

WORD AND WORK

WORDS IN SEASON.

YOUR RELIANCE.

It has been well said that whatever you rely on and look to for support and help is your god. It may be the true God, or it may be some other. And we may add that to whatsoever you show that homage and obedience which is due to God alone, that thing is your idol. If this is true—and it is beyond contradiction—then most men are idolaters; and not those outside the church alone, but many who are in the church. For there are those in the very assemblies of the saints “whose god is the belly”—who render to their own perishable body that homage and service and that submission to every demand, which is due to God exclusively, and that in plain disregard of God’s will. And there is the covetous man, of whom the Word plainly says he is an idolater: the man who is fired by the love of *getting*, and the man who hoards what he can gather—both of them alike worshippers and servants of Mammon. For to money they look for food and sustenance, for prestige and protection. It is their god. In it rests their confidence and their hope. Take money away from them and they are stripped of all their confidence and strength, of all men most miserable. “If I have made gold my hope,” said Job, “and have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gotten much. . . . This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judges; for (in doing this) I should have denied the God that is above.” (Job 31:24-28). And what, my reader, is your confidence and reliance? On what do you trust? On what does your present hope and happiness depend? And to what do you look for your comfort, and your safety, and your protection? Is it the creature or the Creator? Is it the Giver, or some one, or several, of His gifts? Think on it carefully and honestly; and if you find that a false god sits in the sanctuary of your heart, cast out the idol, and set your faith upon the true Rock on which alone all your interests are safe.

GOD BETTER THAN MONEY.

The wish for money is really the wish for the sense of ease, safety, comfort, independence and power which money brings with it—a sense of ease and safety and power, alas! which is not of God, nor rests in God, but is independent of Him. It is always a fatal comfort and satisfaction that comes to us apart from God. It is a deception in itself. The man is in reality just as weak and helpless as before, but the wealth that came to him, like an intoxicant, or a narcotic drug, has lent him a feeling of strength and independence, and filled him with a sense of self-satisfaction and

unbounded confidence which has no solid foundation. And that pleasant sensation keeps him deceived as to his own real condition, and prevents his coming to God, the only true source of help. "Be ye free from the love of money, content with such things as ye have; for Himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee." Lord I would rather have *Thee* than all the wealth of the world, for in *Thee* alone is true comfort and rest and help. I do not want to be, even if I could, at rest and satisfied apart from *Thee*; and the possession of much earthly resources would hinder rather than help, a complete reliance upon *Thee*. Teach me more distinctly the difference between the using of thy gifts and the looking to the gifts instead of the Giver for blessing; between seeking after the earthly things, and seeking after the invisible God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Keep me from all idolatry.

THOU WILT KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE.

When the house of David heard that Syria had confederated with Ephraim, the King's heart trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest tremble with the wind. Then Jehovah sent Isaiah to him with the word of comfort and command: "*Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thy heart faint.*" The king was Ahaz, who never acted as though he believed that there really was a God; or that God would or could do anything, one way or the other. (Zeph. 1:12). Once more therefore the Lord appealed to him by His prophet: For once, O Ahaz, give up thy unbelieving fears, and the panic of thy heart; for once, at least, turn from the things of sight to the Unseen, the ever faithful God; and walk not this time by your feeble sense, but trust in God's promise. The enemy's purpose shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. But if you will not believe you shall not be established. (Isa. 7:1-9). But neither the king, nor the people as a whole, hearkened; and as His wont is, God then addressed the few, the remnant that would hear Him, and instructed them not to walk in the way of this people, nor to join in with the way of this people, nor to join in with their panic-stricken cry, "A conspiracy! A conspiracy!" Don't fear this sort of fear at all, said the Lord to His beloved, nor dread what *they* are dreading. Fear God only. "Jehovah of hosts, *him* shall ye sanctify; and let *him* be your fear, and let *him* be your dread." (Isa. 8:11-13). "For thus said the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved: in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." (Isa. 30:15). And Peter transferred the passage in Isa. 8 almost bodily into the epistle that he addressed to Christians: "But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord." (1 Pet. 3:14, 15.) There is much that is dreadful and terror-inspiring in the black storm-cloud that has lately risen upon our country; and no one knows what a day may bring forth of change and ill. But let all the servants of God strengthen

their hearts in the God who maketh the clouds His chariots and rideth upon the storm. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose heart is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in thee." (Isa. 26:3).

IN WAR-TIMES.

What should a Christian do? These days call for special circumspection in the Christian's walk. First of all there is a demand for *real faith*, and personal righteousness; for truth and love unfeigned. For in the fires that are now already burning, it is easily possible, all that is false and half-hearted will be consumed. Let us preach the word as never before: call men to genuine repentance, turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that, while it is yet called today, as many as possible may be saved. Let us work while it is day, if haply the fierce anger of Jehovah may be turned away from this nation. And let us pray: pray for kings, for rulers—especially for our President, and all that are in authority in our land: let us pray for the youth of our land that is being drafted into the great conflict that the moral and spiritual and physical danger may be reduced for them to the smallest limit. Let us pray for all men—for the unfortunate masses of Europe (for generally speaking they all are victims of the terrible situation) who are suffering unspeakably in every way—all of them, I say, on both sides of the conflict; for the Christian sees not the world as men see it, but with the eye of the Son of God, who, when He was lifted up, drew all men unto Himself. Let us take no share in slaughter, none in fomenting hatred of nations; for we are not called to such ends; we are God's people. Let us be helpful: comforters of the stricken, helpers of the needy, healers of the sick and wounded, for Jesus' sake. Let us be obedient in all things in which under God we may, to the powers that be, and respect authorities and government, avoiding all unnecessary trouble; careful of our utterances; practicing economy for the welfare of all. Let us pray that the judgment may yet pass over. Let us lift our heads, and with the beloved apostle cry, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

THE STRONGEST WEAPON.

The Christian's mighty weapon, which by the world and unbelieving religious folk is not so much as considered as a possible real factor and power in the present situation is *prayer*. If the prayer of God's elect can shorten the period of the Great Tribulation, and affect the movements of armies, favorably changing the times and circumstances in the inevitable judgment of God as they fall (Matt 24:20-22)—then the true prayer will not fall fruitless in present affairs: "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." (Jas. 5:16). Blind unbelief will scoff at this. The wise man of the world will raise his eyebrows, and, like Nicodemus, demand to know the *how* of it. The shallow reasoner will come with a puzzle-problem, and try with his hypothetical case to set at naught God's plain declaration. But the firm foundation of God standeth: *God has promised.*

WORD AND WORK

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NEWS AND NOTES.

Paul B. Holcomb sends us the following fine report of Brother Will Morton's work under the auspices of the Hungerford congregation, near Wharton, Texas:

One week at Muldoon, six baptized. One week at Crescent, thirty-three additions, twenty-eight by baptism. One week at Hungerford with one added to the congregation. The Hungerford Church intends to stand by and strengthen these brethren, W. C. Harris working at Muldoon and Brother Holcomb at Crescent. They ask for the prayers of all true Christians everywhere.

The church at Dozier, Ala., plans a step forward this year. They expect to hold a meeting at a destitute point in Florida.

J. N. Gardner is now in a meeting at Burlingame, Kan.,—so writes C. F. Conner.

The meeting conducted at Spearfish, S. D., in July by D. J. Poynter and E. L. Jorgenson, resulted in gathering a congregation to serve God and to wait for His Son from Heaven, and to carry on God's work and worship in God's way. While on this western journey Brother Jorgenson did some spiritual "prospecting" at Lead, S. D., one of the richest and wickest places on earth. The great Homestake gold-mine is located there. Christian men who would assist in building up God's Church at that place could probably find something to do for self-support along almost any line, or some congregation would make no mistake in sending the right kind of a preacher there for a mission meeting. Sister S. J. Laphorne, Lead, S. D., will be glad to correspond with any who are interested.

"Our meeting at Shady Grove, Ala., resulted in three baptisms; at Shellhorn in four baptisms and four restorations. A splendid interest manifested in all our meetings." Boyd and Sanders.

The meetings conducted by R. H. Boll in Westbrook, Maine, during July, were richly blessed of God. Eight believing penitents were baptized into Christ, and in every way God's name was greatly honored. Brother Boll is now engaged in a tent meeting with his home congregation.

The Highland Church, Louisville, is now conducting its third meeting since May 15th. R. C. Bell, of Sherman, Texas, is preaching with power in a tent not far from the church-house. The prospects are excellent.

The Bible study course in this issue makes a fine introduction to the International Lessons now studied in many Bible Schools. It will refresh the memory and put you "on to the strings" in that historical study.

The church at Sellersburg, Ind., will begin Evangelistic services, Aug. 12th, C. F. Witty, of Detroit, preaching. Brother Witty is a good man and a "live wire." So is Clinton Davidson, who ministers at Sellersburg.

