been ashamed to entertain such evil thoughts, and Jesus would say, "Is it possible that you, *you Scribes, are thinking evil in your hearts?*" Better things were to have been expected of them. To whom much is given of him much shall be required. 6. By the question, Which is easier? Jesus means to say that it required divine power to heal this man of his bodily ailment as well as to forgive him his sins. Since there is no outward evidence, no way by which a man can tell that another's sins are or are not forgiven, Jesus proposed to accompany the healing of this man of his spiritual ailment with the healing of his bodily ailment. He healed the man of his bodily ailment in order that it might be easier for the fault-finders to believe that He had power to forgive sins.

By the name Son of Man Jesus means Messiah, who, though the Son of God, was true man.

This forgiveness of sin does not take place after death, or after a period of suffering in purgatory as the Roman Catholics claim, but here on earth.

At Jesus' word the helpless man arose without assistance and went to his home. God's Word is all that is necessary to heal the spiritually diseased. As Jesus' Word brought peace and happiness to this afflicted man, so it brings peace and happiness to the spiritually helpless of all time. 7. The people who witnessed this miracle were amazed at the

miracle, and the evidence they had received that Jesus had power to forgive sins. They glorified, that is, they praised God that the power of healing and the power of forgiving sins was bestowed upon men.

The power to forgive sins has indeed been given unto men, and is exercised by means of the Word and Sacraments. This is called of Office of the Keys, which is "the peculiar church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, and to retain the sins of the impenitent, so long as they do not repent."

QUESTIONS.

1. Where did this incident happen? 2. Whence had Jesus come? 3. Why was Capernaum called "His own city?" 4. How was the sick man afflicted? 5. How did his friends manifest their faith? 6. What conditions made their undertaking comparatively easy? 7. In what did these people set an example? 8. How may we follow their example? 9. Why did Jesus address the sick man as Son? 10. What entitles a sinner to this name? 11. To which of the man's troubles did Jesus give attention first? 12. Why? 13. What may we learn from this? 14. What comforting words did Jesus speak? 15. What is one of the sweet truths we confess in the third article? 16. What sins does God forgive? 17. How does He forgive them? 18. To whom does He forgive them? 19. Where is this forgiveness found? 20. According to what do we hold this doctrine of forgiveness? 21. What makes this so comforting? 22. Why is it necessary that we obtain forgiveness? 23. What is man's condition before he is forgiven? 24. What does the prophet say of our righteousness? 25. In what words does Job set forth man's helplessness? 26. How does the psalmist express man's need of forgiveness? 27. What is the sinner's only hope? 28. How does David express this truth? 29. How is it possible for the sinner to be forgiven? 30. What sinners have this forgiveness? 31. Give this truth in the words of St. Paul. 32. Why had the sick man reason to be of good cheer? 33. How does David refer to the blessedness of being forgiven? 34. Give this truth in the words of St. Paul. 35. In what way did the Scribes find fault? 36. Of what were they ignorant? 37. To what should the fact that God is all-seeing move us? 38. Of what did the Scribes accuse Jesus? 39. What is blasphemy? 40. Under what conditions would the words Jesus spoke have been blasphemy? 41. What evidence of His divinity did Jesus give them at once? 42. Why were their thoughts especially evil? 43. Why were better things to be expected of them? 44. What did Jesus mean by the question, Which is easier? 45. Why did Jesus perform the miracle of healing at this time? 46. What does the name Son of Man signify? 47. When is the sinner forgiven? 48. What healed the man? 49. What alone is necessary to heal the spiritually sick? 50. How were the people affected? 51. To what were they moved? 52. What peculiar power has God given to His Church? 53. How is this power exercised?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 31, 1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

77. THE PUBLICAN JUSTIFIED.

LUKE 18, 9-14.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN. (B).

In which Christian Church He daily and richly FORGIVES ALL SINS TO ME and ALL BELIEVERS, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

The Persons to whom Jesus addressed this Parable. — And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.¹

The two Worshipers. — Two men went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.²

The Worship of the Pharisee. — The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.³

The Worship of the Publican. — And the publican, standing afar off would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.⁴

The Justification of the Publican. — I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. It is not likely that the persons whom Jesus addressed were Pharisees, but they were like them in this that they were self-righteous. They trusted in themselves, that is, they not only felt that they were better than their neighbors, but that they merited God's favor and forgiveness. People who are satisfied with themselves, and think that by being moral and neighborly they can fit themselves for heaven, belong to this class. Being satisfied with themselves they do not feel the need of a Savior. Such persons are apt to be dissatisfied with everybody else. They see nothing but good in themselves, and only faults and flaws in

their neighbors. 2. The temple was situated on an elevation, hence the worshippers "went up" into it. It was customary in those days for people to go to the temple, not only at the hour of public worship, but at other times, for private devotion. Jesus taught His disciples that He could be worshipped acceptably anywhere. Therefore, while we should love God's house, and regularly attend the services there, we need not resort to a church or any other particular place for private devotion. So far from teaching us to go to a public place for private prayer Jesus says, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Matthew 6, 6.

The Pharisees were noted for their self-righteousness. They went to the temple to pray because it was a public place, and they expected to get a lot of credit from men for their long prayers. All church-goers, and especially ministers, singers and others who take a prominent part in the service, should examine their hearts often, lest the spirit of this Pharisee take possession of them.

The publicans were called sinners, and were reputed a dishonest set, but this one was to be commended because he went to the temple to pray. 3. The Pharisee stood while he prayed. Our attitude in prayer should be becoming and reverent, but no particular attitude is prescribed in the Scriptures. If the heart is right the attitude will not be wrong. This man, however, stood not out of awe of God, but in order to be seen of men. The Pharisee did not see his own sins; in this he was at fault. A true child of God knows himself better than he knows any one else. He knows more sins of himself than he does of any other person because he can see into his own heart, but cannot see into the hearts of others. He could recount every good work he performed, which showed that he thought too much of himself and his works—he overestimated his good deeds.

Had the Pharisee spent more time in examining himself he would have had less time to find fault with the publican. Our own sins should concern us far more than those of other people. They should look larger than those of our neighbors because they are nearer to us.

The Pharisee thought that he was an exceptionally good man because he fasted and paid tithes beyond what the Law required. The Law required tithes only of certain things, but this man gave a tithe of everything. Let us take warning. One can be very busy in what looks like a good cause, and yet not be pleasing to God. In order that our service be acceptable to God our hearts must be right. 4. The publican showed his penitence and earnestness by the attitude he assumed, by his demeanor and his prayer. He stood afar off, kept his eyes cast down, smote upon his breast and cried, God be merciful to me a sinner. We may learn from him to stand in awe of God, and to go into His presence with reverence and holiness of heart. This man felt the need of *the forgiveness of sin*. His sins were weighing upon him. He came to the Lord to get rid of them. These worshippers were very different from

each other. The one was boastful while the other could think of no good thing to say of himself. The one based his hope on his righteousness, the other's only hope was in God's mercy. The one had much to say, the other is too much burdened with his sins to talk. 5. The publican was *justified before God* not because his sins were of little consequence, but because he was penitent. The Pharisee exalted himself, and had no sorrow of heart and no faith. He came before God feeling the need of nothing, and received nothing. The publican humbled himself. He had both *sorrow* for his sins and *faith*. He deplored his poverty and was lavishly blessed. He longed for forgiveness, and went to the right place and to the right One for it. We confess that God in His Christian Church, daily and richly *forgives all sins* to me and all believers. His sins brought him into condemnation with God, and he realized that his only hope was to find forgiveness. The forgiveness of sin is the condition of our justification before God. When our sins are forgiven God no longer regards us as sinners under condemnation, but as *just*. Justification is that act of God by which He, of pure grace, for the sake of the merits of Christ, pronounces a poor sinner, who truly believes in Christ, free from guilt, and declares him just.

The publican did not, like the Pharisee, lay claims to justification, but asked for mercy. He realized that if God justified him it would be out of mercy, or, as we say, by grace. So says St. Paul, Romans 3, 21-24, "Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

The sinner remains a sinner, and yet so soon as he believes in Jesus he stands justified—justified for the sake of the merits of Christ. Jesus suffered and died to redeem us from our sins, and because of what He has done and endured as our substitute we are forgiven and declared just. In order to receive forgiveness the sinner, like the publican, must be sorry for his sins and have faith in the Lord Jesus. St. Paul declares this, Romans 3, 28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law". We are justified by faith.

The publican had no good deeds to refer to, and yet he was justified, for the sinner is justified because of what Christ has done, and not because of anything he himself has done. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Romans 4, 5.

The Pharisee had plenty of his own righteousness but it was of no account. The publican's faith was counted for righteousness. When one believes in Jesus then the Savior's holy life and innocent death is credited to him. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Romans 10, 4. This is plainly taught in

the reference to Abraham, Genesis 15, 6, "He believed in the Lord; and He counted it unto him for righteousness." St. Paul refers to this in Romans 4, 3, "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

The Pharisee had no faith and therefore no righteousness that was pleasing to God. The publican had faith, for he cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Although he was a great sinner, having faith, he went down to his house justified. It was because the righteousness of Jesus was ascribed to him that the publican was justified.

QUESTIONS.

1. To whom did Jesus address this parable? 2. In what respect did these people trust in themselves? 3. Who belong to this class? 4. Of what do these people not feel the need? 5. How are they likely to feel toward others? 6. Why is it said "went up" to the temple? 7. What custom prevailed in those days? 8. What did Jesus teach His disciples in regard to this? 9. What place does Jesus mention as suitable for private devotion? 10. For what were the Pharisees noted? 11. What prompted them to go to the temple to pray? 12. Why will church-goers do well to examine themselves frequently? 13. Who should be especially watchful in this matter? 14. In what repute were the publicans held? 15. Why was this one to be commended? 16. Why did the Pharisee stand and pray with himself? 17. What is to be said of one's attitude in prayer? 18. In what respect was the Pharisee lacking? 19. What can be said of the true child of God in regard to this? 20. Why should we see more sins in ourselves than in any one else? 21. What is evident from the Pharisee's enumeration of his good deeds? 22. Whose sins should concern us most? 23. Why did the Pharisees think so well of himself? 24. What may we learn from his case? 25. What will make our efforts pleasing to God? 26. How did the publican show the condition of his heart? 27. What does his example teach us? 28. In what respects did these worshippers differ? 29. Why was the publican justified? 30. What was lacking in the Pharisee? 31. How did the publican come before God? 32. Where did the publican look for forgiveness? 33. Where does God dispense forgiveness? 34. What sins does God forgive? 35. Whom does God forgive? 36. How does God forgive? 37. What is the condition of the sinner's justification? 38. How does God regard the sinner who is forgiven? 39. Whose is the act of justification? 40. Whom does God justify? 41. Why does God do this? 42. On what grounds did the publican seek forgiveness? 43. What does Paul say on this subject in Romans 3? 44. When does a sinner stand justified? 45. Because of what are believing sinners declared just? 46. Under what condition is the sinner justified? 47. State this in the words of St. Paul. 48. What righteousness did the Pharisee have, and what was its character? 49. Whose righteousness did the publican have? 50. With what is the believer credited? 51. In what words does St. Paul declare this? 52. In what words is this declared of Abraham? 53. Mention one more important particular in which these worshippers differed.

GOLDEN TEXT.

ROMANS 3, 22-24. There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

78. LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

JOHN 11, 17-44.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

In which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the last day RAISE UP ME and ALL THE DEAD, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

Jesus visits His Friends at Bethany. — Then when Jesus came, He found that He had lain in the grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:¹ and many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.² Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him: but Mary sat still in the house.

An Interview between Martha and Jesus. — Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.³ But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee. Jesus said unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.⁴ Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: I believe that Thou art Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.⁵

Mary, Summoned into Christ's Presence, Unburdens her Heart to Him. — And when she had so said, she went her way,

and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, the Master is come, and calleth for thee. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came unto Him.⁶ Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met Him. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily and went out followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.⁷

Jesus Weeps with the Sorrowing ones.— When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.⁸ Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him: And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?⁹

At the Grave of Lazarus.— Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.¹⁰ Jesus saith unto her. Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? Then they took the stone away from the place where the dead was laid.¹¹

Jesus Calls the Dead Brother to Life.— And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I know that Thou hearest Me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth, and He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.¹²

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus had been in Perea, whither He had withdrawn from Jerusalem. Having heard of the sickness of Lazarus He started for Bethany two days later. Bethany was a village nearly two miles distant from Jerusalem, and the home of His sick friend. Lazarus, which means *whom God helps*, was the brother of Martha and Mary. 2. The efforts of friends of this family to comfort the bereaved sisters is an example we should imitate. Well directed sympathy consoles and comforts trouble hearts. Mary differed from her sister as to grieving for her brother and as to her disposition, and therefore acted differently on hearing that Jesus had come. 3. Martha's faith was strong enough to believe that had Jesus been there her brother would have been restored, but scarcely strong enough to believe that Jesus could restore him now that he was dead. Her faith was not small, however, for she says, Even now whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee. 4. Jesus' reply did not bring her new comfort. She, like the Israelites in general, believed in the resurrection at the last day, and she supposed that Jesus referred to that. With Martha all Christians believe in *the resurrection of the body*. By eating of the forbidden fruit in Paradise, concerning which God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die," man brought death into the world and upon all men. St. Paul states this in Romans 5, 12, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." All must die. The dead body is committed to the ground and decays. This, however, is not the end of the body. According to God's Word we most assuredly hold that God will at the last day raise up the dead. In John 5, 28, 29, we read what Jesus says on this subject: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." 5. Jesus' words, "I am the resurrection and the life" mean that He is the author of all life, and the ground of all hope of life after death. He said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Again He said, "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day," John 6, 40.

Jesus not only tells us this in words but also by His own resurrection. Of this St. Paul reminds us, 1 Corinthians 15, 12, "Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead."

That the dead will rise was the comfort of God's people of the Old Testament. We read, Luke 20, 37-38, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him." Job rejoiced

in the hope of the resurrection, ch. 19, 25, 26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

The words, "though he were dead, yet shall he live," mean that the death believers suffer is but temporal. Although they die yet will they live, and live forever. The words, "shall never die," mean that the death that comes to God's people is not real death—not eternal death. It is a death that cannot touch the soul, and holds the body but for a time. Jesus' question, *Believest thou this?* is personal and important. That there is salvation from death is the sweetest truth ever revealed to man, but only when we believe it does it bring peace and joy to the soul. Martha's confession embraced three important truths: That Jesus is Christ the Messiah, that He is the Son of God, and that He is the Savior whom the prophets foretold. 6. As Martha calls her sister to share with her the counsel and comfort Jesus dispensed, so should we be busy in bringing the world, and the cold and indifferent of the Church to the service of God's house. Jesus called for Mary, and He calls for all who stand aloof. He wants every one with Him. As Mary arose quickly and came to Jesus so should we be ready to go and do our part when through our fellow Christians the Lord shows us what He would have us do. 7. Mary greeted Jesus with the same words that her sister had used. Perhaps the sisters felt that Jesus should not have delayed in coming when they sent for Him, but the sequel showed that He made no mistake. Let us learn that the Lord always hears our prayers, and that although He may not answer them in the way and at the time we prefer, He answers in the best way and at the right time.

8. That Jesus was troubled, and wept, shows us our Lord's deep interest in us, and His loving sympathy for us. 9. The Jews did not believe in Jesus, therefore it was strange to them that He should perform miracles and yet permit one whom He dearly loved to die. Like these Jews people of all time are finding fault with God and God's dealings with men. Believers do not find fault with God even when they cannot understand His ways. True faith leads them to believe that He will overrule all for good as He did in this case. 10. Martha evidently did not mean to object to the removal of the stone at Jesus' command, but to remind Him that her brother had been dead four days, and decomposition had already begun. 11. Jesus means by His reply to Martha, Remember what I told you, and have confidence in my words. In the hour of trial we too should remember Jesus' promises, and confide in them.

That we might not give way to doubt on this precious doctrine God raised different departed ones to life, and the record is given to us in the inspired Word. An example from the Old Testament dispensation is that of the man whose body was cast into the sepulchre of the prophet Elisha: as soon as his body touched the bones of the prophet the man revived and stood upon his feet. Examples of those whom Jesus raised besides that in our lesson are the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow

of Nain. Examples of those whom the apostles brought back to life are Dorcas by Peter, and Entychus by Paul. 12. Jesus looked upward to indicate that the power comes from above. He addressed God as Father in order to remind His hearers that He is the Son of God. He thanked the Father for having heard His prayer, for He had no doubt communed with the Father in regard to raising Lazarus before starting for Bethany. Jesus utters His prayer in the hearing of the people in order that the proof He is giving them of His Messiahship might be plain and convincing. He cried with a loud voice not because it was necessary, but in order that all present might hear Him. Lazarus came forth in perfect health and strength, and so in God's time all the dead will be raised to life, to a happier and better life. It is not *some* of the dead, possibly the most righteous, but *all* of the dead that will be raised. "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth," John 5, 28. Of course there will be a difference. "They that have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Those who shall rise to everlasting life are they that have done good, that is, who because of their faith in Jesus are accounted good and just before God. They that have done evil shall rise to everlasting damnation. This is set forth in Daniel 12, 2, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

The bodies of those raised unto life will be fashioned like unto Jesus' glorious body, Philippians 3, 21. That is, they will not be maimed, blind, deaf, sickly, but perfect and glorified.

As for the bodies of those raised unto damnation, they shall arise to shame and everlasting contempt. As a life of sin makes persons red-faced, bloated and bleary-eyed, so the existence with Satan in hell will no doubt affect the bodies of the lost, for the prophet says, "They shall be an abhorring to all flesh."

QUESTIONS.

1. Where was this miracle performed? 2. Whence had Jesus come?
3. What does the name Lazarus mean? 4. What good example did these people set? 5. How is the difference in the conduct of these sisters to be accounted for? 6. What can you say of Martha's faith? 7. Why did Jesus' reply give her no new comfort? 8. What do all Christians believe in this regard? 9. How did death come into the world? 10. Who are now subject to death? 11. State this in the words of St. Paul. 12. In what words does Jesus refer to the resurrection? 13. How did He speak of it to Martha? 14. Repeat another passage in which Jesus declared this doctrine. 15. Besides expressing it in words how else did Jesus teach that the dead would rise? 16. In what words did St. Paul refer to this doctrine? 17. Repeat a passage from the New Testament in which the faith of Moses in the resurrection of the dead is referred to. 18. In what words did Job rejoice in the hope of the resurrection? 19. What did Jesus mean by the words, "I am the resurrection and the life"? 20. What did He mean by the expression, Though he were dead yet shall he live? 21.

What by the words, Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die? 22. When does the offer of salvation bring peace and joy to the soul? 23. What truths are embraced in Martha's answer? 24. How can we follow the example Martha set when she called her sister? 25. How can we do as Mary did when she hastened to heed the call? 26. What circumstance may have led the sisters to address Jesus as they did? 27. What does the sequel show? 28. What may we learn from this in regard to the answer of prayer in general? 29. What is indicated by Jesus being troubled because of their grief? 30. Why did the entire matter seem strange to the Jews? 31. Why do believers not find fault with divine providence? 32. Why did Martha interpose when Jesus ordered that the stone be removed? 33. What did Jesus mean by His reply? 34. What other evidences of the resurrection is found in the inspired Word? 35. Mention an instance in the Old Testament in which a dead person was raised. 36. Mention other instances in which Jesus raised the dead. 37. Mention incidents in which the apostles called the dead to life. 38. Why did Jesus lift up His eyes? 39. Why did He address God as Father? 40. What seems to be indicated by Jesus thanking the Father for having heard Him? 41. Why did Jesus repeat the prayer in the hearing of the people? 42. Why did He cry with a loud voice? 43. What is indicated in regard to life after death by the fact that Lazarus was not only restored to life but to good health? 44. Which of the dead shall rise? 45. With what difference shall they rise? 46. Who shall rise unto life everlasting? 47. Who are they that have done good? 48. Who shall rise unto everlasting damnation? 49. State this in the words of the prophet Daniel. 50. What of the bodies of those resurrected unto life? 51. What of the bodies of those resurrected unto damnation?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN II, 25. I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

79. THE RICH MAN IN HELL.

LUKE 16, 19-31.

HELL.

In which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and give unto me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

The Rich Man and Lazarus in this Life. — There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:¹ and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores?

The End that Came to these Men. — And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.²

Their Condition after Death. — In hell the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.⁴

The Conversation that Ensued Between the Rich Man and Abraham. — The rich man cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented: And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.⁶ Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if **one** went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he

said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. This rich man is sometimes called Dives, which is the Latin word for rich. It is not wrong to be rich, but it is dangerous to the soul, since money brings with it many temptations. His clothing was of purple from Tyre and linen from Egypt, the best, no doubt, he could procure. It is not wrong to wear fine clothing if one can afford it, but it is wrong to set the heart on our garments, and to spend so much time and money in adorning our bodies that we neglect more important matters. He fared sumptuously, that is, lived in mirth and pleasure. It is not wrong to surround one's self with good things, and to enjoy life, but this man fared sumptuously *every day*. There is danger of running into excess, and becoming so engrossed in pleasure and gratification that the interests of the soul are neglected. 2. Lazarus was so poor and helpless that he was dependent on charity for a livelihood. It is not a virtue to be poor; many poor people are ungodly. Some people are poor because they are lazy, or extravagant, or careless. The sacred writer says, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," for one brings its temptation as well as the other. No one should covet poverty. It is not wrong to beg when there is necessity for it, but there is danger that beggars will become bold, dishonest and ungrateful.

Lazarus needed assistance, for his friends had to carry him. He was worthy of assistance because he was humble; he was satisfied with crumbs. Moreover he was in a pitiable plight, being full of sores — possibly the result of neglect and lack of food. 3. Both men died. In the end the rich man had no advantage over the beggar. Many earthly friends and associates came to pay respect to Dives; his funeral no doubt brought honor to his name. Lazarus may not have been accorded a respectable burial, but the angels hovered around, and wafted his soul at the moment of its release to the bosom of Abraham. To understand the expression, bosom of Abraham, we must know that heaven is here pictured, as the Jews were wont to picture it, as a feast or banquet. In the Jewish mind Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, occupied the position of honor at this feast. Jesus meant to say, therefore, that this beggar fared as well as Abraham, for he reclined on the bosom of this ancient worthy, that is, occupied a place next to him at the banquet. The fact that one filled a lowly station in life will not lessen his perfect happiness in heaven. 4. The rich man's body was buried with much ceremony, but his soul was consigned to the punishment prepared for the wicked. The place where the wicked suffer after death is called *hell*. The condition of those in hell is one of torment. Their sufferings as to the soul begin immediately after death, but the body is committed to the ground and returns to dust. When the body will be raised on the last

day it will be reunited with the soul, and its sufferings will begin. The lost will therefore suffer pain eternally both in body and soul. 5. The damned must suffer in *both body and soul*. Jesus says, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," Matthew 10, 28. St. John describes the sufferings of the lost in Revelation 14, 9-11, "The third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receives his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." The rich man was tormented. He suffered in soul. He had spent his life pursuing the foolish and sinful pleasures of the flesh, neglecting his soul, and now his conscience accused him of his folly and neglect. His sufferings of soul were increased by the company with which he was compelled to mingle. Jesus tells us of the company of the lost, Matthew 25, 14, "Then shall He say unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

They will suffer untold agony of mind. They will be cast out from the presence of God, who is the source of all good. They will be robbed of all hope, as is indicated by the words, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." This mental anguish is referred to by the apostle, Hebrews 10, 26, 27, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

They will also suffer in body. The rich man suffered such thirst that he longed for but one drop of water. Jesus refers to the bodily sufferings of the damned as well as to their soul sufferings in Matthew 27, 13, "Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Not all will suffer in the same degree, as we learn from Luke 12, 47, "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Those who are born of Christian parents, and brought up in the Christian Church, and go astray, will have much more to answer for in eternity than people of the world who grow up in ignorance of God's will. This is made plain by our Lord when, as recorded in Matthew 20, He declares that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, heathen cities, than for the people of Palestine who had the truth proclaimed to them but rejected it. He declares the

same truth in Matthew 23, 14, Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers: therefore ye shall received the greater damnation." 6. *The punishment of the wicked in hell will be eternal*: "Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh." Isaiah 66, 24. There is a gulf between the wicked and heaven. It is a great gulf and it is fixed; there is no escape. In Mark 9, 48, it is written: "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." That the wicked must suffer eternally is taught in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament. We read in Daniel 12, 2, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." In Proverbs 11, 7, it is written, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth." 7. The rich man was lost because he would not repent. He continued in sin. Jesus says, "He that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16. Who must suffer in hell is plainly stated by the apostle, 2 Thessalonians 1, 8, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dives was anxious about his five brothers, and plead that a messenger should be sent to warn them. He was told, "They have Moses and the prophets," that is, the writings of Moses and the prophets, the Bible. In our day we have besides the writings of Moses and the prophets those of the apostles and evangelists. Abraham's answer might be given in these words: God has made all arrangements necessary for the saving of sinners. If they will not use the means of grace which God has provided for them in the Church there is no hope for them.

The time to prepare for death and eternity is in this life. As for a purgatory of which the Roman Catholics dream, in which, as they claim, those who are not quite fit for heaven can be prepared after death, it is nothing but a human invention. It is contrary to the Scriptures. Jesus says, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7, 13-14.

Paul declares that there is no opportunity to prepare for eternity after death, Hebrews 9, 27, "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this, the judgment." This is also taught in the Old Testament, "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be." Ecclesiastes 11, 3, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of an unjust man perisheth."

QUESTIONS.

1. By what name is the rich man sometimes called, and why by that name? 2. What can be said of being rich? 3. What may be said of wearing fine clothing? 4. What is to be said of faring sumptuously? 5. What can you say of poverty in general? 6. What are some of the causes of poverty? 7. What may we learn from Agur's prayer in regard to poverty and riches? 8. What may be said of begging and beggars? 9. What can you say of Lazarus? 10. What difference was there between these men in the hour of death? 11. In what respect did the rich man seem to have an advantage over the poor man immediately after death? 12. In what respect did the latter have an advantage over Dives? 13. How is the expression "in the bosom of Abraham" to be explained? 14. What did Jesus mean to say by these words? 15. What effect did the beggar's poverty have upon his condition in eternity? 16. What befell the rich man's body? 17. What befell his soul? 18. What is the condition of the lost after death? 19. When does this condition begin as to the soul? 20. When does it begin as to the body? 21. In what respect must the damned suffer in hell? 22. In what words does Jesus declare this? 23. State the condition of the damned in the words of John. 24. How does conscience add to the sufferings of the lost? 25. What condition increases their sufferings? 26. In what company will they mingle? 27. From whose presence must they be separated? 28. How does St. Paul refer to their mental sufferings? 29. Of what bodily suffering did the rich man complain? 30. In what words does Jesus refer to the suffering of the lost? 31. In what respect is there a difference in the sufferings of the lost? 32. What conditions in this life will add to the degree of suffering? 33. How does Jesus teach this in alluding to certain cities of His day? 34. How does He refer to it when addressing the scribes and Pharisees? 35. How long will the sufferings of the wicked endure? 36. State this in the words of the prophet Isaiah. 37. How is it expressed in our lesson? 38. How is it expressed in words recorded by St. Mark? 39. Repeat passages from the Old Testament teaching this doctrine. 40. Why was Dives lost? 41. Whom does Jesus say will be lost? 42. Whom does Paul speak of as being lost? 43. How did Dives intercede for his brothers? 44. What answer was given to him? 45. What is meant by Moses and the prophets? 46. In what other words might Abraham's answer have been given? 47. When should the preparation for eternity be made? 48. What is understood by the so-called purgatory? 49. How do we consider that doctrine? 50. Mention a passage of Scripture which this doctrine contradicts. 51. In what words does St. Paul overthrow this doctrine? 52. What words from Ecclesiastes overthrow it?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 7, 13-14. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

80. THE HOLY CITY.

REVELATION 21, 1-7.

