



*GEMS OF TRUTH IN
SIMPLE SETTINGS.*


by
ALICE H. HOPKINS.

To my Young Friends at Home and Abroad.

Truth, how sacred is the treasure,
Help us, Lord, its worth to know,
Vain the hope, and short the pleasure
Which from other sources flow.

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Your loving friend,
Alice H. Hopkins.

PREFACE.

TO PARENTS AND FRIENDS.

It had long been the desire of the Author to place within the reach of our boys and girls the Truth, as it is revealed in the Scriptures, in plain and simple language, while in attractive and interesting form.

The present enlarged and revised edition, we trust, will be even more freely welcomed and more widely circulated than the first.

Every doctrine of vital importance is briefly touched upon, and the whole plan of Salvation clearly revealed in verse and prose: the Bible Search-texts affording opportunity for acquiring a personal knowledge of the same. Sin is pointed out to be exceedingly displeasing to God, and many practical lessons are given for help and guidance in the right way.

The Bible Readers' Calendar is intended to encourage daily reading, and may prove of value to those who have no set portions. The book is suitable for a Sunday School Prize, Birthday or Present. May its value be tested, and the message it contains reach many young hearts and minds, to the glory of God and the eternal welfare of all who will believe and obey.

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THE BIBLE.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

Many pleasant hours have been spent in preparing this little book for you, so I trust that you in turn will have much pleasure in reading it, and may find its pages not only interesting but instructive. As all the stories and verses it contains are based upon the teaching of the Bible, I think it will be well first to speak to you about this great Book wherein so many beautiful lessons are to be found.

What a many books there are in the world at the present time—good, bad and indifferent. With the aid of the noble art of printing, books have multiplied year by year to such an extent that the world seems over supplied, and a great many need serving in the same manner as some that we read of in the nineteenth chapter of Acts.

“Of making many books there is no end; and much study or reading (margin) is a weariness of the flesh,” says Solomon in Ecclesiastes xii., so that discretion and moderation are necessary.

Among all the wonderful and clever works written at various times by great men and presented to the people of the earth no book can be compared with the Bible, however wise and learned its author may be, for it is testified that “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter i. 22), and so the Bible is what it claims to be—the inspired Word of God, or the Holy Scriptures.

The word Bible means a collection of books, and although we rightly speak of it as one book, because of the harmony and completeness of the message it contains, it is in reality a library of books, sixty-six in all. Although written at different periods in the world’s history, yet each writer without a single exception was a Jew.

Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, “Salvation is of the Jews” (John iv. 22)—a very important statement, showing how much we Gentiles owe to the Jews. In Romans iii. the Apostle Paul points out

the chief reason why Jews had the advantage of Gentiles. "Because that unto them were committed the oracles of God"; and again in chapter ix. : "To whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises."

Although a copy of the Bible can be purchased for a very small sum of money, we must ever keep in mind that it is the most costly and precious book in all the world.

In our days there is a tendency to under-estimate its value and doubt its truthfulness. But, whatever people may say against it will not alter the fact that "God has spoken," and His Word is true. Jesus said so when addressing His Father in Heaven (John xvii. 17)—"Thy Word is the Truth." (R.V.)

The words of this Book have been preserved by God, and handed down from generations, in spite of all the attempts that have been made to destroy it. It has been tried to the uttermost, yet has stood the test, and still remains the unchanging word of our unchangeable God.

Now, suppose we take the five letters in the word "Bible," and think of something beginning with each that will help to fix in our minds and hearts its value.

First, the Bible is the "Book of books," the "Best Book" for all. It is the Book for boys and girls as well as grown-up people; and every one should make a rule of reading a portion each day. There are some difficult things to understand in the Bible, but also many beautiful things that all may grasp quite easily if they give time and attention to its study; so that we are without excuse if we neglect or cast it aside altogether on account of a few difficulties. We do not usually treat the letter of a friend in this manner—not reading any because some of the words at first sight are not quite plain to us. Do we not rather seek an explanation, and get it made clear, even if it should cost a little time and trouble? If we think of the Bible as the letter of our loving Heavenly Father to His children, we certainly shall desire to know what it contains, that we may carry out His wishes.

The Bible reveals to us God's love, wisdom and power, and also His purpose with the earth, and with mankind upon it. God has given us His word for our guidance, and not to puzzle us so that we may learn to know Him thereby, and find out what is well-pleasing unto Him, and then do it. We cannot imagine God giving us a guide book which we could not possibly understand, for who then could follow its precepts? And we could not be held responsible for our use or abuse of it. What does the Psalmist say—"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. . . . I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation." (Psalm cxix. 130, 99).

The Bible then is "the best Book" for all who desire to serve God aright, and hope at last to receive a place in His glorious kingdom. Whenever we read its sacred pages we are, as it were, in the company of some of the best men and women the world has ever known. Think of Abel, the first shepherd; Noah, the preacher of righteousness; and Abraham, the friend of God, to whom God promised all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. The history of Joseph and his brethren; Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, and David, the shepherd, afterwards king of Israel, whom God said should have a Son to sit upon His throne for ever, are full of interest to every lover of the Bible. And, side by side with these good men who endeavoured to serve God in their generation, we have Sarah, Rebekah, Hannah and Ruth, among others whose lives should influence us for good. Then later, we have the disciples of Jesus, Martha and Mary of Bethany, and many more who devoted themselves to His service; the Apostle Paul and his companions in travel and labour, among whom were Prisca and Phoebe, Mary and the beloved Persis, whose names are recorded in Romans xvi. But above all these, the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus Himself should concern us most, for "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

We do not come to the Bible to be amused, but to receive strength, comfort and encouragement as we endeavour to do our duty to God and to our fellow creatures, and here alone can we find help and guidance.

The beginning of a new year is a good time to make a fresh start at any duty that may have been neglected, or to take up some new duty that hitherto we may not have considered binding upon us; and if any of my young readers feel that this "Book of Books," this "Best of Books," has been neglected in the past, and not had its proper place in their lives, I trust they will not wait until next January the first before making this new start, but recollect that any day, even the present, may become a Happy New Year's Day to them if they will commence at once to read daily a portion of God's Holy Word*. Paul reminded Timothy that "From a child he had known the Holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation" (2 Timothy iii. 15). He could not have endured hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ if he had not learned to handle skilfully "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." (Ephesians vi. 17).

This now leads us to our next letter, "I." If God's Word is to be of real value to us, we must become "Intimate" with its teaching. It is not enough even to read it daily, but we must be "interested" in it and take pleasure in studying it also. We

The Calendars and Bible Readings for the Year will be found on pages 11, 46, 102, 182.

should be able to say from our hearts, " Oh, how love I Thy law ! it is my meditation all the day " (Ps. cxix. 97). " I rejoice at Thy Word as one that findeth great spoil " (v. 162). We must feed upon God's Word if we desire to be strong in faith and grow in grace, just as in a natural way we eat to live and to enable us to run and jump and work. Jesus said, " The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life " (Jno. vi. 63), and, " The words that I speak unto you are not mine, but the Father's which sent me : He that is of God heareth God's Words " (Jno. viii. 47).

These words of Life which Jesus spake must enter into our hearts as well as our " intellects," and become a living power in our lives; for knowledge alone is not all that God requires, as the Apostle James informs us, we must be " doers of the Word," and not hearers and readers only, lest we deceive our own selves. Then thirdly, we must " believe in the Bible " and show our belief in a very practical manner by accepting it wholly and without doubts or questioning, as the Word of God.

Here are some good reasons for so doing. 1. It is pure. How necessary is purity even in temporal things? We enjoy anything so much better if we can rely upon it being pure. Take, for instance, the food we eat and the air we breathe. There is always satisfaction in a pure article. That is why the Bible is so refreshing and invigorating. It does us good whenever we read it. " Thy word is very pure," says the psalmist, therefore, " Thy servant loveth it " (Psa. cxix. 140); that is—tried or refined, and it has a refining, purifying influence on the lives of all who read it aright so that they cannot help loving it. 2. It is true. A very important quality, when we are asked to believe it. True from the beginning and true to the end. (Psa. cxix. 160; xix. 6). 3. It is sure. It will never fail, for all that God has promised He is able to perform (Psa. xix. 7). 4. It is a light. It shines through the darkness and leads us in the right path. Peter tells us we do well to take heed to it (2 Peter i. 19). We know what the effect is of a light being brought into a dark room. How soon the darkness disappears! So the Word of God is " A Lamp. . . and a light to guide our feet into the way of peace and onward to the kingdom and glory of the future age. 5. It is quick and powerful. When the bright clear light of God's Word beams across our path and shines into our hearts, it not only warms and cheers but shows up all the black sin-spots in our lives, and we see ourselves as we really are. Poor and weak and helpless, and oh, so unworthy of the least of God's blessings, and it makes us glad to know that He has provided a covering for our sins in Jesus. I trust all my dear young friends may be found safely sheltered beneath the sin-covering name of Jesus, in the great day when the secrets of all hearts will be made known by the search-light of this living, all-penetrating Word. 6. It is the good Word of God (Heb. vi. 5)

and, having once tasted of its sweetness, we shall long and desire for more (Psa. xix. 10). 7. It endureth for ever (Isa. xl. 8), so we need not fear. Truly these are ample proof to cause us to uphold the Bible and "believe" it with all our hearts.

I am very fond of a little chorus I heard some years ago. It is quite easy, so perhaps you will learn it and remember it too:—

I believe God's Word is true,
I am sure God's Word is true,
I have proved God's Word is true,
All glory to His Name.

If so, you will gladly "learn its lessons" and "lovingly" follow its precepts. Do you appreciate good books? Here is the finest "literature" that ever has or will adorn the walls of the wealthiest libraries. If you are fond of study, here you have the geography of the world and the history of the nations, past, present, and future. Science explained from a Divine standpoint, and a code of laws which if put into operation to-day would bring health and happiness to all people and end all the trouble and misery that spoils this beautiful earth at the present time. Here, too, are music and art of the highest order—songs and poetry that will become the lips and pens of their divinely inspired authors. Also architecture of the grandest type, including the plan of the most magnificent edifice ever designed to beautify this earth, of which God is both Architect and Builder.

In the Bible too, the will and purpose of God are clearly revealed and the glories of a bright and happy future foreshadowed, for our encouragement, and to crown all, we have the "Ideal" character in the Person of the Lord Jesus, "In whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins."

In conclusion, being satisfied that the Bible is indeed the "Book of Books," the "Best Book" of all and for all, and having become "Interested" in it, and "Intimate" with its teaching, "Believing" it to be the "Living word of God," "Loving" it with all our hearts and "learning daily its lessons," I feel sure it will be our "Earnest" desire to make it known, and we shall "Endeavour" to "Encourage" others to read it, so that they may be "Enlightened" in its glorious Truths and learn to love it also. We can only "Estimate" its value by a practical knowledge of its contents. Happy are they who love and reverence this Holy Book, for it "Ennobles" our lives, gives comfort in sorrow or distress, adds sweetness and strength to our joys and will help us to walk humbly and acceptably before God, in the narrow way that leads to life eternal and unending day.

EXHORTATIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Ponder the path thy footsteps daily wend,
 There is a way that seemeth right, but death is at the end.
 Strive ye to enter by the narrow gate,
 And leave not the seeking till it be " too late."
 Be not of sin or evil overcome,
 Consider Christ, before His accusers, dumb !
 Fear ye not man, who is so frail at best,
 Right in the end will triumph and be blest.
 Do with thy might what e'er thy hands may do,
 And let all thy works be righteous, just and true.
 Fret not thyself for evil-doers ; nor be wroth,
 For from the earth they soon will be cut off.
 Boast not thyself of what to-morrow brings,
 " Uncertainty " is written on all human things.
 Lay hold on Life, which is the Life indeed,
 And unto careless sinners take not heed.
 Remember thy Creator in the days of youth,
 And for thy guidance take the Word of Truth.
 To the believers a bright example be,
 In faith, in love and deeds of charity.
 Study to show thyself approved, a workman not ashamed,
 Whose hope and confidence, on the sure Word is framed.
 Rejoice in others joys, and ne'er forget,
 To sympathize with those who toil and fret.
 Keep thyself pure : hold fast the faithful word,
 A holy vessel for the Master's use prepared.
 Be gentle unto all, and in good works abound,
 Established in the Truth, and in doctrine sound.
 Owe no man anything, but freely love
 Even thine enemies, and thus prove,
 Thyself a follower of Christ, once crucified ;
 Who for our sake, laid down his life and died.
 In nothing anxious be, but, " In the Lord be strong."
 And watchful—though the Master tarry long.
 Hold fast that which is good ; rejoice always,
 In everything give thanks and ceaseless pray.
 Run patiently the race, thou shalt not run in vain,
 Press on toward the mark, despising earthly gain.
 Do heartily thy task, and then thy cross lay down,
 And in the day of Christ, rise to receive thy crown.



Bible Reader's Calendar.



JANUARY.

FEBRUARY.

MARCH.

Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.
1	Ps. 1-3	Gen. 1	Matt. 1 18-25	1	Ps. 55-56	Gen. 28	Matt. 13 1-17	1	Ps. 114-116	Exodus 3	Matt. 25 14-30
2	" 4-6	" 2	" 2 1-12	2	" 57-58	" 29	" 13 18-33	2	" 117-118	" 4	" 25 31-46
3	" 7-8	" 3	" 2 13-23	3	" 59-61	" 30	" 13 34-58	3	" 119 1-48	" 5	" 26 1-16
4	" 9-10	" 4	" 3	4	" 62-64	" 31 1-24	" 14 1-21	4	" 119 49-96	" 6	Gen. 42
5	" 11-14	" 5	" 4 1-11	5	Acts 8	Acts 5	Gen. 39	5	" 119 97-144	" 7	Gen. 43
6	" 15-17	" 6	" 4 12-25	6	Ps. 65-66	Gen. 31 25-55	Gen. 40	6	" 119 145-176	" 8	Matt. 26 17-35
7	" 18	" 7	Gen. 11	7	" 67-68	" 32	Matt. 14 22-36	7	" 120-124	" 9	" 26 36-56
8	" 19-21	Acts 1	Gen. 12	8	" 69-70	" 33	" 15 1-20	8	" 125-129	" 10	" 26 57-75
9	" 22-23	Gen 8	Gen. 18	9	" 71-72	" 34	" 15 21-39	9	" 130-134	" 11	" 27 1-23
10	" 24-26	" 9	Matt. 5, 1-16	10	" 73-74	" 35	" 16 1-12	10	Acts 10	" 12	Gen. 45
11	" 27-28	" 11	" 5 17-32	11	" 75-77	" 37	" 16 13-28	11	Acts 11	Acts 8	Gen. 46
12	" 29-30	" 12	" 5 33-48	12	Acts 9	Acts 6	Gen. 41	12	Ps. 135-136	Exodus 13	Gen. 47
13	" 31	" 13	" 6 1-18	13	Ps. 78	Gen. 38	Matt. 17 1-13	13	" 137-139	" 14	Matt. 27 24-44
14	Acts 1	" 14	" 6 19-34	14	" 79-80	" 39	" 17 14-27	14	" 140-142	" 15	" 27 45-66
15	Acts 2	Acts 2	Gen. 21	15	" 81-83	" 40	" 18 1-20	15	" 143-144	" 16	" 28
16	Acts 5-6	Gen. 15	Gen. 22	16	" 84-85	" 41 1-36	" 18 21-35	16	" 145-147	" 17	Acts 1
17	Ps. 32-33	" 16	Matt. 7 1-14	17	" 86-88	" 41 37-57	" 19 1-15	17	" 148-150	" 18	" 2 1-28
18	" 34	" 17	" 7 15-29	18	" 89	" 42	" 19 16-30	18	Acts 12	Acts 9 1-31	Exodus 2 1-10
19	" 35-36	" 18	" 8 1-17	19	" 90-91	Acts 7 ; 8 1-3	" 20 1-16	19	Prov. 1-2	Exodus 19	Acts 2 29-47
20	" 37	" 19	" 8 18-31	20	" 92-94	Gen. 43	" 20 17-34	20	" 3	" 20	" 3
21	" 38-39	" 20	" 9 1-19	21	" 95-97	" 44	" 21 1-22	21	" 4-5	" 24	" 4 1-22
22	Acts 3-4	Acts 3	Gen. 27	22	" 98-100	" 45	" 21 23-46	22	" 6	" 32	" 4 23-37
23	Ps. 40-41	Gen. 21	Matt. 9 20-38	23	" 101-102	" 46	" 22 1-22	23	" 7	" 33	" 5 1-16
24	" 42-44	" 22	" 10 1-22	24	" 103-104	" 47	" 22 23-46	24	" 8	" 34	" 5 17-42
25	" 45-47	" 23	" 10 23-42	25	" 105	" 48	" 23 1-22	25	Acts 13-14	Acts 9 32-43	Exodus 2 11-25
26	" 48-49	" 24 1-28	" 11 1-15	26	" 106	" 49	" 23 23-39	26	Prov. 9-10	Deut. 1 1-21	Exodus 3 1-10
27	" 50-51	" 24 29-6	" 11 16-30	27	" 107	" 50	" 24 1-28	27	" 11	" 1 22-46	Acts 6
28	Acts 6	" 25	" 12 1-13	28	" 108-109	Exodus 1	" 24 29-51	28	" 12-13	" 2	" 7 1-16
29	Acts 7	Acts 4	Gen. 37	29	" 110-113	" 2	" 25 1-13	29	" 14	" 3	" 7 17-36
30	Acts 8	Gen. 26	Matt. 12 14-30					30	" 15	" 4 1-24	Exodus 7
31	Ps. 52-54	" 27	" 12 31-50					31	" 16	" 4 25-49	Exodus 8

THE CUCKOO.

When the trees are robed in green,
 And the tender buds are seen,
 When the pleasant flowers appear,
 The cheerful, two-fold voice we hear
 Of the Cuckoo!

Perched among the leafiest bowers,
 He displays his endless powers,
 In the woodlands all day long,
 Piping forth his changeless song,
 Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Thousands each fresh, hopeful year,
 Hail the welcome notes with cheer,
 And anew most gladly learn
 Of the joyous Spring's return—
 Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

Welcome, welcome, pretty bird,
 Make thy thrilling message heard;
 This, the glad news thou dost bring,
 Once again 'tis glorious Spring,
 Cuckoo! Cuckoo!

LOST

Somewhere between Sunrise and Sunset

TWO GOLDEN HOURS.

EACH SET WITH SIXTY DIAMOND MINUTES.

No Reward is Offered, as They are Gone for Ever.



THE LESSONS OF THE FLOWERS.

NOTHING could be more beautiful than the opening buds and blossoms of early Spring, and perhaps no season of the year is more gladly welcomed. How our hearts rejoice when we see this new life bursting forth after the long winter. The sun's rays begin to get brighter and warmer, and the soft, refreshing showers cause the things in the gardens and fields to spring up with youthful grace and beauty. I am sure you all love the flowers so we will have a quiet talk about a few of them as we stroll along together.

Dear flowers, how they seem to be smiling up at us everywhere! It seems as if God, after loading the earth with blessings, had just thrown in the flowers so that no part should be lacking in beauty and interest. Beautiful flowers, what an influence they have over our lives, and how attractive they are! There are some young people in this world of ours who are just like the lovely flowers; wherever they are found, and it is in the lowliest places often, they bring joy and gladness, and hope to the downcast in heart, and sweet messages of love and mercy, and comfort to the sorrowful.

Flowers cannot talk, and yet they speak to us very plainly in their own quiet way, for there is much language without sound. For instance, a good example speaks louder than words; and so, as the daisies and buttercups smile up at us from their grassy homes in the green meadows they say to us, God is good, and God is love. They speak to us of His wisdom and skill, and teach us many useful lessons.