Young man! are you planning to attend the Bible Classes at Portland Ave., Church, Louisville, this season? They begin in November and we expect them to manifest the usual helpfulness and power. Inquiries concerning these classes addressed to The Word and Work, will be cheerfully answered.

The present issue of our paper is smaller than usual. The explanation is simple: our cash receipts were less than usual the past month; and we are resolutely and determinedly set against going into debt. As the Lord shall provide, and stir His children here and there to assist in one way and another, we shall not only return to regular size but improve the paper in every way possible. Remember, other publishers raised subscription rates when high prices came. We continued at the easy, original rates; and of eight issues so far this year, we have cut the size of only one.

It was a fine meeting that Hines Brothers, J. H. and W. T., closed lately at Cave City, Ky. Twenty-eight were added to the congregation. Brother J. H. is now in a good meeting at Fairview. A number of additions, interest fine, large crowds. He asks for prayer.

In sending subscriptions, your own or others, please state whether they are new names or renewals; and in sending renewals, please give the full address always, just as if they were new names. When asking for a change of address always give both old and new address. Do not wait to have your Postmaster notify us. If you do you are almost sure to miss an issue, as second class mail is not forwarded.

"Work with the Central Church is moving on well considering the 'perilous times.' I lately closed a meeting at Potter's Chapel with nine baptized. This is a point near the city where we have been working more than a year. Fourteen baptized there last year. We begin a mission meeting the fourth Sunday in July a few miles out from here."—E. H. Hoover.

“ONE GUESS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER.”

STANFORD CHAMBERS.

Under the above caption, sometime since, a good brother on the twentieth chapter of Revelation guessed as follows: Chapters preceding “no doubt” show the Dark Ages under the “papal Roman empire,” during which time Satan had “pretty much his own way.” Chapters 16-19 relate the fall of that empire, the wars of the Reformation, the vials of God’s wrath poured out on the Catholic church, and the restoring of the Bible to the people, the result of which, Satan was bound for a thousand years, i. e., “for an indefinite period, so that he can no longer keep the truth of God, the Bible, from the people. No more can he deceive the nations!”

John “saw thrones and they sat upon them.” The guess is that “they” are the twelve Apostles, who, after the Word of God is restored, are “sitting on twelve thrones and judgment given unto them. They are now deciding what is truth.”

Those in “the first resurrection,” the guess has it, are such as were cut off from the source of knowledge, the word, and died spiritually, but “now, as they have the Bible they are living and reigning with Christ.” “These resurrected ones escape the second death.” “‘The rest of the dead’ may refer to those who had the source of knowledge before the Dark Ages.” “As the close of the thousand years draws near Satan gets loose out of his prison and *no doubt* (italics mine—S. C.) through that old apostate church he will try to get control. In the great war now raging in Europe the nations are deceived.” “Is not the United States the camp of the saints?” “The nations at war shall not succeed in bringing this nation into the conflict. Fire comes down out of heaven and consumes them.” *Reductio absurdum!*

Notice is given this “good-as-another” guess for two reasons. One is that while it confesses to being a guess, it betrays a good deal of self-confidence and on some points expresses “no doubt.” We have observed very similar guesses made by several others who betray also a liking for certain analogies and striking applications especially to Catholicism,—as though we need more truth on that great false system, and must go “raking and scraping” for it.

The above “guess work” doesn’t “hit” because it rests on the assumption that the Scriptures referred to are fulfilled, which no man can prove. Note those prophecies, for instance, of the seventy years’ captivity, the return, the Bethlehem virgin birth of Jesus, of His works, of His betrayal, of His slaughter, of His resurrection, of the destruction of Jerusalem, of the temple and of the dispersion of the Jews, and learn Gods’ way of fulfilling prophecies to the full, so that we do not have to “guess” as to the fulfillment thereof. Only those who try to find unfulfilled prophecy in history need to do any guessing.

Our chief reason, however, for giving attention to this guess is because it professes to be "just as plausible as the guess of those brethren who claim the Savior comes to earth and reigns literally one thousand years, without one scrap of proof that the Savior will ever put His feet again upon the earth."

The Bible for it, "yet a very little while, He that cometh shall come and shall not tarry." (Heb. 10:37). "Be patient, therefore, brethren until the coming of the Lord." (Jas. 5:7). "That thou keep the commandment without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which, in its own times, He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." (1 Tim. 6:14-15). "The kingdom of this world" shall then "become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. 11:15.) "And they (the saints of the first resurrection) lived and reigned with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:4). "If we endure we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2:12.) If the reader would understand how the Lord will show who is King of kings, and how the kingdom of this world is to become His, refer to the following and other parallel passages: Ps. 2:3-12, Dan. 2:34, 35-44, 1 Thess. 4:1-11, 2 Thess. 2:8, Rev. 19:11-16, 19-20, Zech. 14:3, 4-9. Note that Zech. 14:4 says, "and *his feet* shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives," and also, v. 9, "And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and His name one."

So, admitting "one guess" to be "as good as another" (if not a little better), no guess is quite so reliable as the Word of God which, respecting the questions above guessed upon, has this to say:

"And if I go . . . I will come again." (John 14:3). "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." (Acts 1:11). "The Lord, himself, shall descend from heaven . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise." (1 Thess. 4:16). "They that are Christ's at His coming." (1 Cor. 15:23). The living saints "shall be changed and "with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." (1 Cor. 15:51, 1 Thess. 4:17). Consequent to this event comes the great "hour of trial" "upon the whole world" (Rev. 3:10) which is wound up by the Lord's coming on to the earth, followed by the armies of heaven (Rev. 19:11-14)—saints and angels; "with ten thousands of His holy ones to execute judgment upon all and to convict all the ungodly" (Jude 14, 15), when "he shall smite the nations" (Rev. 19:15) and the kingdom of the world shall "become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15). Here is where "the beast and the false prophet" are "cast alive into the lake of fire" (Rev. 19:20) and Satan is bound for the thousand years. (Rev. 20:2). It is a wild guess indeed to conclude that this binding of Satan and destruction of the beast took place at the Reformation. Concerning the destruction of "the man of sin" it is written, "whom the Lord Jesus . . . shall

bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming." (2 Thess. 2:8). Not at the Reformation, nor before, nor yet is the "man of sin" destroyed. Satan is yet "as a roaring lion" going "about seeking whom he may devour." The thousand years' reign of the saints, contemporary with Satan's imprisonment, has not yet begun. Now is their time of suffering and enduring, by which they are being qualified, for which they shall be crowned, and then shall they reign. "Nevertheless, that which ye have hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh . . . to him will I give authority over the nations." (Rev. 2:25-26). "He that overcometh will I give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21). "When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with him then shall he sit on the throne of his glory." (Matt. 25:31). "Maranatha."

AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION.

J. EDWARD BOYD.

Man is prone to make distinctions where God has made none, and to fail to recognize those which He has made. In either case confusion is almost certain to result; wrong applications of principles will be made, and erroneous conclusions will be drawn. Recently I have read a number of arguments in favor of a Christian's participating in war—arguments which apparently were based upon scriptural statements; yet in each case there was a disregard of the distinction which God made between the Church and the state—between the people for His own possession and the nations of this world.

But that there is just such a distinction must be clear to every careful Bible student who reads the Word with the eyes of his heart enlightened. Especially does he find the contrast strongly marked in the 12th and 13th chapters of Romans. The first of these has been aptly called "the church chapter;" in it the apostle freely uses such pronouns as "we" and "you" (he is addressing the saints in Rome): the second has likewise been termed "the state chapter;" in this he speaks of our relationship to "the higher powers"—the rulers, designating them by the pronouns "he" and "they." Thus it is seen that the Church is not identified with the civil government, nor recognized as a part of it; but that the two are contemplated as separate institutions, the members of the one being instructed to be subject to the other; which subjection, to be sure, cannot be taken to justify or sanction our disobeying God to obey the state, for in case of conflict "We must obey God rather than man."

The Church and the state, then, both exist by the express authority of God, and both are ministers of His; but the purposes, characteristics, and work, together with the means to be employed for carrying on their work, are altogether different.

This may readily be seen from a comparison of scriptural statements concerning each.

THE CHURCH.

Subjects
Not to avenge
Bears not carnal weapons
Is to save sinners.

THE STATE.

Rulers
An avenger for wrath
Bears the sword
Is to punish evil-doers.

Thus it is evident that, while the state has its own God-appointed service to perform in this age, it is to exercise a function altogether contrary to that which belongs to the Church.