ETERNAL LIFE.

In which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the last day raise up me and all the dead, and WILL GIVE UNTO ME and ALL BELIEVERS IN CHRIST, ETERNAL LIFE. This is most certainly true.

The New Heaven and Earth.— And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.¹

The New Jerusalem.— And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.²

The Presence of God in the Holy City.— And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.³

The Blessed Estate of those who Dwell there.— And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.⁴ And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that over-cometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The writer who saw these things was the apostle John, to whom God made known many important facts concerning the future of the Church, and which the apostle recorded in the Book of Revelation. The apostle sees a time when the heaven and earth shall have passed away, and there will be a new heaven and earth. This change will take place at the end of the present world or age. Isaiah predicted this, chapter 65, 17,

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Peter describes this change in his second epistle, chapter 3, 10, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up."

The apostle says that there will be no sea upon the new earth, the sea being taken to represent an element of evil. 2. On this new earth there will be a city called the *Holy City* because it is divine in its origin, coming from God out of heaven. It will also be known as the *New Jerusalem* in contrast with the old Jerusalem of the old earth. By referring to this city as a bride adorned for her husband the apostle means to tell us of its beauty and perfection. This city is conceived of as the Church. In chapter 5, 9, it is referred to as the Lamb's bride, another name for the Church. 3. This city is called the tabernacle of God, that is, God's home. God will then dwell with men in a different sense from that in which He is with His people now. They will no doubt see Him, all will own Him as their God, and He will own them as His people.

Of the many revelations given to us of *eternal life* the most cheering is that God is with His people in that life in such manner that they will see Him and dwell with Him. He is our best Friend. The greatest happiness heaven will have in store for the redeemed is the blessedness of seeing God. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God," Matthew 5, 8. John refers to this in these impressive words, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is," 1 John 3, 2. "We shall be like Him" means that the image of God which was lost in the fall will be restored. This image of God consists principally in righteousness and true holiness. This is told us in Psalm 17, 15, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness." 4. The fearful consequences of sin will not be found in heaven because there is no sin there. Were God to describe heaven to us we would not understand Him, for it is far beyond anything that man has ever seen or heard: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2, 9. Since God could not make us understand many of the joys and beauties of heaven, most of the information He gives us in regard to it is negative. He tells us what is not to be found there, as, for example, no evil, no sorrow, no tears, no pain, no death. One of these negative descriptions is found in Revelation 21, 4, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." St. Paul writes in the same strain, 2 Timothy 4, 18, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom." 5. Although most passages that tell us of heaven

are of a negative character still there are also positive declarations; we know something of the realm beyond the grave. One of the blessings found there is knowledge — a knowledge of God and divine things, "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known." 1 Corinthians 13, 17. Since we shall be without sin we know that there is true happiness in heaven. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. "Psalm 16, 11. Here there is sorrow, but in heaven there is joy. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 128, 5-6. The Savior reminds us of this in the words, "Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." Luke 6, 21.

Another of the good things that we shall find in heaven is *rest*. "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Revelation 14, 13.

The rest and joy of heaven will so satisfy and enrapture us that we shall forget about the trials of earth. Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8, 18.

Another of the blessings of heaven is the reward which God bestows on those who faithfully serve Him in this world. Of course it is not a reward of merit but of grace. Of this we read in Matthew 25, 21, "His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

In order that we may have a faint idea of the blessedness of heaven God compares it to the most precious things of earth. In Matthew 25, 34, it is compared to a kingdom. "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." In Revelation 2, 10, and in 2 Timothy 4, 8, to a crown. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing." In our lesson the glories of heaven are described as those of a beautiful city.

Every one who attains to eternal life will be happy — perfectly happy. However there are degrees of happiness, as we see from 2 Corinthians 9; 6, "But this I say, he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." The same is seen from 1 Corinthians 15, 41-42, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also in the resurrection of the dead." The Old Testament teaches the same truth, as we see from

Daniel 12, 3, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Jesus died to open heaven to all sinners, but not all will enter and enjoy it. Only those shall attain to this life who continue in true faith unto the end. We read in Acts 16, 21, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." It is not enough that one is brought to faith; he must persevere in it. Only those who endure unto the end shall be saved. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Revelation 2, 10.

Eternal life is a blessing too wonderful for mortals to conceive of and appreciate. It is all the more wonderful because it is bestowed upon sinners, and bestowed upon them as a free gift, for Christ's sake. It is an inheritance, and all who love Jesus shall receive it, "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," Matthew 25, 34.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of the apostle who wrote the words of this lesson?
2. What did he foresee?
3. When will the change he foresaw take place?
4. In what words did Isaiah foretell this? In what words does St. Peter refer to it?
6. What did the prophet behold in the new earth?
7. Why is this city called the Holy City?
8. Why is it called the New Jerusalem?
9. To what is this city compared, and what is meant?
10. What does this city represent?
11. Why is it referred to as the tabernacle of the Lord?
12. How will the Lord's presence with His people then differ from His presence now?
13. What is the most cheering of all that is told us of heaven?
14. Why are the pure in heart blessed?
15. In what words does John refer to the blessedness of seeing God?
16. What is understood by being like God?
17. In what does God's image consist?
18. What does the psalmist say on this subject?
19. Why will there be none of the consequences of sin in heaven?
20. Why could we not understand an accurate description of heaven?
21. What is the character of most of the information given us concerning heaven?
22. What will not be found in heaven?
23. What does St. Paul say pertinent to this?
24. Mention one of the blessings found in heaven.
25. In what words does St. Paul allude to this?
26. Mention a second blessing that will be found in heaven.
27. In what words does the psalmist assure us of this?
28. What is promised to those who sow in tears?
29. In what words does Jesus tell us of the joy of heaven?
30. Mention another of heaven's blessings.
31. In what words is this promised in Revelation?
32. What will be forgotten in the rapture of heaven?
33. What does Paul say on this subject?
34. What is another blessing that heaven bestows?
35. What kind of a reward is this?
36. How does Jesus refer to it?
37. In what words is the blessedness of heaven compared to a kingdom?
38. In what word is it compared to a crown?
39. Under what imagery is heaven pictured in our lesson?
40. How happy will every one be who reaches heaven?
41. What is meant by degrees in the happiness of heaven?
42. In what words does Paul allude to this?
43. How is this referred to in the book of Daniel?
44. What was accomplished through the sufferings and death of Jesus?
45. Who only will enter heaven?
46. What does Paul admonish in regard to this?
47. What is eternal life called?
- 48.

Who are heirs to this inheritance? 49. With what words shall those be greeted who are faithful to the end?

GOLDEN TEXT.

HEBREWS 13, 14. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

81. REVIEW OF LESSONS 76-80.

A Joyful Message.—The paralytic and his friends, of whom we read in Lesson 76, received much more of Jesus than they expected. The helpless man was not only cured of his bodily ailment, but his soul was made unspeakably happy. He received the forgiveness of sins. Jesus says to all sinners as He said to this one, Be of good cheer. According to God's Word we most assuredly hold that God in His Christian Church daily and richly forgives all sins to all believers. We sin daily, and because of our sins deserve God's wrath. It is necessary that every one receives forgiveness. Only then will we be just before God. It is for Christ's sake that God forgives us. By His sufferings and death Jesus Christ has paid the penalty of all sins. The sinner who truly believes in Jesus stands forgiven in the sight of God. He is declared free from all guilt, as we read in Psalm 32, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven". There is forgiveness for all sin. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. No one who looks in faith to Jesus will be turned away as too great a sinner to be forgiven. This forgiveness does not take place after death, or after a period of suffering, but here on earth.

A Sinner, Yet Pleasing to God.—The two worshippers to which Lesson 77 calls our attention were like each other in this that they were sinners, and stood in need of forgiveness. They were unlike each other, however, in the matter of seeing and confessing their sins. The Pharisee did not see his sins, and did not feel the need of forgiveness; the publican saw and felt his sins, and longed for forgiveness. The Pharisee's sins were held against him not because they were too great to be

forgiven, but because he was not penitent. The publican was justified not because his sins were trifling, but because he was penitent—he was sorry for his sins and looked to Heaven for pardon. God in the Christian Church daily and richly forgives all sins to all believers. The forgiven sinner is justified before God. Forgiveness of sin is the condition of our justification before God. When we are forgiven God no longer regards us as sinners but as just. Justification is an act of God by which He, out of pure grace, for Christ's sake, pronounces all believing sinners free from guilt, and declares them just. The forgiven sinner is still a sinner, and yet justified. He is justified because of what Jesus Christ did for Him as his substitute. To receive this forgiveness the sinner must be sorry for his sins and have faith in our Lord Jesus. The publican's faith was counted for righteousness.

Through Death to Endless Life.—Lesson 78 proclaims the resurrection of the body. By the disobedience of our first parents sin came into the world, and death came with it. All must die. Although the dead body is committed to the ground, and decays, it will live again. According to God's Word we most assuredly hold that God will at the last day raise up the dead. The people of the Old Testament believed in the resurrection of the body. Job declared that in his flesh he would see God. Jesus not only taught this truth by words but proved it by raising different departed ones to life, by himself coming forth from death, and by enabling His apostles to call the dead to life. Those whom Jesus, the prophets and the apostles raised to life suffered death a second time, but at the last day all the dead will be resurrected never again to die. Some will be resurrected to life and happiness, but some to eternal damnation. The former are they who believe in Jesus, the latter are they who reject Him. The bodies of those who shall rise unto life will be fashioned like unto Jesus' glorious body, that is, their bodies will be perfect and glorified. As for the bodies of those raised unto damnation, they shall suffer shame and everlasting contempt.

Through a Life of Sin to Endless Death.—The rich man fared sumptuously every day, but death found him unprepared to meet God. His body was buried with much ceremony, but

his soul was consigned to the punishment prepared for the wicked. (Lesson 79). The place where the wicked suffer after death is called hell. The condition of those in hell is one of torment. Their sufferings as to the soul begin immediately after death, but the body is committed to the ground, and returns to dust. When the body will be raised on the last day it will be reunited with the soul and its sufferings will begin. The unsaved will suffer eternally in both body and soul. They will suffer in mind, being without hope, in a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. They will suffer in body. The rich man suffered thirst and torment. Not all will suffer in the same degree. Those who are born of Christian parents, and reared in the Church, and go astray — those who know the Lord's will and did it not, will have more to answer for in eternity than people who grew up in ignorance of the truth. The punishment of the damned will be eternal. There is a great gulf between heaven and hell, and it is fixed. There is no escape for the wicked. The time to prepare for death and eternity is in this life. God has made all arrangements necessary for the salvation of every sinner; it is the sinner's fault if he is not saved.

The Kingdom of Glory. — The Holy City, and the blessed estate of those who dwell there are referred to in Lesson 80. The realm of the redeemed is sometimes called the New Jerusalem, but more generally, heaven. Of the many revelations given to us of the home of the saved the most cheering is that God is with His people there in such a manner that they will see Him and dwell with Him. The inhabitants will be like God, that is, the image of God that was lost through sin will be restored. Nothing will be permitted in heaven that would tend to diminish the joy and happiness of its citizen. There will be no evil, no sorrow, no tears, no pain, no death. One of the blessings with which heaven will abound is knowledge — knowledge of God and divine things. Undisturbed and enrapturing rest is another of the good thing in store for the redeemed. The reward which God has promised to all who abide faithful will be among the blessings then and there enjoyed. That we may be able faintly to realize the blessedness of heaven God compares it to the most precious things of earth, as, for example, a crown, a kingdom. Although eternal life is too

wonderful for mortals to conceive of, it is offered freely to all for Christ's sake.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 76. 1. What blessings did the paralytic receive? 2. Which was the greater? 3. What do we confess in regard to the forgiveness of sins? 4. Why is forgiveness necessary? 5. How has it been made possible for sinners to be forgiven? 6. Who enjoys forgiveness? 7. In what words does the Psalmist express the condition of forgiveness? 8. For what sins is there forgiveness? 9. What sinners are sure of forgiveness? 10. When is forgiveness granted?

LESSON 77. 1. In what respect were the worshippers alluded to in this lesson similar? 2. In what respect unlike each other? 3. What was the difference between them? 4. Why were the sins of the Pharisee held against him? 5. Why was the publican forgiven? 6. How does the pardoned sinner stand in God's sight? 7. What is the condition of the sinner's justification? 8. How does God regard the pardoned sinner? 9. Whose is the act of justification? 10. For whose sake is the penitent sinner justified? 11. Why was the publican accounted righteous?

LESSON 78. 1. What is the topic of this lesson? 2. What is the Christian's hope in view of death? 3. How did Job express his hope in the resurrection of the body? 4. How did Jesus prove the resurrection of the body? 5. What experience did these undergo who were resurrected by Christ and others, that will not obtain after the general resurrection? 6. With what difference will the dead arise? 7. What can be said of the bodies of those raised unto life? Of those raised unto condemnation?

LESSON 79. 1. What can be said of the rich man referred to in this lesson? 2. To what place are the wicked assigned? 3. What will be their condition? 4. When does their suffering of soul begin? 5. When that of the body? 6. In what respect, therefore, will the lost suffer? 7. What of their mental suffering? 8. What bodily pain of the rich man in hell is referred to? 9. In what respect will the suffering of the lost differ? 10. Whose punishment will be severest? 11. What will be the duration of the suffering of the lost? 12. When is preparation for death to be made? 13. Who will be at fault in the case of the sinner that is lost?

LESSON 80. 1. To what does this lesson call attention? 2. By what names is this realm called? 3. What is the most cheering revelation concerning heaven? 4. In what respect will the redeemed be like God? 5. What will not be found in heaven? 6. Mention some of the blessings that will be found there. 7. By what names is the blessedness of heaven called? 8. What may we learn from the use of such names? 9. How does God manifest His boundless love for sinners?

82. LORD TEACH US TO PRAY.

LUKE 11, 1-13.

PRAYER IN GENERAL.

Prayer is that divine service in which we call upon the name of God in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

The Disciples' Request. — And it came to pass, that as He was praying in a certain place,¹ when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.²

Jesus' Answer. — And He said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven,³ Hallowed be Thy name:⁴ Thy Kingdom come:⁵ Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.⁶ Give us day by day our daily bread:⁷ and forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.⁸ And lead us not into temptation;⁹ but deliver us from evil.¹⁰

Jesus Counsels to Fervency in Prayer. — And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.¹¹

Jesus Declares the Efficacy of Prayer. — And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.¹² If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?¹³

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. As Jesus was praying in a certain place, so the Christian should have a certain place—a place of retirement, where he can pray undisturbed. 2. John's disciples were well instructed in praying, but Jesus was even more ready and capable of teaching His followers to pray than was John; therefore this request was not necessary. However in answer to their request Jesus taught his disciples the prayer that follows, which is given more fully in Matthew. This is a model prayer—a pattern to guide us in praying.

Prayer is that divine service in which we call upon the name of God in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks. *Prayer is a divine service*, that is, it is calling upon the name of God. There are three forms of calling upon God mentioned in the definition of prayer which we have in our catechism: we are to *pray, praise and give thanks*. To pray means to ask God for something, to praise is to speak well of Him, and to give thanks is to express our gratitude. We should do all of these when we pray.

We learn in our catechism that we should be moved to pray by our *need*, and by God's *command and promise*. That our need should lead us to pray is taught, for example, by the words of the Psalmist: Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me. Perhaps we would not be in need so often if we prayed more frequently and more fervently. St. James says, "Ye have not, because ye ask not."

God has commanded us to pray, as we see in the words of the Psalmist just quoted, and in many other passages. These commands of God should move us to pray. A third motive that should prompt us to pray is the promise that God has given in regard to prayer. He not only commands, "Call upon me," but adds, "I will deliver thee." There are many instances given in the Bible to show that God keeps this promise—that He answers prayer. Hannah received a son in answer to prayer. The Red Sea parted for Israel in answer to Moses' prayer. Daniel was delivered from the mouths of the lions through prayer. Elijah's prayer that it might not rain was answered, and it rained not for three and one-half years. Then he prayed that it might rain and rain came in abundance. The account of the journey of Israel, and the entire history of this people, is replete with answers to prayer. The life of every Christian abounds in evidences that God answers prayer.

3. The Lord would have His people begin their prayers with the words, "Our Father who art in heaven," in order that, being thus reminded that God is their Father and they His children, they will pray with confidence, even as children entreat their dear father. We are to pray to Our Father—to God. "Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve," Matthew 4, 10. That we should not pray to departed saints, as do the Roman Catholics, is plain from many pas-

sages of Scripture. Even Abraham could not hear our prayers. "Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting." Isaiah 63, 16.

We are not to pray to the angels, as we see from Revelation 19, 10, "I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Neither should we pray to an unknown god, some higher being, some great spirit, but to the only true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

4. The Lord wants His people to ask for power to hallow His name—that is, so to believe and so to live that His name will be kept holy among them. 5. God wants His people to pray that His kingdom of grace, the Christian Church, may flourish and grow so that many souls may come to His kingdom of glory, which is heaven. 6. In this petition God would have His people pray that they and all others may do God's will here on earth as the angels do it in heaven. 7. After offering three petitions for spiritual blessings the Lord would have His people pray for temporal blessings, summing up all they need in the word bread. 8. Having taught His people by His law that they are sinners, in this fifth petition God would have them plead daily for forgiveness. Since we must have penitent hearts before we can expect God's forgiveness, He asks us to promise that we will forgive those who sin against us. 9. A temptation is a trial. While some trials are for our good, the kind of trials here meant are those that do us harm, as a temptation to do wrong. God wants us to ask that the world, the flesh and the devil may not entice us into sin of any kind, and that when we are tempted by these enemies we may resist and overcome. 10. Since we are weak and are surrounded by enemies God would have us pray daily to be delivered from every evil of body and soul, property and honor, and especially from the evil of an unhappy death. 11. Everybody has at least one friend to whom he feels at liberty to go for assistance in time of trouble, but earthly friends, like the one referred to in the lesson, are not as ready to help those in need as they should be. Too many respond when appealed to for aid, "Trouble me not," or begin to offer excuses instead of offering aid. But Christians have a Friend in Jesus who never says, "Trouble me not," but who is ready at all times to help us. Our call for help may come to any earthly friend at an unseasonable hour, but there are no unseasonable hours with God. If cold hearted earthly friends are moved by our perseverance in asking, how much more the tender hearted Jesus. 12. If we ask as God has told us to do, in *humility* and *faith*, we shall surely receive what is for our good. If we seek by the light of the candle of God's Word we will surely find. If we knock in true repentance at the door of God's heart, it shall be opened to us. To those who feel their unworthiness this promise is very comforting. It says, "Every one that asketh." God is no respecter

of persons. He says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." 13. In our prayers we should ask for everything that tends to the glory of God and our salvation, be it spiritual or temporal blessings. We should not ask for these two kinds of blessings in exactly the same way. All that is really necessary unto salvation we should ask for unconditionally; but all else under the condition; if it please God. If parents being evil will not give anything to their children that will injure them, we may be sure God will not do so. Since we are evil, that is ignorant of what is for our good, and what is best for us to have, when asking for temporal blessings we should add, "If it please God."

The leper, although very anxious to be healed, cried, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me whole." In the agony of Gethsemane Jesus prayed, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done."

When we pray for spiritual blessings, however, we know that they are for our good, and that God wishes us to have them. These we ask for unconditionally.

Jesus teaches us in the model prayer to say "us" and "our." He means that we are to pray not only for ourselves, but also for all our fellowmen on earth. Of course we are not to pray for those who have died, for they do not need our prayers, but for all who are yet on earth. We are even to pray for our enemies, as Jesus tells us, Matthew 5, 44, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Jesus teaches us this also by His example, for on the cross He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This is also taught by the example of godly people, as, for example, Stephen, "They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

QUESTIONS.

1. What is suggested by Jesus praying in a certain place? 2. What request did the disciples make? 3. Why was this not necessary? 4. What did Jesus give them according to this request? 5. What purpose is the Lord's Prayer to serve? 6. What is prayer? 7. Why is prayer called a divine service? 8. Mention three forms of calling upon God. 9. Define each of them. 10. What should move us to pray? 11. Give a passage showing that our need should prompt us to pray. 12. Why do many lack? 13. Give one of God's commands to pray. 14. Give a promise concerning the efficacy of prayer. 15. Mention instances of answered prayer. 16. Where else may we see evidence of the efficacy of prayer? 17. What is the introduction to the Lord's Prayer? 18. To what would God move us by these introductory words? 19. To whom alone should we pray? 20. Give a passage in proof. 21. Mention a respect in which Roman Catholics depart from God's Word in this particular. 22. Repeat a passage forbidding praying to angels. 23. What is the first petition? 24. For what do we here ask? 25. What is the second petition? 26. For which of our

Lord's Kingdoms do we here especially pray? 27. For what are we asking God? 28. For what do we pray in the third petition? 29. For what kind of blessings do we ask in these three petitions? 30. What is the fourth petition? 31. For what kind of blessings do we ask in this petition? 32. In what word are all earthly blessings included? 33. What do Christians learn from God's law? 34. For what do we pray in the fifth petition? 35. What promise do we make when offering this petition? 36. What is meant by temptation? 37. What kind of trials or temptations are meant in the sixth petition? 38. Who tempts to evil? 39. For what do we pray in this petition? 40. What is the seventh petition? 41. Mention four kinds of evils. 42. What evil should we especially have in mind? 43. What can be said of many earthly friends? 44. In what respect are many like the one referred to in our lesson? 45. What can be said of Jesus our Friend? 46. What kind of asking will not be in vain? 47. What kind of seeking will prove successful? 48. When will our knocking be heard? 49. Which words of this lesson are very comforting to those who realize their unworthiness? 50. Into what classes may the blessing for which we pray be divided? 51. With what distinction do we pray for these? 52. Why do we ask for spiritual blessings unconditionally? 53. Why in asking for temporal blessings do we add, If it please God? 54. Give examples of the use of this condition. 55. What do we learn from the use of the plural pronoun in the Lord's Prayer? 56. For whom should we not pray? 57. Give a passage that teaches us to pray for our enemies? 58. When did Jesus teach us this by His example? 59. In what words did Stephen pray for his enemies?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PHILIPPIANS 4, 6. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

83. THE PRAYER OF THE WOMAN OF CANAAN.

MATTHEW 15, 21-28.

PERSISTENCE IN PRAYER.

The Woman of Canaan Intercedes for her Daughter. — Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.¹ And behold, a woman of Canaan come out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.²

She Encountered Discouragements. — But He answered her not a word.³ And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.⁴ But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.⁵

She Continued to Pray. — Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me!⁶

Renewed Discouragements Served to Increase her Fervor. — But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.⁷ And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.⁸

Her Prayer was Answered. — Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.⁹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Jesus had been at Capernaum but left that city because the scribes and Pharisees were bitterly opposing Him. Some of His enemies at Jerusalem had followed Him into Galilee. He withdrew because the time for Him to be offered had not yet come. Tyre and Sidon were the two chief cities of Phenicia, situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, northwest of Galilee.

This, it is thought, was the only time that Jesus left His own land and people. His work was especially among the Jews; of course the Gentiles were not to be overlooked. 2. This woman was of Canaan, that is, she belonged to the ancient Canaanites whom Israel had driven out of the land. She came in behalf of her daughter, but said, "Have mercy on me." Children are so near to the heart of a true parent that he shares their trials and affections. She plead for mercy, that is, that the Lord

would be willing to help her. She confidently believed that if He was willing her daughter would be restored. When we sing of the mercy of the Lord we are praising Him for His willingness to serve and save us.

By addressing Jesus as Lord, the Son of David, she was really declaring Him the promised Messiah. Jesus was the Son of David in that He descended from David, although He lived one thousand years later. This woman must have known something of the Old Testament prophecies. She may have even seen and heard Jesus, for He was not unknown in Syria and Phœnicia.

The daughter was possessed by an evil spirit. At the time of Christ many persons were bodily possessed of devils or evil spirits. There were different kinds of evil spirits, such as dumb, deaf and unclean. In this case it was the last kind, and the victim was unclean in her talk and habits. 3. Jesus made no reply, as though the woman's grievous affliction did not concern Him. It seemed unmerciful and cruel, but Jesus knew the woman's heart, and knew that such treatment would redound to her soul's welfare. It often seems that the Lord does not answer the prayers of His people as promptly as He should. Sometimes it seems as though the Christian was pleading in vain, but it only *seems so*. The Lord always hears the prayers of His people. He may not give us what we wish, or give when we wish, yet He hears us, and the answer will come in His time and in His way. Perhaps we are in need of discipline, or for some other good reason, the Lord sees that it is best not to answer at once. We may be self-willed and impatient and the Lord delays answering our prayer in order to exercise us in patience. All blessings come from God, and all that comes from God is a blessing. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1, 17. As the Lord knew what treatment was best for this troubled woman, so He knows what each of us needs most.

We do not know our own hearts, and therefore do not know what experience it may be best for us to have. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins, even to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings," Jeremiah 17, 9, 10.

4. The disciples were vexed because of the woman's *persistence in prayer*. They wanted to be rid of her. They meant by what they said, "Grant her request, so she leaves us." Evidently they lacked sympathy for the afflicted woman. Is our giving to the poor like this? When people help the needy to get rid of them they are hurting rather than helping. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. True giving is the fruit of love. We should never accompany our gifts with words and looks and actions that will make the recipients unhappy. 5. Jesus came to save all the world. He was offered as a ransom for the sins of every human being. His work while here on earth—His preaching and kindnesses—was to be done among God's chosen people, the Jews. Because most of them had neglected to study the prophecies, and had fallen away from God, he likens them to lost sheep. 6. Had this woman yielded to her flesh she

would have said, "He does not care for me, since I am not of the chosen people." However her faith led her to conclude, "Perhaps He did not hear me; I will go nearer."

When our prayers are not answered let us, like this woman, be sure that it is not God's fault but our own. Her example teaches that, when we pray, we should get as far from the thoughts and cares and pleasures of the world, and as near to God, as possible.

It is not wrong to repeat our petitions when it is done in humility and in faith. It would be wrong to do so in a spirit of rebellion. Abraham petitioned in behalf of Sodom again and again, and God was not displeased. But the patriarch was humble and devout, not defiant. "Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." Genesis 18, 27.

Moses persevered in prayer in behalf of rebellious, stiff-necked Israel, but always in a spirit of humility. "Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against the people, which Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand?" Exodus 32, 11.

When Manoah was in doubt as to his duty in regard to the son God had promised to him and his wife, he "entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which Thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born." Judges 13, 8.