From early times flowers have been used instead of words to express thoughts and feelings, because they appeal so forcibly to the heart. They not only gratify the sight, but are good and useful.

From them the bees extract pure wax and sweet honey, and many a sad heart has been cheered by their presence. If you are bright and useful like the flowers then you will be truly happy. It is not enough for you to have rosy faces, and strong and healthy limbs; to be able to run and skip about and enjoy yourselves, but

you must be good and do good to those around you. Unless piety accompanies a beautiful countenance it is of little worth; it is like the artificial flowers that look so well but yet they are failures, because they do not possess the life and fragrance that can produce wax and honey.

Flowers are often found growing in lonely places, and it may seem a waste to some people, but we cannot understand all their uses any more than we can tell all the great thoughts in the mind of God. There is a work for all to do however humble or weak. The lily and the violet are content to grow wherever God has placed them, and the tiny Alpine flowers in marvellous beauty among the weirdest scenery of snow and clouds; while the green velvet moss is content to creep over and cover up the deformity of the unsightly old thatch. Just so should we be willing to cover up the faults of others and make the best of things. On account of the beauty and usefulness of the flowers many little girls have been named after them. The Japanese are so fond of flowers that I believe all their girls are so named. If any of you are called Daisy, Lily, Rosie, or Flora, this should especially interest you, and help encourage you to try and imitate the character and graces of the flowers. In some countries plants and flowers were associated with human life from the cradle to the grave, the palm being used as a token of good wishes for a child's victory over evil; and in times of sickness the buckthorn or laurel were placed across the lintel of the door in hopes of recovery, while at death the head was crowned with flowers, as well as the urn or tombstone being wreathed with them.

In superstitious ignorance the Romans worshipped flowers, April 28th being the day set apart for the worship of the goddess Flora.

In Ceylon up to the present, heathen temples are festooned with flowers, and possibly worshipped. Throughout the Holy Land where Jesus our Saviour once lived, there are many choice and fragrant flowers besides those of humble growth. You remember how Jesus called attention to the flowers of the field. "Consider the lilies 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."

The lilies do not try to grow, they leave that to God. Their part is to draw all the nourishment from the soil and drink in the gentle dew from heaven. If we watch them constantly to try and perceive their growth we might get impatient, because it would seem so slow, but yet they do and very wonderfully. We must make use of our privileges and opportunities, and leave the rest to God, who will help us to grow as bright and beautiful as the lilies.

In the Bible flowers are frequently mentioned. They were used to beautify the holy things in both the Tabernacle and the Temple of old, and were intended as types of those who are to adorn the

more glorious and abiding House of God in the future. Some of these flowers are made to represent the House of Israel when purified and restored, and referred to the time when God will perform the truth unto Jacob and the mercy unto Abraham (Mic. vii., 20). Hosea compares Israel to the lily, saying, "He shall blossom as the lily" (ch. xiv.), and in Song of Solomon i., the Spirit says of Jesus, "I am a rose of Sharon, and a lily of the valleys." These flowers that are used in symbol, that is, are made to represent persons and things that are like them in character and appearance, will adorn the Holy Land when it is beautified and restored (Isa. lx.). Now let us think of some of the lessons which the flowers teach, for they are numerous, and we can only consider a few just now. One important thing is that they show us how dearly God loves all that is beautiful, pure and fragrant. What would this world be without the flowers with their diversity of colouring, shape and fragrance? How liberally God has scattered the mountains and valleys with them! The forests and the banks of the rivers, and even the muddy marshes are strewn with them, so that everyone may have the pleasure of beholding, and the opportunity of admiring and learning the goodness of God, and of tracing His wisdom.

As the flowers adorn the secluded places of earth, in the deepest solitude, so let us find some good wherever we are placed, and be sure that God can keep us safely and help us to overcome all obstacles. We need not fear any change, but may be virtuous in any place if God be for us and with us. Some of earth's choicest flowers grow out of the most disagreeable and objectionable manures, and some of God's loveliest flowers spring up bright and pure from the most unwelcome quarters and among the hardest and most common-place surroundings. Just as the sweetest perfumes are sometimes brought forth out of putrid substances, as the Musk and Civet, so too, from the meanest and humblest dwelling may arise the sweet refreshing fragrance of a holy life. Children, remember the flowers always live above the soil in which they are planted, and keep themselves clean and pure although so near the ground. Do not be fretful or discontented if you are not quite so favoured as some of your companions; perhaps you possess something far better than large houses and pretty dresses. Do you know that the delicate white flowers are more fragrant than those gaily coloured. The bright golden and lemon flowers are often disagreeable in smell, so that when a flower has less colour it has a more beautiful fragrance. Can we not see that God makes up to those who have less advantages than others, and that it is not the most attractive outwardly whose lives are most fragrant with the graces of the Spirit (Gal., v.) God chose the white fragrant almond blossom to typify immortal purity, because the white blossom in early spring-time foreshadowed a time of fruit. Little white snow-drop is the first flower of the year. It speaks to us of hope in

dark days and bids us be like Him, the Friend in need to the sad and lonely, our true Hope in life and death, who endured so many hardships. Snow-drop pierces the hard ground and nods its pearly head as if to say, Children, be brave like me, and dare to be true, even though the chilly winds sweep around us. I think it whispers a sweet message too of the resurrection of God's pure and bright ones who sleep in the dust of the earth awaiting an eternal Spring-time.

Fragrant white narcissus and crocus with its pretty orange, purple and white striped petals, coming soon after snowdrop teach a similar lesson. Crocus means Cheerfulness. How we should lay to heart the message of bright little crocus in these days when there seems so much gloom and sadness. We can be happy and cheerful in dark days for the sake of others if we have Jesus for our best Friend.

Then there are the violets that delight to grow among the brambles and beneath the shady hedgerows. Away in the secluded valleys all covered with woods we may find these sweet little flowers. Even before our eyes fall upon them we are aware of their presence by their delicious perfume. They teach us humility, modesty and discretion. The meek and lowly in heart are most like their Saviour, innocent and unassuming. They wear the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" that is precious in the sight of God. Remember there is no spot on earth even now where the children of God may not find some happiness in living to serve others. Hyacinth is another fragrant spring flower. It speaks about "Play," and breathes the lesson of simplicity and faithfulness. "I like to play with Mary," said a little girl to her mother one day, and when asked why, she promptly replied, "O, because she plays like a Christian." If you romp and laugh with your companions, and play games without being selfish and quarrelsome you will be loved and welcomed like fair Hyacinth. May all our leisure hours be pleasant and refreshing. Perhaps the most welcome little flower of spring is the golden-eyed daisy, or "day's-eye," as its name means. Daisy opens its eye first thing in the morning and looks right up at the sun, and keeps its eye fixed upon him all the day. So should we be always "looking unto Jesus," who is "the Sun of Righteousness." We cannot look at the sun in the sky, it would injure our sight if we tried, but one day we hope to see the King in His beauty. Every day we should look at His perfect example given us in the Bible and try to follow in His steps.

Daisy speaks of innocence and fidelity. It wakes up early and catches the first bright rays of light and drinks of the early dew, thus it is able to cheer others on their way. It is always the same plain, bright little daisy wherever we find it, in the fields or on cultivated lawns, reminding us of these words, "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble" (I. Peter v., 5).

Primrose looks pale and delicate, but if we notice, what a message of gentleness and grace it bears as it stands erect on its slender pink stem! It seems to love companionship and always has a number of friends about it, as quiet and gentle as itself. Primrose is so unassuming, and is content to be just "primrose" to the end of its days. It never envies tall stately daffodil as it raises its golden crowned head high above it, or rich sweet-scented Narcissus, so much admired by everyone. There is no pride of birth and position among these dear spring flowers, and no haughty looks or feelings of ill-will towards one another as we so often see in those who should know far better.

There is a sweet unconscious beauty about all the flowers. They smile on all, and send abroad their refreshing fragrance, and their lovely forms and colours are studied and praised while they retain their innocence. What lessons then of love, joy and peace, of trustfulness and contentment we may learn from them! Even tender little Forget-me-not, as blue as the skies, tells of that sweet consolation that comes from the knowledge that God is ever mindful of us.

Let us not forget to thank God for the sweet flowers, and try to be like them, so that we may be pleasing in His sight. When the summer comes, all being well, we must talk together about more of them.

BEAUTIFUL SPRING.

How beautiful ; oh, how beautiful
 Are the first bright days of spring !
 When the trees put forth their foliage,
 And the birds begin to sing,
 I feel my heart rejoicing
 Beyond what words can say ;
 And when I look around, I wish
 'Twould never pass away.

How beautiful ! oh, how beautiful
 Are the first bright rays of sun
 That wrap the earth in glory
 Ere wintry days are done !
 They fill my soul with gladness,
 Direct my thoughts on high
 From whence my Master, Christ the King,
 Returneth by and by.

How beautiful ! oh, how beautiful
 Are the flowers that fill the dell !
 The daisy and the buttercup,
 Primrose and heather-bell,
 The lily pure, the snowdrop,
 The fragrant perfumed rose,
 And the humble, modest violet—
 All our Father's love disclose.

How beautiful ! oh, how beautiful
 God made this world of ours,
 The free and joyous spring-time,
 The sunshine and the flowers !
 Oft, often will I lift my voice
 Sweet hymns of praise to sing,
 And thank, with all my heart, the God
 Who gave the glorious spring.

Yet glorious and more beautiful
 That future age will be
 When Christ in all His glory
 His faithful ones shall see ;
 Awakened in His likeness,
 Earth filled with heavenly light,
 Through all eternity, they shall
 Enjoy the wondrous sight.

PASS ON THE SUNSHINE.

If you have sunshine in your heart,
 Don't keep it—pass it round
 To those who need it, give a part,
 Don't keep it—pass it round.

It wasn't made alone for you ;
 It's yours, of course, but still, it's true,
 It's meant for other people, too ;
 Don't keep it—pass it round.

You'll find you have enough to spare ;
 Don't keep it—pass it round ;
 'Twill drown a lot of gloomy care,
 Don't keep it—pass it round.

Dividing up your sunshine store
 Will lighten loads for those hearts sore,
 And, you'll enjoy life all the more ;
 Don't keep it—pass it round.



BUTTERCUPS.

(ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG FRIEND IN SPRING).

Despise not the buttercups, young friend,
 Our thoughtful care they need;
 Just look across the golden fields—
 How beautiful indeed!

Boast not thy spacious garden bears
 Thee many a shining gem;
 Some flowers are common, some are rare,
 But God made all of them.

Look yonder to that ponderous oak,
 Swaying in royal power;
 But mark you well its moss-grown bark,
 With frail and quivering flower!

The green ivy that trails the ground
 Or clings to the old wall,
 May teach us wisdom if we will,
 So may the daisy small.

The violet, with fragrance sweet,
 Loves 'neath the hedge to hide;
 And the lily, with waxen bell,
 Seeks not a pasture wide.

How we enjoy the scented lanes
 When sweet Spring flowers are there,
 And find the tall bright buttercups
 Are smiling everywhere.

Then spare these golden cups, young friend
 Why shouldst thou destroy
 What God has given to make earth fair?
 They speak of love and joy.



GOD—WHO IS HE ?



HIS is an exceedingly interesting and important question, requiring the earnest consideration of all. And like all other religious subjects, the Bible must be consulted for the correct answer.

The Bible alone must be our guide, not the Bible and some other books. It alone can supply full and satisfactory information, for the Bible is its own interpreter, and God, who caused it to be written for our learning, can make no mistakes.

To commence with then, we learn that God is the All-wise, All-powerful Creator of all things (Gen. i. 1; Isa. xlv. 11, 12), and although no human eye has ever seen or can see Him, yet we may find out much about Him in His Word, and by observing His marvellous handiwork.

Nature alone will not help us to know God. We must look in the Bible to see who God is, and then nature, as it were, puts her seal to it saying: "Yes: it is all true—God made everything and 'God is Love.'"

This shall be our first thought about God. Whatever else we may learn, we will remember that "God is Love" (1 John iv. 8-16). The Bible tells us so over and over again, and all nature sings—"God is wisdom, God is Love."

I am not going to ask if you believe in God. Jesus took it for granted that all His friends did. How could they help believing? He said to His disciples before leaving them, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me" (John xiv. 1). The important question for us is,—What do we believe about God? Who is He? Now if we turn to the book of Ecclesiastes, we find these words: "God is in heaven and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few" (ch. v. 2). From this we learn that God's dwelling-place is heaven, as we read also in Psa. cxv. 15, 16, "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men."

God is high above all, not only in His dwelling-place but in authority. His Majesty fills the Heavens. We are weak and insignificant, and entirely dependent upon Him for all things. He

gives us what He considers best and we have no right to murmur about what He withholds. His greatness demands our obedience and respect. "Holy and reverend is His name" (Psa. cxi. 9). No human being, however wealthy or wise should take to himself this title which belongs to God alone, but should "Give unto the Lord the honour due unto His name" (Psa. cxv. 1). God will allow of no equal. He is the One Supreme Being who guides, controls and sustains all things. Speaking of His absolute power, Elihu said: "If He gather unto Himself, His spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together" (Job xxxiv. 14, 15), and the apostle confirmed these words when he told the learned ones of Athens that "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28). These superstitious people had built an altar with the inscription "To the unknown God," and Paul, seizing the opportunity, reasoned with them concerning the utter uselessness of idol worship, and pointed them to the only living True God, who made the world and all things therein, showing them the vast difference existing between the Great God, unknown to them, and the gods of gold, silver, and stone, worshipped with men's hands, for—

"Jehovah dwells alone, No equal can He see—
The unchangeable and Mighty God, from all eternity."

"To whom will ye liken God?" enquired the prophet, "or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?" (Isa. xl. 18). He is so great that even nations before Him are as nothing. "The everlasting Father, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding" (verse 28). In the book of Job the Almightyness of God is brought before us very forcibly. Read carefully chapters xxxviii.—xli., and you will conclude that no better answer could be given to those heart-searching questions than the words of Job himself: "I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee" (ch. xlii. 2).

Yes, this is a "Great God" with whom we have to do, and the Bible tells us as much about His greatness as His love. Who would not honour His glorious and fearful name? "Behold God is great and we know Him not, neither can the number of His years be searched out" (again we read in Job xxxvi. 26). "Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord," says the psalmist. "For Thou art great and doest wondrous things: Thou art God alone" (Psa. lxxxvi. 8-10). "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable," he exclaims (Psa. cxlv. 3). "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite." And coupled with this greatness, is His "Goodness." "Good and upright is the Lord" (Psa. xxv. 8). "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psa. cxlv. 9). See how David qualifies this goodness in verse 7, and in another Psalm he compares it to the great moun-

tains :—" He is abundant in goodness " (Psa. xxxiv. 6). " The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord " (Psa. xxxiii. 5). In the truest sense of the word, there is none good but God. Even Jesus would not accept the honour of being addressed as " Good Master " (Mark x. 17).

Love and goodness are ever close companions of real greatness, so " God is Love " and " God is Good " because He is great. His goodness is shown forth moment by moment. " He giveth to all life and breath, and all things " (Acts xvii. 25), sending us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts xiv. 17). " He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (Matt. v. 45). His temporal gifts should make us remember Him, and cause us to love Him too; but His goodness not only provides for our present needs but extends right on to the glorious future. With God's choicest gift, the gift of His own dear Son, He freely gives us all things (Rom. viii. 32). " O how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee " the psalmist says again (Psa. xxxi. 19), reminding us of the Apostle's words, " Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

We gather also from some of the verses already referred to that " God is Eternal," from everlasting to everlasting (Psa. xc. 2), There was a time when there were no angels. These bright immortal beings owe their power and glory to God, and although Jesus existed in the mind and purpose of God from the foundation of the world, well we know that He was born in Bethlehem of Judæa nearly 2,000 years ago. But God has always been and will continue to be, for He is Self-existent. Moses sought to impress Israel with the fact that " God is Holy and separate." " The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward " (Deut. x. 17). He tells them also that He is a " Jealous God," that is, full of zeal, or much concerned about, and solicitous for, His people's welfare, and He is " the Faithful God " which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him."

We are not surprised then to find these words in that solemn, plaintive psalm, prophetic of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that was to follow : " Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel " (xxii. 3). Yes, " God is Holy." He has declared Himself so to be, and desires His people to be holy too; so Peter reminded the believers that it is written, " Be ye holy, for I am holy " (1 Peter i. 16).

Then you recollect that Jesus told the woman of Samaria that " God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth " (John iv. 24). In other words, " God is a

Spiritual Being." When we come to Him, " We must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him " (Heb. xi. 6). It is John also who tells us that " God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all " (1 John i. 5). He is Spirit-Light, the glory of which was seen above the camps of Israel and going before the Israelites in their wilderness journeyings, symbolising the Presence of their most glorious Ruler and Protector, for God is a great King (Jer. x. 10). His glory is to be witnessed yet again, shining upon the city of God's choice, Jerusalem, in the days to come, " And there shall be no night there " (Rev. xxi. 23-25) on account of this resplendent glory.

Among the many titles belonging to God, perhaps there is none so beautiful as that of " Father." There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all," said the Apostle Paul to the Christians at Ephesus (Eph. iv. 6), and to those at Rome, " Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but. . . the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father " (Rom. viii. 15), and the same thoughts were passing in his mind when he wrote to the Galatians. They had received Jesus and therefore become sons of God, so he reminds them of their privileges, saying, " Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father " (Gal. iv. 6). He is the God and Father of the Lord Jesus too (2 Cor. i. 3), as well as the Father of all that believe in Jesus. A merciful, loving Father that pities the weaknesses and helps the infirmities of His children. Jesus said to His disciples, " When ye pray say, Our Father who art in heaven " (Matt. vi.). How frequently Jesus spoke of God as His Father! It was for this saying the Jews once attempted to stone Him, misinterpreting His words when He said, " I and My Father are One " (John x. 30). Jesus never claimed to be equal with God, but being the only begotten, well-beloved Son of God, who did always those things that please the Father, He was one with Him in will and purpose. " I can of myself do nothing " said Jesus on one occasion, showing how entirely dependent upon His Father He was for all things (John v. 19-30). Even the gracious words He spake were attributed to Him (John viii. 28).

And this brings us to another very important point in our consideration of who God is. As we have before noted that the Scriptures are our only safe guide, we will turn again to them and there we find that " God is One."

God does not ask us to believe what is impossible to be understood. The teaching of the Bible is reasonable, and always in harmony with the laws of nature. For instance, the Bible does not teach us that Jesus existed co-eternally with His Father, for a son cannot be as old as his father. This would be a direct contradiction to the Bible, nature and reason, and would place us in a

very difficult position in relation to other truths of vital importance were we to accept it. The phrases "Holy Trinity," "Triune God," and "Very God of very God," are nowhere to be found in the Book of books. The inspired definition is "God is One." Let us look at a few references to be quite clear on this point. We will go back to the words of Moses for a start. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is One Lord" (Deut. vi. 4). Notice r.v. marginal alternative. How definite and decisive! and how grievous was Israel's sin when they forsook the Lord and served other gods! Passing on to the time of the Kings, we have the same glorious truth brought before us in Hezekiah's prayer. King Hezekiah was troubled on account of the boastful words of the king of Assyria who had sent to reproach the living God. When the letter was received, he read it and then went up into the house of the Lord and spread it before the Lord. (Let us follow his example). "And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwelleth between the cherubim, Thou art the God even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou hast made heaven and earth" (2 Kings xix. 15). We must not stay here for further particulars or the answer to that earnest prayer, interesting as it is, but turn to another reference.