Now let us apply this principle to the question of the hour. Let it be freely granted (as one has in a recent article emphasized), that "Nations, under God, have magisterial functions to perform in declaring and conducting war," and that "it sometimes becomes the duty of nations to declare war;" does it therefore follow that Christians should have a part in the conduct of such a war? Not at all; for clearly the duties of Christians are entirely distinct from those of the nations. Nor is it a new thing that God should use wicked and idolatrous nations for purposes of His own, although those nations were entirely unconscious of the fact that they were so used. The boastful and insolent Assyrian is the rod of God's anger; he is used for the executing of God's wrath; "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so." (Is. 10:5-7). And after he has thus been used, this haughty monarch himself experiences the fierce fires of God's wrath.

So was Nebuchadnezzar: "*The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.*" (Dan. 1:2). So were the Romans; for when the legions of Rome came against Jerusalem, it was only in fulfillment of the prediction of Moses (Deut. 28:49)—that "*Jehovah will bring a nation against thee from afar.*" Indeed, we may well say that the Roman nation was at that time performing its "magisterial function, under God, in declaring and conducting that war;" that it was executing the wrath of God; yet there is no evidence that the Christians of that day felt it their duty or privilege to assist in that work. On the other hand, the very principles by which they were to be governed (as has already been amply set forth in this magazine) were utterly opposed to such a thing. Furthermore, those who were in Jerusalem and Judea at the time had been clearly instructed by the Lord to leave when the time of vengeance came; so it is evident that they were to have nothing to do with it. *The work of the Roman government was not their work.* Let us also not fail to recognize the scriptural distinctions when considering this and all other questions.

"*Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin rebuke him; and if he repent forgive him.*" (Luke 17:3). "*Thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbor and not suffer sin upon him.*" (Lev. 19:17).

WORDS BY THE WAY.

E. L. JORGENSON.

To be born of the flesh, and "christened" as soon as born, then never to be born *again*—what good is that? Yet thousands of "church members" have never had a second birth, a birth from above, a birth of water and the spirit. They were introduced into some ecclesiastical body upon their first birth, or eight days thereafter—a mischievous, unscriptural process which serves both to fill the churches with unconverted people, thus breaking down the line between the church and the world; and to deny effectually the need of being born again.

Of those also who have been enrolled on the church-book by their own consent and choice, that is after reaching the age of responsibility, it is a question if some of them have ever been born of God. They have confessed with the mouth, but have they believed in the heart? (Rom. 10:9). They have been dipped, but have they truly been baptized? They have obeyed the form of doctrine, but have they obeyed it from the heart? (Rom. 6:17.) They have gone down into the water but have they been raised into newness of life, or have they gone back up into the world? They have gone through the outward forms but have they made the inward change? If not, church clerks may have enrolled them upon the church books, but the Lord has not added them to His Church (Acts 2:47), nor are they enrolled in heaven (Heb. 12:23).



What could be unkindier than to admit and accept to fellowship those whom God has not accepted, whether as "social" members of the Church or in any other fashion? In apostolic times, wherever men hearing, "believed and were baptized" (Acts 18:8), there the Church of God rose up (1 Cor. 1:2); but no Church of God rose up except when men not only believed but were baptized. The early Christians had *uniformly* believed in Jesus Christ as God's Son, turned from sin in the act and article of a whole-hearted and thorough-going repentance, and they had been "buried therefore with Him through baptism into death." It is disobedience to God and great injustice to those whom we would befriend, to ease men's hearts and make them think they are in God's Church when they have never met those terms upon which God, who alone can do it, adds unto His Church (Acts 2:41, 47).



So deceived had I been by the common and, as I now see, perverted use made of Matthew 24:36, that it was almost a shock to me to discover recently that the Savior's use of the passage is *precisely opposite* to this common use. The passage reads: "Of that day and hour (the day and hour of the Son of Man's returning) knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." How often it is said, "Do not allow

any one to disturb you about the Second Coming; no one knows the day." But it is this very fact—that no one knows the day—that should stir and arouse to readiness and watchfulness; *and such is the Savior's purpose in the passage.* Examine the context; note specially verses 42 and 44: "Watch therefore: for (mark the "for") ye know not on what day your Lord cometh." "Therefore be ye also ready; for (mark the "for" again) in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh." Our very ignorance of the day and hour is urged as the reason for watchfulness and readiness. And who knows—since we know not the time—but that *today* is the day and *this* is the hour? It is not at all necessary to know that it is; it is only necessary to know that it *may be*, in order to use this Scripture to stir men tremendously.

Reader, I want this thing to sink into your heart. The mocker and his ally, the unfaithful servant, ask: "Do you know that Jesus will come today?" "No." "Then why are you stirring and disturbing people on this subject so?" "Because Jesus may come today." "O, He *may* come; you do not know; you are just guessing; you are preaching what may be so—speculating!" To which I reply—and I have not at my command such emphasis and positiveness as the answer deserves—"I am neither guessing nor speculating nor preaching simply what *may* be so; but delivering an utterance so true that my brethren on every hand admit it, and so tremendously stirring as to demand *immediate* preparation. JESUS CHRIST MAY COME TODAY!

We cannot in every case be sure that a knowledge of some certain truths concerning things to come will prove essential to salvation; but we can in no case be sure that it will not; and therefore we must present it. Very often we witness the salvation of some sinner or the revival of some back-sliding saint under the power of some such doctrine, notably, The Lord's Return. A clear grasp on Bible teaching concerning Heaven, Hell, The Lord's Return, The Thousand Years, The State of the Dead, etc.—all future, may save some one! For if ever some one should be moved by any of these considerations—to obey the gospel, after everything else had failed to move him—and who will deny that this is within the range of easy possibility—it would be proved that such teaching may be, and often is, essential to salvation. It is not necessary to know that it is so; it is only necessary to know that *it may be* in order to feel bound to present it. Men could be saved without any knowledge of the future if they could be moved to obey, and to abide, without it; but this is impossible. Some are turned to God by the fear of hell; some by the hope of heaven; some by the desire to see loved ones again; by various motives; and often it is a comparatively little thing that tips the scale, that makes men altogether persuaded where they were only "almost persuaded" before. And for their sakes we can withhold nothing.

BIBLE STUDY COURSE.

R. H. B.

Second Kings, to the end of the Kingdom of Israel.

FIRST DAY. *Elijah's Conflict with Ahaziah.* 2 Kings 1. Who was Ahaziah? 1 Kings 22:51. Think of the insult to the God of Israel Ahaziah is guilty of in v. 2. Comp. Isa. 8:19, 20. Professed Christians who resort to fortune-tellers, clairvoyants, spiritist mediums, are guilty of the same wrong, only in greater degree. (Cp. Deut. 18:10-14). The message of God to Ahaziah through Elijah. vs. 3-8. The description of Elijah in verse 8 recalls the dress of John the Baptist. (Mt. 3:4). This came to be a sort of professional dress with the prophets, Zech. 13:4. Elijah had power to shut up the heavens and to call down fire. (Cp. Rev. 11:5, 6). Consider Luke 9:51-55 with footnote (in R. V.) The wisdom of the third captain: vs. 13-15. It is the same old story: the God so terrible to His adversaries is gracious to those who approach Him in humility and faith. V. 16: Elijah repeats the message to the King's face, and does not modify it one whit.

SECOND DAY. *Elijah's Ascension.* 2 Kings 2. Elijah had secret knowledge of the impending event of his translation. Elisha also knew secretly. Why did Elijah try to shake him off? And why did Elisha insist on hanging on? See if you can answer this satisfactorily, in the light of the whole story. Trace on map, Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and see what a circuit Elijah led him. The "sons of the prophets" had a partial knowledge; v. 5, comp. v. 16. Who else was thus translated "that he should not see death?" Heb. 11:5. Is there any implication that Enoch was sought and not found? Who else will some day (perhaps much nearer than we think) be suddenly transformed and translated? 1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:16. Elisha's great request, v. 9. He did not ask for twice as much of the Spirit as Elijah possessed, but the "double portion," the first-born son's full share of inheritance. Deut. 21:17. On what condition would it be granted? v. 10. When Jesus ascended did all see him? Acts 10:40, 41. Did those who did see Him ascend (Acts 1:9-13) receive a "double portion" of His Spirit? (Acts 2:1-4). In v. 12 Elisha meant that Elijah had been the real strength and defense of Israel. Vs. 13, 14 contain God's assurance to Elisha. His first public miracle, vs. 19-22—typical of the healing of man's bad heart, Matt. 15:19, 20; Acts 15:9. The curse upon the lads of Bethel has caused some to stumble. Note (1) the place was Bethel: the stronghold of Israel's idolatry; (2) the lads mocked Elisha, not on general principles, but as a prophet of Jehovah: the insult was against God: Matt. 10:41. (3) The judgment was both upon the boys for their irreverence, and upon their parents for permitting, or perhaps even instigating such conduct toward God's prophet. These facts are not at all adduced in defense of

God's action through His prophet, for He asks no defense of us; but as facts that may throw solemn light upon the *reason* for this curse. Recall however, Luke 9:54 and 19:10.