Although this woman repeated her petition she was not guilty of using "vain repetitions," as some do in their efforts to make a long prayer. "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Matthew 6, 7. When, like this woman, we are sincere, we will not be so much concerned about the length of our prayer, or the beautiful phraseology we may be able to use, as about making known our wants in childlike faith. Of the former kind of supplicants it is said, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." Matthew 15, 8.

7. Having referred to the Jews as sheep Jesus here refers to the Gentiles as dogs. To us the comparison sounds harsh and severe, but it set forth His meaning clearly, and did not seem as offensive in those days as it does now. Jesus meant that the Jews, being God's chosen people, should be served first as the children of the household are served before the dogs. 8. The woman was quick to see a gleam of hope in Jesus' reply. Although the children of a household sit at the table and are served first, the dogs are not neglected—they get the crumbs. She does not ask Jesus to stay in that heathen community and preach and perform deeds of mercy as He had done in Judea and Galilee, but just to speak the word which would heal her daughter. She will be satisfied. She had persevered in prayer. God wants us to do likewise—even to pray without ceasing. We are to live in the atmosphere of prayer. It should be as natural for the Christian to pray as it is to eat and drink. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all

perseverance and supplication for all saints." Ephesians 6, 18. Her prayer was offered in faith, and Jesus said, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." He also says to us, "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive," Matthew 21, 22.

QUESTIONS.

1. Why had Jesus left Capernaum? 2. Why did He at this time elude His enemies? 3. Whither had He come? 4. What can you say of Tyre and Sidon? 5. Among what people was Jesus to labor? 6. What of the Gentile nations? 7. What can be said of the woman who called on Him? 8. What do the words of her prayer indicate? 9. What did she mean by asking for mercy? 10. Of what was she confident? 11. To what do we refer when we sing of God's mercy? 12. What was implied in the words with which she addressed Jesus? 13. In what sense is Jesus the Son of David? 14. What is evident from the woman's words? 15. What was the daughter's ailment? 16. What can be said of this ailment? 17. What form had the ailment assumed in this case? 18. How did it affect the patient? 19. How did Jesus treat the supplicant? 20. How does this treatment seem from our point of view? 21. Why did Jesus thus treat the woman? 22. What are we inclined to think in regard to some of our prayers? 23. What is certain in this respect? 24. Of what also may we rest assured? 25. Why does God sometimes delay in answering prayer? 26. From whom do all blessings come? 27. What should console us when our prayers are not answered when and as we prefer? 28. Why can we be sure that the Lord knows what is for our good? 29. How were the disciples affected? 30. In what were they evidently lacking? 31. Under what conditions will our giving hurt rather than help? 32. Of what is acceptable giving the fruit? 33. In what respect should we be cautious when giving to the needy? 34. Why does Jesus liken the Jews to lost sheep? 35. What would the woman had thought had she yielded to the flesh? 36. To what conclusion did faith lead her? 37. Of what can we be certain when our prayers are not answered? 38. What does this woman's example teach us? 39. Under what conditions is it wrong to repeat our petitions? 40. What incident in Abraham's life teaches perseverance in prayer? 41. What may we learn from his example? 42. Mention other incidents of perseverance in prayer. 43. Of what kind of repetition was this woman not guilty? 44. What does Jesus say in regard to vain repetitions? 45. What should concern us less, and what concerns us more when we pray? 46. What does Jesus say of some who draw near to Him? 47. To what did Jesus liken the Gentiles? 48. What did He mean? 49. What did the woman find in these words of Jesus? 50. What did she not expect? 51. With what would she be satisfied? 52. What is meant by praying without ceasing? 53. What was especially pleasing about her prayer? 54. What does Jesus say about the prayer of faith?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 7. 7-8. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that knocketh to him it shall be opened.

84. PRAYER IN JESUS' NAME.

JOHN 16, 23-27.

Access to the Father through Christ. — And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing.¹ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.² Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.³ These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs:⁴ but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.⁵ At that day ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Jesus was about to withdraw His visible presence from His disciples, and our lesson is a portion of His farewell sermon to them. He assures them that He will not forsake them, that He will seek the Holy Spirit to direct and comfort them, and that His leaving will prove expedient, that is, be to their advantage. In these words Jesus refers to the clearer, fuller knowledge they will enjoy after the outpouring of the Spirit. They had asked Christ many questions, some of them improper, even foolish, but when the Spirit will have come upon them there will be no need of questioning. He will guide them into the truth, and make everything plain.

Although the Holy Spirit does not descend upon us and other believers in the remarkable manner in which He descended upon the disciples on Pentecost, He comes through the revealed Word, and leads us to know the truth. Of us it is also true that we need ask no questions. All that we need to know for our salvation is clearly revealed to us. 2. It is a most precious truth which Jesus here declares, viz., that there is a way of approaching the Father that will assure us the granting of our petitions. That way is in and through Christ. We need but *ask in Jesus' name*. Jesus has taken the sinner's place, fulfilled the divine law for him, and made full atonement for all his sins. On His account — in His name, the chief of sinners who believes stands before God as one that is free from sin. As Christ had no sin, and is well pleasing to the Father, so are all they who believe in Christ. Faith is counted for righteousness. As Christ is so near the Father's heart that He can ask what He will and it will be done, so are all they who are in Christ by faith. That we may not doubt this amazing truth Jesus adds the word verily, repeating it to make it doubly sure. 3. In the matter of praying, as in other respects, the disciples did not come to the full realization of the truth of Jesus' teaching

until after the Holy Spirit descended upon them. After the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost they prayed more earnestly and acceptably than ever before. The heart in which the Spirit is not permitted to rule cannot pray acceptably to God. James tells us that many have not because they ask not, and Jesus here declares that they who ask shall receive. Both statements should move us to prayer. Sincere prayer fills the heart with joy, because it keeps the heart in proper relation to God. 4. Jesus taught His disciples by the use of proverbs or parables. This was an effective manner of teaching, but they were dull, and slow of heart. Much that He spoke in their hearing was not fully understood by them. 5. When the Spirit had descended upon them on Pentecost this promise was fulfilled. Then these anxious-hearted, trembling disciples became heroes. Then these doubting, wavering followers of Jesus stood in the truth as firm as a rock. Then these unlettered fishermen became theologians and eloquent preachers, and no one was able to gainsay the wonderful truths they proclaimed. Once running away when there was no real danger, and hiding when there was no foe in pursuit, after the Spirit came upon them these men boldly faced their threatening accusers, saying, We cannot but speak forth the things which we have seen and heard. The Father who hates sin loves sinners. He loves sinners especially because the guilt of sin has been washed away by the blood of His Son, and the penalty of sin has been paid by His innocent sufferings and death. It is not to be overlooked, however, that the sinners who are thus loved are those who accept Jesus as the Savior come from God.

When we pray we must not overlook the fact that it is for Christ's sake that the Father loves us. Outside of Christ there is nothing to commend the sinner to God. Those who have not by faith donned the righteousness of Jesus Christ stand before God in the filthy rags of sin, patched up with their own faulty good works. Such persons are under condemnation. Their sins are held against them.

Being in Christ we are right with the Father. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8. 1. Those who approach the Father in Jesus' name will not be cast out.

It is of utmost importance to the acceptableness of our prayers that we offer them in Jesus' name. In the name of Jesus means in obedience to His command, and depending upon what He has done and suffered as our Substitute.

That we should pray in Jesus' name we see from Matthew 21, 22, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

In James 1, 5-7, we are told to *pray in faith*. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

To pray in faith is to rely entirely on the mercy of God as we read

in Daniel 9, 18, "We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies."

We are taught this by the example of the penitent publican. "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

It is not praying in faith to mumble nice sounding words, or to utter finely formed sentences with a view of getting credit of men, or to indulge in vain repetitions, or to be thoughtless and indifferent while praying. To pray in faith is to offer our supplications in a devout manner, permitting every word to come from the heart. We should approach God in the spirit of piety, for "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me," Psalm 66, 18. "God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit, and in truth," John 4, 24.

A mere uttering of words, although in flowery language, and pious drawl, is not praying. "When ye pray use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking," Matthew 6, 7.

Of those who do not pray in Jesus' name, that is, in true faith, the Lord says, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me," Matthew 15, 8.

QUESTIONS.

1. Of what discourse is our lesson a part? 2. Under what circumstances was it delivered? 3. What assurance does the Lord give His disciples here? 4. To what does He refer in the first words of the lesson? 5. What will they no longer do after the coming of the Spirit? 6. Why will this not be necessary? 7. How does the Spirit come to us? 8. In what respect do we not need to ask questions? 9. What precious truth does Jesus here reveal? 10. What is the way to which He alludes? 11. Why can we approach the Father in Jesus' name? 12. How do believers stand before God? 13. What is counted as righteousness to the believer? 14. What is added for the confirmation of our faith? 15. What effect did the coming of the Spirit have upon the disciples? 16. What heart cannot pray acceptably to God? 17. Give words of James and of Jesus that should move us to pray. 18. What is the effect of prayer upon the heart? 19. In what way did Jesus teach His disciples? 20. What kind of hearers were the disciples? 21. What was the consequence? 22. How did the coming of the Spirit affect them? 23. Though unlettered fishermen what did they become? 24. What effect did it have upon their courage? 25. While the Father hates sin what does He love? 26. What sinners are especially beloved of the Father? 27. What must be said of those who are outside of Christ? 28. How does the unbeliever stand before God? 29. What is held against him? 30. What is the condition of those who are in Christ? 31. How must our petitions be offered to insure their acceptableness? 32. What is meant by offering them in Jesus' name? 33. In what words are we told to pray in Jesus' name? 34. In what words does James tell us to pray in faith? 35. What is meant by praying in faith? 36. How is this expressed by the prophet Daniel? 37. What example did the publican set us? 38. What kind of service would not be praying in faith? 39. How is the prayer of faith offered? 40. What does the Psalmist say in this regard? 41. Since God is a spirit how should He be worshipped? 42. What custom of the heathen should we be careful to avoid? 43. What does Jesus say of those who do not pray in His name?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 16, 23. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.

85. OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.

EPHESIANS 3, 14-20.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LORD'S PRAYER.

God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He IS OUR TRUE FATHER, and that we are HIS TRUE CHILDREN, so that we may with all boldness and confidence entreat Him, as dear children entreat their dear Father.

The Apostle Prays that His People may have Spiritual Strength. — For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,¹ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.²

He Prays that Christ may Dwell in their Hearts. — That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.³

He Prays that their Love may be Abiding. — That ye, being rooted and grounded in love.⁴

He Prays that they may better Comprehend the Love of Christ. — That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

He Prays that they may be Filled with the Fullness of God. — That ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.⁵

He Concludes with a Word of Praise to the Father. — Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Paul had expressed his joy to the Ephesians that in and through Christ Jesus he and they now had access to the Father, and with Him found grace in every trouble. It was for this cause that he bowed in prayer before the Father. We should follow the apostle's example in

assuming a reverent attitude in prayer, but no particular attitude is prescribed in the Bible.

The God whom we worship is not unknown to us. It is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who worship some other being, whether they call him the Great Spirit, the Architect of the Universe, the Supreme Being, or what they may, are calling upon a false god, the true God is the Father of Jesus. We are taught to begin our prayers to Him with the words, *Our Father who art in heaven*. God would by these words tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence entreat Him, as dear children entreat their dear father.

God asks us to call Him Father in order that by so doing we may be inspired with confidence. He thereby tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and we are His true children.

God is our *true Father*. He deserves to be called by this name because He has given us our being. "Know ye that the Lord He is God; it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves," Psalm 100, 3.

He deserves to be called Father because of His loving care for us. But most of all we should call Him Father because He is the Father of Jesus Christ, who is our Savior and brother.

Since God is our Father we are *His children*. Those who live in sin are not worthy of being called God's children. True children of God will forsake sin, and strive in every way to please their Father.

God would have us bear in mind that He is our true Father so that we may with all boldness and confidence entreat Him, as dear children entreat their dear father. If we would please God we must get rid of all doubts and misgivings as to how God is disposed toward us, and entreat Him with confidence. In order that we may do so He gives us sweet and precious promises. He says, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me," Psalm 50, 15. To inspire us with still more confidence the Psalmist says, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." For the same reason Jesus says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11, 13. It is to this end, too, that the apostle says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," James 1, 17.

A Christian cannot worship with those who do not believe in the divinity of Jesus, no matter by what name they call themselves, nor by what name they call the god whom they worship. Millions of people in all parts of the world now bear the name of Jesus Christ. 2. Our inner man, the soul, like the outer man, the body, needs to be strengthened daily. The Christian's faith is often weak, and besetting sins often make him an easy prey to Satan; he stands in need of nourishment.

The Holy Spirit is sent to awaken the new and spiritual life in us, and it is His mission to cause this new life to grow stronger. The Spirit awakens and nourishes the spiritual life in us through the means of grace, the Word and sacraments. Those who wish to grow stronger

spiritually must use the nourishment which God has provided, that is, they must hear the Word and partake of the Lord's Supper. 3. Christ has not only promised to be with His people always, but even to dwell in them. The Spirit of God dwells in the Christian's heart, and where the Spirit is there Christ is. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith.

We begin the Lord's Prayer with the words *Our Father* because all Christians are brethren, and because they should therefore also pray for one another. Being brethren Christians should be deeply interested in each other. Therefore Jesus teaches us to begin our prayer with the plural pronoun. For this reason also He uses the plural pronoun in the petitions, as "Give us this day our daily bread," "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," etc.

4. Christianity is not a garment that can be donned and doffed at pleasure. A Christian is not a child of God only on the Lord's Day, on a bed of sickness, and in hours of trouble, but a man of the world at other times. The Christian is rooted and grounded in love—fixed in God's love to him, and in his love to God. The love of Christ for sinful humanity is a subject that mortals will never be able to understand, but which they should never cease to contemplate. Because of the weakness of our sinful nature, and the temptations of the world and the devil, the Christian should be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, deeply and firmly rooted. 5. The saints may well be interested in studying the love of Christ. It is so broad that it embraces all nations of all ages. As to its length it began in eternity and will endure to eternity. As to its depth it reaches down to the most deeply fallen ones of the human family. As to its height it elevates groveling worms of the dust to the very glory of God's presence. The love of Christ passeth knowledge, that is, we cannot hope to know it in all its fulness: yet we are to seek to know it better and better. The better we comprehend Christ's love the more influence will that love exert over us. We should pray that that love may take such possession of our heart that there will be no room left for the enemy of the soul. 6. The apostle is striving for words with which to describe the Father's readiness and power to bless—the fulness of His grace and mercy. God is able not only to do what we may ask, but even much more than we think.

Through Jesus Christ the Church for all time and eternity will give glory to the Father. The honor and praise we give to the Son is given to the Father, for Jesus says, "I and my Father are one."

Jesus teaches us to add, "Who art in heaven" after words, *Our Father*, to indicate that this our dear Father is the omniscient and omnipotent God. These four words remind us at the outstart that the Father we are entreating is all-knowing and all-powerful. Since such attributes as these belong to our Father we can entreat Him with boldness and confidence. He is not only omniscient and omnipotent, but also omnipresent. Wherever we may be He can hear us. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." Jeremiah 23, 23-24.

QUESTIONS.

1. What filled the apostle's heart with joy and gratitude to God? 2. What did Paul's bowing the knee mean? 3. What does this teach us? 4. How does the apostle identify God? 5. What of those who worship some other being? 6. By what name do we call God in the introduction? 7. What does this mean? 8. Why does God ask us to address Him as Father? 9. Of what would He invitingly assure us? 10. Why does God deserve to be called Father? 11. In what words does the Psalmist express this? 12. Give another reason why He should be called Father? 13. What is Christ's relationship to us? 14. Since God is Christ's Father what must be His relationship to us? 15. What then is our relationship to God? 16. Who are not worthy of being called God's children? 17. Why would God have us keep our relationship with Him in mind? 18. If we would please God of what must we rid ourselves? 19. What has He given to increase our confidence in Him? 20. Repeat one of these promises. 21. Repeat a passage from the Psalms that should inspire us with confidence. 22. What should we conclude from the fact that sinful parents give good gifts to their children? 23. What does the apostle say of the gifts that come from God? 24. With whom cannot a Christian unite in worship. 25. Whose name do millions of people now bear? Of what does the soul stand in daily need? 27. For what special reason does the Christian stand in need of nourishment? 28. What is the mission of the Holy Spirit? 29. Through what means does the Spirit do this? 30. Under what conditions will the Christian grow spiritually? 31. What promise has Jesus left in regard to His presence? 32. In what way does Christ dwell in our hearts? 33. Why do we say Our Father? 34. Since Christians are brethren how should they be disposed to each other? 35. What wrong idea of Christianity and of Christians do some have? 36. How does the apostle refer to the stability of Christians? 37. What can be said of Christ's love? 38. To what may a Christian be likened? 39. What can you say of the breadth of Christ's love? Of its length? Of its depth? Of its height? 40. How can it be said that the love of Christ passeth knowledge? 41. Why should we seek to comprehend Christ's love? 42. In what words does the apostle refer to the Father's readiness and power to bless us? 43. Whom do we honor when we honor Jesus? 44. In what words does Jesus express His unity with the Father? 45. Why do we add, Who art in heaven? 46. Of what attributes of God are we reminded by these words? 47. Mindful of these attributes how should we entreat God?

GOLDEN TEXT.

LUKE II, 13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

86. REVIEW OF LESSONS 82-85.

About Prayer.—All will do well to make the request that Jesus' disciples made, Lord, teach us to pray. The model prayer, the good counsel and the sweet promises that He gave them in answer to their request, as we see in Lesson 82, are for us. Here we learn that prayer is a divine service in which

we call upon the name of God. There are three forms of prayer; we are to pray, praise and give thanks. We should be moved to pray by our need, and by God's command and promise. We are to pray to our Father who art in heaven — to God, but not to the angels or saints, or an unknown God. We ask for two kinds of blessing, spiritual and temporal. The Lord teaches us to value spiritual blessings the more highly by having us ask for them first, and in three petitions, while we ask for temporal blessings in but one petition. Since we know that all spiritual blessing are for our good we should ask for them unconditionally; since we are not sure whether the temporal blessings we desire are for our good or not. He teaches us to ask for them with the condition, If it please God. God would have us pray for others, even for our enemies, as did Stephen and Jesus.

Praying with Fervency. — The woman of Canaan was in earnest when she plead for her afflicted daughter. We, too, should pray with earnestness. Her example as set before us in Lesson 83 also teaches us to persevere in prayer. At first Jesus seemed not to hear the woman's pleading, and when He finally gave her attention there seemed to be no gleam of hope in His word, but she continued to pray. At last she received her heart's desire. Although at times it seems as though the Christian's prayer were offered in vain, it only seems so. God always answers the prayers of His people. It should not discourage supplicants if their prayers are not answered at once. God may not give us what we ask, or give it when we wish; but He hears us, and the answer will come in His time and in His way; It is not wrong to repeat our petitions if it is done in humility and faith. Of course it is wrong to pray in a spirit of rebellion. While we may repeat our petitions, we should never be guilty of vain repetitions, as they are who wish to be heard for their much speaking. We should be more concerned about the acceptableness of our prayers than about their length. The Christian should often go to the Lord in prayer. He is to pray without ceasing — live in the atmosphere of prayer.

Praying in Faith. — Prayer is a blessed privilege, and most effectual service. Not all prayer, however, is pleasing to God, and therefore effectual. From Lesson 84 we learn that acceptable prayer is that which is offered in Jesus' name. The way to approach the Father is in and through Christ. On Christ's

account—because of His sufferings and death, the chief of sinners who believes is pleasing to the Father. His prayers, since they are offered in Jesus' name, are not vain. Although God hates sin, He loves sinners, because the guilt of their sin is washed away by the blood of Jesus. To pray in Jesus' name is to pray in obedience to His command, and depending on what He has done and suffered as our Substitute. To pray in Jesus' name is to pray in faith, that is, to rely entirely on the mercy of God, bestowed on sinners for Christ's sake. Not the mere mumbling of words, or the uttering of finely formed sentences, but devoutly drawing near to God—humbly confiding in the merits and promises of Jesus, is praying in faith.

Praying to Our Father.—The God whom we worship is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore our Father. Jesus' disciple address Him, Our Father who art in heaven. (Lesson 85). By these words God would tenderly invite us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that we may with all boldness and confidence entreat Him as dear children entreat their dear father. God asks us to call Him Father that by so doing we may be inspired with confidence. He deserves to be called by this name because He has given us our being, ever cares for us, and is the Father of Jesus Christ, our Savior and brother. Since God is our Father we are His children, and should strive to please Him. We are taught to begin the Lord's Prayer with the words, Our Father, reminding ourselves that we are brethren, should be deeply interested in each other, and pray for one another. Jesus teaches us to add, Who art in heaven after the words Our Father, to indicate that our Father is all-wise and all-powerful. He is our Father, therefore willing to answer our prayers, He is omniscient and omnipotent, therefore able to answer them.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 82. 1. What request did the disciples make of Jesus? 2. What did He give them? 3. What is prayer? 4. Mention three forms of prayer. 5. What should move us to pray? 6. To whom only should we pray? 7. Into what classes may the blessings God bestows be divided? 8. With what distinction do we ask for them? 9. What arrangement teaches us that spiritual blessings are the more precious?

LESSON 83. 1. To what incident does this lesson direct attention? 2. What may we learn from the example of the woman of Canaan? 3. What discouragements did she encounter? 4. How was her perseverance rewarded? 5. What should not discourage us in praying? 6. Of what may we rest assured? 7. Under what conditions is it not wrong to repeat our petitions? 8. In what spirit should they not be repeated? 9. What

should concern us more than the desire to make our prayers lengthy?
10. What do we understand by persevering in prayer?

LESSON 84. 1. What can be said of prayer? 2. What prayers are acceptable to God? 3. How does a sinner become pleasing to God? 4. Why is a believing sinner pleasing to God? 5. What can be said of such a person's prayers? 6. What prayers are not pleasing to God? 7. What is understood by praying in Jesus' name?

LESSON 85. 1. To whom are all prayers to be offered? 2. How is God to be addressed? 3. What do these words mean? 4. What effect should the use of this name in our prayers have? 5. Why does God deserve to be called Our Father? 6. What is our relationship to Him? 7. Of what should the word our in the introduction remind us? 8. What do the words, Who art in heaven indicate?

87. SOLOMON'S PRAYER AT THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

1 KINGS 8, 12-30.

THE FIRST PETITION.

HALLOWED be Thy name.

What does this mean?

God's name is indeed HOLY IN ITSELF; but we pray in this petition that it may be HOLY AMONG US ALSO.

How is this done?

When the WORD OF GOD IS TAUGHT in its TRUTH and PURITY, and we as the children of God also lead a HOLY LIFE according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven. But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father.

A House for the Lord. — Then spake Solomon,¹ the Lord said that He would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in forever.²

Solomon Addresses the People. — And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel:³ (and all the congregation of Israel stood :) And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with His mouth unto David my father, and hath with His hand fulfilled it, saying, Since the day that I brought forth My people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that My name might be therein; but I chose David to be over My people Israel.⁴ And it was in the heart of David my father

to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto My name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart: Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son, that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto My name.⁵ And the Lord hath performed His word that He spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel.⁶ And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.⁷

Solomon's Prayer. — And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: and he said, Lord God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants that walk before Thee with all their heart; who hast kept with Thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst him: Thou spakest also with Thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with Thine hand, as it is this day,⁸ Therefore now, Lord God of Israel, keep with Thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in My sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before Me, as thou hast walked before Me. And now, O God of Israel, let Thy word, I pray Thee, be verified which Thou speakest unto Thy servant David, my father. But will God indeed dwell on earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded! yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which Thy servant prayeth before Thee to-day:¹⁰ that Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place which Thou hast said, My name shall be there; that Thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant shall make toward this place. And hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place; and hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive.¹¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Solomon was David's second son by Bathsheba. The name means *peaceful*. There were few wars in his reign, and the kingdom prospered remarkably. He loved the Lord, and was blessed of God with extraordinary wisdom and great wealth. He wrote the Proverbs, excepting the last two chapters, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and probably several of the Psalms. 2. The priests were astonished at the dark cloud that overshadowed them, and Solomon addressed some encouraging words to them. 3. The people also were astonished and affrighted at the presence of the cloud, but it was an indication that God was near. Like them we are often afraid of acts of Providence which are sent to bless us. The king turned from encouraging the priests to bless the people. 4. Solomon praises God for the sweet promise he had made to his father David, namely, that his people would some day have a house of worship. We should praise God for every promise He has given us in the Bible, for like the one He made to David, they are yea and amen—they will be fulfilled. Solomon praised God also because all were able to see the fulfillment of that promise. Nine of the lepers went their way without a word of thanks to Jesus. Many forget to thank God for His mercies. Let us learn from Solomon to be grateful, and to thank God for the blessings received. 5. David had said, "See, now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." He proposed to build a temple, but God forbade him, but promised that his son, who would succeed him on the throne, should do so. David's desire to honor God by building a temple was pleasing to God. From this we learn that the money and labor we expend in erecting and beautifying places of worship are well spent. Those professed Christians who withhold their means and their service when church work is to be done, and look upon the money given to the Church as so much lost, are governed by the flesh and not by the Holy Spirit.

It must have given David no little comfort to hear that his son would do the work that lay so near to his heart. When sons and daughters live in the fear of God, and are active in the work of the Church, they are doing much to make the latter days of their parents peaceful and happy. 6. Solomon took no credit to himself, but confessed, "The Lord hath performed His Word." Christians should ever be willing tools in the Lord's hands, and when by using them the Lord accomplishes His work, like Solomon, let them give all the glory to God. Solomon was doing what we ask God to help us to do when we pray, *Hallowed be Thy name*.

God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also. We understand by God's name all that God has revealed of himself in holy Scripture, such as His essence, attributes, will or command. The name of a person stands for the person himself. When we hear a person's name we think of that person, of the house in which he lives, the work he does, the kind of a person he is, etc. When we hear the name Job we think of that man's meekness. So when we hear the name of God we think of what kind of a being God

is, that is, of His attributes. For example, we think that He is holy, of which this petition reminds us. Being holy, God wants His name kept holy. He teaches us to pray that we and all others may keep His name holy. Of course, God's name is holy in itself, but we pray that it may be holy among us also. We keep God's name holy when among us the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God, lead a holy life according to it.

As children do not honor their parents by telling lies about them, so we cannot hallow our heavenly Father's name by changing His Word — declaring that He has said what He has not said. We must tell the truth about God if we would keep His name holy. That is, we must teach His Word in its truth and purity.

As children do not honor their parents by being wicked, so we cannot hallow God's name by leading a sinful life. We must lead the life of a Christian if we would hallow God's name; we cannot do this of ourselves. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure", Philippians 2, 3. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." 2 Corinthians 3, 5.

Since we cannot of ourselves accept and teach God's Word in its truth and purity, nor lead a holy life, therefore God wants us daily to pray, Hallowed be Thy name, which is the same as saying, Help me to accept Thy Word, and so to live that I will keep Thy name holy.