"Is there a God beside Me?" enquires the Divine Creator Himself in Isa. xlv. and then gives the answer, v. 8, "Yea, there is no God; I know not any." "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me" (Isa. xlv. 5). "Hath not One God created us" asked the prophet Malachi (ch. ii. 10). Surely the Lord and His own prophets should be taken at their word! But perhaps some of my young friends will say, well, that is all quite true, but when we come to the New Testament, things were changed, Jesus was born and lived among men, and was He not "God with us?" Then after His ascension the Holy Spirit was given and so have we not "Three in One, and One in Three?" Let us see.

First, we remember that God said of Himself, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. iii. 6). It is scarcely necessary to say then, that whatever has been changed is not of God.

Our next greatest authority is Jesus. Do you recollect what He said to the one who came running to Him, saying, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Yes, the words are so familiar to us. "There is none good but one, that is, God" (Mark x. 17, 18). Therefore Jesus cannot be God. Think how He answered the scribe who asked, "Which is the first commandment of all?" In the very words of Moses we have already mentioned, "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. vi. 4), and the scribe said unto Him, "Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He" (Mark xii. 32). In similar words the same truth is

recorded in Matt. xix. and Luke xviii., and this is followed up by the teaching of the Apostles.

Paul told the Corinthian believers that "an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." For though there be that are called gods. . . to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in Him"; and then adds, "And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (or on account of whom) are all things and we by Him" (1 Cor. xiii. 4-6). To the Galatians he said, "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one: but God is one." And again to the Ephesians, "There is. . . one God and Father of all" (Gal. iii. 20; Eph. iv. 6).

Is Jesus less appreciated then if He is not God? A thousand times, No! "To you therefore which believe He is precious," said Peter in his first epistle, after telling those who had come to believe in God, who raised up Jesus from the dead, that they had not been "redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." This can mean nothing else than that they believed the truth concerning Jesus. It was Peter who made that noble confession of Christ in the days of his weakness, when "He was despised and rejected of men." "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi. 16). The same as Nathanael had discovered near the banks of Galilee, when he exclaimed, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel" (John i. 49). Paul told Timothy that God "would have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the Truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 4, 5). "Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well" reasoned the apostle James; and so shall we, if we cling to the Bible and agree with all these worthies of old that "God is One."

This God "dwelleth in light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen nor can see" (1 Tim. vi. 15), and may only be known to the extent that He has been pleased to reveal Himself.

Philip once said, "Lord shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 10). How faithfully Jesus must have represented the Father, that in every deed and truth the eternal Creator was manifested through Him! "And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God," said Jesus, addressing His Father in Heaven (John xvii. 3).

Oh that we may learn to know Him truly and serve Him with willing hearts and minds, putting Him "First" in all things, so that when Jesus delivers up the kingdom to His Father, that God may be "All in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28), we may share in the blessedness of that most gracious age. For then, all will know Him from the least unto the greatest, and all the earth be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord" (Hab. ii. 14).



GOD IS LOVE.

Love rules, Perfect love !
 Love rules the heavens above ;
 Love rules the earth beneath,
 Love all blessings doth bequeath,
 For " God is Love !"

Love makes the sun to shine,
 The moon and stars in lustre fine ;
 Love formed the deep blue sea,
 The mountains, vales and lea,
 Unbounded love !

Love for His glory made,
 Man, and in Eden's glade,
 Placed him, as lord of state,
 With Eve, his bosom mate,
 Love, divine love !

Love made the flowers so fair,
 And the birds of the air ;
 Love sent His Son to save,
 Love conquered o'er the grave,
 Redeeming love !

Love rule within our hearts,
 Love, quench all fiery darts,
 Love, give us peace of mind,
 Love, make us patient, kind,
 Pure, perfect love !

Love, grant us Thine to be,
 And make us more like Thee,
 Love, be Thou ever nigh,
 For Thou can'st never die,
 Love, Perfect Love !

GOD IS GOOD.

Yes, God is good! No words could possibly be more true. We recollect the reply of Jesus to the young lawyer, "there is none good but One, that is God," and we are all familiar with the beautiful hymn commencing, "Yes, God is good in earth and sky."

Those who love God often speak one to another of His love and goodness toward them, and try to show forth their thankfulness, not only by singing hymns of praise, but by endeavouring earnestly to serve and please Him.

The writer of this hymn has given us some lovely thoughts about the goodness of God in Nature. When we look around and see the sun shining, the trees robed in verdure, and the flowers so fragrant and fair; yea, all the manifold works of God, all so wonderful, and so perfect, our hearts are filled with joy and gladness, and we exclaim—"Yes, God is good, all Nature says." In our Sunday School we often lift up our voices in songs of gratitude to God for His goodness, and when we take our walks, and pic-nic in the country, or by the sea-side, how frequently we raise the same joyous notes of praise.

Children, it is good and well-pleasing to God to sing His praises at all times and in all places for it lifts us up above the poor, empty, perishing things of the world, and helps us to keep in touch with higher and better things, even the things that are eternal. "Is any merry?" enquires the apostle James, "let Him sing psalms." "It is a good thing to sing praises unto the Lord" says the sweet psalmist who sang while engaged in his humble duties in the fields of Bethlehem as shepherd.

Sometimes we feel like singing all the while, our hearts are so full. That is how I felt one bright morning not long ago. Everything around me looked so beautiful, the sun was shining, the flowers seemed so fresh and fair, and the birds were merrily singing. The words of our hymn came to mind, and almost unconsciously I was singing it through. Then I thought how true it all is, but still there is much more we might sing about the goodness of God; so I went on singing, adding verse to verse, as you have it below, for I wrote the verses down in order that you might also see, in how many ways God reveals His goodness to us; and that you may all be able to sing and rejoice with me.

Now children, you all know the tune, sing as heartily as you can:—

Yes, God is good, each morn we rise,
 Fresh for the duties of the day,
 Oh let us think, "How good God is,"
 Ere we pursue our onward way.

Yes, God is good ; our needs supplied,
 His goodness and His greatness prove ;
 To Him we look for food and clothes,
 In Him we live, and act, and move.

Yes, God is good, His loving Heart,
 Is touched with all our pain and care ;
 He looks on us with pitying eye,
 And answers every faithful prayer.

Yes, God is good, in blessings poured
 Upon the thankless and the just :
 And nothing can in no wise harm,
 The humble ones who in Him trust.

Yes, God is good ; the whole world o'er,
 His loving kindness is displayed ;
 From mountain top to shining rill,
 His grace and wisdom are portrayed.

Yes, God is good, Oh may we give,
 Due honour to His name always ;
 Then in His Kingdom we may still,
 Proclaim His love through endless days.

WHICH ?

Here are two little hands,
 What can they do—
 Good things or bad things
 The whole day through?
 Helping or hindering—
 Which of the two?

Here are two little feet,
 Where have they run—
 Into the shadow or
 Into the sun?
 Helping or hindering—
 Which have they done?

Here are two little lips,
 What can they say—
 Glad words or cross words
 Through the whole day?
 Helping or hindering—
 Now, which are they?

GOD, WHO LOVES US.

Pilgrim.

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. It begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The melody consists of several phrases, with dynamic markings of *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *cres.* (crescendo) indicating volume changes. The score is divided into two systems, each with a double bar line. The first system contains the first two lines of music, and the second system contains the remaining two lines.

God Who loves us,
Dwells above us ;
We'll try
Not to grieve Him,
But believe Him,
Ever nigh.

Never fretful,
Nor forgetful,
Oh may
We give pleasure
Without measure
Every day.

Lord of glory,
We adore Thee,
And pray
Thee to hear us,
And be near us,
All our way.

Watchful ever,
Our endeavour,
Shall be,
Though we're youthful,
To be truthful,
Before Thee.

With bright faces,
Joyous praises
We'll sing.
To Life's sadness,
Love and gladness
We will bring.

THOUGHTS.

LONG while ago I heard of a very little girl who had been playing in the nursery nearly all the day with her kitty, dollies, and coloured picture story book, and had become so tired, that when big sister Nellie came upstairs to talk to her, after lessons were prepared, tears were in the bright blue eyes, and rolling down the hot, dimpled cheeks.

A game of "Hide and Seek" was started, and the tears soon disappeared. "I spy," cried Nellie, and then Maggie's merry laugh resounded again, and another hiding place was quickly sought for.

"I spy," repeated Nellie, "I see Maggie's head above the sofa."

“Wo tan’t, wo tan’t,” retorted the little girl, clasping both hands over her head, and as Nellie went on saying “Yes, I can, I see hands, eyes, mouth, nose, and chin,” Maggie emphasised the words “Wo tan’t, wo tan’t,” by vigorously shaking her curly head.

Then feeling that big sister had won the game, she stood quite still for a few moments with such a serious little face that Nellie wondered what would happen next.

Suddenly, she exclaimed, with a mischievous smile, “I know, Nellie, I know, wo tan’t see me finks! Wo tan’t see me finks!”

Maggie danced about for joy, repeating “Wo tan’t see me finks,” until Nellie, with good-night kisses, carried her off to bed.

Yes, little Maggie was quite right. Friends cannot see our thoughts; but always remember, boys and girls, that God can. Thoughts are very wonderful. Only one can pass through the mind at a time, and what a number of thoughts we have during a day!

Thoughts are like the main-spring in a watch, which proves whether it is a good one or not. Solomon says: “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. xxiii. 7).

God is the Great Thought-Reader. He knows all things. We cannot hide anything from Him. (Psalm cxxxix. 2; Job xlii. 2). Well may we ask ourselves the question Jesus once put to Simon (Matt. xvii.), “What thinkest thou?” and endeavour to keep a stricter watch over our thoughts.

God told Israel through the prophet Ezekiel (ch. xi. 5), “I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them,” and we may be sure He knows ours too. Jesus said, “Out of the heart proceed. . . . evil thought” (Matt. xv. 19). All kinds of bad thoughts are included in that word “evil.” Selfish, unkind, ungrateful, unjust, and impure thoughts, are all displeasing to God. Proud thoughts prompted those indignant words of Naaman about Elisha’s message and the best rivers to bathe in (11 Kings v. 11, 12). He had wrong thoughts of God’s way to cleansing. If he wanted the blessing of health, he must willingly do whatever God commanded.

Covetous thoughts led Achan to take those Babylonish garments (Josh. vii. 21). Mean thoughts made Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, keep back part of the price of the land (Acts v.), and wrong thoughts, too, about God’s free gift, caused Simon to exclaim, “Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts viii. 18-20), and offer money for the same.

Even “the thought of foolishness is sin” (Prov. xiv. 9) in God’s sight; so, boys and girls, there must be no silly nonsense in the minds of those who would please Him.

Will you ask God, in the words of that beautiful prayer at the end of 139th Psalm, to search. . . . try. . . . and know your thoughts, and lead you into the Way Everlasting?

But not only does God know our thoughts, but He thinks of us. God's thoughts are not like our thoughts (Isa. lv. 8). We must never imagine He acts unkindly when trials, or pain, or sorrow come, for God's thoughts are always kind towards them that love Him, and I hope you do very much (Jer. xxix. 11, 12). He will make all things work together for their good (Rom. viii. 28), so that we may say, "How precious are Thy thoughts to me, O God, how great is the sum of them!" (Psa. cxxxix. 7).

Then there is our part to consider. God is well pleased when we think of Him. He takes notice of all who do (Mal. iii. 16), and will count them among His jewels by-and-bye.

How sad that God should have to say of His chosen People: "My people have forgotten Me days without number (Jer. ii. 32). Many in these days, both young and old, are so busy with the things of this present life, that they have no time to think of God and study His Word.

Let God manage your thoughts then dear boys and girls, and the words and actions which are the outcome of good, pure, noble thoughts, must surely follow.

Often read and think about the beautiful life of the Lord Jesus, then selfish, worldly thoughts, will gradually vanish away, and at last, may you, with all those who are looking for the Glorious Kingdom soon to come, be able to bring, by the grace of God, "every thought into the obedience of Christ" (11 Cor. x. 5).

"THOU GOD SEEST ME."

May be sung to tune "Peter" on page 45.

I cannot hide away from God,
He is so great and high,
He knows my heart, He reads my thoughts,
And hears me when I cry.

He watches o'er me while I sleep,
All through the silent night,
And when the light of morning dawns,
I wake up in His sight.

I cannot see this glorious God,
Who sees and cares for me,
But all His wondrous works declare
How loving He must be.

Then I will try to serve Him well,
And in His Word believe,
For such a wise and loving God
I surely must not grieve.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.—PROV. 15, 3.



JESUS— HIS CHARACTER AND TITLES.



E have already thought of Jesus as the "Son of God," and dwelt upon His wonderful love in laying down His life for us. Now we will think more particularly of His character, and some of His titles.

The character of Jesus well becomes the holy and beautiful Name by which He is known, and there are many titles belonging to Him besides that of "Son."

Perhaps the most familiar of all these is,—“Saviour.” What a lovely title this is! In the Old Testament God is frequently spoken of as “the Saviour,” as well as in several places in the New. In Isaiah xliii. 3, God says to Israel through His prophet, “I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.” God was as truly Israel’s Saviour as their Creator and King (v. 15). “Many times did He deliver them but they were rebellious,” says the psalmist (Psa. vi. 43). “When they went from one nation to another. . . He suffered no man to do them wrong” (Psa. cv. 13, 14). “God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth” (Psa. lxxiv. 12). “The earth feared and was still, when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth,” says the Psalmist again. (Psa. lxxvi. 8, 9). This salvation which God wrought for Israel in the past is also a type of a greater salvation from bondage, that awaits them in the near future.

God called His people to witness that, “Besides Me there is no Saviour.” I have declared and have saved (Isa. xliii. 11, 12, and again in Hosea xiii. 4) “Thou shalt know no god but Me; for there is no Saviour besides Me,” and Jeremiah addressed God as “the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble” (ch. xiv. 8). So that Jude the Apostle made no mistake when he concluded his short letter with the words, “To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever” (v. 25).

God is still the Saviour of men, although He has chosen to do so through His dear Son; as Paul declared, " God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself " (11 Cor. v. 19), or as John records in his gospel, " God sent not His Son into the world to condemn. . . . but that the world through Him might be saved " (ch. iii. 17), and in his epistle, he says, " We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world " (1 Jno. iv. 14).

The Samaritans who heard of, and came to Jesus through the invitation of the woman who said, " Come, see a man who told me all that ever I did," recognised that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world (Jno. iv. 42), and Mary, the mother of Jesus, must also have been convinced of this same great truth, when she rejoiced at the good news concerning the birth of her Son, saying " My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour " (Luke i. 47). Now if we connect this with the message of the angel to the shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night, " Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. . . . For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord " (Luke ii.) we may realise something of the depth of meaning in those words of the Saviour Himself, at which the Jews were offended, " I and My Father are One " (Jno. x.).

God had promised to send Israel a Saviour, but when the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost, they turned deaf ears to His loving invitation to come unto the Father by Him. Oh, how surprised and sad they will be when He comes again to earth, and they look upon this long rejected Saviour, whom they pierced and crucified.

Peter and the other apostles testifying before the council, after God had sent the angel and released them from prison, said, " We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins " (Acts v.), and Paul addressing the audience of Jews in the synogogue at Antioch reminded them how God had brought their fathers out of Egypt with an high arm and suffered their manners in the wilderness, or as the margin says, bore, or fed them, as a nurse beareth, or feedeth her child. And when afterward they desired a king, God gave them Saul, and later David to be their king, and then in due time had raised up unto Israel, according to His promise, " a Saviour, Jesus." Here Paul proves that Jesus was of the royal house of David. Both the " Prince " or " High Priest " of His own household, and the " King " destined to occupy David's throne and rule over His House, or Kingdom for ever. And this He will do in the appointed time. Zechariah tells us how He shall

build the temple of the Lord and bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne : and He shall be a priest upon His throne (ch. vi.).

There are two other titles claimed by Jesus Himself, which appear never to have been disputed, as were the titles of " Son of God " and " the Christ " (Matt. iv. 3, 6 ; xxvii. 40 ; Mark xv. 32 ; Luke 23). I refer to those of " Master " and " Lord." Titles which imply superiority and rulership. The words " Lord " and " Master " were not confined to the little inner circle of the disciples, but in the broadest sense were frequently used by those who by their words and conduct owned no allegiance to Jesus, but yet must have felt something of awe and reverence when they came into His presence and marked the calm dignity of His behaviour upon every varied occasion, and the authority as well as the truth of the words He spake ; although many only cared to acknowledge Him, with envy lurking in their hearts, as " the carpenter's Son."

Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? asked the " great Teacher!" (Luke vi. 46), and again, when one said unto Him, " Lord, are there few that be saved?" He said, " Strive to enter in by the narrow door : for many . . . shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once ' the Master of the house ' is risen up, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us and he shall answer. . . I know you not whence ye are." They had made a profession of following Him, but by their works denied Him, and so are classed among the workers of iniquity (Luke xiii.). Yes, they had called Him, " Lord, Lord," glibly enough, and addressed Him as " Good Master " or " Teacher," yet they would not come unto Him, nor take His yoke upon them, that they might find rest unto their souls, and have life.

We see that a bare assent to the claims and authority of Jesus is not enough as Jesus Himself said, " Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven," (Matt. vii. 21—23). This " doing " denotes " action "—the following of a certain course of life—the willing, intelligent belief in, and the cheerful acceptance of His teaching and claims, coupled with loving obedience to His will. In meekness and lowliness, endeavouring to follow in His steps, walking as it were, side by side with Jesus, keeping in line with Him, so that His yoke becomes easy, and His burden light. It is because so many try to serve two Masters that Christ's yoke seems so irksome and His burden so heavy. If the oxen drawing the plough are constantly kicking against the pricks, the yoke will not fit well and they will be bruised and hindered in the work.

So let us not merely confess Christ with our lips but believe on Him in our hearts, and acknowledge Him in all our ways. Judas, you recollect, with the words, " Hail, Master," and the kiss

of betrayal on his lips marshalled the band of soldiers through the deep shady glades of Gethsemane, that they might take Jesus and lead Him away to be crucified. How black and deadly is the sin of pretended loyalty! We turn from the dreadful picture to another scene a little earlier in the life of Jesus, in which Judas is again a prominent figure, recorded in the thirteenth chapter of John. Here Jesus teaches his disciples and us, what it means to be truly great. He had told them previously that, he who would be great among them must be willing to serve all, and that they were to remember that the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. "It is enough for the disciple to be as his master and the servant as his Lord" (Matt. x. 24). Jesus did not encourage one person's dominating a number of his fellow creatures often to their hurt, but throws quite a different aspect on the meaning of the words, Master and Lord, then is generally accepted. And whatever He gave in precept, He always put into practise; and so with this beautiful, touching incident. Rising from supper, He laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself and began to wash the disciples' feet. We cannot stay to consider all the details but I trust you will read and ponder over them.

After he had washed their feet. . . . and was set down again, He said unto them, "Know ye not what I have done unto you?" They must have been much surprised, for Jesus was taking the place of a slave whose duty it was to bathe the soiled and tired feet of visitors or guests. Well might Peter at first refuse! He felt so unworthy of such lowly service, but Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," and that was sufficient for Peter, so he answered, Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and head.

They did not understand at the time, but Jesus said they should hereafter. This washing of their feet was to teach them two important lessons. They had been washed from their sins in the waters of baptism, now they needed the daily cleansing from the constant faults and failings in the walk of life, from the sins that do so easily beset. Jesus was shortly to shed His life-blood on Calvary's Tree, for, "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." In God's great scheme for our redemption both the water and the blood are necessary elements (1 Jno. v. 5, 6). The water washing away all our original sin, by the personal act of faith and obedience, and the blood of Christ believingly applied, cleansing continually from all sin. What a lesson is this too for all who say it does not matter whether they are baptized or not (Mark xvi. 15, 16).