THIRD DAY. *Acts of Elisha*. 2 Kings 3:4. Jehoshaphat always fraternized too much with Israel, v. 7; but it was on his account that victory was granted to the combined armies. There was (1) a command, testing their faith, v. 16; (2) a promise, vs. 17, 18; (3) further directions from Jehovah. An obscure calamity, which fell upon the allied armies, following Mesha's horrible sacrifice, prevented the full completion of their work of destruction. Vs. 26, 27. *The Widow's Oil-Vessels*. 4:1-7. Like the Lord Jesus, the prophets did not refuse any true appeals. Note how the gift to this needy woman was limited by her faith; if she had little faith she would procure few vessels only; if much faith, many vessels; and in either case she would receive her vessels full of oil. We also are limited in spiritual power and blessing by the extent of our faith. "*A Great Woman*." 4:8-37. Mark some of the points of her greatness, vs. 10, 13, 24. "*Death in the pot*." Vs. 38-41. *Food multiplied*. Vs. 42-44. Striking resemblance to Jesus' feeding of the five thousand.

FOURTH DAY. *Naaman the Syrian*. 2 Kings 5. In these stories seek for New Testament principles and foreshadowings; for they are pictures of the greater spiritual things in Christ. In the story of Naaman observe the following features: I. The awful "But." V. 1. Every unsaved man, no matter how good by human standard, has such a "but." (Eph. 2:1-4). II. The Little Lamp of Testimony. Vs. 2-4. A little captive maiden who has faith, testifies. III. Naaman, under commission of the King of Syria goes to Israel to be healed. Vs. 5-7. Note the twofold mistake: (1) he supposes that if anyone in Israel could heal, surely the *king could*; (2) the wealth he took with him, which showed that Naaman thought the gift of God could be purchased with money; or, at least, that he might make some adequate returns for the benefit done him. Both these mistakes were to meet with correction. IV. Naaman's Disgust. Vs. 8-12. To him it seemed rank foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18; 2:14) and he felt that he was being trifled with and made a fool of. In reality God was humbling his pride. The great blessing of God must be received on the knees. V. Naaman's cleansing. Vs. 13, 14. (1) A bit of good sense. How many people who would be willing to do some great thing for the Lord (anything that the flesh might glory in) yet refuse to obey the simple requirement of the Gospel. (2) Naaman reconsiders and obeys. (3) His cleansing. VI. Naaman's Gratitude. Vs. 15-19. VII. Gehazi's Covetousness, and its reward. Vs. 20-27. So does the curse of the world's leprosy fall upon and cleave unto the covetous preacher.

FIFTH DAY. *Elisha and the Syrians*. 1 Kings 6-8:15. I. The occurrence about the axe-head, vs. 1-7. Comp. Matt. 19:26. Despair of nothing while you have access to God. II. 'Elijah at Dothan. Vs. 8-23. Three verses deserve particular notice: 15-17.

Cp. Ps. 34:7; Heb. 1:14. Would they have been there just the same if the young man's eyes had not been opened so that he could see them? Is it not possible then that often (perhaps when we least think it) God's angels surround us? Vs. 22, 23 exhibit some high-principled conduct. III. The Siege of Samaria. Vs. 24 to chap. 7:20. The wisdom of the "four leprous men" (7:3-5) was: Make the *best* of the situation. It deserves imitation. IV. The Shunamite providentially receives her land again. 8:1-6. V. The prophecy to Hazael. Vs. 7-15. Hazael murders his master and usurps the Syrian throne.

SIXTH DAY. *Jehu*. 2 Kings 9 and 10. Jehu was the man of God's vengeance, and through him a veritable day of the Lord broke in upon the house of Ahab. I. The Anointing of Jehu. 9:1-10. II. The Rebellion begun. Vs. 11-13. Verse 13 sheds light upon a feature of the "Triumphal Entry," Mt. 21:7, 8. III. The Raid upon Jezreel. Vs. 14-37. The first purpose was to slay King Joram. Note the significant words at the end of v. 21: what do you recall concerning that? Jehu recognized God's hand, vs. 25, 26. Ahaziah was also there, providentially, to get what was coming to him, vs. 27, 28; 2 Chron. 22:7-9. Then Jezebel gets her reward at last; more completely than Jehu intended; but not more than God intended. Again Jehu recognizes the hand of God. Vs. 30-37. IV. Extermination of Ahab's seed. 10:1-11. Jehu playfully feigns surprise in v. 9, although he had ordered it himself. Again Jehu recognizes that this is God's vengeance, and goes on to complete it according to the prediction. (21:19-29). V. The slaying of Ahaziah's Brethren, and the rest of Ahab's seed. Vs. 12-17. Forty-two men of Ahaziah's brethren also providentially ran into the judgment due. On v. 15, read Jer. 35:6-19. VI. The Vengeance upon Baal. Vs. 18:28. VII. God's judgment of Jehu. Vs. 29-36. His commendation, v. 30. His wrong and punishment, vs. 29, 31-33. Comp. also Hos. 1:4.

SEVENTH DAY. *The Dynasty of Jehu*. Let us follow up the history of the Kingdom of Israel to its *end*, which is not far off. After this we shall take up the Kings of Judah. Recall God's promise to Jehu. 10:30. I. Jehoahaz. 13:1-9. The Hazael prophecy is coming true. (8:11-13). Vs. 4-6 are remarkable. Comp. Ps. 78:38, 39. II. Jehoash. Vs. 10-25. From the feeble, nerveless hand of unbelief a great opportunity slips away, vs. 14-19. Elisha's ministry was from first to last most abundantly confirmed by signs; vs. 20, 21. Comp. Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:4. There was special need and occasion for it. Does God yet respect His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Rom. 11:28. Comp. Lev. 26:44, 45. III. Jeroboam. 14:23-29. To distinguish him from the first King of Israel (see 1 Kings 12) he is called "Jeroboam II." In, or before, his days *Jonah* flourished. Again, we see Israel, though themselves unworthy, helped and pitied for the sake of the promise made to their fathers. IV.

Zachariah. 15:8-12. God gave him short shrift. This ends the dynasty of the house of Jehu.

EIGHTH DAY. *The last Kings of Israel.* There were five of them, four of them assassins, conspirators, usurpers. Bad days for poor Israel! I. Shallum, who lasted but a month. 15:13-16. II. Menahem, ten years; 17-22; III. Pekahiah, two years; 23-26. IV. Pekah, twenty years. His name will come up again. In his days the captivity began. Vs. 27-31. V. Hoshea, 17:1-6.

NINTH DAY. *The Captivity of Israel.* 2 Kings 17. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the final stroke fell. (v. 6). Hoshea did not go as deeply into sin as his predecessors, and God noted the fact (v. 12) but this did not avert the judgment, now long overdue. In verses 7 to 18 God rehearses the evil course of Israel, and His reasons for "casting them out of His sight." Read here carefully, Lev. 18:24-28. In addition to their open wickedness there was much secret sin. God had seen it all. V. 9; Ps. 90:8. They sinned against light and warning, and God's gracious invitation. (13-18). With v. 15 comp. Rom. 1:21-23. Note the expression, "sold themselves to do evil." The latter part of the chapter shows the origin of the mixed Samaritan race—of both mixed blood and mixed religion. Note vs. 33, 41. Never did the conjunctive "and" bind together two things more incompatible than in these verses. Did they succeed in serving both? See v. 34. Comp. Matt. 6:24; 12:30; John 4:22 (the latter spoken to a Samaritan).

TENTH DAY. *The Kingdom of Israel.* Retrospect. Make a list of the nineteen kings of Israel, and mark the dynasties (kings of one family); also a list of all the prophets that prophesied to Israel, and in whose reign. When did Jonah flourish? When did Hosea prophesy? (1:1). When Amos? (1:1). Our next lesson will go to the end of the Kingdom of Judah.

THE SAFETY VALVE.

If we want to keep the best that we have, we must give it away. If we want to lose the best that we have, we need only refuse to give it away. It is the paradox that makes those who have God's best, and who keep on having God's best, an unceasing blessing to others. A young woman who had abandoned herself to Christ in such surrender and trust that He was flooding her life with the unspeakable joys of heaven, wrote to a friend: "I do want to be *kept overflowing*. Someone said to Mrs. ———, 'If you don't look out you'll burst with joy;' and she said, 'You never saw a vessel burst that overflowed, did you?'" So the overflow of our lives not only prevents bursting, but also prevents drying up. The life that is not overflowing with blessing to others all the time is an abnormal life. The life of constant outgo is the natural life—natural with the nature of God.—S. S.