7. The Ark of the Covenant was kept in the Most Holy Place. It contained the two tables of the law or covenant, and therefore was called the Ark of the Covenant. The golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded were also kept in the Ark. The covering or lid of the Ark, over which were two cherubims, was called the Mercy Seat, where God would meet with His people and show His mercy. 8. Solomon begins the prayer by calling to mind God's faithfulness in keeping the promise made to David. He is mindful, too, that God does more than keep His promises — He keepeth mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart. Thus recounting God's goodness and mercy the king is magnifying His holy name. He is hallowing God's name. He who does not keep God's name holy is profaning it. Of this we read, Ezekiel 22, 26, "Her priests have violated My law, and have profaned Mine holy things." God declares that the wicked thus use His name, "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldst take My covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee." Psalm 50, 16, 17.

He who lives otherwise than God's Word teaches is profaning God's name. "Thou that makest the boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written." Romans 2, 23-24.

Since we cannot of ourselves keep false doctrines from taking root in our hearts, nor shun all sinful living, God asks us daily to pray, Hallowed be Thy name, or, Help me to keep Thy name holy. 9. Having called to mind that God had hitherto kept His promises Solomon entreats

that He continue to keep them. It is not wrong for the believer to remind God of His promises, and plead that these promises be kept. It pleases God to see that His people are acquainted with His promises, and long for their fulfillment. 10. Solomon realizes that he was asking a great deal when he pleads that God whom the heavens cannot contain should dwell in a structure made with hands, but he knew that God is more willing to dwell with sinful mortals than they are to have Him in their midst. When we contemplate God's greatness and glory, and our unworthiness, we must, like Solomon, be amazed at the thought of God meeting with us when we assemble for worship. This thought should fill us with reverence for our houses of worship, so that we demean ourselves properly in them. This thought should also move us to make our places of public worship attractive, and suggestive of divine truths, and lead us to clothe ourselves becomingly when we go to church.

11. Solomon was dedicating the temple, their place of worship, and was pleading that God should have open eyes and ears to all that transpired therein. We dedicate our churches and plead the same for them. While it should fill us with awe to think that we are in God's presence when at divine service, it is also most comforting to know that God has engaged to be very near to His people when they assemble, to speak to them through His preached Word, and to hear their every prayer, and forgive their sins.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of King Solomon? 2. Of what inspired writings is he the author? 3. To whom did he address the first words of this lesson? 4. What was his purpose? 5. How were the people affected by the presence of the cloud? 6. Of what was it to assure them? 7. Of what groundless fears are we reminded? 8. Whom did the king turn to address? 9. For what did Solomon especially praise God? 10. What may we learn from this? 11. For what did the King next praise God? 12. Of what were nine of the ten lepers whom Jesus cleansed guilty? 13. What should we learn from Solomon's example? 14. What had David purposed to do? 15. What moved David to this? 16. What was God's decree in the matter? 17. How did God look upon David's desire? 18. What does this teach us? 19. What of those who withhold their money and service from the Church? 20. What must have comforted David? 21. When are children helping to make the latter days of their parents happy? 22. To whom did Solomon give the credit for the completion of the temple? 23. How may we follow his example? 24. In what words do we pray for help in doing what Solomon was doing? 25. What does this petition mean? 26. How is this done? 27. What do we understand by God's name? 28. Of what are we likely to think on hearing a person's name? 29. Of what do we think on hearing the name Job? Moses? 30. Of what do we think on hearing God's name? 31. Of which attribute of God are we reminded by this petition? 32. For what do we here pray? 33. In the first place, when is God's name hallowed among us? 34. Under what circumstances would children dishonor the names of their parents? 35. What must we do if we would keep God's name holy? 36. In the second place, when is God's name hallowed among us? 37. Why do we ask God to help us to keep His name holy? 38. How does Paul refer to our helplessness in spiritual matters? 39. In what other words could we express this petition? 40. What can you say of the Ark of the Covenant? 41. How did Solomon begin his prayer? 42. Of what also was he mindful? 43. To whose glory were these words to redound? 44. Of what is he guilty who does not hallow God's name? 45. Of what did the prophet accuse the priests? 46.

In what words does the Psalmist accuse the wicked of this sin? 47. Who is guilty of profaning God's name? 48. After recounting God's faithfulness for what did the king entreat? 49. What can be said of such a petition? 50. What gave the prophet boldness to ask God to dwell in a man-made structure? 51. What thought should amaze the Christian? 52. What service was Solomon engaged in on this occasion? 53. For what was he especially pleading? 54. When do we hold a similar service? 55. What should comfort us when we assemble for divine service?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOHN 17, 17. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.

88. THE LITTLE SYRIAN MAID.

2 KINGS 5, 1-17.

THE SECOND PETITION.

Thy KINGDOM come.

What does this mean?

The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself, but we pray in this petition that it may COME UNTO US also.

How is this done?

When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we BELIEVE HIS HOLY WORD and lead a GODLY LIFE, here in time and hereafter in eternity.

Naaman the Leper. — Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria,¹ was a great man with his master, and honorable; because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.²

The Good News brought by a Captive Maid. — And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my Lord was with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy.³ And one went in and told his lord, saying thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.⁴

Naaman sent to Samaria. — And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment,⁵ And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying. Now, when this letter is come unto thee, behold I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

The King's Alarm. — And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes,⁶ and said, Am I a god to kill and make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.⁷

Elisha proffered his Service. — And it was so when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.⁸

The Leper and the Prophet of Israel. — So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.⁹

Naaman's Mistake. — But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? so he turned and went away in a rage.¹⁰

A Servant's Advice. — And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean!

The Leper Healed. — Then went he down, and dipped seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.¹¹

Naaman's Gratitude, Confession and Promise. — And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him; and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant. But he said, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused. And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord.¹²

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Syria was a county north of Samaria and Galilee. 2. Leprosy was a loathsome and incurable disease. 3. Elisha was the prophet among God's people at that time. He had not cleansed any lepers, but he had wrought other miracles, such as dividing the waters of Jordan, healing the waters of Jericho, multiplying the widow's oil, and restoring the Shunamite's son to life. The maid had not forgotten the God of Israel and the work of His prophet. Let our sons and daughters, when they go out into the world, keep in mind what they learned in their Christian homes. As this maid belonged to Israel so they belong to the kingdom of Grace. Although held captive by Naaman she desired and sought his welfare. Let us learn from her to return good for evil. Her example should bestir us in behalf of those who are afflicted with the leprosy of sin. As this maid longed that Naaman were with the prophets of Israel, so should we pray in behalf of the worldly and the heathen, *Thy kingdom come*. The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself, but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also. This kingdom comes unto us when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word, and lead a godly life here in time, and hereafter in eternity. The Lord Jesus has three kingdoms, the kingdom of power, the kingdom of grace, and the kingdom of glory. In the second petition we do not mean the kingdom of power, for that kingdom has already come to us. We mean the kingdom of grace, which is the Church on earth, and the kingdom of glory, which is the Church in heaven. 4. Naaman, was not a Jew, so by nature we are not in the Church, but in the kingdom of darkness. What the maid said sounded strange enough to Naaman, and yet he was soon on His way to Samaria. He was anxious to get rid of his leprosy. If sinners realized the character of the spiritual leprosy, sin, they would lend a listening ear to the preachers of the Gospel, however humble they may be. 5. Naaman meant to reward the prophet for his services. God wills that His servants who minister in spiritual things he provided with temporal things. In the Church as in the world, the laborer is worthy of his hire. 6. It was a custom of the Jews to rend their outer garment when they heard or read that which they considered blasphemous, such as attributing to man divine power. 7. The king of Israel was alarmed. He knew that he could not heal the leper, and supposed that the king of Syria would make this a pretence for declaring war against the Israelites. 8. Elisha meant to tell the king that he had no occasion for rending his clothes, for while restoring a leper was impossible with man, God would enable the prophet to do so. 9. Naaman wished to give honor to the prophet, but Elisha kept himself in the background. The honor must be given to God. Because the work of building up the Lord's kingdom in us and in the world is God's work, and not man's, therefore we should daily pray, *Thy kingdom come*. The prophets of the Lord should follow Elisha's example, and give all the honor to God.

The remedy was simple, and reminds us of the means of grace as

they appear to the world. The means through which God would heal spiritual lepers, and thus build up His kingdom on earth, are the Word and the Sacraments. The preaching of the Word is foolishness to the world, and as for the Sacraments, the world sees in them only a bit of bread and sup of wine, and a little water. 10. Naaman had his own idea as to how the prophet should proceed, by which much honor would be given to him and his country. Men think they know better than God as to how His kingdom should be established and built up in the hearts of men. If we are sincere when we pray this petition, then we must take God's plan and not man's. When men preach a plan of salvation after their own heart they may fill their churches, but what good is done? God's Word alone is the power of God unto salvation. 11. Naaman could not understand why it would not answer to wash in the rivers of Damascus, or why the prophet had not prescribed some more elaborate method of healing. The servant gave him good advice, namely, obey. Instead of finding fault with God's way of saving the soul, and wondering why this or that could not be different, it becomes us to obey. We cannot improve on the Word of God and the Sacraments. Through the Word sinners are led to repent and to believe in Jesus. In holy Baptism our little ones are delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and placed into Christ. In this way the same is done for the sinner's soul, as the prophet did for Naaman's body. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16. When we believe in Jesus, or, what is the same thing, when God gives us His Holy Spirit, we have come into God's kingdom of grace, the Church. When we have the Holy Spirit we have faith, for the Holy Spirit works faith in the heart. Jesus says, John 3, 5, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." When the Holy Ghost kindles faith in our hearts He brings God's kingdom to us. 12. Naaman was grateful. His manifestation of gratitude should lead us who have been spiritually healed to ask if we appreciate what God has done and is doing for us. Naaman made a grand confession. Like him let us be sure that we own and serve but one God. He also made a good promise. He had come into God's kingdom, and to the interests of that kingdom he would henceforth devote himself. If we are earnest Christians we will devote ourselves to the interests of the Christian Church. If we are sincere when we pray, Thy kingdom come, we will hold ourselves in readiness to do our part in the Lord's service. The Lord's work in this world will continue to the end, and the need of workmen is great. We read, Matthew, 9, 37, 38, "Then saith He unto His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest." This should bestir us to greater effort in the Lord's work, and lead us more earnestly to pray, Thy kingdom come.

This is a prayer for the Church on earth—a missionary prayer. Here we pray that we and other believers may remain faithful, and that those outside of the Church may be converted. We are entreating that

what was done for the leper's body may be done for the soul of those in the kingdom of darkness.

This is a prayer offered with our eyes fixed upon heaven. We ask that we and all others in the kingdom of grace may abide faithful, and finally enter the kingdom of glory.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where was Syria located? 2. What can you say of leprosy? 3. What reason had the maid for believing that the prophet could heal her master? 4. What can our sons and daughters learn from this maid's example? 5. What may we learn from her in regard to the treatment of those who misuse us? 6. For whose healing should Christians long? 7. In what words can we pray for this? 8. What does this petition mean? 9. How is this done? 10. How many kingdoms has our Lord? 11. Which kingdom is not meant? 12. Why do we not pray that the kingdom of power may come? 13. What kingdoms are meant? 14. In what respect do we by nature resemble Naaman? 15. Why was Naaman so ready to act in accordance with the maid's words? 16. What condition would lead sinners better to appreciate the preaching of God's Word? 17. How did Naaman mean to show his gratitude? 18. What is the duty of Christians toward those who minister to them spiritually? 19. What was the custom of the Jews on hearing what they considered blasphemous? 20. How was the king of Israel affected? 21. What caused him alarm? 22. What did Elisha mean by the words he addressed the king? 23. What was Elisha's idea in regard to receiving the Syrian captain's honor? 24. Why is there need of Christians praying this petition? 25. What can be said of the remedy prescribed? 26. What means has God given for the healing of the spiritually leprous? 27. How does the world consider these? 28. What can be said of Naaman's idea as to how he should be healed? 29. If we are sincere in the use of this prayer how will we show it? 30. What is the consequence when men use human methods? 31. Why is the result disappointing? 32. What perplexed Naaman? 33. What advice did his servant give? 34. What may we learn from this? 35. What does the Spirit work in the heart through the Word? 36. What is done for children through Holy Baptism? 37. In what words does Jesus tell us the benefits of Baptism? 38. What is another expression for believing in Jesus? 39. In what kingdom are all they who believe? 40. What is kindled in our hearts when God gives us His Holy Spirit? 41. What words of Jesus declare this? 42. How was Naaman affected on seeing that he was healed? 43. What should his gratitude lead us to ask? 44. What confession did he make? 45. When can we make the same confession? 46. What promise did he make? 47. To what will sincerity as Christians prompt us? 48. If we are in earnest in offering this petition how will we manifest it? 49. In what words does Jesus speak of the need of workmen in the Church? 50. For what do we ask in behalf of ourselves and others in this petition? 51. For what do we ask in behalf of the world? 52. For what do we ask in regard to the kingdom of glory?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JAMES 5, 19, 20. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

89. ABRAHAM'S TRIAL.

GENESIS 22, 1-19.

THE THIRD PETITION.

THY WILL BE DONE *on earth, as it is in heaven.*

What does this mean?

The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done AMONG US also.

How is this done?

When God BREAKS and HINDERS every EVIL COUNSEL and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh; but STRENGTHENS and PRESERVES us steadfast in His word and FAITH unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

God's Strange Command to the Patriarch. — And it came to pass, after these things,¹ that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am? And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.²

Abraham Prepares to Obey and Starts on the Sad Journey. — And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clove the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar-off.³ And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife: and they went both of them together.⁴

The Son's Inquiry and the Father's Reply. — And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold, the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together.⁵

Arranging for the Sacrifice. — And they came to the place

which God had told him of: and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order; and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.⁷

The Angel of the Lord Interposed. — And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me.

Abraham Worships, and Hears God's Promise Renewed. — And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.⁸ And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, said the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy Seed shall possess the gate of His enemies: and in thy Seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice. So Abraham returned unto his young men: and they rose up, and went together to Beer-sheba: and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.⁹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. After years of waiting, disappointment, strife and other discouragements came this severest trial. 2. God did not tempt Abraham to lead him into sin, but to strengthen his faith. Although he had been sorely tried in the past Abraham was quick to respond to God's call. Let us learn from him to answer every call to duty, with a, Here am I. 3. God not only asks the patriarch to offer up his son, but reminds him that it is his only son, whom he loves, also his heir, that he is asked to sacrifice. This is done that he may fully realize what is asked of him. Mount Moriah was the place at which the sacrifice was to be made. It was the mount on which the temple of God's chosen people was erected centuries later. That his sacrifice may the more fully typify the offering of Christ for the sins of the world it shall be offered in the locality of the future Golgotha. 4. It was a three-days journey — about forty-five miles, from Beer-Sheba. The tedious journey made on such a mission would add to the severity of the trial.

Abraham did not hesitate, did not argue the matter with God, but hastened to obey—rose up early. He was praying, *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* God wants us to stand in readiness to do His will, and, that we may be ready at all times, daily to offer this petition.

The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also. God's will sometimes seems to us, as it must have seemed to Abraham at this time, harsh and severe—even wrong. We must ever bear in mind that it is *good and gracious.* That means, it is for the best, and it is far more than we deserve.

God revealed His will to Abraham at this time in a special way. He has revealed His will to us in the Scriptures. God's holy will is especially made clear to us in the holy ten commandments. There we learn what God would have us do and not do. God earnestly means it when He commands and forbids us, and threatens to punish those who do not obey.

"However He also promises to forgive the sins of those who repent, and on that account His will is a gracious will.

Many passages of Scripture tell us that God's will is gracious. In John 6, 40, we read, "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." We are all familiar with John 3, 16: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

A passage of this kind from the Old Testament is found in Ezekiel 33, 11, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" 5. The two young men would not have understood the meaning of the worship, and would probably have interposed; therefore they are left in waiting while the father and son proceed to Mount Moriah. Isaac carried the wood thus the better to typify Jesus Christ who carried the cross on which He was to be crucified. Abraham carried the knife, a constant reminder to him of the trial that was before him. In this also he was saying, not my will, but the will of God be done. 6. It was quite natural for Isaac to ask as to the lamb that was to be offered. The question, beginning with the words "my father", must have struck deep into the heart of the sorely tried patriarch. Of course he cannot yet tell his son of the strange command God had given, but answers prudently, God will provide himself a lamb. That is, we must submit all this to God. It is not easy to pray. Thy will be done. God's will may be far different from the will of the natural heart. God's will is done when His Word is taught in its truth and purity, and when we lead a godly life in accordance with it. When we pray, Thy will be done, we are declaring that God knows better than we as to what we should believe and what we should do, and are asking for grace to bow to His will. As Abraham counseled Isaac, so should we do—go on in the path of duty believing that all will come out right.

We pray, Thy will be done on earth *as it is in heaven.* The holy

angels do God's will cheerfully, promptly and perfectly: well for us if we learn to do it in the same way.

The patriarch's words were prophetic. God did provide a lamb—a sacrifice to be offered in due time for the sins of the world. Abraham, however, went to Mount Moriah with the full intention of offering his son.

7. It was contrary to natural affection for this father to construct that altar, lay the wood in order, bind his son, lay him on the altar, and stretch forth his hand to strike the fatal blow, but God's people are not governed by their affections and feelings, but by the Spirit of God. Abraham was praying again, Thy will be done.

God's will is done among us when He enables us to keep down our fleshly desires—when He breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow God's name nor let His kingdom come. Of course we cannot drive off all suggestions of the world, the flesh and the devil, therefore we go to God in prayer and ask, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Since there are temptations within us and all around us we should persevere in prayer. We should also be careful not to run into temptation. The apostle gives good counsel, I. Peter, 5, 8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 8. The Lord at last spoke. After three days of waiting and praying God's will was made plain to the devout patriarch. God's dealings with us may seem strange, but in His time we will understand why these strange things came to pass.

The angel of the Lord is the Son of God himself.

Abraham was not to harm his son. God's purpose had been accomplished. The patriarch had shown that he feared God with all his heart.

The animal God provided is a type of Jesus Christ, the sacrifice God provided for the sins of the world. 9. Abraham is rewarded for his faithfulness by God's blessing, and by hearing the sweet promise that God had given more than forty years previous, repeated. That promise embraced numerous descendants, power over enemies, and a blessing to all the nations of the earth. The sweetest part of the promise is, In Thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. It means that through Jesus Christ, who would be born of his descendants, salvation would be secured for all mankind.

Well for Abraham that he prayed, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. He learned that God's will is best, and so will all learn who humbly and patiently bow to it. Our will is not to be trusted "because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8, 7.

QUESTIONS.

1. After what experiment did the trial here related come to the patriarch? 2. What purpose was this temptation to serve? 3. What does Abraham's example teach us? 4. Of what did God remind the patriarch? 5. Why were these things mentioned? 6. Where was this sacrifice to be made? 7. Of what was that mount the site centuries later? 8. Why was the sacrifice to be made at that place? 9. How far distant was this mount

from Beer-Sheba? 10. For what reasons was this place chosen? 11. How did Abraham receive this command? 12. Of what petition of the Lord's Prayer does this narrative remind us? 13. Why should we daily offer this petition? 14. What does this petition mean? 15. How is this done? 16. How does God's will sometime seem to us? 17. How would God have us consider it? 18. What is meant when God's will is called good and gracious? 19. How did God make His will known to Abraham? 20. How is it revealed to us? 21. In what part of the Scriptures is God's holy will made especially plain? 22. How does God indicate that He earnestly means what He commands and forbids? 23. What promise does He add? 24. In what words does St. John reveal God's gracious will? 25. In what words does the prophet Ezekiel declare it? 26. Why were the young men left in waiting instead of allowed to accompany the patriarch and his son? 27. What necessities were carried along? 28. In what way was Isaac made to typify Jesus more fully? 29. In what way must the severe trial awaiting him have been kept in the patriarch's mind? 30. What did Isaac ask? 31. What words that he used must have reached the patriarch's heart? 32. How did Abraham answer the son's question? 33. What was implied in this answer? 34. Why is it not easy to pray this petition? 35. When is God's will done among us? 36. What are we admitting when we offer this petition? 37. What is best for us to do? 38. How do we ask that God's will may be done? 39. Who are alluded to? 40. How is God's will done by the angels? 41. What prophecy do we see in the patriarch's words? 42. With what intention did Abraham go to Mount Moriah? 43. What decides for the Christian as to what he should or should not do? 44. What must be broken and hindered before God's will is done among us? 45. In what words do we ask that this may be done? 46. If we would do God's will what must we avoid? 47. What counsel does the apostle give in this matter? 48. What may we learn from God's dealings with the patriarch? 49. Who was this angel of the Lord? 50. What was evident from Abraham's conduct? 51. What else in this narrative typifies Christ? 52. How was Abraham rewarded? 53. What is the best part of the promise made to him? 54. In what words does the apostle teach us that man's will is not to be trusted?

• **GOLDEN TEXT.**

PSALM 143, 10. Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God; Thy Spirit is good: lead me into the land of uprightness.

90. THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

MATTHEW 6, 24-34.

THE FOURTH PETITION.

Give us this day our DAILY BREAD.

What does this mean?

God gives daily bread indeed without our prayer, also to all the wicked; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to KNOW and to RECEIVE our daily bread WITH THANKSGIVING.

What is meant by daily bread?

EVERYTHING THAT BELONGS TO THE SUPPORT AND WANTS OF THE BODY; *such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home,*

fields, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

No one can serve two Masters. — No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon!

Sinful Cares Forbidden. — Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?²

The Folly of Sinful Cares. — Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?³ And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.⁴ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast unto the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?⁵ For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Wise Counsel and Comforting Assurance. — But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.⁶ Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Mammon is a Syriac word signifying gain. To serve Mammon is to set the heart on the things of this life. To try to serve God and Mammon the same time is to try to be a Christian and yet be engrossed with the things of time. 2. This does not mean that we are to be indifferent as to our temporal calling, but that we are not to be anxiously concerned about the supply of our bodily wants. The reason given is that since God gives us life He will surely give us food, and since He gives us bodies He will surely give us raiment, for food and raiment are of little worth compared with body and life.

Of course in a certain sense we are to be concerned about our bodily necessities; we are daily to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*. Jesus wants us to value spiritual blessings more highly than temporal blessings, and therefore in the Lord's Prayer has given three petitions in which to ask for spiritual blessings; and placed them at the beginning, and but one petition for temporal blessings. Jesus teaches us the greater importance of spiritual blessings when He says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6, 33. Yet we are to be concerned about the supply of our temporal necessities and daily to pray for it. We are also to think of the wants of others, and therefore to say, Give *us* this day *our* daily bread.

3. It is all right for fowls not to sow and cultivate and harvest crops, for God has arranged other ways of providing for them: but it is our duty to use the gifts and resources with which God has blessed us. However, if God so well provides for fowls that are helpless and comparatively insignificant, He will surely provide for man who is the chief of visible creatures. While God is the Father of all creatures, He is in a special sense the Father of those who believe in Jesus; therefore Jesus says "Your", not "their" heavenly Father feedeth them.

It is not pleasing to God when we worry about our temporal wants. Faith will move us to do our duty and leave the consequences to God. It is useless as well as sinful to worry. We cannot make matters better by worrying. No one by taking thought can add even a cubit to his stature. In Psalm 127, 1-2, the folly of worrying is described: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so He giveth His beloved sleep."

Jesus has promised to care for us, and that should comfort us. However, in His forbearance He directs us to the fowls and the flowers — gives us object lessons. 4. Our Lord would impress us with the fact that much has been done for the less important part of creation. The lily is a frail plant and yet God has clothed it with unsurpassed beauty. Solomon was so highly favored of God that he reveled in wealth and luxury, and was clothed in the richest of garments, yet the insignificant lily was arrayed in greater splendor than he. If God showers such blessings upon a short-lived flower, is there a likelihood that He will neglect man, the chief of the visible creatures? We may therefore *pray with confidence*, Give us this day our daily bread. 5. If we would please God we should throw away all anxious care. The fact that God has promised to provide for us should comfort and cheer us.

God does not bless all with wealth and luxury, but He provides for us as His wisdom and love moves Him to do — with such things and in such measure as is for our good.

In this petition God bids us ask for *bread* because we are to be content with our daily bread, or with what belongs to the support and wants of the body. Besides, God wants us to be easily satisfied. Of

course the word bread stands for all temporal blessings. Since bread is such an important factor in our temporal necessities, all blessings for the body are embraced in this one word. God in His goodness gives all of us much more than mere bread, but we are to ask for bread: should God withhold other things, and give us bread only, we should be content. Solomon, the wisest and wealthiest of men, did not pray for riches. You will find a suitable prayer in Proverbs 30, 7-9: "Two things have I required of Thee; deny me them not before I die; remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain: We should not ask for wealth and luxuries, although should God bless us with them it would not be wrong to accept and use them. We are to pray for bread, leaving it to God to add whatever else He may think it well for us to have. The blessedness of a contented heart is described in I. Timothy 6, 6-10, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Jesus teaches us to be contented with the ordinary things of life, not only by His words, but also by His deeds. When He fed the hungry He gave them but bread and fish.

We are not to forget that everything comes from God, and to look to Him for all that we need. The blessings of life are not our earnings, but God's gifts to us. We do not say, "Pay us," but "Give us." We have not deserved them.

Since the blessings of life are gifts we should use them properly. It is ungrateful to be wasteful and extravagant. Jesus says to us as He did to the disciples after feeding the multitude, Gather up the fragments—do not be wasteful.

That everything comes from God is taught us by the apostle, James 1, 17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning." To Him we should go daily, and in every time of need, and pray, Give us this day our daily bread. 6. Gentiles, that is, people of the world, set their hearts upon food, clothing, pleasure and the like, but Christians must not be guilty of such a sin. It is wrong not only because God forbids it, but because it is foolish to be so much concerned about temporal matters. It does no good. God provides. He even provides for the wicked. He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. We pray for daily bread not because we would not get it did we neglect to ask for it, but that God may lead us to know and to receive it with thanksgiving.