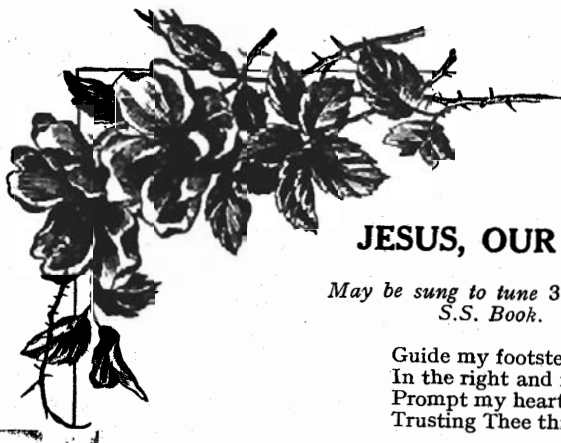
There is a dividing line, young friends, that marks off and shows clearly whether we are really partners with Christ. If we are unwilling to do what He wishes, how can we be truly His? The second lesson is that of humility and condescension. "Ye

call Me Master and Lord : continued Jesus, and ye say well ; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Example is always better than precept, for it carries with it a much greater wealth of influence, and usually leaves a deeper impression on the heart and mind.

Have you ever been asked to do some simple deed of kindness for another whom you felt was much beneath you, and you turned away with an indignant refusal, only to find later that someone of much higher rank than yourself has willingly performed the lowly service, for the dear Master's sake who first set the example? giving untold joy to the humble recipient and also honouring His Name. Jesus was never above stooping to the lowliest—never too busy to lend a listening ear to the cry of the needy and distressed—never so engrossed in His own concerns as to be impatient when interrupted ! He was ever ready to bless others, laying aside His own ease or comfort for their sake, even forgetting to take necessary food in His eagerness to preach the glad tidings of the Kingdom to all who desired to learn of Him.

Truly He could say as none other dare, " I have given you an example." Let us try and follow it.



JESUS, OUR EXAMPLE.

*May be sung to tune 37, "Weber,"
S.S. Book.*

Guide my footsteps day by day,
In the right and narrow way,
Prompt my heart to love Thy Will,
Trusting Thee through good or ill.

God of mercy, God of grace,
From Thy holy dwelling place,
Look upon a little child,
Make me humble, meek and mild.

When the tears of passion start,
And bad feelings fill my heart,
Help me, Lord, to conquer sin,
And o'er self the victory win.

Jesus was so good and kind,
Nothing wrong in Him we find ;
I would His example take,
And be good for His dear sake.

God of mercy, God of grace,
Early would I seek Thy Face ;
Teach me how to worship Thee,
And to Thee all glory be.

" Your Father knoweth what things ye need."



ALPHABETICAL TITLES OF JESUS.

- " **A**uthor and Finisher of our Faith." (Heb. xii., 2).
 " **B**eloved Son " of God, and man. (Matt. iii., 17 ; Heb. iv., 15).
 " **C**aptain of our Salvation." (Heb. ii., 10).
 " **D**oor of the Sheep," the only door by which the flock go in.
 " **E**manuel " God with us. (Isai. vii., 14 ; Matt. i., 23).
 " **F**oundation Stone." (Isai. xxviii., 16 ; i. Cor. iii., 11).
 " **G**ood Shepherd." (Jno. x., 11, 14, 16 ; Isai. xl., 11).
 " **H**igh Priest " at God's right hand. (Heb. iii., 1 ; vii., 26).
 " **I** am " (John viii., 58 ; see also Exod. iii., 14).
 " **J**esus " the Saviour. The sweetest Name on earth.
 " **K**ing of kings " Who once wore a crown of thorns. (Rev. xvii., 14).
 " **L**ight of the World," Walk in the Light. (John viii., 12 ; ix., 5).
 " **M**essiah," God's Anointed or The Christ. (Dan. ix., 26 ; Jno. i., 41).
 " **N**azarene." (Matt. ii., 23 ; xxi., 11 ; Luke ii., 51 ; John i., 45).
 " **O**ffspring of David," called David's Son and Lord. (Psa. cx.).
 " **P**lant of Renown," at first " a tender Plant." (Ezek. xxx., 29).
 " **Q**uickenng Spirit " that is Life-giving." (1 Cor., xv., 45 ; Jno. v.).
 " **R**edeemer " (Isai. lix., 20). " **R**oot " (Rev. xxii., 16).
 " **S**eed of the woman " (Gen. iii., 15). " **S**aviour " (Luke ii., 11).
 " **T**eacher " sent from God. (Jno. iii., 2 ; vii., 46). " **T**ruth."
 " **U**ndefiled," The Lamb without blemish. (Heb. vii., 26).
 " **V**ine," of whom we may be the branches. (Jno. xv., 1, 5).
 " **W**ay " by Whom we approach unto God. (Jno. 14, 6 ; Heb. x.).
 " **X**ample." Let us follow Him. (Jno. xiii., 15 ; Matt. xvi., 24).
 " **Y**esterday, to-day; and ever, Jesus Christ." (Heb. xiii., 8).
 " **Z**eal of the Lord of Hosts." (Isai. ix., 7 ; lix., 7 ; Jno. ii., 17).
 (Oh may zeal like His inflame our hearts).

PARADISE LOST AND REGAINED.

Tell you a story, little Maid?
 Some words of Life from the grand old Book
 Wherein our Father's Love is displayed?
 Yes, I see from your wishful look.

Then where the Ancient Seer began
 His story so simple and yet so true,
 I'll tell how God made this Earth for man,
 And fashioned it in His Goodness anew.

When by the Mighty Spirit-Word,
 Light chased away the darkness dread,
 And wonderful Orbs in the heavens appeared,
 And the waters gathered in their deep bed.

The awful chaos, the void, the gloom,
 Vanished at the Divine behest,
 And Earth arose from her sombre tomb
 In garments of glorious verdure drest.

Beautiful flowers the pastures filled,
 Spreading abroad their fragrance rare,
 While sweet-voiced birds in the woodlands trilled,
 Music blending with pure fresh air.

Lofty mountains and verdant hills,
 Looked down in silent majesty
 O'er fruitful valleys and sparkling rills,
 Beneath the azure canopy.

Morning Stars in their gladness sang
 To welcome the dawn of that Perfect Day,
 And shouts of praise through heaven's arches rang
 To Him Whose Word they trust and obey.

Such was the Paradise of God,
 The beautiful Eden by Him prepared;
 Man, side by side, with the Elohim trod,
 And sweet companionship with them shared.

Earth was then a magnificent place,
 Glory to God in the Highest given;
 All was order, beauty and grace,
 Reflecting the light and joy of Heaven.

No storm-clouds darkened those radiant skies,
 No chilly winds swept the forests through;
 No tears ever dimmed those bless'd ones eyes,
 For pain and sorrow they never knew.

But Sin entered there and Death through Sin,
 The lovely picture was marred and spoiled,
 For Man yielded to evil desires from within
 And the spotless garments of innocence soiled.

Covered with guilt and shame they sought,
 To hide themselves in the leafy glade,
 From the Holy Presence of Him they ought
 To have loved and honoured and ever obeyed.

Severed from God, they were driven abroad,
 To face the battle and wage the strife;
 While bright Cherubim with flaming sword
 Guard every way the Tree of Life.

And Adam must labour with weary brow,
 And Eve in weakness oft bend her head;
 And both to mortal sorrow must bow
 When they behold their loved one, dead.

Oh the awful heinousness of sin,
 And the fearful consequence it brings!
 We feel its deadly power within,
 And trace it in all human things.

'Tis written on the pale blanched face
 Of those who tramp the city street;
 It dwells in men of high-born race,
 And those who crouch beneath their seats.

The hungry who in vain seek bread
 While earth affords a rich supply;
 And the thousands who work with aching head,
 And long to lay them down and die.

Are monuments of what obtains
 Through that first sin in Eden's bower;
 And the feeble, base, demented brains
 Of many, speak its constant power.

Stay, little maiden, dry thy tears
 Sweet Child, the story ends not here;
 Man was not left in his guilty fears
 Without one promise his heart to cheer.

See judgment meted by love divine,
 Justice tendered by power supreme;
 See wisdom, goodness and mercy benign,
 All working together in that great scheme.

For man's redemption from sin and death,
 The eternal Arm is put forth to save;
 And although he must yield his fleeting breath
 He may rise victorious from the grave.

For God who is holy, just and good
 An humble offering in love designed
 Whereby His fallen creatures could
 Draw near and with Him acceptance find.

And so the blood of the victim shed,
 Foreshadowed that one great Sacrifice,
 When Christ as a lamb to the slaughter led,
 His life-blood gave as the ransom price.

Thus what man lost by that grievous fall,
 Jesus, by perfect obedience regained.
 And receiving a Name which is far above all,
 Eternal redemption for us obtained.

Oh beautiful earth! when once again
 She shall blossom forth as the fragrant rose,
 And her glorious King shall return to reign,
 And end for ever all human woes.

Oh lovely Earth! when the Prince of Peace
 Victorious reigns on Zion's hill,
 And war and blood-shed for ever cease,
 And all men honour God's holy will.

Sweet child, would'st thou share this heavenly bliss,
 And raise thy voice in that glad new song?
 Would'st thou dwell in a perfect world like this,
 And be full of vigour, healthy and strong?

Then let the Truth of this grand old Book,
 Dwell richly within thy heart and mind;
 To its precious precepts for guidance look,
 For the Light of Life thou wilt therein find.

And when the trump of God shall sound,
 And the dead in Christ, hear and arise—
 If thy name among the faithful be found,
 Thou shalt enter this glorious Paradise.

GOOD FRIDAY.

The words of the weeping prophet in Lamentation i. 12, when lamenting over the destruction of Jerusalem, may very effectively be applied to Jesus in His suffering for our sins.

“ Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow !”

Nothing to you, passer by?
Hark ! a pleading voice doth cry ;
Nothing ! that the God of Love
Gave His Son that love to prove !
Nothing that He came to dwell
Where the strains of discord swell :
Nothing to you, can it be?
Nothing, sinner, nought to thee !

Nothing that He deigned to share
Human sufferings, mortal care ;
Easing torment, healing pain,
Bringing dead to life again ;
Doing good, yet bearing ill,
Accomplishing His Father's will :
Nothing to you, can it be
That Christ bore all this for Thee?

Nothing ! when, for forty days,
In the wilderness He stays,
Praying in dark trial's hour ;
Wrestling with the tempter's power ;
Homeless, hungered and athirst,
For His enemies accursed :
Nothing to you, can it be
That Christ suffered this for thee?

Nothing to you, passer by,
That the Son of God should die !
Nothing ! that He hung forlorn
On the shameful Cross of scorn !
Nothing, when He pleads for you,
“ They know not, Father, what they do ” ;
Nothing sinner ! Nought to thee,
That Christ pleaded thus for thee?

Nothing ! when that crimson tide
 Flowed from out His wounded side ;
 Blood and water in a stream,
 A world of sinners to redeem :
 When that bitter cry of pain
 Rent the Temple veil in twain :
 Nothing to you, can it be
 That Christ died on Calvary ?

Come, oh come, both young and old,
 This great mystery behold ;
 Come in thought to Calvary's height,
 There behold the awful sight,
 See the suffering Saviour bow—
 Is it nothing to you now ?
 Where was sorrow like to this,
 Where was love so strong as His ?

All thy sins before Him lay,
 Learn of Him, His Word obey ;
 All things therefore, will it be
 That Christ died to set thee free.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

HE resurrection of Jesus is the most important event that has happened in the history of the world, because apart from the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead we have no hope of life beyond the grave. Everything depends upon it, for we act according to our belief and if our faith is wrong, then our actions will be also. If we were walking on a bridge over a broad river, we should want to be quite sure that its foundation supports were solid and firm, especially if we heard different reports about it. Now nothing could be more certain than the death and resurrection of Jesus. Many of the friends of Jesus who witnessed His sufferings on the Cross, and knew where He was laid to rest, were witnesses to His rising again, and so many witnesses could not all make a mistake. In 1 Cor. xv. 14-17, the Apostle Paul shows us how necessary it is to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. How plain verses 14 and 17 are. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain." "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." But we believe Jesus died and rose again, and will come soon to raise all those who have fallen asleep in Him (1 Thess. iv. 14).

The disciples in their great sorrow, for a little while forgot the words of their Master, "The third day He shall rise again," but after the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them they remembered these things, and went everywhere preaching "Jesus and the Resurrection," and at last died in the hope of being raised to a new and endless life. The story of the Resurrection of Jesus is given by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. What is left out in one account is given in another, so that it is full and complete, like a beautiful word-picture. Now Jesus lives for evermore, and He has the power to give life to all who die believing in Him. As God raised up Jesus (Acts xvii. 31) so Jesus will raise them up (Jno. v. 29) to die no more.

Among the many wonderful things that Jesus did, while on earth before, the most wonderful thing was the raising of the dead; but those who were raised then, after a few years passed away again, for they were only restored to their mortal life. One day it was the only daughter of Jairus the ruler of the synagogue, who lay a-dying. Some say her name was Ruth, but we know she was a girl of twelve and very dear to her parents. The great Teacher and Healer was sought and her life was restored. How thankful all would feel. We should always recollect that life is the priceless gift of God, and use it aright. On another occasion it was the widow's son at Nain. What a glad surprise it must have been! How wonderful too. Even then the dead could hear the Voice of the Son of Man and live.

Another time it was two sisters who were in trouble, their dear brother, a friend of Jesus, was very ill, and soon died (Jno. xi.). See what great faith these sisters had in Jesus (vv. 20-27). In these few verses Martha names four beautiful titles belonging to Jesus. She knew also that whatever Jesus would ask of God would be given Him. She believed that God was the Source and Giver of all good. What sweet words of comfort Jesus gave her! There was no thought in Martha's or Mary's minds that Lazarus still lived somewhere in another world: they did not say, our brother is now very happy with Jesus in heaven, it is our loss, but his gain: for Jesus had not then ascended into heaven, and even if He had they would not have believed that, for they knew, oh so well, that Lazarus was dead, and that it is recorded in God's Word that "The dead know not anything" (Eccles. ix. 5). Martha said, "I know that my brother shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said unto her, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Yes, Jesus is the Life-giver, for God has conferred upon Him the honour of giving "Life to as many as He will." So Jesus will remember all His friends, and raise them from among the dead at the appointed time. "Jesus wept" when He thought of all the

sorrow caused by sin, for "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). He was truly "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Friends of Jesus have not now the privilege of taking Him to the graveside of loved ones, but they may receive comfort by the assurance that Jesus who is now their "High Priest" at God's right Hand, sympathises with them in all their sorrow, and is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and there is coming that happy day when they will live again, and "God shall wipe away all tears from every eye." Jesus did not give Lazarus eternal life, but He called him with a loud voice from the grave where he was laid and the good news soon spread abroad: Our friend Lazarus is alive again. What joy there will be among the friends of Jesus when the Resurrection Morning dawns!

On the evening of the first Resurrection Day two of the disciples were on the way to a little village called Emmaus. They were sad because they had lost their Master and were talking of Him when Jesus Himself drew near and went with them, "but their eyes were holden, that they should not know Him." He enquired what made them so sad, and they asked if He were a stranger, as He knew not all that had happened. Then He told them all that was written in the Psalms and the prophets about Jesus of Nazareth, until they arrived at the place to which they journeyed and invited Him to tarry with them. And as He sat at meat they recognised He was their risen Lord. But He vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us, and opened to us the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 32). May we stay a moment here to ask ourselves if we take as much pleasure in hearing God's Word explained? We do if we really are in earnest. Perhaps we think it would be so lovely to have a talk with Jesus, but let us recollect that He has promised to be with those who meet in His Name.

After eight days Jesus came again to His disciples as they were assembled together. At first they were afraid when He stood in the midst of them, for after His resurrection Jesus became a Spiritual Body (1 Cor. xv. 44). That is, flesh and bones, entirely controlled, and held in life by the power of the Spirit of God, and not a mortal body dependent upon the life-blood flowing freely through its veins: subject to pain and death. We see that bolted doors did not hinder Him, and the disciples were soon at ease when Jesus said, "Peace be unto you." They beheld the nail-prints in His wounded hands and feet. They heard Him speak and He did eat and drink with them (Luke xxiv. 42). So we may be sure it was no phantom or ghost that they all imagined they beheld. No one can persuade us that it was when the Bible is so clear and definite on the resurrection of Jesus. It was such a real, Living, Personal Saviour that the disciples saw and handled, that there could be no misunderstanding, for they all saw Him and never forgot those precious visits. Think how gladly and quickly

they hastened from one to another, so that all His sorrowing friends might know as soon as possible. "The Lord is risen," exclaimed one. "No, it is too good to be true," says Thomas, doubtfully, "I cannot believe unless I see for myself." But soon they are all satisfied. "We have seen the Lord," they say with joy. "Yes, He is risen indeed."

And then, after forty days He gives them His parting blessing at the foot of Olivet (Acts i. 12; Luke xxiv. 50), and leaves them worshipping in His Name. We are told they returned to Jerusalem from Bethany, the place of His Ascension, with great joy. "And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (v. 52). Afterwards "they went everywhere preaching the glad tidings of the Kingdom, the Lord working with them" (Mark xvi.).

"HE IS RISEN INDEED."

Peter.



Come, lift your thankful voices high,
Our Father, God, to praise;
Who gave His only son to die,
Then Him to life did raise.
On this our future hopes depend
Of life, and joy and peace;
Of happy days that have no end
When sin and sorrow cease.

Oh, welcome news the angels brought
On that first Easter Morn,
To those who their dear Master sought
With fears and grief, forlorn.

Jesus, your blest Redeemer lives!
Haste ye with joyful speed,
And bring His sad disciples word
That "He is risen indeed."

The First-fruits of the Harvest Home,
The Wave-Sheaf of the Law;
The bruised and broken Corn of Wheat:
"He lives for evermore."

O'er sin and death victorious, He
Triumphant rose again;
And those who sleep in Jesus now,
Will rise with Him to reign.



Bible Reader's Calendar.



APRIL.

MAY.

JUNE.

Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.
1	Acts 15	Acts 10	Exodus 9	1	Luke 12	Matt. 17	Luke 8 28-56	1	Isaiah 6-7	1 Chron. 17	Luke 23 27-56
2	Prov. 17	Deut. 5	Exodus 10	2	" 13-14	" 18	" 9 1-27	2	2 Thess. 1-2	" 18	" 24 1-27
3	" 18	" 6	Acts 7 37-60	3	" 15	" 19	" 9 28-62	3	2 Thess. 3	Acts 15-36 16-5	Joshua 2
4	" 19	" 27	" 8 1-25	4	" 16	" 20	" 10 1-20	4	Isaiah 8	1 Chron. 19	Joshua 6
5	" 20	" 28 1-44	" 8 26-40	5	" 17	" 21	" 10 21-42	5	" 9	" 20	Luke 24 28-53
6	" 21	" 28 45-68	" 9 1-22	6	" 18	" 22	" 11 1-26	6	" 10	" 21	John 20
7	" 22	" 29	" 9 23-43	7	" 19	" 23	" 11 27-54	7	" 11-12	" 22	" 21
8	Acts 16	Acts 11	Exodus 11	8	" 20	" 24	" 12 1-21	8	" 13	" 23	Acts 1...
9	Prov. 23	Deut. 30	Exodus 12	9	" 21	" 25	" 12 22-59	9	" 14	" 28	Judges 6 1-24
10	" 24	" 31	Acts 10 1-18	10	" 22	" 26	" 13	10	Acts 18-19 7	Acts 16 6-40	Judges 7 1-23
11	" 25	" 32 1-28	" 10 19-48	11	" 23	" 27	" 14	11	Isaiah 15-16	1 Chron. 29	1 Sam. 1
12	" 26	" 32 29-52	" 11 1-18	12	" 24	" 28	" 15	12	" 17-18	2 Chron. 1	" 2
13	" 27	" 33	" 11 19-30	13	Acts 17	Acts 13	Exodus 24 12-18	13	" 19	" 2	" 3
14	Phil. 1-2	" 34	" 12	14	Ecc. 1-2	1 Sam. 1	Luke 16	14	" 20-21	" 3	" 4
15	Phil. 3-4	Acts 12	Exodus 13	15	" 3-4	" 2	" 17	15	" 22	" 4	" 5
16	Prov. 28	Matt. 1 18-25; 2	Exodus 14	16	" 5-6	" 3	" 18 1-17	16	" 23	" 5	" 6
17	" 29	" 3	Luke 1 1-25	17	" 7-8	" 4	" 18 18-43	17	Acts 18-20	Acts 17 1-14	" 7
18	" 30	" 4	" 1 26-56	18	" 9-10	" 5	" 19 1-27	18	1 Cor. 1-2	2 Chron. 6	" 8
19	" 31	" 5	" 1 57-80	19	" 11-12	" 6	" 19 28-48	19	" 3	" 7	" 9
20	Luke 1	" 6	" 2 1-24	20	Acts 18	Acts 14	Numb. 13	20	" 4-5	" 8	" 10
21	" 2	" 7	" 2 25-52	21	Song of So. 1-2	1 Sam. 7	Numb. 14 1-24	21	" 6	" 9	" 11
22	" 3	" 8	" 3	22	" 3-4	" 8	Luke 20 1-26	22	" 7	" 10	" 12
23	" 4	" 9	" 4	23	" 5-6	" 9	" 20 27-47	23	" 8-9	" 11	" 13
24	" 5	" 10	" 5 1-20	24	" 7-8	" 10	" 21 1-19	24	" 10	" 12	" 14 1-23
25	" 6	" 11	" 5 21-39	25	1 Thess. 1-2	1 Chron. 10	" 21 20-38	25	" 11	" 13	" 14 24-52
26	" 7	" 12	" 6 1-26	26	1 Thess. 3-4	" 11 1-25	" 22 1-23	26	" 12-13	" 14	" 15 1-23
27	" 8	" 13	" 6 27-49	27	1 Thess. 5	Acts 15 1-29	Joshua 3	27	" 14	" 15	" 15 24-35
28	" 9	" 14	" 7 1-23	28	Isaiah 1	1 Chron. 13	Joshua 4 1-13	28	" 15	" 16	" 16
29	" 10	" 15	" 7 24-50	29	" 2	" 14	Luke 22 24-46	29	" 16	" 17	" 17 1-19
30	" 11	" 16	" 8 1-25	30	" 3-4	" 15	" 22 47-71	30	2 Cor. 1-2	" 17	1 Sam. 17, 20-37
				31	" 5	" 16	" 23 1-26				



SUMMER TIME.

Away from the crowded street
 I love to wander,
 And in the meadows sweet
 To sit and ponder,
 Breathing the clear fresh air,
 Free from tumultuous care,
 Love ruling everywhere,
 Heaven smiling yonder.

Oft as the rising lark,
 Bright music bringing,
 Soars nigh to heaven's gate
 His message winging,
 Ere the new morning breaks,
 Ere all creation wakes,
 Nature fresh life partakes,
 Joyfully singing.

And when the mid-day sun
 On high is blazing,
 While in the grassy meads
 Cattle are grazing,
 I rest beneath the trees,
 Fanned by the summer breeze,
 With heart and mind at ease,
 Thoughts heavenward raising.

Or sit beside the stream
 Rapidly flowing,
 Watching the sun's gay beams
 Coming and going;
 Where the green willow bowers,
 Shelter from sun or showers,
 And the sweet meadow flowers,
 Are gently blowing.

And, when in the golden west,
 The sun is shining,
 Ere to his place of rest
 Slowly declining;
 Cheered by each purple ray
 And with the summer day,
 Homeward I take my way,
 Nothing repining.

Praising our God above,
 Who never sleepeth,
 For His unbounded love :
 He vigil keepeth
 O'er those who fear His name,
 Calling upon the same,
 Making His Law their aim—
 And blessings heapeth.



THE MESSAGE OF THE FLOWERS.

Come children, it is such a lovely summer morning, we will go into the garden and have our promised talk about the flowers. You have not forgotten the message of the sweet flowers that bloom in Spring-time. Snowdrop, primrose, and daffodil have all faded away long ago, but what a many beautiful flowers are with us still. God has not only given us an abundance of them, but some for each season of the year; so that we may have joy, and beauty around us every day. See, the pansies are smiling up at us from the border of the lawn! How soft and rich their petals are! Just like lovely shaded velvet. Their other name is Heartease. They are saying, Children, entertain good and noble thoughts, for it is only those who love what is good, and keep to the right, that can enjoy real heartease. Take the path to the right now, for see, what a fine show of sweet-peas there are. How lovely they smell! Notice too how these slender plants with their small delicate leaves and feelers have grown up and twined themselves around the supports they so much needed. They will not soil

themselves by trailing on the ground, but in this way balance themselves, while they display their bright variegated plumes that smell so delicious, and look so very much like pretty coloured butterflies.

Day by day, as you grow up, dear children, you must look to God for help and support in weakness, and cling fast to His Word. Lean on the Lord Jesus for strength to grow in grace, and rise above all that is mean and unholy. We should always build our hopes and aspirations on higher things than those of time and sense, and lay hold of all that will help and advance us in the way of improving our intellects, and growing in grace, as the flowers grow in beauty. May you each endeavour to be upright in character, graceful in demeanour and aspire towards heavenly things, just as those beautiful lilies a little beyond us, have burst forth into bloom, and stand so erect, looking up to the sun, through the effects of the recent rain and warm sunshine, and are diffusing all their beauty and magnificence in the morning light. The lily is the symbol of purity and innocence; like its sweet name-sake, the Lily of the Valley, the flower of the woods. How graceful these garden lilies are! Their petals are of the whiteness that far exceeds the richness of satin and that equals the driven snow. How wonderful they are fashioned too! As we admire the lilies we think of the words of Jesus, our pure and holy Saviour, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

The lily is such a delicate white that even the least touch will spoil it. Let us remember that just one unholy thought, or one untruthful word, or action will soil our character and rob our minds of that sweet purity and innocence which all God's dear children should possess. "Oh, look here," exclaims Josie, "what a magnificent red rose." And so we all turn towards the rose-bed. What a beauty we all reply in joyous chorus. It is grand, and how lovely it smells! Children, no wonder Christ is likened to a rose, for "He is altogether lovely," and "His Name is as ointment poured forth." "A sweet savour unto God"; and He is indeed precious to those who know and love Him.

The lilies and the roses are usually in bloom together. They are like two sisters or companions, both as pleasant as each other; both showing forth the most lovely characters, and yet so different in manners and appearance. Both the perfect grace and the purity of the lily, and the rich, deep fulness and beauty of the rose were combined in our Lord's life.

The lesson of the rose is modesty and discretion. Innocence and modesty must go hand in hand. If you would be virtuous you must cultivate a discreet and modest disposition.

I trust you will always retain the tender conscience and responsive heart as well as the cheek that will blush deeper than this rose at the least appearance of evil.

There are quite a variety of roses, and these have meanings according to their kind and colour, but we cannot stay to mention them now, as there are nearly forty. Some are large and open, others deep and close. Some are admired for their graceful form and colour, others for their lovely fragrance. One speaks to us of kingly glory and royal majesty, and another of faithfulness and courage. The beautiful *Montiflora* speaks of grace and reminds us of the source of all true beauty. There is the sweet little moss rose dressed so prettily in its green robe breathing the message of peace and security, while another of its fair companions grows bravely and beautifully among the thorns. The single rose tells of simplicity. How we should all aim at singleness of heart and purpose.

The rose has rightly been called the "Queen of the Flowers," but although given such a distinguished position, it is not envied by any of the more humble flowers, for each are content to be what God has made them; neither does the lovely rose bear a trace of vanity. Think how wonderfully it exhibits the wisdom of God in its bright, fragrant and gradually unfolding petals! Each one perfect in hue, form and shade. And what a number there are on one single flower, all having their proper place, unfolding each other so gracefully, while slowly expanding until they reach full bloom.

Just as the rose blossoms so does our life increase, and may it be as bright and refreshing. Sometimes we talk of life being like a path of roses, but I think it is more like a rose tree; sometimes we have our thorny, dark and fretful days, and we seem stripped of all our fair blossoms of hope and joy, like the bare and leafless trees; but by and by the sun shines through the clouds and we are warmed and cheered; the leaves of happiness appear, and joys abound like the rich flowers and we go smiling on our way.

As Christ is compared to the rose so may we liken the preaching of His Gospel of the Kingdom to it also, for the rose is planted in all lands and will grow in any part of the world. You recollect the command of Jesus to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." Let us each accept the good news ourselves and then try to help spread abroad the joyful sound.

This sweet little rosebud here reminds us of early piety. If we attempted to expand its leaves so tightly bound together with our fingers, it would soon be ruined, and yet by the Hand of God how naturally and beautifully it will unfold itself! The thorns do not hinder its growth but it springs up bright and free among them; and so, children, we learn that nothing can harm us if we do our

duty right faithfully, and just as I pluck this dear rosebud from among the thorny bushes so you will find blessings and joys arising out of all life's troubles if you will only put your trust in God and look around for them. But we must leave the roses to the bees and butterflies, and pass on to see what some of the other flowers have to say to us. See how the breeze is shaking the leaves and making the roses sway to and fro! That big green caterpillar has been sent swinging, and another has fallen to the ground.

As the wind flutters the leaves of the rose-trees, and shakes off the caterpillars that are so destructive, so you must shake off dull sloth, and evil habits, for just as one caterpillar is enough to spoil and kill a lovely rose, so one sin may ruin the character and leave it like a rose-tree stripped of all its beauty, while the dew-drops weep on its tattered leaves.

The geraniums in the centre of the lawn look one mass of gaudy bloom. They make a glorious picture surrounded by dainty little blue lobelia. They gratify the sight, but are unpleasant to smell. Scarlet is the colour used for sin in the Bible (Isa. i. 18). Teaching us that all is not good for us that may look bright and tempting. The crimson of the roses tells of redeeming love (Jno. iii. 16), and blue is the emblem of healing grace.

The tall foxgloves along the hedge make a pretty contrast with the green laurel that remind us of the incorruptible crown laid up for all who serve their Lord, and run the race (1 Cor. ix. 24).

The head of the foxglove that grows up first is the last to bloom, for the flowers that appear first are the lowest on the stem and outer growths. Those near the top open last of all; an example of the last being first, and the first last. Its name means the finger of a glove, and is said to be a corruption of "Folk's glove," that is, Fairies' glove. But though it has such a stately form, we will not seek to be like it, for it is the emblem of cruelty and pride. The fragrant honeysuckle over the porch is much to be preferred as it breathes of sweetness and refreshment. The hawkmoth extracts honey from its flowers and in autumn the birds feast upon its clusters of dark red berries.

Here is some meadow-sweet! It looks very pretty but we will not gather any because if we put it in our rooms it will give us headache, if it does not make us ill. From such flowers we may learn that the company of all who look well are not always helpful or agreeable. There are some books not profitable reading, and some pleasures that dull the senses and take away the taste for better things. Little Flora may gather a bunch of pinks for the table while we pull a few weeds that have sprung up so rapidly since the recent rain. Weeds are like sins, unless they are checked at once, they grow amazingly quick and would soon spoil the most delicate flowers. Let us uproot them out of our heart-gardens while they are young and tender. Periwinkle, with its rich blue flowers,

looks very beautiful encircled with those pale anemones and late primroses. It is a brave little plant, resisting the wintry frosts and preserving its verdure, even throughout the severest season. It is the emblem of hope, for just as God protects and keeps it fresh and green, He will strengthen and support all those who trust in Him, through the most trying days and deepest sorrows.

Some syringa must go with Flora's pinks because the meaning of their names is so much alike. Pink means "pure love" and syringa, "brotherly love." Pure love is constant and unselfish, and if we possess this kind of love, "brotherly love" will be sure to follow.

Oh how sweet! how lovely! we all exclaim as we near the French window. Mignonette well deserves the name of "Little Darling" from its sweet fragrance. The meaning is calmness and consolation. It is such a plain, simple flower, and yet it diffuses the most delicious perfume all around. Like the dear violets it just lives to do others good. Even when cut from its green stem it still lends its refreshing and invigorating fragrance.

What a lesson it teaches of kindness to others, and of returning good for evil. The plainest may be of more service than the most handsome. But come children, we have been in the garden long enough now, we must return to our studies in the school-room.

Good-bye, dear flowers, there is one other great lesson you teach us all, and we should lay it well to heart. Although you are so lovely, you fade so soon. How frail and uncertain is human life also! The flowers speak to us of brightness and purity, of humility and love. They cheer us on life's journey, and whisper of a better day when God's brighter, purer flowers may bloom again on earth and fill it with eternal joy and peace.

"ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE O LORD."

"Thy saints shall bless Thee. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom and talk of Thy power" (Psalm cxlv. 10, 11).

I love you, I love you, beautiful flowers,
I said as I walked in the garden bowers,
With beaming faces you smile up at me,
And tell me, how loving our God must be.

You cheer the heart and gladden the sight,
As your graceful petals shine in the light,
You lend your fragrance to perfume the air
And pride never sullies your beauty rare.

You are contented wherever you grow,
And gladly welcomed wherever you go.
For a message of hope and joy do you bring,
To the high and lowly, the peasant and king.

The world is better and happier too,
 For the silent, yet wonderful work you do.
 Then I said as I thought of life's golden hours,
 " Lord, make me more like the beautiful flowers."

I love you, I love you, dear happy birds,
 And could your music be put into words
 I know you would gladly proclaim with me
 How wise and loving our God must be.

Your little lives are not spent in vain,
 For alike in the sunshine and in the rain
 You lift your voices in joyous song,
 And help some weary traveller along.

Though you are weak and of little worth
 You rise far above the things of the earth.
 You trust our Father in heaven for bread,
 Who promised His children should ever be fed.

I fancy, again, the dear Master saith,
 " How much more," and " O ye of little faith."
 If my heart's desire were expressed in words,
 'Twere, " Oh, to be more like the happy birds."

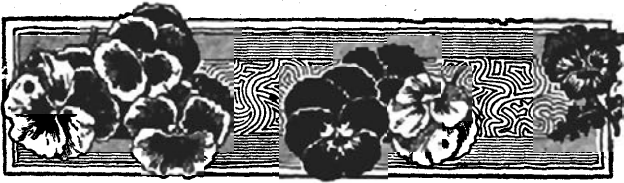
I love you, I love you, glorious light,
 I said as I sat in the sunshine bright;
 Your dazzling rays stream down upon me,
 And I think, how glorious our God must be.

You have a mission for earth to fulfil,
 'Tis God makes you shine on the good and the ill,
 How sad and dreary this world would be,
 Were it not for your bright beams, full and free.

You kiss the flowers, and their colours fair,
 Are tinged with beauty beyond compare,
 You ripen the fruit, and the golden grain
 Seems to laugh and sing on the harvest plain.

I think anon of these words divine,
 That the righteous shall in the Kingdom shine,
 When the Lord of glory shall come in might,
 And sorrow and darkness take their flight.

Then with heart attuned to my Maker's praise
 I will let my light shine in these pilgrim days,
 And pray, in hope of the Kingdom bright,
 " Lord, may I dwell in its glorious light!"



THE HOLY SPIRIT.

✠ HIS subject, like those we have previously considered, is of the utmost importance to all who desire to learn the Truth. And if we keep in mind that " God is One " (Mark xii. 29, 32), and that He is " unchangeable " (Mal. iii. 6), we shall be able to understand the teaching of the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit much better.

We have seen that Jesus did not exist from all eternity with God in heaven, but still was in the purpose of God from the foundation of the world.

He is the centre and pivot of God's great plan for our salvation and final redemption from sin and death.

Jesus, while on earth, plainly taught that God was His Father and that He is a Person, and frequently spoke of Himself as His Son. We have no doubt that Jesus was and still is, a Person; the greatest Personage the world has ever seen; but not so the Holy Spirit. Now let us prove this from the Bible, for we have often said it is our highest authority and our only safe guide.

We will take the word " spirit " as generally used first. There are different words in the original scriptures (that is, in the scriptures in the exact form and letters as they were received before being translated from the Hebrew and Greek into various other languages), which are translated " spirit " in our Bible.

The Hebrew word " ruach " occurs 400 times in the Old Testament and is translated " spirit " 240 times, " breath " 28 times, " wind " 95 times, " mind " 6 times, and the rest in 18 different ways. Then in the New Testament the Greek word " pneuma " has been chosen to represent the word spirit and has the same meaning. It occurs 385 times, which may be placed under these four heads : (1) The air we breathe; (2) A being, as angel; (3) An influence from a being. (4) A state of feeling. The following references give one example of each : Acts xvii. 25; Heb. i. 14; Jno. xv. 26; Acts xvii. 16.

When God said to Noah, "I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life," He included all the animals and beasts, and King Solomon tells us that man and beast have "all one breath" or spirit (Eccles. iii. 19), so that one is not above the other in this respect, and when God takes away their breath, or spirit of life, they both die and turn again to dust; but with this great difference, that God will raise from among the dead all who have been faithful like Noah and believed His Word, and they will then be made spirit-beings like the angels and will die no more.

Without the spirit or breath of life, all would be lifeless or dead, so let us thank God for this wonderful gift which enables us to think and speak and act, and let us use all our strength and abilities in His service and for the glory of His name.

Sometimes we find the word "ghost" in our Bibles. This should not be used at all. It is best to be quite correct and use the word "spirit" in all cases.

Because Jesus called the Holy Spirit "the Comforter," some hold to the word "ghost" and believe the Holy Spirit to be a person.

The story describing the event of the coming of the Holy Spirit is to be found in Acts ii., and if you will read it carefully, you will see the idea it conveys to our minds is that the Holy Spirit is similar to wind. It appeared as cloven tongues of fire, and rested upon each of the disciples. You recollect too that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at His baptism in the form of a dove (Matt. iii. 16). Both Matthew, Luke and John record the fact, thus proving it of great significance.

Peter said the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost fulfilled the words of the prophet Joel (ch. ii. 29). Thus we see that God had promised to pour out His Spirit upon His servants, the followers of Jesus in this remarkable manner.

Again, the use of the word "He" sometimes, has led to the belief that the Holy Spirit is a person, besides the words "ghost" and "comforter"; but we must remember there are other things personified in the Bible as well as "spirit"; for instance, Wisdom is spoken of as having hands (Prov. iii. 16), Sin as being a bad master to serve, "for the wages of sin is death" (Rom vi.) and "death" as an "enemy," the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Cor. xv.). Those who understand grammar may turn to 1 Peter i. and read verse 11. Here the Greek word for Spirit is a neuter noun and is represented by the pronoun "it."

We learn that the Holy Spirit is something which is under the power and control of God, from the words of Jesus to His disciples, "I will pray the Father and He shall send you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever" (Jno. xiv. 16),

and speaking of the time when this promise should be fulfilled, Jesus said, "It is not ye that speak but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matt. x. 20). God spoke through the apostles and prophets by means of the Holy Spirit. That is the express reason why all proclaim the same glorious message without any contradiction, so that sixty-six books may be bound together and be called One Book—The Book.

The Holy Spirit is an unseen power proceeding from God. This is why Jesus said, "Whomsoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven him" (Matt. xii. 32). To gain a clear idea of the meaning of these words of Jesus we must look at the context (that is, the verses before and after, which give rise to this saying, in this case from 22 to 37). Among those who witnessed the healing of that poor afflicted creature brought to Jesus (v. 22) there might be many who denied His divine mission, but who yet might yield to further evidence; while others acute and well-informed, determined not to believe, and being vexed and angry at the power which Jesus possessed, ascribed to the power of Satan, these mighty works which proved the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is to these that Jesus referred, warning them against such a sin to which they were very closely approaching; in other words—therefore he that reproaches My Divine character and charges My authority as being in league with Satan, whose kingdom is the world, and blasphemes the power of God by which I perform these works, can never be forgiven.