THE "ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION."

R. H. B.

In the course of the "Olivet Sermon" the Lord Jesus Christ said:

"When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand) then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains. . . . for there shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be." Matt. 24:15-21.

These words show undisputedly,

1. That Daniel had predicted an "abomination of desolation"—whatever the term may signify.
2. That the prophecy had not then been fulfilled.
3. That this "abomination of desolation," seen standing in the holy place, was to be the signal for quick and instant flight.
4. The reason for the flight lies in the fact that an unparallelled tribulation would immediately follow this signal.

To this we must add that the unparallelled tribulation mentioned, immediately precedes the glorious appearing of the Lord. (Verses 29, 30. "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened. . . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. . . . and they shall see the Son of man coming on the cloud of heaven with power and great glory.") It is evident therefore that Daniel's prophecy has not been fulfilled unto this day, and that it refers to "the end-time," the days immediately preceding the Lord's glorious return.

Assuming then the simple words of the Lord Jesus Christ in their plain significance, as a basis for further study, we are face to face with the following questions: What is the "abomination of desolation"? What did Daniel predict about it? What do we learn in the New Testament as to the fulfillment of this prophecy? First, then,

WHAT IS THE "ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION"?

Even more primarily, what is meant by an "abomination"? In a general way it is *anything* repulsive, abhorrent, revolting. But in the Scriptures the word has also a specific sense: it is regularly used to designate an *idol* of any sort. (Deut. 7:25, 26; 27:15; Isa. 44:19). So for example, the calf was "the abomination of the Egyptians"; Chemosh, Milcom, Molech—the heathen gods—are referred to as "the abominations" of the respective nations who worshipped them. (1 Kings 11:5, 7; 2 Kings 23:13). While *anything* disgusting and vile is an abomination, yet the word standing alone with a specific reference, always means an idol; and this is a particular idol, namely, the one which brings the great and terrible desolation in its wake. It is "the abomination that maketh desolate." Dan. 12:11. This much is clear. We proceed to the next point.

DANIEL'S PREDICTION.

In three places in Daniel's prophecy there is a reference to the "abomination of desolation." In the first passage less clearly: "Upon the wing (or, pinnacle) of abominations, shall come one that maketh desolate." Dan. 9:27.

The second and third occurrences are found in the last two chapters: "They (that is, the forces of a certain king) shall set up *the abomination that maketh desolate.*" Dan. 11:31.

"And from the time that the continual burnt offering shall be taken away, and *the abomination that maketh desolate* set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." Dan. 12:11.

These references, if they are to yield anything like a clear impression, must be studied more particularly, and in their own context. We shall omit the first one just now, because its language does not so plainly point out "the abomination of desolation." As to the second, Dan. 11:31—who is that king whose forces set up the abomination? How, where, when, under what circumstances, is it set up? The reader will kindly open his Bible at Dan. 10 and follow the investigation. It will be seen that Daniel had a vision of a great war (10:1) and upon three weeks' fasting and prayer the Divine word of explanation sent to Daniel through an angelic being.

The angelic messenger now shows Daniel "the truth." (11:2). Persia would be subdued by Greece. But the mighty king of Greece also loses his kingdom, which is broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, "but not to his posterity." Thus far (11:2-4) the fulfilment in history is so perfect and plain that no one disputes it. Persia fell before the mighty king of Greece—Alexander; and after Alexander's death, his kingdom was divided into four parts—not to his posterity, but to his four chief generals, Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, Cassander. This fulfilment was so exact and literal that the modern critics who cannot afford to admit that *God* spoke by Daniel, assert that the book of Daniel must have been written *after* these things came to pass—which is a testimony at least that his prophecy was fulfilled, and that beyond all contradiction. As for us—we believe that Daniel was a *prophet* (Matt. 24:15) and that his word was God's message. (The prediction found in Dan. 11:2-4 is found again in different form in 8:1-8, 20-22.

From 11:5, however, onward, in a continuous prophecy which the reader may find too difficult, we have a series of conflicts, of which some say that they belong to the Past, being wars between the four kingdoms that sprang out of Alexander's divided empire; while others believe that the whole warfare belongs to the time of the end. This question we need not decide, nor need we try to follow those battles and counterstrokes. Sufficient that at the end of the prophecy, whether in unbroken connection with the first part, by one of those sudden transitions common in the word of prophecy, we meet with a person of whom we shall *know* that

he flourishes in the end-time:—THE WILFUL KING. The description given of him in verses 36, 37 identifies him with the king of 8:23-25. He is the dominant figure in that time of unparalleled trouble of which the Lord spoke in His Olivet Sermon, and of which Daniel speaks in this very connection (12:1) and not until this Wicked One has finished breaking in pieces the holy people (12:7); not until Michael stands up on behalf of Israel, are the people delivered. Daniel also joins this with the resurrection, and the time of the end. (Dan. 12:1-4). We invite the reader to trace these things for himself.

Now it is of this willful king that Daniel speaks when he says, "forces shall stand on his part, and they shall profane the sanctuary, even the fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt-offering, and they shall set up the abomination that maketh desolate." (Dan. 11:31). The other reference to this "abomination of desolation" (12:11) so evidently concerns the same situation as to require no separate examination.

What have we found now? That in the end-time a mighty king shall have all but universal dominion; that this king will defy God, exalt himself above God, oppress God's people most terribly, and shall finally come to his end without the hand of man. The forces of this king will set up the abomination that maketh desolate. There will be an unparalleled tribulation. Michael shall stand up for Israel. God's true people will be delivered. So runs the prophecy; and every man can verify this much, whether we can explain it further or not.

It is to be noted that this prophecy sees Israel back in their land in the end-time. Their temple is rebuilt; their sacrifices again resumed. It is not said that all this is by God's direction; but simply that this will be the state of affairs just before the great Tribulation. The likelihood of such things is not so slim in these days as it seemed even a few years ago. Everyone who reads the papers knows how keenly the Jews are now watching their chance to return to Palestine; and that thing may easily come to pass in a short time. Once returned they will of course at once rebuild their temple and resume the temple service. But whether sooner or later, this is what they certainly will do *some-time* for God has foretold it so. That king will arise also, and the last great tribulation will fall upon that unhappy nation: "even the time of Jacob's trouble: but he shall be saved out of it." Jer. 30:7.

(To be Concluded.)

O praying ones, who long have prayed
 And yet no answer heard,
 Have ye been sometimes half afraid
 God might not keep His word?

—"Our Hope."

AFFILIATION FOR CORDELL COLLEGE.

We have just received official notice from the University of Oklahoma accrediting Cordell Christian College with ninety hours or *three full years* of College work. This does not limit us to the standard of an A grade Junior College. Instead, it gives us one *full year's affiliation above* the Junior College. We believe this is the best recognition yet secured by any of our colleges. With this standing any student who desires to take his degree from the State University, may finish three full years with us, and entering the University as a Senior, take his A. B. degree in one year, and his A. M., in two.

We are also completing arrangements with our State Board of Education by which we are invested with the power of granting *County and State Teachers' Certificates*. This is a great advantage to those who desire to teach, as it eliminates the tedious and costly summer normal school. Outside of certain state schools, this is a power that is held by only three or four of the leading colleges and universities of the State. It is proof of the high standing which Cordell Christian College has attained among these institutions of our State. Our new catalog is now ready. Write for one.

J. N. ARMSTRONG, Pres.

SOUND DOCTRINE FREE.

The titles of the free leaflets issued by Don Carlos Janes, Buechel, Ky., and lately mentioned in our columns by Bro. Chambers, are: "Daily Bible Reading," "Conversion," "Baptism," "Missionary Work," "Dancing," "Christ is Coming," "How to Use the Bible," and "Instrumental Music." These are sent for the postage, 4c a hundred. Gummed labels bearing the motto, "Greater Things for God," are 5c a hundred. We print here one of a series of cards Bro. Janes is now issuing on the same plan as the leaflets:

GO TO CHURCH.

BECAUSE the religion of Christ promotes the public welfare, and the assembly is vital to that religion.

BECAUSE you thereby set a good example. Those who follow you should not be led astray.

BECAUSE it is consistent with godliness. Why should not a Christian go to church?

BECAUSE it prevents backsliding. It is unusual for one who regularly goes to church to go back to the world.

BECAUSE it is for your own good. The assembly provides needed teaching, encouragement and opportunity for service.

BECAUSE of its goodness and pleasantness. The assembly is too valuable and too enjoyable to be missed. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." P'sa. 133:1.

BECAUSE the Lord wants you there. "Not forsaking our own assembling together, * * * but exhorting one another; * * * as ye see the day drawing nigh." See Heb. 10:19-31.

Assorted small cards, 3 cents a hundred (postage).