God's people should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, that is, they are to look after the interests of the immortal soul first, and to consider them of greater importance than all other things. When this is done all else that is needful will come in God's time, and in such measure as He sees best. 7. When we pray, Give us this day our daily bread we are not to fold our hands and idle away our time, but be industrious. We are not to take thought for the morrow in the sense that we worry about the future, but we are to take thought for it in the sense that we faithfully and diligently follow our calling, trusting that the Lord will bless our labors, and give us our daily bread.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of the word Mammon? 2. What is it to serve Mammon? 3. What would be a wrong interpretation of the expression, take no thought for your life? 4. How is it to be understood? 5. Why is there no need of anxiety as to the supply of our wants? 6. In what respect should we show concern for them? 7. What is taught by the arrangement of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer? 8. In what words does Jesus express the same truth? 9. What words of the petition teach us to pray for others? 10. Besides praying for what we need, what else are we to do? 11. What comfort may we find in God's care for the fowls? 12. Why may we be sure that God will do even more for us than for the fowls? 13. What effect should a knowledge of God's care for less important creatures have upon us? 14. How does God regard man's worrying about the supply of his wants? 15. What will faith move us to do? 16. What shows the folly of worry? 17. What words of the Psalmist are pertinent? 18. Besides giving us promises, what else does Jesus do to inspire us with confidence? 19. What lesson may we learn from the lily? 20. By what is God governed in the distribution of temporal blessings? 21. In what word are all temporal blessings included? 22. Why has the word bread been chosen? 23. How does God in His goodness usually answer this petition? 24. How should it affect us were God to give us nothing but bread? 25. What is Agur's prayer in regard to riches? 26. How may we follow his example? 27. What condition of heart will lead us to be satisfied with what God gives? 28. What does the apostle say about contentment? 29. What should move us to be content? How is it possible for the sinner to obtain forgiveness? 30. Repeat passages tented? 30. Why is it foolish to long for riches? 31. How else besides by words does Jesus teach us to be easily satisfied? 32. What is implied by the word give at the beginning of this petition? 33. How do some people show ingratitude for God's gifts? 34. What did Jesus teach by telling the disciples after He had fed the multitude, to gather up the fragments? 35. Repeat the passage found in James 1, 17, 36. What is here taught us? 37. Who are referred to as Gentiles? 38. What is said of them? 39. Why is it foolish to be anxiously concerned about temporal matters? 40. In what words are we told that God also provides for the wicked? 41. What would be a wrong motive in the use of this petition? 42. Why do we offer this petition? 43. What else besides praying should we do toward supplying our wants? 44. Instead of worrying lest we come to want what were it better for us to do?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 128-2. Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

91. REVIEW OF LESSONS 87-90.

Hallowing God's Name.— After Solomon completed the building of the temple he held a dedicatory service. From his address to the people and the prayer he offered on that occasion, which are referred to in Lesson 87, we see that the purpose of his heart in that great work was to magnify the name of the Lord. He was doing what we ask God to help us to do when we pray, Hallowed be Thy name. God's name is indeed holy in itself, but in this petition we pray that it may be holy among us also. By God's name we understand all that God has revealed of himself in holy Scripture. We keep His name holy when the Word of God is taught among us in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God, lead a holy life according to it. So children do not honor their parents by telling lies about them, so we cannot hallow our heavenly Father's name by changing His Word. As children do not honor their parents by being wicked, so we cannot hallow God's name by leading sinful lives. Since we cannot of ourselves accept and teach God's Word in its truth and purity, nor lead a holy life, in these words, we ask God's help in doing so. We should be more concerned in this matter because he who teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches is profaning God's name.

Praying for the Prosperity of Zion.— From Lesson 88 we learned that the Syrian maid was not only instrumental in the restoration of Naaman's health but also in leading him, and perhaps many other Syrians, to forsake idolatry and worship God. We too may be helpful in bringing people out of the world into the Christian Church, and finally to heaven. We pray for this in the words, Thy kingdom come. The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself, but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also. It comes to us when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit so that by His grace we believe His holy Word, and lead a godly life here in time and hereafter in eternity. Our Lord has three kingdoms, that of power, of grace and of glory. In this petition we mean the kingdom of grace, which is the Church on earth, and the kingdom of glory, which is the Church in heaven. The means through which God builds up His kingdom on earth are the

Word and Sacraments; These means, like that through which Naaman was healed, seem insignificant and powerless in the eyes of the world, but God works in and through them. Those who earnestly pray, Thy kingdom come, will use their gifts diligently in the station to which Providence calls them in life—do what they can to bring about the answer of their prayer.

Praying that God's Will Be Done.—When Abraham, in obedience to God's command, started for Mount Moriah to offer His son as a sacrifice to God, Lesson 89, he was praying, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also. Sometimes God's will seems to us to be harsh and severe, even wrong. However, it is good and gracious. It is good, that it, it is for the best. It is gracious, that it is far beyond what we deserve. It is revealed to us in the Scriptures, which testify that it is good and gracious. We pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. The holy angels do God's will cheerfully, promptly and perfectly, and set us an example that we will do well to follow. God's will does not accord with the will of our nature, or that of the world. Christians are not governed by their affections and feeling, or by the opinions and ways of the world, but by the Spirit of God. God's will is done among us when He enables us to keep down our fleshly desires, and oppose all the sinful counsels of the world. It will help in having God's will done if we do not run into temptation.

Praying for the Blessings of this Life.—While it is both foolish and sinful to be anxiously concerned about temporal matters, as Lesson 90 taught us, we must not neglect our temporal calling, and we should daily pray, Give us this day our daily bread. We are even to be concerned about the needs of other people, and therefore say "us" and "our" in this petition. The Lord has promised to care for us, and directs us to the fowls and flowers, which are so well cared for, that we may not doubt His promises. In this petition we ask for bread because God wants us to be content with that which belongs to the support and wants of the body. The word bread, however, stands for all temporal blessings. We are to bear in mind that the blessings of life are not our earnings, but God's gifts to us, and therefore say, "Give us", not "Pay us". We ask for daily bread for this day, for God does not want us to worry about to-morrow. Be-

sides, He wants us to come to Him in prayer often. We ask for bread for this day because there is danger in having abundance—danger of falling into the sin of hoarding, or that of extravagance. We pray for daily bread not because we would have nothing to eat if we did not offer this petition, but that God may lead us to know and receive our bread with thanksgiving.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 87. 1. What service that Solomon conducted is here alluded to? 2. What is evident from his address and prayer on that occasion? 3. In which petition do we ask for help in doing this? 4. For what do we plead in this petition? 5. What is understood by God's name? 6. When do we keep God's name holy? 7. In what way do children dishonor the name of their parents? 8. How may God's children commit a like offense? 9. Why should we offer this petition? 10. What should make us the more concerned in this matter?

LESSON 88. 1. To what incident does this lesson direct attention? 2. What can be said of the Jewish maid? 3. In what way may we follow her example? 4. In which petition do we pray for the upbuilding of God's kingdom on earth? 5. When does His kingdom come to us? 6. Over what kingdoms does God rule? 7. Which kingdoms do we have in mind in this petition? 8. Through what means does God build up His kingdom of grace? 9. How do these means seem to the world? 10. What may be expected of all who earnestly offer this petition?

LESSON 89. 1. On what mission did Abraham start? 2. With which petition did his actions accord? 3. For what do we ask in this petition? 4. How does God's will sometimes seem to us? 5. What is its character? 6. What do we mean when we speak of it as God's gracious? 7. How would we have God's will done? 8. How do the angels fulfill God's will? 9. Why is it not in accord with our natural hearts to offer this prayer? 10. Why can a Christian offer it? 11. When is God's will done by us? 12. What will aid us in conforming our lives to God's will?

LESSON 90. 1. What is to be said of being anxiously concerned about temporal matters? 2. What is our duty in regard to our earthly calling? 3. How do we here manifest our concern for others? 4. By what reference would the Lord move us to trust Him? 5. What is indicated by the use of the word bread in this petition? 6. What do we include in this word? 7. What is indicated by the words, Give us? 8. Why are we to ask for daily bread, and for this day? 9. What moves the Christian to offer this petition?

92. THE UNGRATEFUL SERVANT.

MATTHEW 18, 23-35.

THE FIFTH PETITION.

And FORGIVE US our trespasses, AS WE FORGIVE those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor on their account deny these our petitions;

for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; but that He would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much, and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. We will also heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us.

The King Reckoning with his Servants. — Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.¹

A Servant's Plea for Mercy. — And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents²: but forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.³ The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.⁴

The King's Compassion. — Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.⁵

The Forgiven Servant and his Comrade. — But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred pence⁶; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.⁷ And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.⁸

The Other Servant's Complaint. — So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.⁹

The King's Righteous Wrath. — Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I have had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.¹⁰

The Duty of Forgiving. — So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.¹¹

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The apostle Peter had asked Jesus, How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus had replied, that the offender should be forgiven not only seven times, but seventy times that often. He meant that we are never to think that we have now forgiven the offending brother often enough. To make the matter plainer and more impressive Jesus adds the parable of the unmerciful servant. The king is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the servant is one of the human family.

This parable is a comment on the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.* Trespasses is another word for sins. Sins are transgressions of the divine law. God is deeply offended by sin, and moved to inflict temporal and eternal punishment upon the sinner. In this petition we call upon God not to look upon our sins, nor on their account deny our petitions. 2. The servant's debt represents our sins; ten thousand talents is equal to many millions of dollars. The debt is large in order to show us that our sins are grievous in God's sight. We may not be gross sinners, but a look into God's law will show us that we have broken every commandment. We break them by sins of commission and by sins of omission. We are far more guilty than we think because we cannot see and know all our sins. "Who can understand his errors? cleanse Thou me from secret faults," Psalm 19, 12. 3. Not only was the debt large, but the servant was so poor that he could not cancel one penny of it. In this sorry plight of the servant we see our own condition. We are hopelessly in debt, and are adding to our indebtedness constantly. We daily sin much and deserve nothing but punishment. We must confess with the Psalmist, "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Psalm 130, 3. Justice demanded that the servant be punished, and justice—the law, demands the punishment of every sinner. 4. The servant was deeply impressed as he thought how much he owed. He acknowledged the debt. There is little hope for the sinner who has not learned to see and confess his sins. This is the first step to true repentance. However it is not all that is necessary to peace of heart. This man did not know how large his debt was, and did not realize how unable he was to cancel it. Had he realized these things he would not have hoped with a little time to be able to pay the debt.

The penitent sinner must also learn some things if he is to enjoy peace of heart. He must learn that he cannot make himself pleasing to God by his own efforts.

When people try to make themselves good by obeying certain man-made regulations instead of humbly asking God to forgive them, they are displeasing God, and sinking deeper and deeper into the mire of sin. 5. The king was compassionate. The servant's prayer was not exactly right, but it was a cry for help. The king heeded it and gave the unfortunate man far more than he requested. Thus God deals with sinners. He knows that the only thing that can be done for them is to forgive them. God wants us to know this. Instead of looking around

for some way of making ourselves moral He would have us cry daily, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. It is true, God has threatened to punish sin, but for Christ's sake He will forgive us. It is because Jesus Christ suffered and died for us that the Father forgives us. It is all on Christ's account, as we see from John 1, 29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—The same truth is expressed by the same writer, I. John 2, 2, "If any man sin we have an advocate, with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 6. The servant who had been forgiven dealt harshly with his comrade who was indebted to him. The fellow-servant's debt was but a trifle—a few cents. In this way Jesus would tell us that the grievances we hold against our neighbors and brethren amount to very little—are not worth talking about. 7. What a lot of fuss that servant made about that trifling debt! Having been forgiven a debt of millions of dollars he should have been eager to show his gratitude. We are foolish to make so much ado about some slight or other offense that we have suffered at our neighbor's hands. Since God in mercy forgives us one sin after another it is most displeasing to Him to see us unforgiving. 8. The unforgiving spirit that possessed this servant is still in the world. Everyone will do well to look into his heart and see if he is as ready to forgive those who offend him as he should be. 9. The fellow-servants did not say, This is none of our business. Christians are to be interested in each other, and grieved because of the sins and sufferings of their brethren. 10. The king was deeply incensed, pronounced the offender wicked, and delivered him to the tormentors for punishment. Thus Jesus shows us that he who is not of a forgiving spirit is offending God. He should not offer this petition. 11. Those who come to God for forgiveness must from their hearts forgive the trespasses their brother has committed against them. Jesus teaches this in the fifth petition. We ask to be forgiven as we forgive those who trespass against us. We therefore here promise to forgive those who have offended us. We promise to forgive them heartily. He who is not forgiving is without true love to God and man. Being without love he is without faith. Having no faith in Jesus he has no hope of forgiveness.

The forgiveness of sin is the greatest blessing Heaven can bestow upon a sinner, for with it comes salvation, therefore we should frequently and earnestly offer this petition. Since with an unforgiving heart we cannot expect forgiveness we should daily pray for grace to forgive those who trespass against us. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled with thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Matthew 5, 23-26.

QUESTIONS.

1. What question had Peter asked Jesus? 2. What reply did he receive? 3. What did Jesus mean? 4. For what purpose does Jesus relate this parable? 5. Who is the King mentioned in the parable? 6. Who is the servant? 7. On which petition of the Lord's Prayer is this parable a comment? 8. What is the fifth petition? 9. What does this mean? 10. What is another word for trespass? 11. What is sin? 12. How is God affected by sin? 13. What do we therefore ask of God in this petition? 14. What does the servant's debt represent? 15. Why is the servant's debt made so large? 16. What does God's law reveal to us? 17. Why are we more guilty than we are apt to think? 18. What does the Psalmist say on this subject? 19. What made the servant's condition the more hopeless? 20. What may we see in this? 21. What must every sinner confess? 22. What did justice demand in reference to the servant? 23. What does the law demand in reference to sinners? 24. What can be said in commendation of the servant? 25. What must be said of the sinner who has not learned to see and confess his sins? 26. In what respect was this servant lacking? 27. What did he say that showed his ignorance in this respect? 28. What must every penitent sinner learn? 29. What is to be said of those who are trying to please God by obeying man-made rules? 30. What does the king see in the servant's prayer? 31. How was the prayer answered? 32. What is the only way to find peace in view of our sins? 33. How is it possible for the sinner to obtain forgiveness? 34. Repeat passages assuring us that God for Christ's sake will forgive us? 35. How did the forgiven servant show his ingratitude? 36. What is indicated by the smallness of the fellow-servant's debt? 37. Of what does this man's ado about his comrade's small indebtedness to him remind us? 38. To what would God move us by His readiness to forgive us? 39. In what respect is it well for every one to examine himself? 40. What may we learn from the conduct of the other servants? 41. How was the king affected by the ungrateful servant's conduct? 42. What can we learn from this? 43. What promise must all make who come to God for forgiveness? 44. What can be said of those who are unforgiving? 45. What can be said of forgiveness of sins as a blessing from God? 46. For what should we daily pray? 47. What is taught in regard to forgiving those who offend us in the passage from St. Matthew? 48. Of what are those in danger who are not forgiving?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PSALM 130, 3—4. If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.

93. THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

MATTHEW 4, 1-11.

The SIXTH PETITION.

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

God indeed tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may NOT DECEIVE us, nor entice us into mischief, despair,

and other great shame and vice: and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally prevail, and obtain the victory.

Jesus is Tempted. — Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.¹ And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to Him he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.² But He answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.³

The Second Temptation. — Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.⁴ Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.⁵

The Third Temptation. — Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, in a moment of time: and saith unto Him, All these will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.⁶ Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.⁷

The Victory. — Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.⁸

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. This took place immediately after our Lord's baptism, in the wilderness, probably north of Jericho. It was the Father's will that Jesus should be tempted, and therefore the Spirit moved Him to go to this lonely region for this purpose. He came to this world to be our substitute, therefore He must be tempted in all things just as we are that He might fulfill all righteousness, and be our perfect substitute and helper in all times of temptation. Adam and Eve were tempted and fell, Jesus must be tempted that He might overcome the enemy, and regain all that was lost by the fall. The devil tempted Jesus, and he tempts Jesus' disciples.

There are two kinds of temptations, temptations unto good, and those to evil. God tempts us unto good, for He often tries our faith in order to strengthen it. The prophet teaches us this, Isaiah 26, 16, "Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee, they poured out a prayer when Thy

chastening was upon them." God tempted the patriarch, for we read, "It came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here am I."

We have temptations to evil in view when we offer the sixth petition, Lead us not into temptation. These temptations are not from God. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man," James 1. 13. It is the devil that tempts to evil. 2. Jesus was in the wilderness forty days and nights, and was no doubt being tempted all that time; the temptations here mentioned were the last and fiercest assaults. Jesus fasted forty days and nights in compliance with the type and example of Moses and that of Elijah.

Jesus was hungry and Satan shrewdly suggested to Him a way of satisfying His hunger. As He was led into the wilderness to fast and not to eat bread, Satan was tempting Him to disobey the Father. Since Jesus was very hungry Satan hoped that He would yield to his suggestion. The devil in his assaults chooses our weakest place, and a time when we will be most apt to yield. The tempter also wished to create doubt in the mind of Jesus as to His relation to God. He would say, Surely you are not the Son of God. God would love His Son too well to permit Him to get so hungry. 3. Jesus means that bread will not support life if God's blessing is not upon it, and that God can support life without bread. He had the Word of God which promises to provide: that was worth more than bread. 4. How the devil got Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple is not revealed: we know that the devil has much power, and can do wonderful things with God's permission.

He asked Jesus to do a rash and foolish thing—cast himself down from the pinnacle. As Jesus had shown His love for God's Word by quoting a passage so Satan now proceeds to quote from the Word He means to say, There is no danger of getting hurt if you are the Son of God, He has promised to give His angels charge over those who are His. It is still Satan's plan when tempting some one to make his victim believe that he is not asking him to do wrong. He tries to make his victims believe that wrong is right, in order that they may the more readily yield to his evil suggestions. When he tempted our first parents he insisted that they would not be doing wrong by eating of the forbidden fruit, but would be doing a wise thing and be gaining much. Seeing that the tempter is so shrewd God bids us daily to pray, Lead us not into temptation, that is, keep us from temptation, and help us to resist and overcome when we are tempted.

It is a comforting truth, however, that when we walk in the path of duty the angels are with us, encamping round about them that fear God. 5. Satan had misquoted Scripture. In Psalm 91, 11-12, God promises that the angels shall keep us, but the tempter left out the words "in all Thy ways." God promises to keep us when we are in the path of duty, as those four words indicate. Satan asked Jesus to do a foolish thing—something that was not in the path of duty. Jesus could not expect the Father's presence and protection were He to do such a thing. The devil asked Jesus to tempt the Father, that is, to challenge the Father

to keep Him from getting hurt when He unnecessarily endangered His life. The passage Jesus refers to is found in Deuteronomy 6, 16, where we read of the Israelites driving God, as it were, to do a miracle in order to assure them that He was among them. They were tempting God. We are to trust God, and not to expect Him to do wonders before we will believe.

When we offer this petition we must not leave the narrow way in which God's people walk, for only when in that way can we expect to be preserved from harm to our souls. A young man who wishes to remain temperate, and therefore prays this petition, should not go to saloons, or associate with intemperate people. The maiden who wishes to remain pure and modest, and therefore pleads, Lead us not into temptation, should keep away from public dances, and other places where temptation lurks. Watchfulness is necessary. The apostle urges, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Peter 5, 8.

Watchfulness is all the more necessary because the devil has good help in his unholy work. The world and the flesh help him. By the world we mean the wicked people and the evil things that are found in the world. When Satan wanted to tempt Joseph to break the sixth commandment he got Potiphar's wicked wife to help him. When he wanted to tempt the prodigal son he used the pleasures of this life in accomplishing his end. When he wanted to tempt Peter he moved a damsel to approach him and say, Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

Satan uses the flesh to help him. By the flesh is meant our own evil hearts. When Satan wishes to tempt some one to absent himself from divine service he gets that person's flesh to say, It is too hot today, or, It is too cold, or, The sermons are not interesting, etc. 6. Which mountain this was is not stated, nor does it matter. God permitted Satan to use extraordinary power again—to show Jesus at one glance all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Satan offered all these to Jesus if He would but fall down and worship him. Satan deceived our first parents by offering an inducement of this kind, but Jesus was not to be overcome. In dealing with us Satan still uses this plan. He promises us money, pleasure and the like if we will turn away from the Church and become worldly-minded.

Had Jesus yielded to Satan He would not have received what the tempter promised, but would have become his slave. Those who yield to Satan gain nothing, and lose the grace of God, peace of heart, and the hope of salvation. 7. Jesus drives Satan off again by quoting Scripture, showing the devil that God is the only King; and all who are loyal to Him will not seek to become kings, but to glorify Him, the only King. 8. Jesus gained the victory. This is comforting because He was acting as our substitute when He fought this battle with Satan, as He was when He met death. Satan left Jesus, and so he will leave Jesus' disciples. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you," James 4. 7.

We do not plead in vain when we cry, Lead us not into temptation. God answers by keeping us through His power and grace from being tempted, and by sustaining us when we are tempted.

QUESTIONS.

1. When and where did this incident take place? 2. How was it brought about? 3. Why was it necessary? 4. Why is man especially interested in the outcome? 5. What two kinds of temptations can you mention? 6. Who tempts us unto good? 7. In what words does the prophet declare this? 8. How is this taught in the life of Abraham? 9. What kind of temptations do we have in mind when we offer the sixth petition? 10. What is the sixth petition? 11. What does this mean? 12. Who tempts us to evil? 13. Mention some of the circumstances connected with this incident? 14. What was the first temptation? 15. Why would it not have been right for Jesus to eat at that time? 16. What was Satan asking Jesus to do? 17. In what do we see Satan's shrewdness? 18. What can we learn from this about Satan's methods? 19. What did the tempter wish to create in Jesus' heart? 20. What did he mean to say? 21. What was Jesus' reply? 22. What did He mean by it? 23. What is worth more than bread to a hungry man? 24. What was the second temptation? 25. In what do we see an example of the power which Satan exercises by God's permission? 26. What can be said of the request Satan made? 27. What led Satan to quote from the Bible? 28. What does he mean to say by these words? 29. What method does Satan still pursue in tempting people? 30. Seeing that Satan is shrewd and determined what should we do? 31. In what other words might we offer this petition? 32. What comforting truth is expressed by the passage Satan referred to? 33. What trick did Satan play in quoting this passage? 34. How did the omission affect the passage? 35. What was Satan really asking Jesus to do? 36. Why could Jesus not expect protection should He leap from that pinnacle? 37. Where is the passage to be found which Jesus gives in reply? 38. Of what were the Israelites guilty? 39. What should not be necessary before we trust the Lord? 40. Under what conditions would we be offering this petition in vain? 41. When would a young man who wishes to remain temperate be offering it in vain? A maiden who wishes to remain pure and modest? 42. In what words does the apostle urge us to watchfulness? 43. What makes watchfulness the more necessary? 44. What is meant by the world? 45. In what way did the world assist Satan in tempting Joseph? The prodigal? Peter? 46. What is meant by the flesh? 47. In what way does Satan get the flesh to help him to keep church members from divine service? 48. What circumstances were connected with the third temptation? 49. What is a favorite method of Satan in tempting people? 50. What is the consequence of yielding to him? 51. How does Jesus drive off the tempter in the third assault? 52. Why is it comforting to us to know that Jesus gained the victory in this battle? 53. What assurance have we in case we resist the devil? 54. What may we expect if we continue to offer this petition?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JAMES I, 13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man.

94. JOB DELIVERED FROM EVIL.

JOB 42, 10-17.

THE SEVENTH PETITION.

But DELIVER us from evil.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil of body and soul,

property and honor; and finally, when our last hour has come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to himself in heaven.

A Favorable Change begins in Job's Life. — And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.¹

His Acquaintances, Neighbors and Relatives show him Kindness. — Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they be-moaned him, and comforted him over the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.²

The Lord's Blessing Descends upon him and his Possessions. — So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.³

He is again Blessed with Children. — He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first Jemima; and the name of the second Kezia; and the name of the third, Keren-Happuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.⁴

He Lived Long and Died in Peace. — After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Job was an upright man of Uz in northern Arabia. He had seven sons and three daughters, possessed much wealth, had many servants, and was the greatest of all the men of the east, being reputed for his wealth and his wisdom. Although Job was not without sin, God was well pleased with him. Satan, ever anxious to do mischief, challenged the Lord to afflict Job and see how soon he would be cursing his God. Satan was allowed to try Job, and went forth on his unholy mission. After many and grievous trials, out of which he came a wiser and humbler man, God's blessings were again lavished upon Job—God gave him twice as much as he had before.

The expression, "turned the captivity," means that God would not permit Satan to further try Job. The afflicted man's friends had not been a comfort to him in his sore distress, yet he prayed for them. Jesus admonishes us to do this: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse

you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." Matthew 5, 44.

Job was delivered from the evil Satan had brought upon him. We pray for the blessing that came to the sorely tried man of Uz in the seventh petition, *But deliver us from evil*. By evil we understand everything that is harmful to us. This is the last petition of the Lord's Prayer, and here, as in a summary, we plead to be delivered from all evil. The evils which threaten us in this life are fourfold, evils of body, soul, property and honor.

When disease fastened upon Job, and he sat on an ash pile seeking relief, he was suffering an evil of the body. When the Israelites, on their journey through the wilderness, became hungry and thirsty they suffered this kind of evil.

When Job overestimated his righteousness, which was wrong, he was suffering an evil of the soul. David lamenting the death of Absalom, Jacob grieving for the loss of Joseph, Jesus crushed with the weight of sin in Gethsemane, are examples of suffering evil to the soul.

When Job lost his flocks and herds and servants he was suffering evil to his property. When fire, water or wind destroy buildings, trees and crops people are suffering in this way.

Job suffered evil to his honor, or good name, when his so-called friends basely and falsely accused him. Joseph suffered an evil to his honor when Potiphar's wife slandered him to her husband. Jesus suffered in this way when the Jews accused Him of blasphemy, treason and other sins. 2. Job's acquaintances, neighbors and relatives had forsaken him in his distress. They transgressed the law of love. True love moves the Christian to stand by his suffering brother. Although we were sure that our afflicted neighbor brought his trouble on himself by his sins, or that he is a hypocrite, we dare not withhold our help from him. Jesus commands us to do good unto all men.

These cold-hearted people saw their mistake, and finally visited Job, wept with him, comforted him, and gave him substantial assistance. This change was brought about by Job's prayers. He prayed for these false friends, and they were overcome by his forgiving spirit. The good results that come from doing good to one who wrongs us are referred to by Paul in Romans 12, 20: "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

This incident teaches that much good comes from praying for one another. That we are to do so is held before us all through the Lord's Prayer, as in this petition, by the use of the plural pronouns.

Of course it was the Spirit of God that wrought this change. Job's prayers were answered when the Holy Spirit brought these fault-finders to repentance. Their kindnesses to Job were the fruit of faith. 3. Among the blessings that came to Job in his latter days was that of wealth. While wealth brings temptations, just so poverty does; it is not wrong to be rich. A rich man has grave responsibility since he has much for which to account to God. He is surrounded by many temptations so that Jesus says, It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye

of a needle than for a rich man to be saved. However a rich man can do much good if his money is sanctified to God's service.

While it is not wrong to be rich, it is wrong to wish to be rich. Wealth, like poverty, surrounds us with dangers, and all will do well to pray, Give me neither poverty nor riches. 4. Another of the blessings that God lavished upon Job was a house full of children—seven sons and three daughters.

Some worldly-minded people do not want children. They shrink from the suffering and care of bearing and rearing offspring. They are rebelling against God, and foolishly depriving themselves of the greatest of earthly blessings. The Psalmist says, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is His reward. * * * Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them," Psalm 127, 3 and 5. 5. Another of the blessings that God bestowed upon Job was long life. This is a reward promised to the righteous. Of the wicked it is said that they do not live out half their days. In the fourth commandment long life is promised to those who honor their parents. Of course God does not always bless the righteous with long life. Sometimes He takes them away from the evils of this life, or calls them hence for some other good reason.

Job prayed, Deliver us from evil. God answered his prayer. He was delivered from loss and sorrow and disease and false accusation. God granted him still more. He delivered him from an unhappy death. For this we plead in this seventh petition. No greater evil could befall one than to die without the hope of salvation. There is no greater blessing than to die in the hope of a resurrection to eternal life. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Therefore we pray that God finally, when our last hour has come, would grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven.

God delivered the dying thief from evil when He gave him the certain hope of at once entering paradise. God delivered the beggar Lazarus from evil when, releasing his soul from the body, He sent the angels to waft it to the bosom of Abraham. God delivered Job from evil when at the end of a long life he was permitted to die in peace.