To speak against the Holy Spirit was to speak against God Himself, whose Name is sometimes used in change with that of Holy Spirit, and in Jno. iv. we read, "God is a Spirit." In another sense God's Spirit fills all space and is everywhere. The Psalmist enquires, "Whither shall I flee from thy Spirit?" (Psa. cxxxix. 7), and Paul told the Athenians that "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28).

God created all things by His Spirit (Job xxvi. 13), and by His Spirit He upholds them all (Job xxxiv. 14, 15). When used in this general way it is called "the Spirit of God," but when it is set apart for certain purposes in connection with the work of our Salvation it is called "the Holy Spirit."

It is frequently called the Holy Spirit when spoken of as the means by which God has made known His will to men through the prophets, Jesus and His disciples. It is also used interchangeably with the words "Spirit of Truth" and "The Truth," because it reveals the will and purpose of God.

It is very necessary we should understand these various ways in which the Spirit is mentioned, so that we may have a clear and definite idea of its meaning.

It is recorded in Jno. vii. that Jesus invited men to come unto Him, and informed them of the results of their believing in Him, connecting the "Living Waters" with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (v. 39). This is evident from the words, "But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive." We should thirst for this Water of Life—the Holy Spirit, for as the natural life cannot be sustained without water so the Living Waters are essential to the spiritual life.

There was a time when the Holy Spirit was not given: and the reason being, "because Jesus was not yet glorified."

The smitten rock out of which came water to supply the discontented, murmuring Israelites was a type of Christ, we learn from 1 Cor. x. 4, and the water a type of the Holy Spirit. There is something very beautiful about this figure, for the Holy Spirit was not given till after Christ was smitten and glorified. (The rock only to be smitten once; twice would have marred the type hence Moses' punishment (Num. xx. 7-12). No water till the rock smitten, so the Holy Spirit sent fully after Christ was smitten. On the second occasion Moses was told to "speak to" not "smite" the rock (see Num. xx. 8). The first great outpouring of the Holy Spirit among mankind was after the smiting of the Rock—Christ, Acts ii. The second outpouring will be after the Rock is spoken to by the Father. It will then flow again in all its life-sustaining power. (S.S. Note, Nov. 8th, 1914).

After His resurrection Jesus appeared several times to His disciples, and upon one occasion after blessing them, it is written, "He breathed on them and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit'" (Jno. xx.). Breath was a symbol of the power of the Holy Spirit which would come upon them. The idea is that of giving, sending and receiving. The Apostles received the gifts of the Spirit as they required them, but Jesus had the Holy Spirit without measure (Jno. iii. 34).

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles we see the Power of the Spirit exercised in their ability to converse in many languages, in penetrating the inner motives and secrets of men's hearts, and in the preaching of the Gospel with such wonderful success, besides the miraculous healing of the sick and even raising of the dead.

Then we must not overlook the fact that some of the passages relating to the Holy Spirit were addressed only to the Apostles of Jesus. It is unnecessary for believers who have the written Word of God for their guidance to possess the Holy Spirit in the same measure as the Apostles did. The Holy Spirit was given to teach them (Jno. xiv. 26) and equip them for their mission. Some of the things Jesus told his disciples were forgotten by them but the Holy Spirit enabled them to call these things to mind and also proclaim to all around, both far and near, the glorious message of Salvation in the Name of Jesus once crucified but raised from the dead.

Seeing therefore how they were enlightened and guided by the Spirit of the truth, we may rely upon their words. The Holy Scriptures are absolutely necessary to Salvation, and we have the Holy Spirit to enable us to understand them in the same way as the Apostles (Acts 2, 38, 39). God has given to us His written word, which is able to build us up and furnish us with all we need. "God has spoken" and revealed His will and purpose, and now awaits for us to learn, believe and accept it.

Those who claim to receive fresh messages from God over and above what is written already are much mistaken, and those who profess to have the Holy Spirit in any special degree, cannot prove it by working miracles or speaking with tongues. At present all who study the Bible aright and believe its truths are led by the Spirit of God, and those who are thus led are the children of God as Paul said, and the Spirit bears witness to the fact (see Rom. viii.).

Having been brought into contact with Jesus "the life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor. xv. 45) they have been born anew of the Spirit (Jno. iii. 5, 6, 7) therefore God's Spirit dwells in them.

They are temples of the Holy Spirit, having received God's Word into their hearts and minds; and the Holy Spirit is the earnest or pledge to their resurrection, being sealed, unto the day of redemption by the Holy Spirit of promise (Ephes. iv. 30). It was not long before God's wonderful gift to the Early Church was abused: many began to teach things which they considered right, but not according to the Word of God and then the Holy Spirit was "quenched," for the Spirit cannot stay with the backslider. The full blessings attending the power of the Holy Spirit are reserved for that happier time when all will know the Lord and honour His Name by believing His Word.

Referring to this time Jesus said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, and can'st not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every-one that is born of the Spirit."

But what about the Rite of Confirmation? Enquire some of my young friends. Did not the Apostles lay their hands on the early believers and they received the Holy Spirit? And would not the believers in turn follow their example, and so on until the present time? True indeed it is that some still practise the outward form, but where are the results?

The Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit themselves and therefore each believed the same truths. The Apostles' Creed is to be found in Ephesians, chapter iv. They kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Love, and those upon whom the gift was conferred believed likewise, but that the chain of concord was broken we may easily gather from many references in the Epistles and from history.

Now compare this oneness of belief with the diversity of beliefs in our days and consider if God would really entrust His Divine

Spirit to those who believe and teach things contrary to His Word, to dispose of when and how they may choose. God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, but only in such measure as He deems necessary and they are capable of receiving (Luke xi. 13).

Another important fact which helps us to a right understanding of Bible teaching concerning the Holy Spirit is that Jesus was the manifestation of the Father by means of the Spirit. He is our "Emmanuel," or "God with us." Not that Jesus was God, but God dwelt in Him through the Holy Spirit. God was manifested, or made known through Jesus by His Birth, then by His gracious words and wonderful works during His mission among men, and also by His Anointing. There are two distinct differences between Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Jesus, we are told, "increased in wisdom" (Luke ii. 52) until at the age of thirty, at His Baptism, the Holy Spirit came upon Him in its fulness.

This proves that the Holy Spirit is not a Person but that it is Eternal, and Jesus although not eternal was a Person. The idea of one person being poured out upon another is unreasonable. From Ephes. v. 18, and 1 Thess. v. 19, we see that it is possible for believers to be filled with the Spirit or to quench it.

In the second chapter of Acts Peter speaks of Jesus as "a man approved of God" and in his first address to the Gentiles, he tells "How God Anointed Jesus. . . with the Holy Spirit (Acts x. 39). God also spoke through Jesus by the Holy Spirit, and for this reason Jesus explained to the Jews that the words which He spake were not His but the Father's which sent Him, so that God was in very deed speaking to men; inviting them to come unto Himself through Jesus.

Many of the sayings of Jesus puzzled the Jews as they do Gentiles now, and many, both Jews and Gentiles are offended.

If we remember this, much that appears difficult at first becomes plain and simple.

We see also how dependent Jesus was in the days of His flesh upon God for all things. Even the Holy Spirit was given to Him, and apart from this heavenly gift He would have been powerless to perform any of these mighty works; for when on the cross He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" the Holy Spirit had then left Jesus and He who had saved others could not save Himself.

But God did not forsake His well-beloved Son for long. By the power of the Spirit Jesus was raised from the dead, and is now made "after the power of an endless life" He lives for ever more.

And what God has done for Jesus, He will yet do for all those who accept the invitation given in the very last chapter of the Bible,— "The Spirit and the Bride say come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

WISDOM.

" Wisdom," Oh the precious Gift,
 Where may'st it be found?
 And where is Understanding's place?
 And where doth Grace abound?
 Man knoweth not the price thereof,
 Its worth is all untold;
 It is not with bright silver bought,
 Nor valued with pure gold.

For gold and crystal equal not
 This choice and priceless gem;
 Nor coral, pearls, and jewels fine,
 For Wisdom exceedeth them.
 Not with the precious onyx stone
 Wisdom may we compare;
 With the topaz of Ethiopia,
 Nor the sapphire, rich and rare.

For Wisdom doth them all excel
 And happy he who gains
 This heavenly boon; but blessèd thrice
 Is he that aye retains.
 In her right hand are length of days,
 With life and honour crowned;
 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
 While joy and peace abound.

The depth says—" she is not in me."
 Death and the grave proclaim,—
 We know not Wisdom, nor have heard
 Of her unequalled fame.
 In vain doth man for Wisdom seek,
 In objects mean and low;
 God only knows the way thereof,
 And freely can bestow.

From heaven unto remotest earth
 He looks, and marks the whole;
 The creature of the humblest birth,
 Even every living soul:
 And whoso lacketh Wisdom, he
 May ask of God in heaven,
 Believing that he shall receive,
 And Wisdom will be given.



HARD NUTS CRACKED.

“ This is a very hard nut to crack, Uncle Will,” said Georgie, stamping with all his might on a large brazil with his foot: “ I’m afraid I can’t manage it.” “ Is it, my boy?” replied his uncle complacently, “ then you had best throw it away, it cannot be any good.” “ Oh, uncle, you don’t mean it!” exclaimed Georgie with much surprise. “ I’m sure it is good inside, if I could only get at it, but I can’t crack it you see, uncle, that’s the trouble.” “ Well, throw it away, my boy, that is the easiest way out of the difficulty.” “ But—t—Uncle—Will—, I should like it cracked, I know it is a treat of a nut! Can’t *you* help me?” he again pleaded; but seeing his uncle about to walk away without making any effort to assist him, after several more fruitless attempts, he picked up the nut and slipped it into his pocket, saying to himself, “ Uncle Will’s in a bad mood to-day. I don’t mean to throw away a good nut, I’ll wait awhile and then have another try.”

Later in the day Georgie and his uncle met again. “ What have you done with your nut?” called out Uncle Will. “ Oh,” said Georgie, his face beaming with pleasure and satisfaction, “ I managed to crack it after all, uncle. I put it up a little while and then had another try, and it cracked as easily as possibly, and I did enjoy it, too; but uncle, what did you mean? It wasn’t a bit like you to tell me to throw it away.” “ Because I wished to know what you would say and do, dear boy.” “ You didn’t think I should let it go as lightly as that, did you, Uncle?” “ No, Georgie, I knew you were wiser, but yet that is what many people do when they come to a difficult passage in the Bible, They throw away these nuts of Truth because they cannot understand them all at once, and they have no patience to try again or to seek for help, and some find so many of these hard nuts that at length they throw aside the Bible altogether.”

“ It is very foolish to do that; but uncle, I find many difficult things in the Bible myself which I cannot understand and therefore have to pass them over.”

“ Well, my boy, you must forgive my coolness this morning, and if you would like me to help you with these difficulties, it will give me very much pleasure.”

George and his uncle often met after this and many sweet nuts of Truth were cracked and enjoyed exceedingly by both of them.

You will find one of these farther on, and I hope you will be helped by it and enjoy it too.

THIS WORLD.

This is a world of wisdom,
 Of beauty and of grace;
 Industry and enlightenment
 We everywhere can trace.
 The growth of education,
 Earth's many noble arts,
 The laws of gravitation,
 And trade in foreign parts.

And man in science boasteth,
 Striving more light to gain
 On things from mortals hidden,
 Nor counts his labours vain.
 'Tis meet we should remember,
 And keep the fact alive,
 From God each good gift cometh,
 And all that we derive.

This world is full of evil,
 We see it all around;
 In palace, street, and cottage,
 May wickedness be found.
 Man lusteth after riches,
 Mirth, luxury, and ease,
 His selfish lower nature
 To pamper and to please.

Ah! man, no longer marvel,
 Whence comes the piteous cry,
 Of poverty, and sickness,
 Or pestilence draws nigh:
 But think upon the mercy
 Of One you grieve each hour,
 Ineffable in wisdom,
 Almighty in His power.

This world is full of trouble,
 Of sorrow, and of pain;
 Earth's pleasures are deceitful,
 And hope oft proveth vain.
 Yet stay, how dare we murmur
 When man has caused it all!
 For every son of Adam
 Must share in his great Fall.

But, here, rejoice frail nature,
 Death may not always reign;
 Christ died to ransom sinners,
 And He is risen again.
 This world, with all its wisdom,
 Must shortly pass away;
 The evil, and the trouble,
 Will not endure for aye.

For God, in love, will fashion
 A bright new heaven and earth,
 And all the meek and upright,
 Shall hail their joyous birth.
 This world is but the schoolhouse
 For bringing us to God,
 And oft we learn its lessons,
 Beneath a chastening rod.

But, Christ, the Great Schoolmaster,
 Our Saviour, and our Friend
 Will grant each faithful scholar,
 A life that knows no end.

WORDS.

(SEARCH TEXT).

Some time ago I wrote to you about "Thoughts." This time I am writing about "Words" which are the outcome of thoughts. Speech is one of the great gifts of God. Thoughts pass quickly throughout minds and we convey those thoughts to others by means of words. All seems quite natural to us, but how wonderful it is when we come to think about it.

It is so easy to speak that often we forget how important our words are, and what a power they have for good or evil. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue," says King Solomon (Prov. xviii.) and, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv.). The character of a person is usually known by the words they speak, for the words you utter show what power is controlling your heart, and Jesus said, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. xii.). We should always think before we speak, because a word spoken can never be recalled, and words sometimes long forgotten by ourselves may live on for years or even a life-time in some deep wounded heart and cause continual pain and sorrow.

You cannot be too careful of what you say, so I would recommend you all to keep watch over your words.

Now let us think of some of the different kinds of words that we should never speak and we will head our list with "Bad Words." I sincerely hope that none of you ever use "bad words," if so, give up at once and ask God to set a watch before your mouth and keep the door of your lips (Psa. cxli.).

But even if you do not say "bad words" perhaps you very easily get angry, and the hasty, unkind word slips off your tongue almost before you are aware of it. An angry child is a sad picture to behold, so try to control your temper and you will be kept from saying "angry words." He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. xvi.). A very good rule for avoiding angry words is to count twenty before you speak whenever you feel cross or vexed about anything. See what is written in Proverb xxix, verses 20 and 22 about hasty, angry people. It always takes two to make a quarrel, you know, and if you will act the better part you may win your companions to do the same. Remember, "A soft answer turneth away wrath" (Prov. xv.). You may find it hard at first but the more you try, the easier it will become. It is better to conquer evil habits while young, for they will grow stronger and stronger if unchecked, and sooner or later they will conquer you.

Will you read the third chapter of the epistle of James and see what the apostle says about the tongue? In verse 5 he tells us, "The tongue is a little member and boasteth great things." The tongue is indeed a little member but the words it frames have great power. It is with the tongue we can praise God and offer prayers. With the tongue we can comfort and bless, convince and persuade, or we may utter perverse things, speaking words that will sting like the adder.

"The tongue can no man tame," the same apostle adds, after mentioning birds, beasts and serpents that can be tamed (verse). This sounds rather hopeless, but let us take courage, for what man cannot do, God can, and we may be quite sure He will if we ask Him.

Mischievous, unruly little tongue, how it needs constantly guarding lest it brings us into disgrace! What shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? asked the Psalmist (Psa. cxx.) and he prays God to deliver him from "lying lips" and a "deceitful tongue." Let us resolve like one of Job's friends, "Truly my words shall not be false" (Job xxxvi.). Do not say one thing and all the while in your heart and mind mean something else. Then "flattering words" must not be spoken by those who desire to please God, for it is written, "A flattering mouth worketh ruin" (Prov. xxvi.) and we are warned in Prov. xx. to "Meddle not with him that

flattereth with his lips" (verse). And do not be a "Tale-teller" for you will find in the same chapter these words—"He that goeth about as a tale-bearer revealeth secrets" (verse) and, "The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds" (Prov. xviii.).

Some little people too, are very fond of whispering, and they cannot understand why Mother always says, "Now my dears, no more whispering, if you please!" Here is the reason in Prov. xvi. , "A whisperer separateth chief friends." There is usually something doubtful about "whispered words."

Before you say anything about anyone, ask yourself these three questions:—Is it true? Is it kind? Is it worth telling? If not, then better keep silent and save yourself a lot of trouble. Then again, some children do not speak the truth and therefore cannot be trusted. What a sad thing that is! Untruthfulness is one of the things which God hates, so "Be the matter great or small, always speak the truth."

The apostle Paul exhorted his followers to put away "lying," and there is very good reason for so doing, for God has said through His servant David, "He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight" (Psa. ci.). David also tells us what will become of "The tongue that speaketh proud things" (Prov. xii.). And what shall we say about "Idle words?" That is, foolish and unnecessary talking. Do not excuse yourselves, and think you can say as many silly thoughtless words as you like. There are "idle words" to be avoided, so you must not let your busy little tongue run apace and then finish up by saying it was only in fun, or, I did not mean it.

We might still add to this list other objectionable words, but I think it is quite long enough, don't you?

But God has given us tongues and He wishes us to use them in the right way, so we will turn from all the bad, ugly words and try always to speak what is good and noble and true. "Kind words" need no recommendation, and we may say some "kind words" every day if we will. "A word spoken in due season, how good it is" (Prov. xv.).

Have you ever looked at that lovely character picture in the last chapter of Proverbs? You little girls will some day be grown up. Would you not like this to be true of you? "She openeth her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue is the law of kindness" (verse).

Then there are "pure words" which are always "pleasant words" (Prov. xv.) because they are like God's words (Psa. xii.), and "gentle words" that fall like sweet music on the listener's ear. "Good words" cause others to pause and think over them and it "Makes them glad" (Prov. xii.). "Words of truth and soberness" such as Paul spoke before King Agrippa

(Acts xxvi.). " Sound words " that the same Apostle exhorted Timothy to " Hold fast " (2 Tim. i.). " Words of hope and courage, and simple trust in God like those addressed to the men on board ship, bound for Rome, while tempest-tossed and full of fear—" Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God " (Acts xxvii.).

Then we have the Lord Jesus for our highest example. Think of the " gracious words " that fell from His lips as He went about doing good, words of heavenly wisdom which place Him far above all the wise and clever of all time.

" Never man spake like this man," remarked the officers who were sent on one occasion to take Jesus (John vii.). But though His words of love and tenderness attracted the poor and sinful unto Him, we read of some who were offended. His words puzzled many and filled others with indignation.

Sometimes He uttered words of stern rebuke that made even His enemies cower before Him and put the jealous rulers to silence for " He spoke as one having authority and not as the scribes " (Mark i.). Should you not like to have heard Jesus speak, as many dear children did while He was on earth? I should very much. But although we are denied that pleasure now, yet we may hear His voice as we read His wonderful " Words of Life " and let our minds dwell on them. " My sheep hear My voice," said Jesus (John x.) and if we do hear and follow Him in this life, when He comes again to this earth in glory, we shall hear Him welcome us into His holy presence.





ADDRESS TO A VERY LITTLE BOY.

Love thy mother, little Arthur,
 Twine thy arms around her neck;
 Lay thy fair head on her shoulder,
 And her brow with kisses deck.
 Thy small limbs are strong and active,
 Few the trials thou hast known;
 Fair thy features and attractive
 Is thy shrill magnetic tone.

Rosy are thy cheeks 'neath dimple,
 Mother's cheeks are pale and sad;
 Thy young heart is blithe and simple
 And thy ways can make her glad.
 With thy dreamland prattle cheer her,
 And with all thy pretty wiles;
 In her darkest hours be near her,
 With thy bright and sunny smiles.