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ON FOREIGN FIELDS.

MISSIONARY NOTES.

DON CARLOS JANES.

From Japan: Bro. McCaleb reports that "Miss Andrews came through her operation (for appendicitis) beautifully! ** "I have enough potatoes to run me—maybe—through next winter. Have strawberries in abundance." ** Sisters Andrews and Miss Miller have been to the mountains awhile. ** Sister Lillie Cypert, of Marshall, Ark., has signified her willingness to go to Japan as soon as funds are ready. She has stood a fine physical examination and Bro. McCaleb approves her purpose.

From South Africa: Bro. John Sherriff's last letter says: "Contributions are dropping off from America." Sister Mansill, of New Zealand, has joined in the South African work. Bro. Sherriff, who is a stone mason, reports four full months in which he had earned nothing. "So that all round things are not looking at all hopeful."

From India: Bro. Martin preached the funeral of a European lady, May 25. ** Sister Martin says: "He is full of zeal and longs to tell the love of Jesus. ** Bro. Jelley has some trouble with his heart. He writes: "I congratulate you upon the tract on dancing. I cannot see how any Christian can think of such a thing. Orientals do not engage in promiscuous dancing as too openly immoral, but they hire prostitutes to dance for public entertainment." ** Bro. and Sister Armstrong-Hopkins have not been in the best of health. She informs us that the price of drugs is high in India and we can easily believe her. ** Bro. McHenry wrote that he had finished about 9,000 Marathi tracts and had most of a 6-page English tract about ready for the press. He desires to issue one on baptism in the Marathi tongue. ** There is a considerable deficit in Bro. McHenry's funds. Will you help to remove it? ** "Every time we receive mail we go to the Lord in thanks. We thank the Lord first, then we get busy thanking the brethren."—Martin.

"Men are mustered into the service by the million, where in times past they were mustered by thousands. The time has come for the church to do things on a larger scale." Yes, indeed. That time came a good while ago and Christians, many of them, have been tardy and some worse than tardy. They have not rallied to the Lord's call yet. ** Count Okuma said that though Christianity had enrolled less than 200,000 believers in Japan, yet its influence had poured into every realm of Japanese life. ** "Robert E. Speer has said that every soldier dying for his country on the European battlefield, every home giving up its blood and tears, is a summons and a reproach to us men and women who have accepted the Christ of the Cross, but not the Cross of the Christ."

THE SECOND LORD'S DAY LESSON OF AUGUST.

Lesson 7.

August 12, 1917.

JOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN.

Golden Text: "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Eccl. 12:1.

Lesson Text: 2 Chron. 34:1-13. Memorize verses 2, 3.

1. Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign: and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. 2 And he did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, and walked in the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. 3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the Asherim, and the graven images, and the molten images. 4 And they brake down the altars of the Baalim in his presence; and the sun-images that were on high above them he hewed down; and the Asherim, and the graven images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. 5 And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and purged Judah and Jerusalem. 6 And so did he in the cities of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, in their ruins round about. 7 And he brake down the altars, and beat the Asherim and the graven images into powder, and hewed down all the sun-images throughout all the land of Israel, and returned to Jerusalem. 8 Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of Jehovah his God. 9 And they came to Hilkiah the high priest, and delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin, and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10 And they delivered it into the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of Jehovah; and the workmen that wrought in the house of Jehovah gave it to mend and repair the house: 11 even to the carpenters and to the builders gave they it, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to make beams for the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed. 12

Verse 1. What great prophets lived in Josiah's time? Jer. 1:2; Zeph. 1:1.

Verse 2. What kind of man was Josiah's father? 2 Chron. 33:21-25. Can a boy turn away from the bad example of even his own father? In whose eyes did Josiah do right? Whose ways did he follow?

Verse 3. How many years old was Josiah when he began of his own choice to seek after God? How old when he rose up valiantly to destroy evil?

Verses 4-7. Did Josiah make a thorough work of it? What city and country did he clean up first? Why? Did he stop at that? (v. 6.) What condition was the land of Ephraim, (etc.) in at that time? (2 Kings 17:6.) What earlier prophecy concerning himself did Josiah fulfill? 2 Kings 23:15-20. Read 1 Kings 13. What noble qualities do you discern in Josiah?

Verse 8. At the age of 26 what still greater work did Josiah undertake to the honor of God? If there had been proper regard of the temple, would it have fallen into such decay? Had it been merely neglected? (V. 11, last clause.)

Verses 9-11. How were the necessary funds obtained? How was the money used?

Verses 12, 13. What special good point about their work did God have recorded? Does God put a high estimate upon faithfulness? (Numb. 12:7! Heb. 3:1, 2; Matt. 25:21). Was the work also done systematically and intelligently? Is there any virtue in a careless, slipshod method of doing God's work? * * Read 2 Kings 22:1-7.

And the men did the work faithfully; and the overseers of them were Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari. and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set it forward; and others of the Levites, all that were skilful with instruments of music. 13 Also they were over the bearers of burdens, and set forward all that did the work in every manner of service; and of the Levites there were scribes, and officers, and porters.

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NOTES ON LESSON 7.

AMON.

Between the preceding lesson and this one occurs the brief account of the reign of Manasseh's son, Amon. (2 Chron. 33:21-25). His reign was short (2 years), and evil. This man's sin was the darker because of all the light he had and the examples of his righteous grandfather (Hezekiah) and of his father who repented and humbled himself before Jehovah. God looks upon this: He never judges people absolutely, but always with reference to their light and opportunity. Capernaum was worse than Sodom because she refused a better light; and the world at present is more guilty than the vile heathen world Paul describes in Rom. 1, for the same reason. Amon was assassinated by his own servants; but the assassins in turn were put to death, and Josiah made king by the people.

THE DOUBLE WORK.

Unlike the kingdom of Israel, the kingdom of Judah had a number of good kings, of whom Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah are reckoned as "the four great reformers." Josiah came to the throne early in life, and early he formed the purpose of doing the will of God. The situation and outlook was discouraging. In and around Jerusalem and throughout all Judah were "high places"—illicit places of worship. (See Deut. 12). Moreover there was idolatry; images of Baal, and other graven and molten images, idolatrous altars, Asherim, were worshipped on every hand. (Look up in Bible Dictionary, "Baal," "Baalim," "Asherah," "Asherim," "High Places.") But the temple of Jehovah, the true God, was in a condition of decay, and more or less ruin. There was therefore a twofold work to be done: (1) a negative work: cleansing the city and the land from its defilements; (2) a positive work: the restoration of the temple of God. In every case of conversion and of reformation there is such a twofold work: a work of destruction, a giving up, renouncing, forsaking, undoing, of what is wrong; and a work of construction: a returning to God, a doing and building up of what is right. (Isa. 1:16, 17; Acts 26:20). Like his great-grandfather Hezekiah, Josiah did his good work with all his heart and soul. (2 Chron. 34:31). It is remarkable that Josiah extended his reforms over into the (now desolated) land of Israel, to restore the remnant of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and Naphtali, to a right relationship with God. During the reign of Israel's (the ten-tribe kingdom's) first king, God had foretold this valiant campaign of righteousness, and mentioned Josiah by name centuries before he was born. (1 Kings 13:1, 2).

A FEW ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS.

Note the time indications in verses 3 and 8. When did Jeremiah's ministry begin? Jer. 1:2. Did Zephaniah's ministry (so far as indicated, Zeph. 1:1) extend further than Josiah's days? Both these prophets give us a picture of the internal conditions in those days. (Jer. 3:6, etc.; Zeph. 1:4-6, 12). What would God's comment and verdict be upon Christendom in the present day? What His sum-up of the church which professes to be His own? What would He likely say of the particular congregation of which I am a member? What would be His estimate of myself? Are there any idols to be put out of the sanctuary of my own heart? (Ezek. 14:3-8). How can I restore (so far as concerns me) the temple of Jehovah? Will I do it with all my heart and with all my soul?

THE THIRD LORD'S DAY LESSON OF AUGUST.

Lesson 8.

August 19, 1917.

FINDING THE BOOK OF THE LAW.

Golden Text: "I will not forget thy word." Psa. 119:16.**Lesson Text:*** 2 Chron. 34:14-33. Memorize verse 31.

14. And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of Jehovah, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jehovah given by Moses. 15 And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. 16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and moreover brought back word to the king, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they are doing. 17 And they have emptied out the money that was found in the house of Jehovah, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and into the hand of the workmen. 18 And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read therein before the king. 19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes. 29 Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30 And the king went up to the house of Jehovah, and all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, both great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of Jehovah. 31. And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before Jehovah, to walk after Jehovah, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. 32 And he caused all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. 33 And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made

Verse 14. What did Hilkiah find? Had it therefore been lost? Should it have been lost? Would it have been lost if they had followed this? Deut. 6:6-9; 17:18-20; Josh. 1:8. Is the word of God a great blessing to a man or a people? Ps. 19:10, 11. Is it a calamity to lose it? What was the word of God to them? Ps. 119:105. What therefore was one reason they had stumbled so badly? Does anyone lose the word of God today? How?