Simeon looked forward to this deliverance and cried, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation," Luke 2, 29.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can you say of Job? 2. How did he stand in God's sight? 3. What permission was granted Satan? 4. What was the outcome? 5. What is to be understood by the expression, "turned the captivity"? 6. In what respect did Job's friends come short? 7. How did Job treat them in return? 8. What does Jesus admonish us to do in regard to our enemies? 9. In what words do we pray for the blessing that came to Job? 10. What does this mean? 11. What is understood by evil? 12. What may be said of this seventh question? 13. How may the evils that threaten us be divided? 14. When did Job suffer an evil to his body? 15. Mention evils of this kind that came upon Israel in the wilderness. 16. Which of Job's suffering may be called an evil to his soul? 17. Mention evils of this kind that came to David. Jacob. 18. When was Job suffering an evil to

his property? 19. Give other examples of such evils. 20. Which of Job's sufferings was an evil to his honor? 21. When did Joseph thus suffer? Jesus? 22. How did Job's friends transgress the law of love? 23. Under what circumstances even will love prompt us to help those in trouble? 24. What change came over these people? 25. How was this change effected? 26. In what words does Paul tell us that good results follow returning good for evil? 27. What may we learn from this incident? 28. What in the Lord's Prayer indicates that we should pray for one another? 29. To what more properly speaking must the change in these people be attributed? 30. Mention one of the blessings that came to Job in his latter days. 31. What can you say of this blessing? 32. In what words does Jesus portray the danger of riches? 33. What can be said in favor of wealth? 34. Why is it wrong to wish to be rich? 35. What was another blessing that came to Job? 36. What must be said of those who do not want children? 37. What does the Psalmist say of children? 38. What was a third blessing that came to Job? 39. What is said of the rich in this regard? 40. To whom is long life promised? 41. Why are not all the righteous thus blessed? 42. What further deliverance did God grant Job? 43. What can be said of this evil? 44. What is the greatest blessing God can bestow on us? 45. Mention examples of those to whom God granted this deliverance. 46. With what words did Simeon look forward to this deliverance?

GOLDEN TEXT.

JOB 5, 19. He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

95. THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

1 TIMOTHY 6, 13-16.

CONCLUSION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

What does Amen mean?

That I should be certain these our petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and heard by Him; for He himself has commanded us so to pray, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, yea, yea, it shall be so.

A Solemn Call to Faithfulness.— I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;¹ that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:² which in His time He shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate,³ the King of kings and Lord of lords;⁴ who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen or can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting.⁵ Amen.⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The writer is St. Paul. He is addressing Timothy, whom he calls his son, because he had been instrumental in the conversion of the young man. He had also fitted Timothy for the ministry. His epistles to him are full of fatherly counsel. Our lesson today is one of the charges of the apostle to the young minister. He admonishes Timothy to remember two things: that he is charged with the work in the sight of God, and also before Christ Jesus. It is in the sight of God who quickeneth all things, that is, who is the source of life, which should quicken him to service. It is before Christ Jesus who witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate, which should be an incentive to him to loyalty and faithfulness.

Pontius Pilate was the Roman ruler before whom Jesus was taken for trial, and in whose presence Jesus declared himself to be a king, and to have a kingdom. 2. The commandment to which Paul refers is the obligation he had assumed on entering the ministry. He urges his pupil to conduct his office so as to give no one occasion to find fault.

The apostle urges Timothy to abide faithful until the appearing of the Lord Jesus. While he may have believed that Christ would return for judgment in that generation, he means, Be faithful until you will be summoned unto the presence of Jesus. 3. Paul's closing words of this solemn charge are similar to the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer. Jesus would have us end our prayer with the words, *For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.* With these concluding words the Lord would have us comfort ourselves in the assurance that He as our Father who is in heaven *can and will* hear our prayer.

If God is to hear our prayer He must have the power to do so. Children often ask in vain of their earthly father and mother, not because their parents do not love them but because they have not the power to grant the requests. Jesus is the blessed and only Potentate, or, as we say in the Lord's Prayer, Thine is the power. We believe He has all power — is almighty. We cannot ask anything that is too hard for God to do. No matter what we may have asked as we repeated the several petitions we are reminded by the conclusion that God is able to give it. 4. We are also to bear in mind as we close our prayer that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords, or, as we say in the conclusion, Thine is the kingdom. Of course our Lord has three kingdoms, but the one referred to here is the kingdom of grace, the Christian Church. We are citizens of this kingdom. Faith was kindled in our hearts through holy Baptism, and all who have faith are subjects of the King of kings. Jesus is a good King, and the subjects of such a king may be sure that they will be well cared for. Besides He bids us call Him Father at the outset; so we are doubly sure that He is kindly disposed toward us. Children often ask in vain of their father and mother because their parents are not willing to give them that for which they plead. Since Jesus is our King and our Father, we can pray to Him in confidence. He is willing to give us all that is for our good. 5. Jesus is not an earthly, but a heavenly king. No earthly splendor is to be

compared with the glory that surrounds Him whom no man hath seen nor can see. Of this Jesus reminds us in the concluding words, Thine is the glory.

Earthly parents often make mistakes in dealing with their children, or they bequeath them a bad example, a bad habit, or a bad name. Such parents do not bring honor upon themselves. But we are assured in the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer that Jesus deals with His people in a manner that gives glory to His holy name. 6. The word Amen is to assure us that our prayer is pleasing to God, and is heard by Him. We know that the petitions we have offered will be heard because He himself has commanded us so to pray. He gave us this prayer and said, After this manner pray ye. We know that our prayer will be heard, too, because He has promised to hear us. He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." John 16, 23. He has said, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Psalm 50, 15. Again He promises, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the son." John 14, 13. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry, and will save them." Psalm 145, 18, 19. These are sweet promises, and they are true for "It is impossible for God to lie." Hebrews 6, 18.

God always hears believing prayer, but according to His wisdom, and in His own good time. Believing prayer pleases God for He says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11, 24. However we do not always know what is best for us, and sometimes ask for something that would injure us. As parents will not give their children things that will hurt them, however anxious they may be for them, so God mercifully withholds from us the hurtful things for which we pray. When Paul asked to have the thorn in the flesh removed God did not answer His prayer by taking away the thorn, but by giving him strength to endure it.

God does not always answer prayer just *when* we prefer it. At the marriage of Cana the mother of Jesus expected Him to supply the lack of wine at once, but He replied, Mine hour is not yet come. The Syrophenician woman who asked Jesus to heal her daughter had to wait Jesus' time before her prayer was answered.

Although our prayers are not answered as we wish, or when we prefer, we should, like the woman just referred to, continue to pray. God delays in answering our prayers for the purpose of strengthening our faith, making us more patient, or for some other good reason. We believe He will answer our prayer, however, and so we say Amen.

QUESTIONS.

1. Who wrote the words of this lesson? 2. To whom were they addressed? 3. What can you say of Timothy? 4. What would the apostle have him remember? 5. What effect would this have upon him? 6. Who

was Pontius Pilate? 7. What is understood by the commandment? 8. To what does he urge Timothy? 9. What does he mean? 10. To what are the closing words of this charge similar? 11. What is the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer? 12. What does this mean? 13. What comfort should these words give us? 14. Under what condition can God hear our prayer? 15. Why do children often ask gifts of their parents in vain? 16. In what words of the lesson are we assured that Jesus is able to answer our prayers? 17. In what words of the conclusion is this expressed? 18. What comfort does this assurance give us? 19. What other truth should we have in mind as we pray? 20. How is this expressed in the words of the conclusion? 21. Which of the Lord's kingdoms is referred to? 22. Who are citizens of this kingdom? 23. Of what may all citizens of this kingdom be sure? 24. What other feature of the Lord's Prayer gives us this assurance? 25. What assurance does the fact that Jesus is our King and Father give us? 26. Of what does the words "Thine is the glory" remind us? 27. In what way would parents fail to bring honor upon themselves? 28. In which words of the conclusion do we express our confidence that Jesus' answer to our prayer will be right? 29. Of what does the word Amen assure us? 30. Why do we have confidence that the Lord will hear our prayer? 31. What other reason have we for confidence? 32. In what words does the apostle express this promise? 33. In what words did the Psalmist express it? 34. Give another promise in the words of St. John. 35. What does the Psalmist say for the comfort of those who call upon the Lord? 36. In what words does the apostle assure us that God's promises are sure? 37. What can you say in regard to believing prayer? 38. Why are our prayers not always answered as we prefer? 39. How did God answer Paul's prayer for the removal of the thorn? 40. What do we learn from Jesus' conduct at the marriage of Cana and from His dealings with the Syrophenician woman? 41. In what respect did that woman set us a good example? 42. Why does God sometimes delay answering our prayers? 43. Of what should we ever be confident?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ISAIAH 65, 24. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

96. REVIEW OF LESSONS 92-95.

Forgiving and Forgiveness.—The duty of forgiving one another is plainly set forth in the parable of the unmerciful servant, Lesson 92. It is also taught in the fourth petition, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Trespasses is another word for sins. We sin daily, and God is deeply offended thereby. We do well to offer this petition frequently and fervently. Here we call upon God not to look upon our sins, nor on their account deny our petitions. In the parable before us the servant's debt represents our sins. The debt is large in order to show us that our sins are grievous in God's sight. The servant was too poor to pay even a small

portion of the debt. This is to impress us with our spiritual helplessness. The servant's comrade was indebted to him, which indicates that Christians offend one another. The comrade's debt was but a trifle, which reminds us that the grievances that we suffer at the hands of others are insignificant compared with our sins against God. The servant would not forgive his fellow servant. His unforgiving spirit is still in the world. Since he had been forgiven a large debt his conduct showed ingratitude. Since God daily forgives us, we should forgive one another. Those who came to God for forgiveness must from their hearts forgive those who trespass against them. The forgiveness of sin is the greatest blessing that Heaven can bestow, for with it comes salvation. In this petition God asks us to promise that we will forgive those who trespass against us.

Our Enemy and How to Meet Him.— Lesson 93 gives an account of our Lord's temptation. It was a part of His redemptive work that he met Satan, in order that He might gain the victory over him, and prove himself more powerful than our enemy. The devil tempted Jesus, and he tempts Jesus' disciples. There are two kinds of temptations, those unto good, and those unto evil. We pray to be delivered from the latter in the sixth petition, And lead us not into temptation. These temptations are from the devil, although he uses the world and the flesh in this unholy work. By the flesh is meant our evil hearts, by the world, the people and the evil things that are found in the world. Satan is shrewd and determined, and therefore God bids us daily to pray, Lead us not into temptation, that is, keep us from being tempted, and help us to resist and overcome when temptation beset us. Those who offer this petition must not leave the narrow way in which God's people walk. If we are in earnest when we utter his prayer we will keep away from people who would exert a dangerous influence over us, and from places where temptations lurk.

A Summary.— We learned from Lesson 94 that Job, after being sorely tried by Satan, was in God's time, delivered from all that distressed him. We pray for the blessing that came to Job in the seventh petition, But deliver us from evil. By evil we understand everything that is harmful to us. In this petition we plead, as in a summary, to be delivered from all evil. The evils which threaten us in this life as fourfold, evils of body, soul, property and honor. Job suffered an evil of the first class

when disease fastened upon his body; of the second class when he overestimated his righteousness; of the third class when he lost his flocks, herds and servants; of the last class when his so-called friends basely and falsely accused him. In answer to his prayer Job not only received deliverance from the ills that had befallen him, but blessings in abundance. Thus God ever deals with His people, bestowing more than they can ask or think. God not only delivered Job from the evils which at that time threatened him, but at last granted him a blessed end. No greater evil could befall one than to die without the hope of salvation, and no greater blessing can come to him than a happy death. Therefore we pray in this petition that when our last hour has come, God would grant a blessed end.

Our Confidence.— Paul's solemn charge to Timothy, Lesson 95, is similar to the concluding words of the Lord's Prayer, For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. With these concluding words the Lord would have us comfort ourselves in the assurance that He, as our Father who is in heaven, can and will hear our prayer. God is almighty. We cannot ask anything that is too hard for Him to do. We close our prayer by reminding ourselves of this sweet truth, God will be sure to hear our prayer. We do not always ask for such things as are best for us to have. We also may be mistaken as to when the blessing we implore should be granted. God always hears believing prayer, but according to His wisdom and in His own good time. Believing prayer always pleases Him, but, in His mercy He answers in such a way and at such a time as is best for us. He at times delays in answering our prayers, but it is for the purpose of strengthening our faith, making us more patient, or for some other good reasons. We express our confidence in the Lord by closing our prayer with the word. Amen.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 92. 1. What duty is set forth in the parable before us? 2. In which petition is this taught? 3. What is understood by trespasses? 4. What do we here ask of God? 5. Why do we do well to offer this prayer frequently and fervently? 6. What may we learn of our sins from this parable? 7. What is taught us by the servant's poverty? 8. What is indicated by the fellow servant's indebtedness to him? By the smallness of the debt? 9. What did the servant's refusal to pay his comrade show? 10. To what should the mercy of God in forgiving us move us? 11. What promise does God ask of us when we pray for forgiveness?

LESSON 93. 1. Of what does this lesson treat? 2. Why did Jesus have this encounter with Satan? 3. What kinds of temptation can you mention? 4. To which is there reference in this petition? 5. Who.

tempts us unto good? Unto evil? 6. What does the devil use in tempting us? 7. What do we understand by flesh? By the world? 8. What will earnestness move us to do in order to keep from being overcome?

LESSON 94. 1. What followed Job's severe trials? 2. In which petition do we plead for deliverance from evil? 3. What do we understand by evil? 4. Into what classes may the evils that beset us be divided? 5. What evil of the first class befel Job? Of the second? Of the third? Of the fourth? 6. What besides deliverance did Job receive in answer to his prayer? 7. From what dire evil was he finally delivered? 8. What can you say of this evil? 9. What is the greatest of blessings?

LESSON 95. 1. Of what does Paul's charge to Timothy remind us? 2. What is the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer? 3. What comfort do we find in these words? 4. Why may we be sure that God can answer our prayers? 5. Why do we sometimes doubt that God can and will answer? 6. Why does God sometimes delay His answer, or answer in a different way from that which we prefer? 7. How do we express our confidence in the Lord?

97. THE BAPTISM OF JOHN AND OF CHRIST.

JOHN 1, 19-34.

BAPTISM, A DIVINE INSTITUTION.

Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word.

What is that Word of God?

That which Christ our Lord speaks in the last chapter of Matthew; Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

John's Testimony concerning Himself.— And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? and he confessed, and denied not: but confessed, I am not the Christ.¹ And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not? Art thou that prophet² and he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Præsees.⁴

John's Testimony concerning His Baptism.— And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water.

John's Testimony concerning Christ.— There standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who, coming after

me, is preferred before me, whose shoes' latchet I am not worthy to unloose. The things were done in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.⁵ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for He was before me. And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.⁶ And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The authorities at Jerusalem, the elders and chief priests, had heard much about the work and preaching of the Baptist, and sent men to inquire who he was. Had they studied the prophecies concerning the Christ they would have been able to recognize the Christ, and it would not have been necessary to send a committee to ask John if he was the Messiah. People are guilty of the same mistake to-day who run here and there seeking to hear some new thing, instead of searching the Scriptures and listening to the preaching of God's Word.

John wanted none of the honor that was due to Jesus. Preachers, and church workers in general, should not try to attract attention to themselves, and thus rob the Lord of the honor due to Him. 2. Elias is another name for Elijah. This prophet had lived about 900 years before Christ. Having been taken to heaven in a chariot of fire many thought he would return and live again among men. They were the more ready to believe this since it had been said that one would come in the spirit and power of Elijah; but it was John that was referred to in this prophecy. John being the Elijah foretold, that is, the one who would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, he might have answered his questioners with a yes. However he was not Elijah in the sense they meant—he was not the old prophet returned to earth—and therefore he truthfully answered No. 3. The people referred to the prophecy of Moses in which he foretold Christ, who would be a prophet like unto himself. To this question John also answered No. 4. After John had declared that he was not Elijah or Christ the questioners insisted that he tell them plainly who he was. When he referred to himself as a voice he meant that they need not be concerned about him, but be careful to listen to what he said. By alluding to himself as a voice he would say that he is only an humble instrument to point the way to Christ. By referring to

this world as a wilderness he would indicate that as such a region is barren of nourishment so this world knows nothing of Christ except what is revealed to it.

Although but an humble instrument John's mission was most important, namely, to prepare the way for Jesus, so that people would accept Him. 5. John directs the embassy to Jesus, reminding them that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that Jesus the Messiah was in their midst, although they knew it not. He admitted that he baptized with water; in this way he would bind his hearers to repentance, and lead them to look forward to the One to come, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. The disciples were literally baptized by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. This promise is also fulfilled in Holy Baptism. Peter said, as recorded in Acts 3, 38, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's Word. The Word of God is connected with the water in Baptism by the *word of command*, and the *word of promise*. The word of command is that which Christ, our Lord, speaks in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Thus we see that the Author of Holy Baptism is our Lord Jesus Christ. 6. John did indeed preach and baptize before Jesus entered upon His public ministry, but he was preparing people for the coming of Christ. "That He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." John was a prophet. He told the people beforehand of the coming of Jesus. He was a remarkable prophet, because he lived to see his prophecies fulfilled. The next day after he had declared that Jesus was at hand he beheld the Lord approaching Him and said to the people, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is the One of whom I said, "After me cometh a Man which is preferred before me; for He was before me."

When Jesus came John's baptism ceased, and all were enjoined to be baptized in the name of the Triune God.

To be baptized is to be sprinkled with, or immersed in, water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Baptist sects insist that immersion is the only proper mode of Baptism, but the word baptize means any application of water, whether it be washing, pouring, sprinkling or immersion. Baptism is spoken of as a washing in Acts 22, 16, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." For the word baptize the word sprinkling is used in Hebrews 10, 22. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

The Lord does not tell us how the water is to be applied, and since various ways of applying water are referred to in Scripture as a baptizing, it is evident that immersion is not essential to Baptism. However it is

essential to Baptism that the water be applied in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. By this sacrament a person is brought into blessed communion with the Triune God. When a child is baptized it becomes a Christian—a member of the Christian Church. “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3, 26, 27.

7. While John was preaching and baptizing at the Jordan, Jesus came from Galilee to be baptized of him. John forbade Him but Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus means that by this they were complying with a part of the Father’s arrangement.

At first John “knew Him not” in the sense that he had not yet received any outward mark or token direct from God that He was the Messiah. But John soon received abundant evidence. The heavens were opened and John saw the Spirit descend upon Christ like a dove, and heard a voice from heaven saying, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Then John bare record that Jesus is the Son of God.

QUESTIONS.

1. On what mission did the priests and Levites call upon John? 2. Who sent them? 3. Under what conditions would this have been unnecessary? 4. Who make the same mistake that these Jews made? 5. Of what would John not rob Christ? 6. When do church workers follow His example? 7. What can you say of Elias? 8. What wrong idea did many of that day have? 9. What gave rise to this? 10. Who was to come in the spirit and power of Elijah? 11. What was the first question asked of John? 12. In what sense was John Elijah? 13. Why could he truthfully answer, No? 14. What was the second question asked John? 15. To what prophecy did they refer? 16. Who was the prophet like unto Moses that was expected? 17. On what did the embassy insist? 18. What was John’s answer? 19. Of what did John mean to warn these people? 20. In what sense was he a voice? 21. What does John call this world? 22. What did he mean? 23. What was John’s mission? 24. What did John impress upon the embassy? 25. What was the purpose of John’s baptism? 26. What Baptism did he foretell? 27. When did this take place? 28. How else is this promise fulfilled? 29. How does Peter express this? 30. What is Baptism? 31. In what ways is the Word connected with the water? 32. What is the word of command? 33. Where is it recorded? 34. Who is the author of Holy Baptism? 35. What of John’s preaching and baptism? 36. What prophecy did John proclaim? 37. What is remarkable about John as a prophet? 38. What did John say on recognizing Jesus as the Messiah? 39. What constitutes Baptism? 40. What sects insist on immersion? 41. What does the word baptize mean? 42. Mention a passage in which the word sprinkling is used for baptize. 44. Why do we believe that immersion is not essential to Baptism? 45. What is essential? 46. What does it mean to be baptized? 47. In what words does St. Paul declare this? 48. To whom did Jesus go for Baptism? 49. What did John say when Jesus asked him? 50. How did Jesus reply? 51. What did He mean? 52. In what sense did John at first not know Jesus? 53. What evidence of Jesus’ Messiahship was given to him?

GOLDEN TEXT.

MATTHEW 28, 19. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

98. JESUS INSTRUCTS NICODEMUS.

JOHN 3, 1-21.

BAPTISM WORKS REGENERATION.

Baptism works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare.

What are such words and promises of God?

Those which Christ, our Lord, speaks in the last chapter of Mark: He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Nicodemus and His Address to Jesus. — There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:¹ the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.²

A Conversation on Regeneration. — Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?³ Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.⁴ Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Jesus Removing Doubts. — Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these

things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that come down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven.⁵

Jesus' Mission, and the Good Fortune of those that Believe in Him. — And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.⁶

The Condition of those that Persist in Unbelief and Ignorance. — And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.⁷

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Nicodemus, although a Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin and one in authority, was a thoughtful man. 2. He came to Jesus by night because he did not want any one to know it. He was not quite ready to accept Jesus and His teachings. He feared the consequences should his friends learn that he had visited the Nazarene. He concedes a great deal when he declares that Jesus is a teacher come from God. His reasons for believing this was that no one could perform such miracles as Jesus performed except God were with him. He was not well grounded in this faith, however, or he would not have come by night. 3. The new birth that Jesus declares necessary unto salvation is a change of nature, usually called *Regeneration*. By our natural birth we are flesh born of flesh, that is, sinful beings, as our parents are sinful. In this condition we are not fit for the kingdom of God. Every person comes into this world an enemy of God, and a friend and servant of Satan. All would remain so did not God bring about a change.

Although a learned and highly respected man, Nicodemus was very ignorant in regard to spiritual matters. In this respect he was no exception. Many who are learned in the affairs of this world know

nothing of God and the plan of salvation. The reason for this condition is that they do not go to Jesus and humbly accept His teachings. We go to Jesus when we prayerfully read and hear God's Word. Nicodemus sets all an example in this that he went to Jesus, was not ashamed to confess his ignorance and was willing to receive instruction. Although Jesus knew Nicodemus to be a Pharisee, and saw at once that he was far from being a true disciple? He received him kindly, and patiently dealt with him. He says for our comfort, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." 4. When Jesus declares that unless one is born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, and that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, He is emphasizing the necessity of regeneration.

Regeneration is effected through water and the Spirit, which is Baptism. Baptism is the application of water to a sinner in the name of the Triune God. In this sacrament the Word is united with water by command and by promise. The Spirit always accompanies and works through God's Word. Here Jesus refers to Baptism as water and the Spirit.

By Baptism we are brought into blessed communion with the Triune God. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Galatians 3, 27.

All are to be baptized. Adults are not to be baptized for the purpose of regenerating them. God has given His Word, which is the power of God unto salvation, as a means through which the Spirit leads adults to repentance and faith. Only after we have the assurance that he believes in Jesus is the sacrament of Baptism to be administered to an adult. It is done unto the sealing of his faith, and because Jesus so commands.

Children are to be baptized, for God commands to baptize all nations, and to these children belong. Besides Jesus says, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." Mark 10, 14. Baptism is the means through which this is done.

The world laughs when we speak of regenerating children through Baptism, that is, kindling faith in their hearts, but it is laughing at God who says that one can be born again of water and the Spirit, and that as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

He says, Of such is the kingdom of God; but if children are of the kingdom of God they must have faith, since without faith it is impossible to please God. Jesus himself declares that children can believe, Matthew 18, 6, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." 5. The Holy Spirit is compared to wind. As the wind goeth where it listeth, so the Spirit does not wait until we call for Him, but finds His way to every one to whom the Word is brought, and seeks admission. As the wind is powerful, and works wondrous changes in landscapes and elsewhere, so the Spirit works remarkable changes in the heart. As the wind cannot be seen, so the work of the Spirit is hidden. All that God asks us to do is to preach the Word and administer the sacraments. The

Spirit through these means will begin and carry forward His work, although we do not understand it. As Nicodemus cried in amazement, How can these things be? so must we look in wonder at God's work through the means of grace. The things of God are foolishness to the natural man.

Jesus reminds Nicodemus that it would be useless to try to explain to him the workings of the Spirit. Christ had told many important truths by means of "earthly things," that is, by comparing spiritual things to earthly matters, yet the Pharisees would not believe. Why should He explain the work of Regeneration to those who would not accept His parables? 6. The deadly serpent's bite which brought suffering and death to Israel in the wilderness, was a type of sin, which has brought misery and death to all the world. The lifting up of the brazen serpent in the midst of the dying Israelites typified the lifting up of Jesus upon the cross on Golgotha. The healing that came to the wounded pilgrims when they looked upon the brazen serpent typified the salvation which comes to sinners when they believe in Christ. This new life comes without any effort on the sinner's part, altogether through faith in the crucified Savior.

All the Israelites who looked upon the brazen serpent were healed; so God's love is for all the world, and the Spirit is sent to bring all to repentance and faith. 8. The Israelites who would not look upon the brazen serpent perished. Healing was offered but they would not take it. This is the reason why many are not regenerated and saved. Light has come but men love darkness rather than light. We are affected with original sin which leads the unregenerated sinner to turn away from Jesus, and to resist the Spirit. Like the Jews of old many will not allow God's Spirit to do His work in their hearts. When regeneration has taken place the new life manifests itself. He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

QUESTIONS.

1. What can be said of Nicodemus? 2. Why did he come to Jesus by night? 3. How did he address Jesus? 4. What were his reasons for believing that Jesus came from God? 5. What circumstance indicates that he was not well grounded in his faith? 6. What did Jesus declare to be necessary before one could enter the kingdom of God? 7. By what name is this change usually called? 8. What is man's condition by nature? 9. Who alone can change this condition? 10. In what respect are many people of the world like Nicodemus? 11. Why are so many ignorant of God and His will? 12. How can we obtain the knowledge necessary to intelligent faith? 13. In what respect is Nicodemus a good example? 14. What comfort is there to us in the reception Jesus accorded him? 15. How does Jesus emphasize the necessity of regeneration? 16. How is regeneration effected? 17. What is Baptism? 18. How manifest is the Word connected with the water in Baptism? 19. Through what does the Spirit work? 20. To what has Jesus reference when He speaks of water and the Spirit? 21. How does the apostle describe the blessed results of Baptism? 22. What would be a wrong motive in baptizing adults? 23. Through what means is the regeneration of adults effected? 24. When should an adult be baptized? 25. Why

should Baptism be administered to unbaptized adult believers? 26. Why do we insist on baptizing children? 27. What can be said of the world's ridicule of baptismal regeneration? 28. Give Scriptural proof of this doctrine. 29. In what words does Jesus speak of children having faith? 30. To what is the Spirit here likened? 31. In what respect does the Spirit go where it listeth? 32. How is the power of the Spirit manifested? 33. What part does man take in furthering the Spirit's work? 34. How must a contemplation of the changes wrought by the Spirit affect us? 35. How are Jesus' words, "If I have told you earthly things," etc., to be understood? 36. Of what was the serpent's bite by which rebellious Israel was punished a type? The brazen serpent? The healing of the wounded people? 37. What is to be learned from the fact that these wounded Israelites were healed without any effort of their own? 38. What truth is portrayed in the fact that all who looked were healed? 39. What was the consequence so far as they were concerned who would not look? 40. Of what is this typical? 41. How is the fact that many are lost to be explained? 42. What is the consequence when regeneration has taken place?