Dearest, truest, earthly treasure,
 Arthur, love her while you may;
 Give her hope, and give her pleasure,
 Soon she may be far away.
 Darling, cherish and obey her,
 To her loving words attend;
 Never let thy deeds dismay her,
 She is thy best earthly friend.

None will care for thee like mother,
 Patient, tender, prayerful, kind;
 Should God take her, ne'er another
 In this world would Arthur find.
 Heaven bless thee, blue-eyed beauty,
 And direct thy heart aright;
 Love the Truth, and do thy duty,
 God will then thy deeds requite.

“ BIBLE ARITHMETIC.”



ARE you fond of arithmetic, boys and girls? Oh no, no—o, I fancy I hear quite a chorus of voices exclaiming, while a few of you are trying to let me know that it is your best subject and that you carried off prizes for it last session.

To the successful ones I say—Well done, go on persevering, and do still better; and to those who are discouraged by present failures—Try again, and after a while you may even learn to like arithmetic. You will find it exceedingly useful when school days are over.

Now, I propose we have a little talk together about “ Bible Arithmetic,” for I think it will interest you all.

“ Bible Arithmetic ” ! Why, there are no sums in the Bible ! That is because you have never looked for any. Come, gather round and let us try and find a few, and you will soon be saying, “ What a wonderful Book the Bible is.” Yes, of all the Books I ever saw, there’s nothing like the Bible.

As the Bible is “ God’s Book ” so the arithmetic it contains is “ God’s arithmetic,” and therefore of the greatest importance.

Many Bible sums are quite easy and plain so that little children can understand them if they will. Others are more difficult problems which have taken grown up people, who love God’s Word, a long, long time to find correct answers to, and thousands are still puzzling over them and will never be able to prove them because they have lost the Key.

Now I expect you can all COUNT. Well, of course you can. That is really too simple for boys and girls who can read well. But pray, do not get cross with me and I will ask you a question which will bring me to the point I wish to arrive at. What can you count?

God asked Abram once if he could count the stars, and he did not get angry, although he could not manage the counting. It is recorded that he believed in the Lord and He counted it to him for righteousness (Gen. xv. 5, 6). God can count the stars. The Psalmist says, “ He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by names ” (cxlvii. 4). Nothing is too hard for God. He is the loving Creator of all things. In Isaiah xl. God says, “ Lift your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth their host by number : He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth.” Job tells us “ God doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number ” (chap. ix. 10). Also in chapter xxxviii. God asks, “ Who can number the clouds in wisdom?”

Turning again to Isaiah xl. verses 15 to 17, we see how God counts nations. "Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. . . All nations before Him are as nothing: and they are counted to Him less than nothing and vanity." People often forget this and think they are very important. Can you count the number of brave men who came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David King? (1 Chron. xii.). By and bye there will be a still greater number from out of every nation, kindred and tongue, who will come together, with one consent to crown the Saviour "King of Kings." What a glorious time that will be!

It is so beautiful to know that God can count His people. The apostle John saw them in vision while an exile on Patmos. "The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Rev. v.), and later "A multitude which no man could number" (chap. vii.). Notice it is "no man," for God can count them quite easily. Their names have all been written in the Lamb's Book of Life, the most wonderful "Account Book" that has ever been kept (Rev. xx. 22).

You remember too how Jesus comforted His disciples by telling them among other things, that even the very hairs of their head were all numbered (Luke xii. 7).

Much more might be said about counting, but we will pass on after looking at Psalm xc. where the Psalmist reckons up the days of our years, so full of labour and sorrow, and compares them with the unchanging years of an All-powerful, All-wise Creator, and puts on our lips that simple, earnest prayer, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." The fourth verse tells us how God counts time. Peter reminded the early Christians of this in his second epistle. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward."

In this same epistle we have a "Bible ADDITION." It looks rather easy at first sight but I should advise you to commence it at once, because it will take a life-time to get it quite correct. It is—"Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity (or love)."

The answer is, "Perfection in Christ Jesus."

Contrast this with what is written of Herod in Luke iii. 19, 20. This is another character sum which shows the result—A miserable failure.

Look next at Matt. xxiv. verses 40 and 41. Here is "Simple SUBTRACTION." "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left." You know the reason why. These are solemn words of the Master, dear boys and girls. Again, read the warning in verse 44 and another in Rev. xxii. to those who would "add to" or "take away" from God's Holy Word.

In Genesis xxii. we have a beautiful specimen of "Bible MULTIPLICATION"; verse 17 reads, "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore." What a great sum to work out; but God will finish it in His own good time as He promised Abraham.

We are assured of this for no one can hinder God from fulfilling His purpose. You remember when the king of Egypt treated the Israelites unkindly and tried to get rid of them, it is written, "The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied."

Then we picture to ourselves the Lord Jesus on those two occasions feeding multitudes of hungry men, women and children in the wilderness, by multiplying the little lad's barley loaves and small fishes. Do you recollect how many were thus satisfied and what was over in each case? (Matt. xiv. 15).

Quite early in the Bible we read about "Division." Turn to Gen. 1, 4. "And God divided the light from the darkness." How wonderfully God works! Ever since that time there has been Day and Night. See what God told Noah when He established the covenant with him and the first bright rainbow spanned the heavens, in token that God would not again destroy all flesh by a flood. "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." (Gen. viii. 22).

Sometimes we grumble and say we do not like winter, or it is too hot for us in summer. Let us try and be more grateful to Him who arranged all these things so wisely for our good, remembering that God who knows what is best for us made the seasons at the first, and still guides and controls them all.

But not only so, there is another great division which effects us even more than the one we have considered. God makes a division between His people and the people of the nations among whom they dwell (Exod. viii. 23). This has been going on all down the ages to the present moment, and the message comes to us through the written Word—"Come out . . . My people . . . be separate." (2 Cor. vi. 17). This leads us to think of another division which will take place when Jesus returns to the earth again, when the faithful will be rewarded and welcomed into His glorious Kingdom and the wicked punished with destruction. In Matt. xxv. we read,

“ And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.”

Turning back to the book of the Judges we find a splendid sample of “ *Bible Reduction* ” (chapters vi. and vii.). Who would have thought of reducing an army in this manner but God, whose ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts.

Man would endeavour to increase the number, not reduce it. Picture Gideon after God has assured him that he will save Israel out of the hand of Midianites, with that army of 32,000 people around him. Surely with such a host victory is certain. But read what the Lord said (verse 2). “ The people are too many for me. Tell those that are fearful and afraid, to return.”

This was to be one of the Lord’s battles and God does not require human help although He grants some the privilege to work with Him. Just think of it, young friends, 22,000 returned. But far better a few hundred whole-hearted followers, than thousands of half-hearted ones, who would turn back in face of the enemy. And it is the same with the Truth to-day. Do you say there are only 15, 30, or 60 in your Sunday School, while not far away there are 500 and more? Never mind, stand firm to the word of Truth and all will be well. From God’s estimate of things it is quality, not quantity required. Only 10,000 remained, but the Lord said, “ The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water and I will try them for thee there.” We all have to be tried in some way or other. Paul speaks of it in his epistle to the Corinthians, and also Peter in his first epistle. The number is reduced from 32,000 to 300, and the Lord said to Gideon, “ By the 300 men that lapped will I save you.” And then Gideon and those 300 men divided into three companies, with their trumpets, pitchers and lamps, trusting in God only, went down to the camp of the Midianites, whose number it is written was as the sand by the sea-shore for multitude, and cried, “ The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran and cried and fled.” That is how God works for those that put their trust in Him.

Perhaps some of you like working “ *Problems.*” Oh, yes, if they are plain, you say, such a many are so hard to understand. Well, here is one that will suit you all. (Matt. xvi. 26) “ What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” In the book of Daniel there are several difficult problems. Daniel himself was troubled to know the meaning of them, but in the light of the Scriptures as we have them to-day, and the history of kingdoms that have flourished and passed out of existence long ago, with that which is taking place in our time, the Truth is made clear to

those who desire to understand it. In the 12th chapter, Daniel asks, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And he was told (verse 7) but he understood not." The reason is given in verse 9. "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." (Look at verses 11, 12, and 13). When you get a little older I hope you will study these problems for yourself, you will find them both interesting and instructive.

There is one in the last book of the Bible which vexes a great many people but the answer to this problem has long been solved. I refer to chapter xiii. 18. "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man: and his number is six hundred threescore and six." That is 666. This is not a literal man, but refers to Rome which has always been the enemy of the Christians, and, "that Man of Sin" mentioned by Paul in his second letter to the Thessalonians.

Another interesting rule for elder boys and girls to study is "*Bible Proportion.*" Think of the wonderful tabernacle in the wilderness with its minute details and measurements sketched out with such perfect precision and exactness by the great Architect of the Universe, and the divine injunction to Moses, "See thou make all things according to the pattern." The glorious Temple too, portrayed in the last chapters of Ezekiel, and the city with all its dimensions, glory and perfection, to be found in Rev. xxi. furnish the Bible student with much pleasant and profitable information about the glorious future.

I think we have talked long enough for the present, but before we separate let us just glance at that splendid "*Profit and Loss*" account so beautifully worked out by the Apostle Paul, some of the items of which are enumerated in 2 Cor. xi. and see how carefully he balances all up in Phill. iii. "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea . . . and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him." And then that grand conclusion he arrives at in Rom. viii. 18. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

And now, boys and girls, what do you think of "*Bible Arithmetic?*" "It is simply lovely," you say. "We are so glad you have called our attention to it. What a wonderful Book indeed the Bible is. We will look out for other sums too, as there are more to be found."

Yes, there is another important rule which naturally follows those we have already considered, that is "*Practice.*" We recall the old proverb which says, "Example is better than precept." This was beautifully carried out in the life of Him who once said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done" and, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John xiii. 15, 17). And with these thoughts in our minds we bid each other adieu for the present.

MORE BIBLE ARITHMETIC.

ADDITION. Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity (love) (2 Peter i., 5-7).

SUBTRACTION. Lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil speaking. . . . desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby (1 Peter ii., 1-2).

MULTIPLICATION. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord (2 Peter i., 2).

DIVISION. Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. vi., 17-18).

RULE OF THREE. Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity (love) (1 Cor. xiii., 13).

A WONDERFUL NUMBER.

There is a Number in Arithmetic which is known as the Greatest Common Measure. That number is found in the Bible which is one proof that it is God's Book.

The measure of the whole number is written down four times in Leviticus 26. One half of the whole number is spoken of in Daniel and in Revelation more than once. The whole number is the time which God has fixed for the down-treading of His people Israel. When you have found the number, if you can ascertain the last date when the Kingdom of Judah was carried captive—that date added to the figure we are seeking should give us a fixed time within which God will remember His promise and remember the land. You will also find that you can divide the whole number by each of the Cardinal numbers without remainder. What is this wonderful number?



BIRTHDAY WISHES.

May your life be a happy one,
 Free from perplexing cares ;
 Held in the circle of God's love,
 Guarded from worldly snares.
 May it indeed be a pleasant life,
 Gladdened with loved ones nigh ;
 Cheered and helped by sweet fellowship,
 While on God's Word you rely.

May it be too a holy life,
 Christ may you freely serve ;
 As from the narrow path of right
 Never your footsteps swerve :
 So may it be a life of peace,
 With God your chiefest joy ;
 Your heart full of love and gratitude,
 While His praise your lips employ.

I trust it may be a useful life,
 Rich in the fruits of love ;
 Blest by the many you have blessed,
 Approved by the One above.
 And then, may you have an endless life,—
 When our Lord comes again,
 May He call you into His Kingdom bright
 For ever with Him to reign.





BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

MOST children, I am sure, like pretty things, pretty clothes, picture books and toys.

Where is the little girl who does not like a nice doll with rosy cheeks and long curly hair, or the boy who is not delighted to possess a noble looking horse with prancing hoof and flowing mane? How Ethel's eyes sparkled with pleasure when Mother held up a piece of pink satin and said, "Darling, you may have this for dollie, it will make her a very pretty new frock."

It is quite right to love pretty things. Anything we admire very much we usually call "lovely" or "beautiful." There are many beautiful things in the world in which we live. Indeed, it is a "beautiful world," for God made it (Acts xvii. 24), and although a great deal has been spoiled through sin, and nature robbed of her choicest perfection, yet we may look around us and see much that is pure and lovely, and we may "think on these things" (Phil. iv. 8) and live in the enjoyment of them, knowing that they are God's gifts to us to help us to live good lives. If the hills and valleys, trees and flowers are so wonderful and so fair now, let us try and imagine what they will be when sin is taken away altogether and there are no thorns and thistles to spring up or straggling weeds to cumber the ground, when peace and righteousness shall abound and sweet songs of joy and gladness ring again through the ransomed earth.

We have some lovely pictures of this glorious time in Isaiah. There is one in chapter xi. and another in chapter lxx., and you may find many more.

But we must remember that although there is much that is beautiful in the world, at the present time, all that attracts at first sight is not really beautiful, so we have to discern between what is true and what is false.

Many things are not worth looking at or "thinking upon." They are vain things. The Psalmist asked God to turn away his eyes from beholding vanity (Psalm cxix.), and we may do so too.

Some boys and girls seem to notice everything that is vain and ugly. I have seen children laughing and shouting outside a shop because a very ugly picture has been placed in the window for an advertisement, and pushing their way through a crowd which has gathered in the street to see some very disagreeable sight, when it would have been far better to have turned away their eyes and gone straight along with pure, happy thoughts in their minds.

In the "beautiful Book" God has given us, called "the Bible" we read, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter i.), "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil" (Psalm xcvi.), and you are all familiar with the words of Jesus in Matt. v. ,—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The blackest, ugliest thing in the world is "Sin." As we have already mentioned, it has sadly spoiled this "beautiful earth" which God has given to the children of men.

The Apostle Paul says, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi.). How glad we should be that he was able to add, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," so that we may look forward to the time when sin shall be no more.

This reminds us of the "beautiful robe" of righteousness, that God has provided for us in Christ Jesus, as a covering for sin even now, so that we may draw nigh unto Him and be accepted in His Sight.

If you were asked what is the most beautiful thing in the world, I wonder what you would answer. I think it is "love," because "love" is like God, for it is written "God is love" (1 John). The most wonderful thing to me is "life" and the sweetest "forgiveness," but "love" is the greatest, for neither forgiveness nor life could be, apart from "love."

The Lord Jesus is the centre of God's love. "God so loved . . . that He gave—"Jesus," and Jesus so loved, that He laid down His life for us (John xv.). The Apostle Paul was thinking of this wonderful love of God, which was revealed to him in Jesus, when he exclaimed, "He loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*" (Gal. ii.).

Love is the test of true friendship, for Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another" (John xiii.). Love to God and love to our neighbours are the two great commandments of the Law which include all others.

What a many times love is referred to in the Bible! In the first epistle of John alone it is mentioned over forty times. Will you read it through and notice what this "Apostle of love" says about it?

A very pleasant Sunday evening might be spent under-lining the word in your Bible with a very fine pen and small ruler.

In the thirteenth chapter of John's gospel we read of him as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (v.). Jesus loved them all, we know, but John liked to be very near to Jesus, and that sort of close friendship always strengthens love. If you turn back to the eleventh chapter you will see the names of others whom Jesus loved, and we are quite sure they loved Jesus too. (Don't forget to fill in the little spaces neatly). Now what is it that fills us with loving admiration when we think of Jesus? It is not simply the name "Jesus" that so attracts us, although it is a "beautiful Name" (Matt. i.). It is the "beautiful character" of Jesus that draws us to Him. Think of His loving words about little children and His kind invitation to the weary and heavy laden.

Men were filled with awe and wonder as they listened to the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth, and the officers who were sent to take Jesus returned saying, "never man spake like this Man" (John vii.).

Recall some of His kind deeds. The blind restored to sight (Mark viii.). The lepers cleansed (Luke xvii.). The dead raised (Matt. ix.), and the glad tidings preached to the poor (Matt. xi.). All who ever came to Jesus in trouble went away very happy, for He healed them all. Truly He was the "great Physician" (Matt. ix.) as well as "Man of Sorrows" and acquainted with grief (Isaiah liii.). When Peter was sent to Cornelius a long while after Jesus had been raised from the dead and ascended to His Father in Heaven, he told him how "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit," and then, as he thinks of that dear Master who trod the rugged, narrow streets of Palestine, followed by the eager throng of "common people who heard Him gladly" (Mark xii.), he continues "who went about doing good" (Acts x.).

Yes, Peter could never forget the patient, tender self-sacrificing Saviour, who had so freely forgiven him and received him into confidence again.

Dear boys and girls, that is the Master to serve and the example to imitate. Let us try to be more like Jesus, God's beloved Son, day by day, and at last be found, not bearing His Name only, but having His "beautiful character" also, for then shall we be welcomed into His "beautiful Kingdom" and live for ever to praise God.

BEAUTIFUL THINGS.

Beautiful faces are those that wear—
It matters little if dark or fair—
Wholesouled honesty printed there.

Beautiful eyes are they that show,
Like crystal panes where hearthfires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.

Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like songs of birds,
Yet whose utterance prudence girds.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest and brave and true,
Moment by moment the whole day through.

Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Ceaseless burdens of homely care,
With patient grace and daily prayer.

Beautiful lives are those that bless,
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains but few can guess.



“LITTLE CHILDREN LOVE EACH OTHER.”

May be sung to tune “Oswald,” No. 66, S.S. Book.

Little children, love each other,
’Tis the Saviour’s wish we know,
We should think of one another
As through life we onward go.

Oh, how many sad and needy,
All around us we may see;
When we help them, said the Master,
“Ye have done it unto Me.”

Just a smile may make the burden
Lighter for some soul to bear,
In the Bible it is written
We should others sorrow share.

’Tis not many deeds heroic
That in the great Day will tell,
But in humble, loving service,
We may please our Father well.

Let us make it our endeavour
To be patient, just and kind,
For in helping one another
Truest happiness we find.



THE DAISIES.

Sweet little flowers of slender grace,
 Growing here in this quiet place
 Fresh as the new and hopeful morn,
 Bright as the roseate hues of dawn.
 Soft as the summer winds that blow;
 Clear as the silver rills that flow;
 Emblem of purity divine,
 Sweet little daisies you are mine.

Up with the lark at break of day,
 Greeting the sun's first orient ray;
 Feasting upon the glistening dew,
 Freshness and vigour to renew;
 Then when the twilight dims the skies,
 Tightly you close up your pretty eyes,
 And gently nodding your tiny heads,
 Calmly sleep in your grassy beds.

All times, in all places to be seen,
 A crest of white on a stem of green,
 In a meadow sweet, or in forest shade,
 On stately lawn, or in cultured glade.
 On weedy banks, or in devious dell,
 Thou choosest not your place to dwell;
 For wheresoever you are sent,
 Dear little flowers you seem content.

May I be like you daisies, dear,
 Chasing the gloom from places drear,
 Living for others to make them glad,
 Helping the needy, cheering the sad;
 If my lot is cast in a humble place
 Filling my life with that gentle grace.
 That is pleasing well to our God above,
 And proves that my heart is filled with love.



“PUSSY.”



MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,

Perhaps you may be interested to know why we call a cat “pussy.” The name comes from the early Egyptians, who worshipped cats, and fancied they were like the moon, because they are more active at night, and because their eyes change and look like different phases of the moon.

If you have not already noticed, look at the pupils of pussy’s eyes and see how they are sometimes full and sometimes crescent-shaped like a half-moon.

So the Egyptians made an idol of a cat’s head, and called it “Pasht,” which means “the face of the moon.” By degrees this became “paṣ” then “pus,” and finally “pussy,” the common name for a kitty the world over. We should be kind to pussy and treat her well, but we must be careful not to bestow undue affection upon her or any other animal and so turn our household pets into idols.