Verses 15-18. In the course of what work was the Book of the Law found? Was Josiah living up to the light and truth he knew when he cleaned up the land and the city and undertook to restore the Temple? What is the reward of a faithful use of the light we now have? Matt. 13:11, 12; Prov. 4:18. What is the punishment of rejecting light and truth? 2 Thess. 2:10-12.

Verse 19. How did the reading of the Book affect Josiah? Why? v. 21. What does the Word of God first do for a man? Heb. 4:12, 13; Acts 2:37. With what sort of heart did Josiah listen to God's word? See v. 27. What does God implore us not to do, when we hear His voice (that is, His word)? Heb. 3:7, 15.

(For verses 20 to 28, see the Notes.) Verses 29, 30. After having himself heard and humbly accepted the Book of God, what did Josiah do next? Why did he do that? Ps. 40:9, 10; Matt. 5:15.

Verse 31. What did the king pledge himself to do? Is that a good covenant to make? Ought it to be made in fleshly self-confidence (like Israel once made it, Exod. 19:8) or in humble reliance upon God's arm? Have you covenanted with God to live according to His will in Christ Jesus forever? What would a man gain by entering into such a covenant? What would he lose by pursuing any other course?

Verse 32. What had Manasseh done to the people of Judah and Jerusalem? (2 Chron. 33:9). But what did

all that were found in Israel to serve, even to serve Jehovah their God. All his days they departed not from following Jehovah, the God of their fathers.

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Josiah do for them? Does a man's sinfulness or righteousness ever affect only himself alone?

Verse 33. What was the seal and the proof of Josiah's sincerity? How long did the people continue in their faithfulness to God?

NOTES ON LESSON 8.

NO MERCY FOR THE NATION.

In the latter part of Josiah's work and career the outstanding event of all was the finding of the book of the Law. When the Book was read to Josiah it filled him with distress and dismay. How had they disregarded and disobeyed the law of Jehovah their God! How heavy must be the judgment that was hanging over the guilty nation! Josiah sends a committee to Huldah, the prophetess, to enquire of Jehovah through her. (This was the regular and God-ordained method of obtaining God's direct guidance and judgment. Comp. 1 Kings 22:5-7). Huldah's position was by age and length of service above Jeremiah's probably, who at that time had prophesied only about five years, although Jeremiah was destined to hold a far higher place of eminence in the end.—God's answer through Huldah confirmed Josiah's fears, so far as the nation was concerned. All the predicted judgments would come upon Judah, just as the word of God had it (Deut. 28) and there was no remedy. (Comp. Rev. 1:1; 4:1—"things which must come to pass.") The die had really been cast by Manasseh, King of Judah (2 Kings 23:26, 27) who put idols up in the house of God—an offense which calls forth inevitable judgment. (2 Kings 21:4-7). Henceforth the nation and its Temple were doomed; intercession was useless; the only hope was of snatching some as brands from the burning; and the faithfulness of individuals would be reckoned only to them as individuals, and would not avail nationally. (Jer. 15:1-4; Ezek. 14:14, 20). So while pronouncing irrevocable sentence upon Judah, the Lord made good promise to Josiah personally, because his heart had been tender, and he had humbled himself before God. And a time of respite (very short, alas!) was gained for Judah and Jerusalem. (2 Chron. 34:20-28). The reason for this attitude of God toward the nation lay in the hopelessness of the nation's attitude toward Him. If indeed the nation had even then truly repented, God would have rescinded His sentence. (Judg. 10:10-16; Jer. 18:7-10). But there was no prospect.

JOSIAH'S AFTER-WORK AND END,

After the finding of the Book of the Law the work of reformation went on with fresh zeal and power. 1 Kings 23 gives more detail of it. Josiah's Passover was unprecedented. The fuller description of it is found in 2 Chron. 35. From the changes made by Josiah the great dilapidation of the religion can be inferred. Josiah met death in the prime of his life, at the hands of Pharaoh Neco, King of Egypt, in the valley of Megiddo. He had been warned in peculiar fashion, against engaging in battle against Neco, (2 Chron. 35:20-22) and likely entered into the conflict without consulting Jehovah at the mouth of His prophets. The mourning was so great that long afterward it was referred to as a climax of sorrow. (Zech. 12:11). "And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah." Well might they mourn and lament, for with their last good king fell all their hope and power. The reformation proved to be very superficial. "Judah hath not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly." (Jer. 3:10). And so their judgment drew swiftly on.

THE FOURTH LORD'S DAY LESSON OF AUGUST.

Lesson 9.

August 26, 1917.

THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

Golden Text: "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Ezek. 33:11.

Lesson Text:* 2 Kings 25:1-21. Memorize verses 10, 11.

1. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it round about. 2 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. 3 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. 4 Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about); and the king went by the way of the Arabah. 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. 6 Then they took the king and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. 7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon. 8 Now in the fifth month on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzardan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem. 9 And he burnt the house of Jehovah, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jeru-

salem, even every great house burnt he with fire. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. 11 And the residue of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzardan the captain of the guard carry

I. The Siege of Jerusalem.

Verse 1. (Note the last verse of the preceding chapter; it gives the reasons for the event of this verse.) Could Nebuchadnezzar have done this if God had not abandoned Jerusalem to him?

Verses 3, 4. Under what pressure did the garrison of Jerusalem flee from the city? How did the king attempt to escape?

Verse 5. Was the flight successful? Who would not permit it to succeed? Verses 6, 7. What terrible judgment was pronounced and executed upon King Zedekiah? According to what word of prophecy did this come to pass? Jer. 37:17; 34:21, 22; Ezek. 12:13.

II. The Destruction of Jerusalem.

Verse 9. Why was the Babylonian able to lay hands on God's temple and to destroy it? 1 Kings 9:6-9; Jer. 7:4, 12-15. What other buildings did he destroy? Upon what does the judgment of the "day of the Lord" fall first and foremost? Isa. 2:12.

Verse 10. Why was the wall broken down?

Verse 11. What was done to those who were left and who surrendered to the king of Babylon? Was this also according to God's forewarnings? Deut. 28:36, 37. Does God faithfully fulfill His threatenings? Did He wait long and patiently before He did it? Why does God wait? 2 Pet. 3:9. But what warning has He left us? Prov. 29:1.

Verse 12. Who only was left in the land? (24:14). Comp. Isa. 6:11, 12.

away captive. 12 But the captain of the guard left of the poorest of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen.

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NOTES ON LESSON 9.

FROM JOSIAH TO THE END.

Between the last Lord's day's lesson and this one several kings come and go in Judah. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin; and the last, Zedekiah, who was reigning when Nebuchadnezzar besieged and took the city. All these did that which was evil in the eyes of Jehovah. Jehoahaz had reigned three months when the King of Egypt deposed him, and carried him away into Egypt. Jehoiakim, Jehoahaz's brother, was put upon the throne by the King of Egypt, and reigned eleven years. Him Nebuchadnezzar deposed and carried in fetters to Babylon. Jehoiachin reigned three months and ten days, and was carried into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, who made Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's brother, king. Zedekiah had reigned eleven years when Nebuchadnezzar took the rebel city and its king. During all this time Jeremiah the prophet did his work, and the book of Jeremiah contains many prophecies regarding these kings. Read also 2 Chron. 36.

THE GREAT CRASH.

In the story of the catastrophe there are three chiefly impressive features: (1) The persistent wickedness of the kings and the people, which led up to the catastrophe; (2) the marvelous patience of God; (3) the certain and terrific execution of His justice and sentence in its time. The people and kings seem to have gone mad. Flinging all regard for Jehovah to the winds, scoffing at His warnings, mocking and persecuting His messengers they plunged on insanely "until the wrath of Jehovah arose against His people, till there was no remedy." Was not this hardening of the heart itself a preliminary judgment? In strong contrast with the mad course of the people stands God's pitying, patient longsuffering. For He is "not willing that any should perish," and therefore He waited to the utmost. But the people also found that He "is not slack concerning his promise." (2 Pet. 3:9). When the time came, the judgment descended with terrific swiftness and force. So shall it be also with this generation. (Matt. 24:37-39).

JEREMIAH.