· GOLDEN TEXT.

GALATIANS 3, 26-27. Ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

99. THE BAPTISM OF SAUL.

Acts 22, 10-16.

BAPTISM CONFERS FORGIVENESS.

It works forgiveness of sins, DELIVERS from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare.

What are such words and promises of God?

Those which Christ, our Lord, speaks in the last chapter of Mark: He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Paul Gives an Account of His Baptism. — And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.¹ And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.² And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said

unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.³ And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard.⁴ And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Saul, who had been persecuting the believers at Jerusalem started for Damascus for the purpose of seizing any Christians he might find there, and taking them prisoners to be condemned by the Jewish council at Jerusalem. When he drew near to his destination he was struck down by a sudden light from heaven. Jesus appeared to him and said, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? It was to Jesus that Saul addressed the words at the beginning of our lesson, What shall I do, Lord? Jesus directed him to go to Damascus where he would be told what to do. God does not declare His will to man directly. Peter was sent to deliver God's message to Cornelius, and Ananias was commissioned to proclaim it to Paul. The Lord has instituted the office of the ministry to make known His will to men. 2. Saul was smitten with bodily blindness that he might the more keenly realize that he was spiritually blind. The sinner is blind in the sense that he does not know his sins, and does not know how displeasing they are in the sight of God. 3. Ananias was a Jewish convert who had a good report among the Jews on account of his righteous life, and the fact that he still observed the law in various respects. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, and directed him to go to Saul to speak to him and to open his eyes. Ananias was afraid for he knew how Saul had persecuted the believers at Jerusalem, and had authority to do the same at Damascus. The Lord removes his fears, however, assuring him that Saul is no longer an enemy of the Lord, but a chosen vessel in His service. Perhaps the Lord told Ananias how He had appeared to Saul on the way; at least Ananias knew of it, and referred to it when he first met Saul.

Ananias greeted the erstwhile persecutor with the salutation, Brother Saul. He was no longer an enemy but a believer, a brother. He had seen Jesus with his bodily eyes, and now sees Him with the eye of faith. Now that his spiritual eyes are open Ananias says, Receive thy sight, and his bodily eyes also were opened. 4. It was "the God of our fathers" that had chosen Saul to preach Jesus Christ. Saul thought that he was serving the God of his fathers by opposing Christ; now he hears that the God of his fathers has chosen him to preach Christ. He had looked upon Jesus as an impostor and evil doer, now he hears that He is the Just One. He had persecuted those that believed in Jesus, now he is to go forth and labor to increase the number of believers. 5. Ananias, having been assured that Saul believed in Jesus said, *Arise,*

and be baptized. He was a fit subject for Baptism, as he had come to know the Savior. Ananias does not refer to Baptism as an empty form or ceremony, but declares that it will be of great benefit to Saul. It will wash away his sins.

Jesus declares the benefits of Baptism when He says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." We therefore confess that Baptism works the forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare. Baptism puts us in such relation to Christ that His sufferings and death, and His fulfillment of the law, are all made ours. This is what Paul means by the words recorded in Galatians 3, 26, 27, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Therefore Ananias could promise Saul that in Baptism his sins would be washed away. Baptism works the forgiveness of sins. It does this by giving to us the righteousness of Jesus. The righteousness of Christ means everything that Christ did for us. For Christ led a holy life and fulfilled the law and offered a sacrifice for all sins. When we put on Christ in Baptism we are in Him and are righteous before God. We are forgiven. It was this sweet message that Peter proclaimed to the multitude at Jerusalem on Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2, 38.

It means much to sinners to have their sins forgiven. Sin is the one thing that separates us from God, unfits us for heaven, brings temporal death to us, threatens us with eternal death, and makes us slaves of the devil. Baptism bestows upon us forgiveness of sin, and thus delivers us from death and the devil. The baptized Christian needs not fear death. It is sin that makes death so terrible to us. Sin is death's sting. When Jesus forgives the sinner He takes away this sting. Baptized Christians can therefore say with Paul, as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15, 54-57, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Baptism also delivers us from the devil. Through sin we have come into the devil's power. He has bound us with the fetters of sin. When our sins are forgiven these fetters are broken. In Baptism we receive the forgiveness of sin, that is, the fetters that bind us are broken. Baptism delivers from death and the devil.

Sin separates us from God, and unfits us for heaven. When our sins are forgiven all that stands between us and God and heaven has been removed. Since Baptism works the forgiveness of sin, it gives everlasting life. St. Paul declares this in Romans 8, 16, 17, "We are the children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." St. Peter tells us the same truth when he compares Baptism to the ark in 1. Peter 3, 20, 21, "Which some time were disobe-

dient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Great are the benefits of Baptism. They are offered to all, and all may enjoy them. However they must be accepted, and it is by faith in Jesus Christ that we get the benefits of Baptism. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but He that believeth not shall be damned."

QUESTIONS.

1. For what purpose had Saul started for Damascus? 2. What happened as he drew near his destination? 3. Who appeared to him? 4. What did Jesus say to him? 5. What was Saul's reply? 6. What directions did the persecutor receive? 7. What is shown here in regard to God's way of making His will known? 8. What befell Saul? 9. In what way would this affliction benefit him? 10. In what respect are sinners blind? 11. What can you say of Ananias? 12. What was he ordered to do? 13. How was he affected by this commission? 14. Why did he fear? 15. How did the Lord remove his fears? 16. How did Ananias salute Saul? 17. What change had taken place in the persecutor? 18. What bodily blessing did he at once receive? 19. What calling was he henceforth to follow? 20. Who had chosen him for it? 21. Mention some features of the change Saul underwent. 22. What further did Ananias suggest? 23. With what words did he state the benefit of Baptism? 24. In what words does Jesus declare the benefits of Baptism? 25. What is therefore our faith in this particular? 26. How does Baptism effect all this? 27. In what words does Paul state this? 28. How does Baptism work the forgiveness of sins? 29. What is understood by the righteousness of Christ? 30. Having been baptized, how do we stand in the sight of God? 31. In what words did Peter declare this on Pentecost? 32. What can you say of sin? 33. From what does Baptism deliver us? 34. What makes death terrible to the natural man? 35. What is sin in its relation to death? 36. When is the sting of death removed? 37. In what words does St. Paul declare this? 38. In what relation to the devil do we stand by reason of sin? 39. What effect has Baptism on this relation? 40. What separates sinners from God and heaven? 41. What is the consequence when the sinner is forgiven? 42. Being forgiven what is our relation to God? 43. What follows when sinners become God's children? 44. How does Peter set forth the benefits of Baptism? 45. To how many are these benefits offered? 46. Who will enjoy them? 47. In what words does Jesus declare this?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ACTS 2, 38. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

100. WHAT DOES BAPTISM SIGNIFY?

ROMANS 6, 1-11.

Baptism signifies that the Old Adam in us, by daily contrition and repentance, should be drowned and die, with all sins and evil lusts; and that a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live in righteousness and purity before God forever.

The Baptized Christian is Dead to Sin. — What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?¹ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?²

The Baptized Christian is Alive unto Righteousness. — Therefore we are buried with Him by Baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.³ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we shall not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.⁴

The Baptized Christian shall live with Christ Forever. — Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.⁵ Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.⁶

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The apostle wrote in the previous chapter that God's grace was as far-reaching as sin. That the merits of Jesus Christ were sufficient to blot out the guilt of every sin, and secure salvation for every sinner. Now he asks in the first words of our lesson, What use shall we make of this blessed truth? Shall we rush from one sin to another, thinking that the more sin we commit the more will the grace of God be magnified in our pardon? His answer is, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? He who continues in sin is not a Chris-

tian. The Christian is not free from sin. He still transgresses God's law in thought, word and deed, and will continue to do so as long as he lives. But he does this in weakness, not deliberately. So far as his will is concerned he no longer continues in sin. 2. To be baptized into Christ's death means to be put in such relation to Christ that His death avails for us. Death is the penalty of sin. All having sinned, all must die. Jesus died for all. God looks upon those who are baptized into Christ as though they had died, Christ having paid the penalty for their sins, they have been baptized into Christ's death. But to be baptized into Christ's death also means to become dead to sin. That is what the apostle is speaking of here in particular. 3. Baptism is not a mere sign or an empty ceremony, but a means through which the Holy Ghost works in us. We are sinful by nature, and on that account are not fit for heaven. Our sinful nature is called the Old Adam. It is called by this name because we inherit it from the first man. Adam was created in the image of God, that is, a righteous and holy being. When he yielded to the tempter and disobeyed God he lost God's image. He became a sinful being. His sinful nature has been handed down to all his descendants. We show its presence by our sins and evil lusts. We must get rid of this sinful nature. It is through Baptism that this is done. Baptism signifies that the old Adam in us, by daily contrition and repentance, should be drowned and die, with all sins and evil lusts; and that a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live in righteousness and purity before God forever. All this is stated in our lesson: "We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death; that like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

The apostle does not say that we are buried in water. He is not here declaring that in order to be baptized one must be immersed. No doubt immersion is right, but so is sprinkling, for to baptize is to apply water. The apostle is referring to the benefits of Baptism. By this sacrament the sinner is placed into Christ's death—buried into it, so that in God's sight it is the same as though he had died.

Being baptized the believer is dead to sin. We must drown the Old Adam—sinful nature. We must do this daily, for we will never succeed in killing it. We drown the Old Adam by daily contrition and repentance. We are to drown this sinful nature in order that a new nature may daily come forth and arise.

As Christ came forth from the grave on the day of His resurrection with a glorified body, to live a far different life than He lived before death, so are we to arise from spiritual death to newness of life. That is, being baptized, Christians are to show it by a godly life.

The first step in this new life is contrition, or sorrow for sin. We are to be sorry for our sins because they grieve and offend God, and also because God has threatened to punish sin. We are not to stop with this; we are also to repent of our sins. God has promised to forgive our sins for Christ's sake, that is, because Christ has suffered and died for us.

All who turn to God in sorrow and childlike faith may rest assured that their sins are forgiven.

Contrition and repentance is to take place daily; for we never cease sinning. 4. All who have been baptized into Christ's death have been freed from sin. They have been freed from the guilt and condemnation of sin for in Christ they have forgiveness. But they have also been freed from the power and dominion of sin, because the Holy Spirit has awakened in them the new life unto holiness.

Christ did not remain in the bonds of death. As He arose from death so must all who have been baptized into His death arise. As He was not held by death, so we are not to be held by sin. The baptized Christian must hate and avoid sin. He is not only to avoid sin, but he is to be active in deeds of love. As Christ arose with a glorified body, so baptized believers arise from spiritual death to a better life. 5. Being baptized into Christ's death the believer is declared dead—dead with Christ. However Christ arose from death. This is not only to remind us that we are to arise unto newness of life but it is an assurance to us that our bodies will arise from the grave. Having come forth from death Jesus declared, "Because I live, ye shall live also." John 16, 9.

Others have been raised from death. Jesus and His apostles brought different departed ones to life. However Tabitha, Jairus' daughter, Lazarus, and all others who were restored from death by and by yielded again to it. It was not so with Jesus. He conquered death. "Death hath no more dominion over Him."

The blessing that comes to us through Christ's resurrection is described by the apostle in 1 Peter 1, 3, 4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

6. Sin is not to reign in the Christian; but sin is the only thing to which the believer is dead. In all other respects he is alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is called to service. The Lord has a great work to do, namely, the building up of the kingdom of light in this world of darkness. Christians are His workmen. They are never to grow weary in this service, they are to grow in holiness of heart and life, and live in righteousness and purity before God forever.

QUESTIONS.

1. With what truth did the apostle close the previous chapter?
2. With what question does our lesson begin?
3. What is meant by it?
4. How does he answer this question?
5. How does the Christian succeed in keeping God's law?
6. What is the character of the Christian's sins?
7. In what respect does he not continue in sin?
8. What is meant by baptized into Christ's death?
9. What is the relation of death to sin?
10. How many must pay this penalty?
11. How is it possible for the Christian to escape paying this penalty?
12. What does Christ's

death avall for a sinner? 13. What is a wrong explanation of Baptism? 14. What is the teaching of Scripture concerning Baptism? 15. What unfits us for heaven? 16. By what name is this sinful nature called? Why? 17. How did our first parents get this sinful nature? 18. How do we get it? 19. How do we manifest it? 20. What are we to do with it? How? 21. What is to take its place? 22. In what words is this stated in our lesson? 23. What is a wrong interpretation of these words? 24. How do we regard immersion? 25. To what is the apostle referring? 26. How does God look upon those who are baptized? 27. How can the Old Adam be drowned? 28. How often is this to be done? 29. Of what are we reminded by the fact that Christ came forth from death with a glorified body? 30. What is the first step in this new life? 31. Why is the Christian sorry for his sins? 32. What is the next step in this new life? 33. What comforts the baptized Christian? 34. How are we made free from sin through Baptism? 35. Of what does the fact that Christ was not held by the bonds of death remind us? 36. Of what else besides the fact that we are to lead a new life does Christ's resurrection assure us? 37. In what words does Jesus declare this? 38. What must be said of those whom Christ and the apostles raised from death? 39. In what respect did Jesus' resurrection differ from that of all others who were raised? 40. In what words of our lesson is this stated? 41. In what words does the apostle refer to the blessing that comes to us through Christ's resurrection? 42. In what respect is the baptized Christian dead? 43. What should be true of him in all other respects? 44. Why is his service needed?

GOLDEN TEXT.

2. CORINTHIANS 5, 17, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

101. REVIEW OF LESSONS 97-100.

The Circumcision Made Without Hands. — By his preaching and baptizing John the Baptist meant to lead the people to look forward to the One for whom he was but a messenger — a forerunner. (Lesson 97). He baptized with water but Jesus would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and also in Holy Baptism. Jesus is the Author of Baptism. This Sacrament is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command, and connected with God's Word. The Word of God is connected with the water in Baptism by the Word of command and the Word of promise. The Word of command is, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost". To be baptized is to be sprinkled with or immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of

the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The Baptist sect insists that immersion is the only proper mode of Baptism, but the word baptize means any application of water. The Lord does not tell us how the water is to be applied. Since various ways of applying water are referred to in Scripture as a baptizing, it is evident that immersion is not essential to Baptism. A certain amount of water, and a certain mode of application are not essential to this Sacrament, but it is essential that the water be applied in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. By this Sacrament a person is brought into blessed communion with the Triune God, and becomes a member of the Christian Church.

A Washing that Cleanses.— In His conversation with Nicodemus, to which Lesson 98 refers, Jesus declares that a new birth is necessary unto salvation. This change is called regeneration. When Jesus spoke to His guest about being born of water and the Spirit, He not only declared the necessity of a new birth, but also that the means by which this new birth or regeneration takes place is Baptism—water and the Spirit. Baptism is the application of water to a sinner in the name of the Triune God. In this Sacrament the Word—Spirit—is united with water by command and by promise. The spirit always accompanies and works through God's Word, therefore. Baptism is always efficacious. By this Sacrament sinners are brought into blessed communion with the Triune God. All are to be baptized, therefore also children. They are sinful beings—flesh born of flesh. We are by nature children of wrath. They are of those concerning whom Jesus says that they must be born again if they would enter the kingdom of Heaven. Through Baptism the little ones are regenerated. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Adults who have not been baptized are to receive this sacrament, but not for the purpose of being thereby regenerated. God has given His Word as a means through which the Spirit leads adults to repentance and faith. Adults are baptized unto the sealing of their faith, and because Jesus so commands.

A Precious Treasure in an Earthen Vessel.— Ananias declared the benefits of Baptism when, as we learned in Lesson 99, he said to Saul, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Jesus declares the benefits of this Sacrament when He

says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." We believe that Baptism works the forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare. This Sacrament puts us in such relation to Christ that His sufferings and death, and His fulfillment of the law, are all made ours. It works forgiveness of sins by giving us the righteousness of Christ. The righteousness of Christ means everything that Christ did for us. When one puts on Christ in Baptism he stands righteous before God. Our sins being forgiven, all that stands between us and God and heaven has been removed. Baptism also delivers from the devil. Through sin we have come into the devil's power. We are bound with his fetters. When our sins are forgiven these fetters are broken. Since Baptism delivers from death and the devil and work forgiveness of sin, it also gives everlasting life. It is compared to the ark, since it does for our souls what the ark did for the bodies of the eight persons rescued by means of it. The benefits of Baptism are offered to all, and are appropriated by faith in Jesus Christ.

A New Life. — St. Paul declares in Lesson 100 that the baptized Christian is dead to sin, that he is alive unto righteousness, and that he shall live forever with Christ. Baptism is not, therefore, a mere sign, or an empty ceremony, but a means through which the Spirit works. It signifies that the old Adam in us, by daily contrition and repentance, should be drowned and die, with all sins and evil lusts, and that a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live in righteousness and purity before God forever. We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death. The apostle is referring not to the mode but the benefits. He is declaring that by this Sacrament the sinner is placed into Christ's death—buried unto it—so that he becomes dead to sin. The baptized believer is to drown the old Adam by daily contrition and repentance. Then, as Christ came forth from the grave, so is he daily to come forth unto newness of life. Baptized Christians are to show that they have been baptized by leading a goodly life. They are to be dead to sin, but alive unto God.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 97. 1. What was the purpose of John's preaching and baptizing? 2. How did he speak of the difference between his Baptism and that of Christ? 3. When was this promise fulfilled? 4. Who is the

author of Baptism? 5. What is Baptism? 6. In what ways is the Word connected with the water? 7. What is the word of command? 8. What does it mean to be baptized? 9. What do we believe in regard to the mode of applying the water? 10. How is it made evident that immersion is not essential to Baptism? 11. What is essential?

LESSON 98. 1. What does Jesus say is necessary to salvation? 2. By what name is this change usually known? 3. What is the means through which this change takes place? 4. What is here called the Spirit? 5. How is the Word united with the water? 6. What is the effect of this Sacrament upon the sinner? 7. Why do children need Baptism? 8. What is said of those who are baptized into Christ? 9. What would be a wrong purpose in the baptizing of an adult? 10. When are adults subjects for Baptism? 11. Why should believing adults be baptized?

LESSON 99. 1. In what words did Ananias declare the benefits of Baptism? 2. In what words does Jesus declare its benefits? 3. In what words do we declare these benefits? 4. How does Baptism work the forgiveness of sins? 5. What do we understand by the righteousness of Christ? 6. Having put on Christ how do we stand before God? 7. How does Baptism deliver from the devil? 8. What does Baptism bestow? 9. By what comparison does the apostle declare this? 10. To whom are these benefits offered, and who enjoys them?

LESSON 100. 1. What does the apostle declare of baptized Christians in this lesson? 2. What is to be said of Baptism? 3. What does Baptism signify? 4. To what does the apostle refer when he declares that we are burned unto death? 5. What is he to drown? How? 6. What should follow? 7. How do baptized Christians prove that they are Christians?

102. THE PRODIGAL'S CONFESSION.

LUKE 15, 17-24.

CONFESSION.

Confession embraces two parts, one is that we confess our sins; the other that we receive the absolution or forgiveness from the confessor, as from God himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that thereby our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

The Prodigal's Repentance. — And when he came to himself,¹ he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.²

The Prodigal's Return. — And he arose, and came to his father.³

The Prodigal's Reception. — But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.⁴

The Prodigal's Confession. — And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.⁵

The Prodigal's Restoration. — But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. It is the prodigal son that is referred to. He represents the penitent sinner. He had left home, and we have turned from God. The expression "came to himself" implies that wayward, sin-loving people are not true to themselves, and are not serving their own interests. They know not what is for their own good. They are under a spell—deluded by Satan. This expressions means that he saw his mistake. 2. Notice the change in his views. He formerly considered his home a prison, and his home-life a drudgery, and thought nothing more to be desired than to be out in the world; now he would fain change places with any of his father's servants. Thus Jesus teaches us that a life of wrong-doing makes no one happy. He was deeply impressed with a sense of his sins. It did not occur to him to try to lay the blame on some one else, but to put it all on himself and confess, I have sinned.

The prodigal had taken the first step toward Confession. He had learned to see his mistake, and was sorry. Before the sinner will make a sincere confession to God he must learn to know his sins, and be sorry for them. God has given us the Law to teach us to know our sins, and to work true sorrow in our hearts.

He did not delay, but started at once. Many make a mistake in this respect, and soothe their conscience by promising themselves that they will do better by and by. Such persons usually go from bad to worse. They are guilty of the folly of Lots' wife, who looked back and perished. They are likely to perish in their sins. The only safe way is to arise at once and forsake wrong-doing, and return to the narrow way. It is a comfort to penitent sinners that the one whom they have offended, and to whom they return, is their Father. 4. The father saw the prodigal long before he reached home. He was evidently looking and waiting for him, as God is constantly waiting and watching for the return of those who have turned away from Him. God loves sinners so much that He takes no pleasure in their death, but would rather that they turn to Him and live. He had compassion. As this father pitied the son in his

poverty and wretchedness, so God pities those who are lost in sin. He had surpassing love for his son. As he could not wait, but ran to meet his son, embraced and kissed him, so God eagerly welcomes the penitent sinner. As the father loved his son in spite of his filth and nakedness, so God loves sinners in spite of their sins. 5. The penitent son made a good confession, namely, that he had sinned against his father and Heaven. The sins we commit against men are also, and first of all, against God.

The prodigal's penitence made him humble. Once unwilling to remain a son he is now ready to be a servant—a hired servant, which means the lowest grade of servants. Penitence enables a sinner to realize his unworthiness, and makes him humble before God. When the sinner has learned to know and feel his sins he will do as the prodigal, go to his father and make confession. To do this is rendering a service that is pleasing to God. We read in Proverbs 28, 19, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy..

We cannot confess all our sins. We do not know all our sins. David says, "Who can understand his errors? cleanse Thou me from secret faults." Psalm 19, 12. However we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know. We often sin without knowing it, and there is nothing so easily forgotten as our sins. We should not, therefore, postpone confession until we are especially burdened because of some misdeed or shortcoming. Jesus teaches us to pray daily, "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We should not only confess our sins, but, like the publican who cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner," we should daily confess unto God that we are sinners. We would not be guilty of actual sins were it not that original sin lurks in our nature. It is a grievous sin in the sight of God when fanatics boast that they are perfectly sanctified.

The prodigal returned and confessed his sins to his father. He had deeply wronged his father, and it was right for him to make confession to him. When we sin against some one we should follow the prodigal's example—go and confess our sins to him. No one should allow his pride to keep him from confessing his sins. In James 5, 6, we are exhorted to confess our faults one to another and in Matthew 5, 25, we are enjoined to be reconciled to our brother before we bring our gift to the altar.

When one is troubled about his sins he should not forget that the Lord Jesus has instituted the office of the ministry for the purpose of having His Word proclaimed to us, and peace of heart brought to all who are penitent. As those who have bodily pain and distress go to a physician for advice and medicine, so those who have spiritual distress will do well to go to their pastor and make confession to him.

In order that we may properly confess our sins we should study the ten commandments. They will enable us to see what is wrong with our hearts and lives.

God asks us to call Him Father, so that when we confess our sins we may do so with the sweet assurance that He is ready and willing for the sake of Jesus Christ, to forgive us. 6. As the prodigal had given up his place in his father's house, so the sinner has forfeited his place in heaven. As the father uttered no word of rebuke, but welcomed the penitent son, and ordered that all should make merry, so there is joy in heaven when a sinner repents and returns to his heavenly Father. The son returned in rags, so our sins and even our good deeds are filthy rags in God's sight. The best robe that was put upon the prodigal represents the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is bestowed on all who believe. The penitent son was to wear the ring which would constantly remind him that he was once again at home. Christians must never forget that they are God's children.

The prodigal was to have new shoes. That signifies that penitent sinners are to show their sincerity by their walk—their manner of life. He was to feast on good things, by which Jesus reminds us that God has prepared to make all who come to Him perfectly happy. In a life of sin one finds husks, but in a life of godliness he feasts on the fatted calf. That does not mean that Christians have no trouble and sorrow in this life, but that they should be happy and hopeful whatever betides them.

The prodigal returned, confessed his sins, and was forgiven. To all penitent sinners God extends forgiveness, which is also called absolution. The pastor to whom the sinner makes confession bestows the absolution, and the sinner receives it as from God Himself. God alone can forgive sins; men can forgive them only in God's name.

QUESTIONS.

1. Whom does the prodigal represent? 2. In what respect does he remind us of sinners? 3. What is implied by the words, "came to himself?" 4. What do they mean? 5. What change of views had come to the prodigal? 6. What would Jesus teach us by this wayward son's experience? 7. What was he finally led to confess? 8. What step toward confession had he taken? 9. What has God given to lead sinners to take this step? 10. In what respect is the prodigal's example commendable? 11. How do many endeavor to quiet conscience? 12. What is usually the result? 13. To what Bible character may they be likened? 14. What is the only safe course for the sinner? 15. What is the sinner's comfort in this matter? 16. What may we learn from the father's anxiety in regard to the wayward son? 17. Of what does the father's compassion remind us? 18. How did the father manifest his love for the son? 19. Of what does this remind us? 20. What confession did the prodigal make? 21. What do we learn from it? 22. How did the prodigal's penitence affect him? 23. What change had taken place in him? 24. What will penitence lead a sinner to do? 25. What is said in Proverbs on this subject? 26. In what words does David tell us that we cannot confess all our sins? 27. What should we plead? 28. What conditions make it impossible for us to confess all our sins? 29. What would be a mistake in making confession? 30. How does Jesus teach us to be concerned daily about our sins? 31. Repeat a passage from the book of Proverbs on this subject. 32. Besides confessing our sins, what else should we daily confess? 33. What is the root of all actual sin? 34. What do some fanatics teach in regard to sin? 35. Mention

another respect in which the prodigal's example is commendable? 36. What should we do in regard to those who have offended us? 37. What is apt to hinder us in this? 38. In what words of Scripture is this duty enjoined? 39. Through what office would God bring comfort and peace to troubled souls? 40. What is it well for those to do who are troubled because of their sins? 41. What will help us to see and confess our sins? 42. What assurance have we in the fact that we are to call God Father? 43. Mention particulars in which the prodigal reminds us of sinners. 44. What does the best robe represent? 45. Of what was the ring to be a reminder? 46. What do the new shoes signify? 47. Of what does the feast remind us? 48. Give another word for forgiveness. 49. Who can forgive sins? 50. How do men forgive sins?

GOLDEN TEXT.

PROVERBS 28, 13. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

103. THE POWER TO FORGIVE SINS.

JOHN 20, 19-23.

THE OFFICE OF THE KEYS.

The Office of the Keys is the peculiar church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth, to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, and to retain the sins of the impenitent, so long as they do not repent.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples and Salutes them. — Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews,¹ came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.²

Jesus Proves Himself to His Disciples. — And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.³

Jesus Appoints the Apostles to their Work. — Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.⁴

Jesus Institutes the Office of the Keys. — And when He had said this. He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.⁵

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. The day referred to was that on which Jesus arose from the dead. It was Sunday, the first day of the week. Ten of the twelve disciples were assembled. Those not present were Thomas and Judas, the traitor, who had killed himself. The doors of the room in which they met were shut, because they feared that the Jewish authorities, on account of the report that the body of Jesus had been stolen by the disciples, might make them trouble. They were still harrassed by the timidity that led them to flee when Jesus was seized in Gethsemane.