Such a time of crisis is the opportunity both for Satan and for God; for Satan, to send his false prophets to deceive the people unto their final destruction; for God, to make the last supreme effort to warn and recall them. This latter thankless, difficult task was of God entrusted to His servant Jeremiah, "the man with the iron hand and the bleeding heart," the prophet of tears and of failure. No heavier charge was ever laid upon the shoulders of any of God's servants. And Jeremiah discharged his trust under extreme suffering, but faithfully and bravely. Of his conflicts with the prophets his book tells (Jer. 23:28) and its pages vary in tenderest pleadings, fiercest denunciations, solemn warnings, bitter experiences and anticipations, and glorious visions of Zion's glad and cloudless morning. The book of Lamentation bewails Jerusalem's great fall; but a rainbow of hope shines through the prophet's tears.

THE FIRST LORD'S DAY LESSON OF SEPTEMBER.

Lesson 10.

September 2, 1917.

THE SHEPHERD OF CAPTIVE ISRAEL.

Golden Text: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." P's. 23:1.

Lesson Text:* Ezek. 34:1-31. Memorize verse 12.

11. For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I myself, even I, will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark daly. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them with good pasture; and upon the mountains of the height of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie down in a good fold; and on fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord Jehovah. 16 I will seek that which was lost, and will bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but the fat and the strong I will destroy; I will feed them in justice.

23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24 And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I, Jehovah, have spoken it. 25. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. 26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be showers of blessing. 27 And the tree of the field shall yield its fruit,

Before beginning this, read the first part of the Notes on this lesson.

Verse 11. Since the shepherds of Israel had failed of their duty toward Israel, what would God do?

Verse 12. How would He do it? From whence would He gather them? When were they so scattered? Is their "dark and cloudy day" yet on? Rom. 11:25. Was it on in the Savior's time? Matt. 9:36. Did the Good Shepherd then make the attempt to return them? Matt. 23:37. Will He ever gather against their wills? Rom. 11:23, 26. Will they obey sometime? Deut. 30:1-3. Hos. 3:4, 5.

Verses 13, 14. Whom does He mean by his "sheep?" (V. 31). Have they been, and are they yet, scattered among the peoples of many countries? Deut. 4:27. What does He promise them? Jer. 31:10. To what place will He bring them? (Ezek. 37:25; Amos 9:15).

Verses 15, 16. Who will undertake the shepherd's work for them? Will He do it thoroughly? Contrast v. 16 with v. 4. See Ps. 23. Will He discriminate between sheep and sheep? vs. 17-20. See Ezek. 20:33-38.

Verses 23, 24. Whom will God set up as the Shepherd of Israel? Mic. 5:2, 4, with Matt. 2:6. (Rev. Vers.) Why does He bear the name of David? Rev. 22:16. And what would God be to them? Was there a time when God was "ashamed of them to be called their God?" Hos. 1:9. But see Jer. 32:37-42.

Verse 25. Compare with Isa. 11:1-9; Jer. 23:5, 6.

Verses 26, 27. Will there be much fertility and prosperity in those days? (Comp. Hos. 2:21-23; Amos. 9:13-15). Will the condition of Israel be one of bondage or liberty? Have they ever been a free people since the days of the Captivity? Have they ever again since then possessed their own land and sovereignty? Will it ever be otherwise? Jer. 30:3, 8. From what other bondage will they be freed? John 8:33-36; Rom. 11:26. Will their

and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the hand of those that made bondmen of them.

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NOTES ON LESSON 10.

The Simple, Direct Meaning.

Israel in captivity, God is now reviewing their failure, and places the blame in due measure where it belongs; and makes the captive people good promises of a better time when a better Shepherd shall exercise better rule and care over them. This is the sum of the first sixteen verses. The shepherds of Israel were the kings and rulers—all the leaders to whom the care of the people had been entrusted. V. 10 declares the fearful responsibility under which God held them, and the judgment that awaited their unfaithfulness. The language in its reference to the nation of Israel past, present and future, is very plain, and requires no comment, only simple acceptance.

II. Applications.

..1. To the People of God Today.

In its spiritual principles, in its delineations of God's character and ways, as also in its portrayal of man in his various attitudes toward God, all Scripture is of universal application. (2 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 15:4). This is true of the Prophets as of all other Scripture. There is a difference between application and interpretation. A scripture may be fulfilled many times in its principle; yet for its definite meaning it has its one, sure, full accomplishment.

The situation is this: the people of God, heedless of many warnings, have finally had to drink to the dregs the cup of God's wrath and chastisement. They are cast out from their land, and captives in a strange country. (Ps. 137). But God is their faithful Keeper even in the far land. (Ps. 121). He has not forgotten His covenant, though they have; and He will not cast them off or abhor them. (Lev. 26:44). If in the enemies' land they will bethink themselves and turn to Him, He will again be found their good and merciful God. (1 Kings 8:47-51). And though in the depths, they may cry unto Him and He will hear their voice. (Ps. 130). Thus if in their very punishment, they repent, they shall find peace with God, and rest in the hope of a sure deliverance. (Mic. 7:7-9). This is true of God's people today. If in their sorrows, though caused by their own disobedience, they return to God, He will return to them with blessing.

2. To the Shepherds of Today.

The shepherds today are the leaders of the church. The "pastors" mentioned in Eph. 4:11 are literally "shepherds." The elders are shepherds. Their responsibility is to take the oversight over God's flock, not as lording it over the charge allotted to them, but making themselves examples to the flock. Then when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, the under-shepherds shall receive the reward of their faithful work: the crown of glory that fadeth not away. (1 Pet. 5:1-4). But of how many pastors and teachers and preachers will it be said: "Ye eat the fat and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill the fatlings, but ye feed not the sheep. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought back that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with rigor have ye ruled over them!" Woe to all shepherds, whether then or now, who use their position to selfish ends, and disregard their responsibility, and abuse their right to the oppression and destruction of the sheep. (Ezek. 34:1-6).

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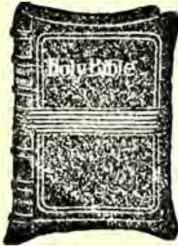
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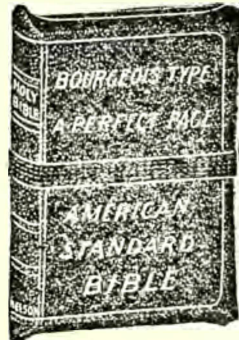
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and fought against the Philistines. And David waxed faint; 16 and Ishbi-benob, who was ^oof the sons of the ²giant, the weight of whose spear was three hundred *shekels* of brass in weight, he being girded with ^aa new sword, thought to have slain David. 17 But ^aAbishai the son of Zeruiah succored him, and smote the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David sware unto him, saying, 'Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not ^kthe lamp of Israel.

18 ^lAnd it came to pass after

Dt. 31. 30
 ver. 32, 47;
 Dt. 32. 4;
 37; 1 S. 2.
 2; Ps. 31.
 3; 71. 5;
 2 Ps. 51. 2;
 141. 2
 Gen. 15. 1;
 Dt. 33. 29
 Dt. 33. 17;
 1 K. 1. 69
 Ps. 9; 14.
 6; 40. 7, 11;
 71. 7; Jer.
 10. 19
 Ps. 48. 1;
 96. 4
 Ps. 93. 4;
 Jon. 2. 3
 Ps. 69. 14,
 15
 Ps. 118. 3
 Ps. 118. 4;



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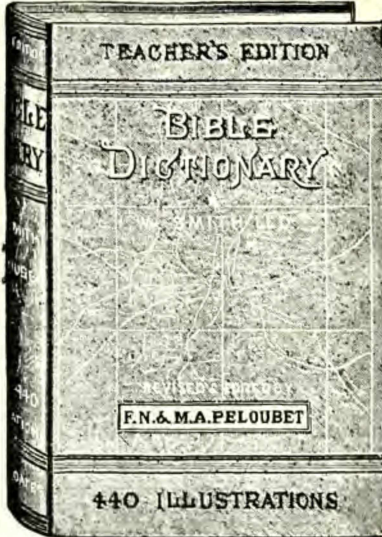
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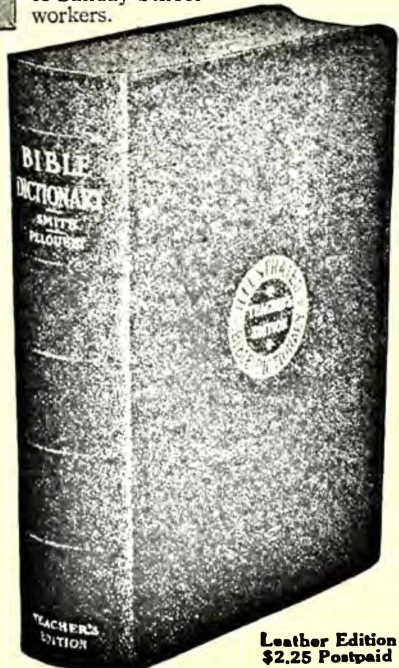
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