2. This was the fifth appearance of Jesus since His resurrection on the morning of that day. He came into their midst suddenly, unexpectedly, the doors being shut. They were frightened. They had believed that Jesus was risen, but were not prepared to see Him appear in that manner. He greeted them with, Peace be unto you. It was not a mere formal salutation. He came to bestow upon His followers not only the peace of mind of which they stood in need at that moment, but the peace which He had secured for them by His sufferings, death and resurrection. He had purchased the forgiveness of sins for every soul, and all who accept that forgiveness have peace—peace in the comforting assurance that they are reconciled with God.

As Jesus came to give His disciples of that day peace, so has He arranged that His disciples of all time shall have peace. For this purpose He has instituted the *Office of the Keys*. It is the peculiar church power given to the Church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, and to retain the sins of the impenitent so long as they do not repent. Sin destroys our peace of heart, and unfits us for heaven. What all sinners need and must have in order to enjoy peace is *the forgiveness of sin*; that is bestowed through this office.

3. Jesus knew what doubts and fears disturbed the hearts of the disciples, and therefore sets about to convince them of the truth of His resurrection. They had seen Him cold in death; the doubt that troubled them was whether the One before them was Jesus. He does not rebuke them because of their doubts, but proceeds to remove those doubts by showing them His lacerated hands and wounded side. Then they believed and were glad. Doubts and fears make people unhappy, faith gives them glad and joyous hearts.

4. Jesus then appointed the apostles to their work, and begins by giving them the greeting, "Peace be unto you." In order that they might bring peace to the hearts of men, they must have peace in their own hearts. By these words Jesus meant to impress the disciples with the solemnity and importance of the occasion. He assures them that their work is of the same kind, and has the same purpose in view, as His work. The Father had sent Him to accomplish the redemption of men, now He sends the disciples to tell the world of the salvation purchased for them, and lead men to accept it. They were to do this by using the means of grace.

The part of this work which Jesus was sent to do was such that no one but the God-man could do it. The work of the disciples is that of servants. They were to bring the people that which the Triune God had

prepared for them. It is an important work, and they are sent with authority even as the Father sent Jesus. 5. Jesus fits the disciples for their work by the gift of the Holy Ghost. Jesus had promised them the Spirit as their Comforter and Guide; for without Him they could do nothing. As on the day of Pentecost the coming of the Spirit was accompanied by the sound of a mighty, rushing wind, so at this time Jesus breathed on the disciples. This breathing was a token of the imparting of the Spirit.

The work of Jesus' disciples is to remit or forgive sins, and to retain sins. The power to do this is called the Office of the Keys. A key is used to lock or unlock a door. Of this office Jesus said to Peter, as recorded in Matthew 16, 19, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The kingdom of heaven is spoken of as a house. To this house there is a door, and Christ, who owns the house, is the only one who can open the door. However He entrusts the locking and unlocking of this door to His disciples, that is, to the Church. It is to the Church on earth, which is called the kingdom of grace; this office is not needed in the kingdom of glory because there is no sin there.

One of the keys is that by which sins are remitted or forgiven. This is called the loosing key, absolution. This key is to be used in dealing with penitent sinners. A penitent sinner is one who is sorry for his sins, believes in Christ, and is willing to lead a better life. The Church is to tell such sinners that their sins are forgiven.

The other key is that by which sins are retained. This is called the binding key, or ban. This key is to be used in dealing with impenitent sinners. The Church is to tell such sinners that their sins are not forgiven. Such sinners will be without forgiveness as long as they do not repent.

Jesus says that when His disciples, the Church, exercises this office it is the same as if God exercised it. In Matthew 18, 18, it is recorded, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Jesus gave this power not to Peter alone, or to the ten disciples there present alone, but to all His disciples, that is, to the Church. This is a Church power. The Church administers this office of the keys by preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments. She does this through her regularly called ministers. Jesus commands that everything shall be done decently and in order in the Church; therefore only those who are called to the office of the ministry should exercise this office publicly. This Paul teaches, as recorded in Romans 10, 15, "How shall they preach except they be sent." Again, "No man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Hebrews 5, 4.

QUESTIONS.

1. On what day did this incident transpire? 2. Who were assembled? 3. Why were they afraid? 4. What condition added to their

fear? 5. How often had the risen Savior been seen before this incident? 6. What was the manner of this appearance? 7. How did He greet them? 8. What did His greeting signify? 9. Under what condition can a sinner find peace? 10. What arrangement has the Lord made to give peace to His disciples of all time? 11. What is the Office of the Keys? 12. What must all sinners have before they can enjoy peace? 13. What disturbed the disciples? 14. How did Jesus proceed to remove these doubts? 15. When were they glad? 16. What is necessary for a glad and joyous heart? 17. How did Jesus greet the disciples before appointing them to their work? 18. What was the purpose of this manner of greeting? 19. With what words did He further address them? 20. How were they to accomplish this work? 21. What can be said of the work Jesus was sent to do? 22. What of the work given to Jesus disciples? 23. How did Jesus fit them for their work? 24. With what act did He accompany the giving of the Spirit? 25. What accompanied the giving of the Spirit on Pentecost? 26. Of what was His breathing on them to be a token? 27. What is the name of the office through which the disciples exercise this power? 28. What did Jesus say to Peter of this office? 29. What Keys are here spoken of? 30. To what is the kingdom here likened? 31. What must be done with the door of a house before one can enter? 32. Who can open the door to Christ's house, the Church? 33. To whom has He entrusted the locking and unlocking of this door? 34. To which of the Lord's kingdoms does this office belong? 35. Why is such an office not needed in the kingdom of glory? 36. How many keys are spoken of in the passage just referred to? 37. What is the opening key called? 38. When is this key used? 39. What is a penitent sinner? 40. What message is to be brought to such a sinner? 41. What is the second key called? 42. When is this key used? 43. What message is to be brought to such a sinner? 44. How long is such a sinner to be without forgiveness? 45. How is the exercise of this office by the Church to be regarded? 46. In what words does Jesus say this? 47. What false doctrine is taught in regard to this office? 48. How does the Church administer this office? 49. Through whom does the Church preach the Word and administer the sacraments? 50. In what words does Paul refer to this?

GOLDEN TEXT.

ACTS 20, 28. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.

104. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MATTHEW 26, 26-29.

The Sacrament of the Altar is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ himself.

The Institution of the Lord's Supper. — And, as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave

it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

It was Jesus and the twelve disciples that are referred to. They were eating the Paschal supper, which was instituted 1,500 years previous, and commemorated the deliverance of the Israelites from the death of the first born and from Egyptian bondage. This meeting was held on the evening of our Lord's betrayal. In connection with the Passover that evening Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, which is also called the Sacrament of the Altar. It is called by this name because it is celebrated around or at an altar. It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ himself.

The *earthly elements* in this Sacrament are bread and wine. The bread must be real bread, baked of flour and water. Jesus used unleavened bread, since the Jews used no other kind of bread at the time of the Passover. We should also use unleavened bread. For the sake of convenience the bread we use is baked in the form of wafers. The wine must be grape wine. Our Savior used grape wine, and no other kind of liquid, such as raisin water, milk or other kinds of wine, will answer. Neither did our Savior use grape juice.

The Lord gave thanks, that is, pronounced a blessing upon the elements. He thus set them a part for the holy purpose of the Sacrament. This is the act of consecration, which is always observed in the celebration of the Holy Supper, and immediately precedes the distribution of the elements. The elements are consecrated by repeating the words our Lord then spoke, and by prayer. These consecrated elements should be given of every communicant, the bread first, and then the wine. Jesus broke the bread before giving it to the disciples, because it was in the form of loaves, and the breaking was necessary, but the breaking of the bread is not essential to the Sacrament.

Jesus gave the elements to all the disciples. It is His will that all communicants should receive both bread and wine. The practice in the Romish Church of withholding the cup from lay members is contrary to Jesus' words, Drink ye all of it.

Our Lord said of the bread, This is My body; He said of the wine, This is My blood of the New Testament. We believe that in this Sacrament we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine. Since there are those who use these words of Jesus but do not believe them, we add the word *true*, and confess that we receive the *true*

body and the *true blood* of our Lord in the sacrament. We believe this because the holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and St. Paul write thus: "The Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples and said, Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, Take, drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins; this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."

We believe that we receive the true body of our Lord for He says, "Take eat, this is My body which is given for you." That means that we receive the same body which was given for us unto death. We believe that we receive the true blood of the Lord for He declares that it is the blood that was shed for us. His blood was shed for us when He was crowned with thorns, scourged and crucified. There are those who say that we receive mere signs of Christ's body and blood. The Reformed Churches teach that when Jesus said, "This is My body," He meant this represents My body, or is a symbol or picture of My body; and when He said, "This is My blood," He meant, This represents My blood. If Christ had meant that He would have said so. He did not say, This *represents* My body, but, This *is* My body.

We believe that the Romish Church is in error when it teaches that the bread and wine are *changed* through consecration *into the body and blood of Christ*—that what is received looks like bread and wine, but is not bread and wine. However the bread is referred to as bread by the apostle after consecration, and therefore it must still be bread.

We do not eat and drink the body and blood of Christ in a *natural manner*, that is, as we partake of food for the nourishing of our bodies, but in a *heavenly manner*. Of course, we cannot understand how this is done. There are other doctrines of God's Word that we cannot understand, as, for example, that of the Trinity, and that of the two natures of Christ. There are also many things in the natural world that we cannot understand, as, for example, that God enables a mother to nourish her child of her own body and blood. It is not necessary that we understand all things in nature, nor is it necessary that we understand all the mysteries of our Christian religion. What is necessary is that we believe everything the Lord has revealed to us.

We should not doubt anything the Lord says, nor should we think it strange that we cannot understand all that He has revealed to us. We should believe His promises even if they seem unreasonable or impossible to us, for nothing is impossible with God.

That we receive the body and blood of Christ under the bread and wine is taught by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 10, 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we bless is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

We must also remember that the day of types and shadows is *past*.

Under the Old Testament such things were in place, foreshadowing the coming Savior, but now that He has come they are not necessary.

Another proof of the real presence is found in 1 Corinthians 11, 27-29, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." The apostle thus assures us that the unworthy communicant sins not against bread and wine, but against the body and blood of the Lord. This he could not do if they were not present.

When Jesus gave the disciples the cup, He said, "Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Jesus shed His blood, that is, suffered and died, to secure the remission of sins for us. He therefore says of His body and blood, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." These words show the benefit of the Lord's Supper. They assure us that in the Sacrament the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins there is also life and salvation.

By His suffering and death Jesus won forgiveness of sin for all men. When we receive the Holy Supper, and hear Jesus' words, This is given and shed for you for the remission of sins, each communicant is assured that his sins are forgiven, because Jesus died for him. We confidently believe that God will forgive all our sins because Jesus died to atone for them. As most precious pledges of this Christ gives us in the Holy Supper His body and blood which were given and shed to purchase this forgiveness.

The Lord God could not bestow on us a more valuable blessing than forgiveness of sin. Sin is the one obstacle between sinners and heaven. If sin is forgiven there is life and salvation. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man with whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Psalm 32, 1-2.

Our happiness in this life, our hope in the hour of death, and our salvation in the world to come all depend on the forgiveness of sins. In the Lord's Supper we are positively assured of this blessing.

QUESTIONS.

1. On what occasion did the event here recorded transpire? 2. What was instituted at this time? 3. What is the Lord's Supper? 3. Why is it called the Sacrament of the Altar? 5. What can you say of the earthly elements? 6. What substitutes are sometimes used, and what is to be said of them? 7. What is to be done with these elements? 8. How are they consecrated? 9. Who should receive these elements? 10. What is to be said of the breaking of the bread? 11. What practice prevails in the Romish Church, and what is to be said of it? 12. What do we receive under the bread and wine? 13. Why do we add the word

true when speaking of what we receive under the earthly elements? 14. What are the words of institution? 15. By whom are they given? 16. Why do we believe in the real presence of the body of Christ in the Sacrament? 17. What body of Christ is referred to? 18. Why do we believe in the real presence of the blood of Christ in the Sacrament? 19. How was the shedding of our Lord's blood brought about? 20. What do the Reformed Churches teach in regard to the Holy Supper? 21. Give a reason why we do not accept this doctrine. 22. What does the Romish Church teach in regard to these Sacraments? 23. Give a reason why we do not accept this doctrine. 24. What would be a false explanation of the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are received? 25. In what manner do we receive the body and blood of our Lord in the Sacrament? 26. Why should the fact that we cannot understand this doctrine not cause us to doubt it? 27. Mention other doctrines that we cannot understand. 28. Mention something in nature that we cannot understand. 29. What is much more necessary than understanding the doctrines of the Bible? 30. Under what circumstances even should we believe God's promises? 31. Why? 32. Give the words of St. Paul as recorded 1 Corinthians 10, 16. 33. When were types and shadows in place? 34. Why should we not expect them in the New Testament? 35. What is recorded in 1 Corinthians 11, 25-29? 36. Of what does the apostle here assure us? 37. What does this prove? 38. What words did Jesus speak when He gave the disciples the cup? 39. What does He say of His body and blood? 40. What is shown by these words? 41. Of what do they assure us? 42. On what does our confidence rest? 43. For what purpose does Jesus give us His body and blood? 44. What makes forgiveness of sin such a precious blessing? 45. Of what are they assured who have it? 46. In what words does the Psalmist speak of forgiveness? 47. What depends on the forgiveness of sins? 48. Why should we highly prize the Lord's Supper.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I. CORINTHIANS 16, 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break it it not the communion of the body of Christ?

105. THE RIGHT USE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1 CORINTHIANS 11, 17-34.

Who receives the sacrament worthily?

Fasting and bodily preparation is indeed a fine outward training: but he is truly worthy and well prepared, who has faith in these words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." But he that does not believe these words or doubts, is unworthy and unprepared. For the words, "For you," require truly believing hearts.

The Apostle's Charge against the Corinthians. — Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come to-

gether not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together into the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.¹ When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.²

The Apostle's Account of the Institution of the Lord's Supper. — For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.³

The Danger of Receiving the Sacrament Unworthily. — Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.⁴

An Admonition to Prepare for Communion. — But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.⁵

A Warning against Unbecoming Conduct on the Part of Communicants. — Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

HINTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Paul had heard of the strife and dissension in the congregation at Corinth, and partly believed it, for Christians are not perfect. He writes to rebuke those at fault. 2. They were guilty of misusing, even despising the Lord's Supper. They had turned it into a meal for the gratification of bodily appetites, and were even partaking of the elements to excess. They had not learned, or had forgotten, *the right use of the Holy Supper*. Christians should remember that when they assemble to worship God, to hear His Word, and sing His praise, or to partake of the Sacrament, they are entering into God's presence. Our carnal nature should be denied and kept under at all times, but the Corinthians were pampering it while engaged in a most solemn service.

When communicants approach the Lord's table in a trivial, thoughtless manner, when they are more concerned about their dress and outward appearance than about the condition of the heart, they are committing a sin very similar to that of which the Corinthians were guilty.

Some people keep from eating anything on the day of communion until after they have been to the Lord's table, hoping that in this way they can give themselves more thoroughly to self-examination and prayer. In the Romish Church it is a law. No one is permitted to commune in that church without first obeying certain regulations in regard to eating and bodily preparation. This *fasting and bodily preparation* consisted in keeping themselves sober and temperate, and then appearing at the altar in a becoming manner. We admit that this is a *fine outward training*. It is right to be careful to appear at the Lord's table in a becoming manner. When we are invited to take a meal with a friend we show our respect for him by doffing our everyday clothes, and donning clean garments. We wish to be a clean and tidy guest at the table of those who invite us to enjoy their hospitality. Surely we should show respect and reverence when we are the Lord's guests. However this alone will prepare no one for a worthy celebration of the Holy Supper. When persons obey such laws in a slavish way, hoping thereby to merit God's favor, they are doing wrong. We therefore have no such laws. Yet those who feel that fasting and other methods of discipline will be helpful to their souls may make these outward preparations. 3. In order to impress the Corinthians with the solemnity of the service they were holding the apostle reminds them that the Sacrament is the Lord's institution, and that he had received his knowledge of it from the Lord. It was not only instituted by the Lord, but instituted by Him under most solemn and impressive circumstances, namely, on the night in which He was betrayed. It was when Jesus was about to part from His disciples, and to enter upon His passion—to endure untold suffering and ignominious death—that He instituted this Sacrament. The nature of the Sacrament should also serve to banish all carnal thoughts from sincere communicants. Here they receive not simply bread and wine, but the body and blood of the Lord Jesus under the bread and wine. A contemplation of the benefits of the Holy Supper

should also impress communicants. These are shown by our Lord's words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." That is, the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins there is also life and salvation. Finally, the fact that the Lord asks us to observe this Sacrament in remembrance of Him should lead us to approach the communion altar in a prayerful, thoughtful mood. 4. Communicants should bear in mind that the unworthy not only fail to receive the blessing that is offered in the Sacrament, but *partake to their condemnation*—He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself. 5. The apostle urges that all communicants should *examine themselves*, therefore only those who can examine themselves should be admitted to the Lord's table. Children who have not yet been instructed in the teachings of God's Word, and adults who do not have the use of their mental faculties, should not receive the Sacrament.

Those who commune should examine themselves as to their faith, as the apostle enjoins, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." 2 Corinthians 11, 28. If persons do not believe in Christ, or if they do not accept the plain teaching of the Bible, they should not partake of the Lord's Supper. If they believe in Christ, the fact that they are troubled with doubts, and are weak in the faith, does not unfit them for communion. "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench." Isaiah 47, 3.

Those who would commune should also examine themselves as to their *sins*. Our Lord says, Matthew 7, 6, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Also in Matthew 5, 23-26, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

It is not necessary to true worthiness that one be without sin, for the Sacrament was instituted for sinners. Jesus wants sinners to come to Him that they may find forgiveness and peace. He says, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11, 28.

He is truly worthy and well prepared to commune who has faith in these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." The words "for you" are addressed to all of us. Each communicant should regard them as spoken to him.

When a person approaches the Lord's table thoughtlessly, or when he neglects to commune, he will soon be as were some of the Corinthians,

a weak, sickly and sleepy Christian. The Lord has not prescribed how frequently we are to partake of the Holy Supper, but since He says, This do as oft as ye do it, we believe that we should partake frequently, as often as our distressed conscience and our weak faith require it.

QUESTIONS.

1. What was the occasion of Paul's writing the words of our text? 2. Of what were the Corinthians guilty? 3. What had they not yet learned? 4. What should Christians remember when they assemble for worship, or to receive the Sacrament? 5. What must the Christian at all times keep under? 6. So far from doing this what can be said of the Corinthians? 7. When are communicants guilty of a similar sin? 8. What custom prevails among some Christians? 9. For what purpose do they abstain? 10. What is the practice of the Romish church? 11. What is understood by fasting? 12. What does a guest do out of respect for the host? 13. What should this suggest to communicants? 14. What would be a wrong view of this outward preparation? 15. How do we regard fasting and bodily preparation? 16. How did the apostle endeavor to impress the Corinthians with the solemnity of the communion service? 17. What fact should add to this solemnity? 18. What does the communicant receive in the Sacrament? 19. How should this affect the sincere communicant? 20. What other feature of the Sacrament should impress communicants? 21. What are these benefits? 22. What in regard to the purpose of the Sacrament should cause the communicant to be thoughtful and prayerful? 23. What else besides the failure of the unworthy to receive the blessing offered in this Sacrament should we bear in mind? 24. What does the apostle urge upon all communicants? 25. Who only, therefore, should be admitted to the Lord's table? 26. Who must be denied the privilege of communing? 27. In what respect should all communicants examine themselves? 28. In what words does the apostle urge this duty? 29. Who else besides those mentioned should be denied the privilege of communing? 30. How are the weak in faith to be treated? 31. What does the prophet say for the comfort of such? 32. In what other respect should communicants examine themselves? 33. In what words does Jesus show us that the impenitent should not be permitted to commune? 34. What should he do who, on approaching the altar, remembers that he is not at peace with some one? 35. What is not necessary to worthiness? 36. For whom has the Sacrament been instituted? 37. What invitation does Jesus extend to those who are burdened with sin? 38. Who is well prepared to commune? 39. How should the words "for you" be regarded? 40. What will be the condition of the unthoughtful and neglectful communicant? 41. What words of Jesus imply that we should commune frequently?

GOLDEN TEXT.

I. CORINTHIANS II, 28. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

106. REVIEW OF LESSONS 102-105.

Unburdening the Heart. — From the story of the prodigal as it is found in Lesson 102, we learn how to confess our sins. The wayward son was not ready to make a confession until he saw his mistake. Before a sinner will make a confession he must know his sins and be sorry for them. God has given us the law to teach us our sins, and to work sorrow in our hearts. The prodigal kept nothing back, but confessed that he had sinned against his father and Heaven. His penitence made him so humble that he was willing to be his father's hired servant. Since we do not know all our sins, and so readily forget those of which we have been conscious, we cannot confess all of them; however, we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know. We should not only confess our sins, but confess that we are sinners — by nature sinners. The prodigal confessed his sins to his father whom he had wronged and so should we confess to those whom we have wronged. When our sins trouble us we should not forget that the Lord Jesus has instituted the office of the ministry for the purpose of having His will proclaimed, and peace brought to anxious hearts. As those who have bodily pains go to a physician, so those in spiritual distress should go to their pastor and make confession to him. It is by studying the ten commandments that we learn to know our sins and are enabled to confess them. The prodigal received forgiveness — absolution. The pastor to whom confession is made bestows the absolution, and the sinner receives it as from God himself. God alone can forgive sins: men can forgive them only in God's name.

Opening and Closing the Door to the Kingdom of Heaven. — As Jesus came to His disciples after His resurrection, when they were disturbed with doubts and fears, to give them peace, Lesson 103, so has He arranged that His disciples of all time shall have peace. For this purpose He has instituted the Office of the Keys. It is the peculiar church power given to the Church on earth, to forgive sins of penitent sinners, and to retain the sins of the impenitent so long as they do not repent. What sinners need in order to enjoy peace is the forgiveness of

sins. Jesus appointed the apostles to this work of telling the world of the salvation that is offered to all, and leading men to accept it. This they did by using the means of grace. The work of the disciples — forgiving and retaining sins — is called the **Office of the Keys**. The Kingdom of heaven is spoken of as a house. Jesus alone can open and close the door, but He does this unlocking of the door through the Church. One of the two keys is that by which sins are remitted. It is called the **loosing key** — absolution. This key is used in dealing with penitent sinners. The Church is to tell sinners that they are not forgiven, and that their sins will be retained against them as long as they do not repent. This power is given to the Church, and is called a **Church power**. It is exercised by preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments through regularly called ministers.

A Royal Feast. — On the evening of His betrayal, after celebrating the Passover, Jesus instituted the Holy Supper, which is called the Sacrament of the Altar, (Lesson 104). It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and drink instituted by Christ himself. The earthly elements are bread and wine. The former must be real, unleavened bread, baked from flour and water; the latter must be grape wine. The Lord Jesus set the elements apart by pronouncing a blessing upon them. The consecration is necessary, and is done by repeating the words our Lord then spoke, and by prayer. These elements should then be given to every communicant, the bread first and then the wine. Jesus broke the bread before giving it to the disciples, because it was in the form of loaves, but this is not essential to the Sacrament. Both bread and wine were given to all the disciples, and all communicants should receive both elements. Our Lord said of the bread, *This is My body*, and of the wine, *This is My blood of the New Testament*. We believe that in this Sacrament we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ under the bread and wine. Since there are those who use these words of Jesus but do not believe them, we add the word "true," and confess that we receive the true body and blood — that which was given and shed for us. We believe those are in error who say the word "is" should be "represents," as also the Roman Catholics who say that the bread and wine are changed into the body and

blood of our Lord. We believe that we partake of the body and blood of Jesus not in a natural, but in a heavenly manner.

A Worthy Guest. — Lesson 105 tells us that the congregation at Corinth misused the holy Supper; the apostle's word of counsel and admonition are worthy of the prayerful attention of all communicants. There are those who hope to fit themselves to commune by keeping themselves sober and temperate, and appearing at the altar in a becoming manner. Such fasting and bodily preparation is a fine outward training, but it alone will prepare no one for a worth celebration of the Sacrament. The fact that the Lord has instituted this Supper, and in it offers us the forgiveness of sins, and asks us to observe it in remembrance of Him, should lead us to approach the communion altar in a prayerful, thoughtful mood. Moreover communicants should bear in mind that the unworthy partake to their condemnation. Christians should heed the apostle's admonition, and examine themselves before communing. They should examine themselves as to their faith, for if one does not truly believe the plain teachings of the Bible, he is not prepared to partake of the Lord's Supper. Those desiring to commune should also examine themselves as to their sins. It is not necessary to true worthiness that one be without sin, for the Sacrament is instituted for sinners. He is truly worthy and well prepared to commune who has faith in these words, Given and shed for you for the remission of sin.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

LESSON 102. 1. What is to be learned from the story of the prodigal? 2. When was the wayward son ready to confess his sins? 3. What must take place before a sinner will make confession? 4. Through what means is a sinner brought to repentance? 5. What can be said of the prodigal's confession? 6. How was sincerity and humility manifested? 7. Besides confessing our sins what further should we confess? 8. What is to be learned from the fact that the prodigal confessed to the person he had wronged? 9. To whom also may it be well for troubled sinners to make confession? 10. What comfort did the prodigal have after his confession? 11. Through whom does God send absolution to penitent sinners?

LESSON 103. 1. What did Jesus bestow upon His troubled disciples? 2. What office has He instituted for the purpose of giving peace to His people? 3. What is the office of the Keys? 4. What do sinners need in order to enjoy peace? 5. How do Jesus' disciples bring peace to troubled souls? 6. To what is the kingdom of heaven here likened? 7. Who alone can open and close the door to this house? 8. Through what does Jesus do these things? 9. How many keys has the Lord given the Church? 10. What can you say of these keys? 11. How is the office of the keys exercised?

LESSON 104. 1. When did Jesus institute the Holy Supper? 2. By what other name is it known? 3. What is the Sacrament of the Altar? 4. What can you say of the earthly elements? 5. What was first done with these elements? 6. How are these elements consecrated? 7. What is to be said of the breaking of the bread? 8. To whom are these elements to be given? 9. What did Jesus say of the bread? Of the wine? 10. Why do we add the word "true?" 11. What errors in regard to the elements are popular? 12. In what manner do we partake of the body and blood of Christ?

LESSON 105. 1. What is referred to in this lesson? 2. How do some strive to fit themselves for the celebration of the Holy Supper? 3. What do we admit in regard to such preparation? 4. What facts should lead us to approach the communion altar prayerfully? 5. What admonition should all heed? 6. In what respect should prospective communicants examine themselves? 7. What is not necessary to a worthy celebration of the Holy Supper? 8. Who is worthy and well prepared? /



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