Many of the gods of Egypt were worshipped under the forms of animals, which were chosen to represent them. The Egyptians had very strange ideas about the soul. They believed, like many people do at the present time, that the soul was something inside them that could not die, so when their friends passed away in death, they liked to think they were not really dead, but living somewhere else. The wicked suffered torments, while others passed into the bodies of animals.

This seems very silly to us who read the Bible and learn what God has said through “holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter i. 20) about the soul, and also about loved ones who are taken from us. The Psalmist says, “Put not your trust in princes nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish” (Psalm cxlvi. 3, 4).

You have often read about Martha and Mary, and their brother Lazarus who died. Do you remember what Jesus said to comfort the sorrowing sisters? What did Martha answer? You will find it in the eleventh chapter of John.

God is able to bring again from the dust and give life to all who fall asleep in Jesus, and this He will do at the great resurrection day.

Let us take King Solomon's advice in Eccles. ix. 10. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might"; and why? "For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." In verse 5 he plainly tells us that "the dead know not anything," and I believe God's word is true, don't you?

The children of Israel who sojourned a long time in the land of Egypt, and Moses, whom God sent to deliver them from bondage, would be well acquainted with the manners and customs of these idolatrous people. God had chosen Israel to be His own separate people and commanded them to worship Him only. They were strictly forbidden not to go after the gods of the nations around them.

(Read Deut. vi. 13-15; vii. 4-6; and xii. 1-4, 28-32).

Many similar passages are to be found. From the history of God's dealings with His people in the past, we may see how God requires us to walk, for Israel's God has not changed and it is our duty to love, honour and obey Him.

By and bye all the idols will vanish and the people who worship them all pass away, while those who have put their trust in the One Living True God and worshipped Him only will remain for ever.

That we may all know Him and be accepted of Him in that day is the sincere wish of

YOUR LOVING FRIEND.

HARD NUTS CRACKED.

IMMORTALITY.

"Uncle Will, What is an immortal soul?" asked Georgie endeavouring to keep pace with him, as they walked along together one pleasant afternoon. "Is that one of your 'hard nuts,' George?" enquired his uncle, rather dryly. "Yes, uncle, a very hard one, at least, so it seems to me, for it has puzzled me for some time, but I did not care to trouble you with it." "I do not mind trouble, nephew mine, and I am at your disposal all the while my holiday lasts. This is the most curiously-shaped old nut that ever had existence, and few there are who will tackle it. Most of the people of the earth look upon it as a real beauty, and guard it most carefully."

"Perhaps it is a bit too hard to crack then, uncle!" "No, my boy, no; if it is set in the right position and just given one severe blow, it will crumble to powder as easily as possible, but, as I have said, so few dare touch it." "Then it is a bad one, uncle?" "Yes, Georgie, as bad as anything can be; it is rotten through and through."

"We had better throw it away then, uncle, and not waste time with it." "Not so; although at first I may appear a little contrary. Such nuts are best cracked before being cast away, for two reasons: First, that we may satisfy ourselves that it is bad (for from all appearance it resembles a good one, and many might never detect its badness); and second, we may prevent some one from devouring it in the dark, and suffering from its ill-effects."

"But I shouldn't think anyone would be so foolish as to gobble down a bad nut without looking, even if it did taste fairly well," laughed Georgie, aiming at a pebble with his cane. "Certainly not. When a real brazil is in question it makes all the difference, but this is a Bible nut you recollect," replied his uncle, smiling, "but if we are to pursue the subject we must slacken our pace a little, for if we talk as fast as we are walking we shall soon be exhausted. Let us rest awhile on this green shady bank, the landscape is lovely."

"Then I suppose there really are no souls, uncle?" said Georgie, throwing himself on the long cool grass. "I should say there are, my boy. I should not like the business of counting half of them," said Uncle Will, following his example.

"Oh, of course; I forget for the moment, it is quite a common thing to hear people speak of souls. By the way, uncle, Archie's sister wrote such a nice hymn which runs something like this,— 'There are millions of immortal souls dwelling on this sphere, While millions now enjoy heaven's bliss, These are toiling here.'"

"It sounds original, Georgie, but still there are hundreds of hymns giving forth the same idea, and if it were Bible truth I would not hesitate to accept and rejoice in it as so many well meaning people do." "I don't think it can be very clear in the Bible then what a soul is, uncle, although the word occurs a number of times." "Clear and simple enough, my boy, if we desire to understand. The Bible was never intended to puzzle humble folks, but to enlighten and instruct them. The Hebrew word 'nephesh,' translated 'soul,' occurs in the Old Testament 471 times. It is also translated 'life' and 'living' about 150. In the New Testament, the Greek word 'psuche,' which corresponds with 'nephesh' in the Old, is rendered 'soul' 59 times, and 'life' 40 times, but not once is the word soul prefaced by the words 'immortal' or 'never-dying' in the Bible. The words 'immortal' and 'immortality' is never applied to man in his present state, for immortality is God's nature, and we cannot think that God will bestow His divine and holy Nature upon wicked beings, as most of these so-called immortal souls are. The words 'immortal' and 'immortality' only occur six times in the New Testament. Two referring to God Himself and four in relation to man.

"I should like to know where they are written, uncle? they must be of great importance." "They are, Georgie, and I can give you them now if you care to enter them in your note book." "I will, uncle; for they may help to make clear what now seems

very strange, for if souls are not immortal, that is, as you say, never-dying, there is no need for, and no sense in believing they go to heaven or hell at death—the death of the body, I suppose! Did you not tell me the other day, uncle, that hell means ‘the grave?’” “Yes, sure.” “But now for the references, please uncle.” “Well, here are the two speaking of the King, immortal, invisible. . . . who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable” (1 Tim. i. 17, and vi. 15, 16). The next shows that through the coming of the Lord Jesus, and the great work He accomplished, life and immortality were brought to light; so that through the preaching of the Gospel the way has been made possible for those who believe and obey, in the future to attain unto it (2 Tim. i. 10), for we see it is something God will bestow upon those who “by patient continuance in well-doing,” seek for it. We do not usually seek for what we already possess (Rom. ii. 6), it would not be reasonable.

“The last two references make it clear that immortality is to be put on at the resurrection; and when it is put on, then ‘death will be swallowed up in victory’ (1 Cor. xv. 53) for, ‘the gift of God is Eternal Life’” (Rom. vi. 23).

“Thank you, uncle, I will remember what you have said, and study the verses until I get well hold of their meaning, for I should like to master this curious old nut, although I seem quite misty yet.”

“It is worth while, nephew. At present you are trying to lay hold on a good nut without letting the bad one go.”

“I do not mean to, uncle; but, perhaps, somehow I cannot help it. Have you ever seen a soul, uncle?” “A few thousands in my life, I should say.” “Well, if all is true that is said about them, it must have given you a very funny sensation. No wonder you needed a rest and change!” Uncle Will laughed heartily, but Georgie, who was warm on the subject continued, “I have heard that they take all sorts of shapes, uncle. It must be horrible to see a bad soul going down to hell; it makes me shudder to think of it.” “And me too, boy, its a sorry spectacle, I can tell you, but you have not forgotten the meaning of the word ‘hell.’” “I had for the moment, but Archie has lately lost his only sister, and they were saying what a comfort it was to know her happy soul was in heaven. When she died, something like a beautiful white butterfly was seen by her mother flying upwards.” “Or rather she imagined she did,” put in Uncle Will. “Her mind being full of the idea that souls are immortal, and feeling sure that God is love, it would be most natural for her to believe that God had taken the child’s soul to heaven; but is it not remarkable, Georgie, that flying is about the only thing the Bible does not tell us souls can do!”

“Does the Bible tell us what souls do, uncle?” “Yes, to be sure, it gives the whole history of some souls.” “This is an interesting sort of nut, uncle, I am glad we decided to crack it. Please tell me some of the things souls can do.” “With pleasure,

Georgie. The Bible speaks of souls being born (Exod. xii. 19); of souls dying (Rev. xvii. 3); of souls being in the grave (Ps. cxxxix. 48); of souls being raised from the dead (Acts ii. 31); of souls breathing (Josh. xi. 11); of souls being slain with the sword (Josh. x. 28, 29); of souls eating and drinking (Lev. vii. 20; Isai. xxxii. 6); of souls being burnt with fire (Isai. xlvii. 14, margin); and many other things. It also speaks of souls having hands (Lev. xxiii. 9), mouths (Psa. ciii. 2, 5), and lips (Lev. v. 4), and of souls being put in fetters of iron (Psa. cv. 8, margin).

“ You surprise me, uncle, and is there not one reference among them that speaks of flying?” “ Not a single one, my boy. It is true that souls are now experimenting with airships, but this is quite modern. Even the angels that Jacob saw in his dream required a ladder to ascend and descend upon (Gen. xxviii.). The wings attached to them in pictures gives us a very wrong idea of what angels are, and what they do. You will find that they always appeared as men in the Bible, and were not recognised until they performed their mighty deeds. There are no flowing haired, baby cupids in God’s Book.” “ Did you say that souls are born, uncle?” “ Yes, there are only two souls out of the untold millions who have lived, who were not born, and only two that have not died.” “ Not died, uncle?” “ Yes, not died. “ But uncle, everybody believes that souls cannot die. We sing at school sometimes, “ Our souls can never die, no never die.”

“ If the Bible plainly declares that they do, would you still cling to the hymn?” “ Indeed, I would not, for I believe God’s Word is true.”

“ Then here is one verse just to the point, in Ezek. xviii. ‘ The soul that sinneth it shall die ’ (v. 4). The Apostle James speaks of a soul being saved from death, and you remember too that Jesus said, ‘ My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.’ ” “ I know the verse well, uncle. Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He was overwhelmed with sorrow, and soon after that dreadful scene of the cross, Jesus died.” “ Never forget that fact, my boy. ‘ Jesus died ’ : for as truly as all souls are born, so all die, even the Lord of Life and glory died for us, that we might have life from the grave, by believing in Him; for you know that He said to Martha, ‘ I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.’ ”

“ Uncle Will, I see it,” exclaimed Georgie, rising to his feet, “ the old nut is cracked at last. Jesus Himself was the soul that died, and everybody else are either living or dead souls.” “ Verily, verily,” replied his uncle, “ and I am pleased you have made this discovery yourself, and our time has been so profitably spent.” “ Thank you for helping me, uncle, I shall never forget this pleasant afternoon’s talk,” said Georgie.

May we all be brave enough to put our foot down firmly on this superstitious old nut whenever we have the opportunity.

TO A CAPTIVE FLY.

You are captured foolish fly,
 And most surely doomed to die;
 You will ne'er get free again
 From that silken cobweb chain.

Soon your cunning host will dine,
 On that slender form of thine;
 In his palace, dull and grim,
 You will make a feast for him.

All this struggling is in vain,
 He will only mock your pain;
 Ah! he spies you, insect small.
 From his chamber on the wall.

He has fixed his wicked eye
 On you, poor unhappy fly,
 And anon descends the thread,
 Thirsting for the dainty spread.

Now above your form he hangs,
 Now holds you in his poisonous fangs,
 Now with the banquet pleased well,
 Leaves you but an empty shell.

And your kindred flitting by,
 See your frame suspended high;
 Oh! if you had danger seen,
 You might happy still have been.

Lurking 'neath some tempting bait,
 Sin doth like a spider wait;
 Thus, from you, I learn, poor fly,
 Much of frail humanity.

I must ever watchful be,
 Keeping far from vanity;
 Trusting God to guard my way,
 Till the bright and better day.



A BIBLE BEEHIVE.

(SEARCH TEXT).

DEAR LITTLE ONES,

When you are playing in the garden among the sweet flowers, in the bright, warm summer-time, every now and again you hear the zome, zome, zome, of the busy bee as it flies past you.

Perhaps you give a sudden start. Oh, it is a bee! You are not frightened to be sure. He will not sting unless someone tries to hinder him from doing his duty. He is a faithful little servant. You watch him a few moments—how industriously he moves from flower to flower.

What a skilful worker he is too. He knows well what he is about. See how he forces open the mouth of that crimson dragon-flower and sucks the sweet moisture from its yellow throat, and with another zome, zome, hastens away in search of other flowers.

God made these wonderful little creatures and gave them wisdom to work so curiously and well.

Although so small and weak, they all work together and are therefore able to accomplish a great deal. They are all busy workers, for if there happens to be a drone he is soon thrown out. Like the bees we must be unselfish, and help each other, and thus make sweetness in our lives. The bees have a purpose. They go out to make honey. So we should work with an object in view. If the bees find honey in one flower, they visit only that kind all the day.

When we find out what is good and pleasant, may we forsake all else and keep to it. Then the bees will go a long distance to seek the best flowers, for honey-making. We too must seek the best helps, our parents and teachers, not forgetting God and His Holy Word. Some bees will go miles away in their search for the right flowers. They teach us to be diligent and industrious, and never mind giving ourselves a little trouble for the sake of others.

Let us live to make others happy, just as the bees go about collecting sweet honey to give us food and pleasure.

Many grown up people are very interested in the life and ways of the bee and some have observed their manners very closely and have written books about them which are both useful and instructive.

In God's Book, the Bible, very little is said about the bee, but honey is very frequently mentioned.

I will tell you the four places where bees are referred to. The first is in Deut. 1. 44, where their attacking in swarms is alluded to. In Psalm 118, God's servant compares the enemies that compassed him to swarms of bees, and in Judges xiv. 8, we read of some bees swarming in the dried up carcase of a lion. The last reference is Isaiah vii. 18. This is not a real bee, but the term is used as a figure of the Assyrian.

When I was a very little girl I well remember seeing our neighbour's bees swarm in our garden. Hundreds of bees were buzzing and flying about in all directions, making the air quite dark. At length they all settled on a large currant tree and hung from one of its branches like a big brown bag, a solid, living mass of bees, until their owner arrived and gladly carried them off.

The wild bee in Palestine, we are told, makes its nest in the hollows of rocks and in hollow trunks of trees. Honey was among the choice things sent as a present by Jacob to Joseph (Gen. xliii. 11).

The psalmist tells us of something that is sweeter than honey. Do you know what it is (Psalm xix.).

The house in which the bee lives is called a hive. The one you see here is a very uncommon sort of hive. I have called it "a Bible Bee-Hive" because the names of the bees who belong to it are all to be found in the Bible. They are all beautiful honey bees, so little boys and girls may try to be like them.

There is not room to give you a proper portrait of each, but as you no doubt have already noticed, they are not the same kind of bees as those that fly about the garden, it will not signify.

If you look carefully at this hive you will see there are some little spaces left, where the numbers of the verses are missing. Now I want you to read the directions which I have given you in the poetry that follows, and on Sunday evening, all being well, get your Bible and finish this wonderful "Bible Bee-Hive" for me, so that if father and mother or big brothers and sisters look at it sometime, they will know exactly where "Be patient," "Be watchful," "Be stedfast," and all their lovely companions are found in the Bible, and they may also read what God has promised to those who desire to be like them.

PSALM CXIX. 103.

Be humble (1 Pet. v.).
 Be kind (Eph. iv.). Be pure (2 Tim. v.).
 Be loving (1 Jno. iv.). Be holy (1 Pet. i.).
 Be content (Phil. iv.). Be thankful (Psalm c.).
 Be compassionate (Luke vii.). Be pitiful (1 Pet. iii.).
 Be still (Psa. xlv.). Be glad (Psa. xxxii.). Be wise (Matt. x.).
 Be separate (2 Cor. vi.). Be zealously affected. . . (Gal. iv.).
 Be admonished (Eccles. xii.). Be not afraid (Mark v.).
 Be careful for nothing (Phil. vi.). Be joyful (Psalm cxlix.).
 Be quiet (Thes. iv.). Be gentle (2 Tim. ii.). Be just (Matt. vii. 12).
 Be of good cheer (Jno. xvi.). Be rich in good works (1 Tim. vi.).
 Be courteous (1 Pet. iii.). Be blameless (Phil. ii.). Be harmless (v.).
 Be obedient (Eph. vi.). Be baptised (Acts xxii.).
 Be upright (Psa. xxxvii. 37). Be diligent (Eccles. ix. 10).
 Be strong in the Lord (Ep. vi.). Be sober. Be affectionate (Rm. xii.).
 Be merciful (Luke vi.). Be good (v. 45). Be not hasty (Eccles. vi.).
 Be . . . slow to wrath (Jas. i.). Psalm
cxix. 103. Be patient (James v.).
 Be hopeful (1 Pet. i.). Be faithful (Rev. ii.).
 Be watchful (Luke xii.). Be ready (Matt. xxiv.).
 Be prayerful (Phil. iv.). Be steadfast (1 Cor. xv.). Be perfect (Matt. v.).

Here is a Hive,
 Where Bible bees thrive,
 And near to each " Be "
 A name you will see.

Just on the border
 With neatness and order,
 For as you do so
 T'will help you to know

Now if you don't mind
 The verses please find,
 And figures then place
 In each small open space—

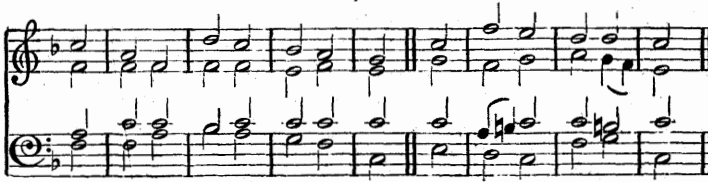
What the Bible doth teach
 About all and each,
 And should you in turn
 These verses well learn

Your mind you will store
 With knowledge far more
 Precious than money,
 And sweeter than honey.



"COME LET US SING."

Bedford.



COME, let us sing of that glad day,
By ancient seers foretold,
When God makes bare His holy arm,
As in the days of old.

When righteous laws from Zion's hill,
Go forth to every sphere,
And joyous pilgrims at His will,
Before their King appear.

When Zion's sons so long dispersed,
Led by the Conqueror's hand,
With songs of holy joy, return
Unto the Fatherland.

Then none shall lift the hand of wrath
To injure or destroy,
For in God's holy mountain dwells
Eternal peace and joy.

GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM AND DAVID.

What solemn things promises are, young friends! And yet how often they are lightly passed over, easily broken, or forgotten altogether. In the Bible we read of some grand and glorious promises made by God, and these are unchangeable and certain of fulfilment. We can but briefly touch upon two, of vital importance to all who desire to know the Truth, but I trust you will not be satisfied until you know much more about them; and if you will "Search the Scriptures" you will find many more arising out of these, that shine like bright jewels throughout the pages of God's Word.

You are all acquainted with the incidents in the life of Abraham, so I am not going to give you many details, but just leave a few thoughts with you that will help you to understand God's great purpose with the earth and mankind upon it. Abraham was called "the Friend of God" (James ii. 23). I expect you know why, but the reason is given in Rom. iv. 20, 21). Abraham's faith was tried to the uttermost, and yet he never hesitated to obey God. Think of those most difficult things he was told to do,

and he wavered not! First, to leave his country and his kindred and go to a land that God would tell him of: and secondly, to offer up his only son as a sacrifice. The Apostle tells us, "he went out, not knowing thither he went" (Heb. xi. 8, 9). We picture him as he journeyed towards Mount Moriah with Isaac at his side. What searching thoughts would pass through the minds of both father and son, for although Isaac is spoken of as a lad, he would be about 28 years of age (Gen. xxii. 6). It was Isaac who broke the silence by saying, "My father, . . . Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (v. 7). From Abraham's reply, we not only see that he quite expected to slay his son whom he loved so dearly, but that he believed that even if he did kill him, God was able to raise him up again from the dead (Heb. xi. 19). Abraham's hopes were centred in Isaac, for you remember that he was the "child of promise." How often Abraham would call to mind what God had said. "I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. xvii.) and later in Gen. xxi. 12, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."

What a marvellous example of faith and willing obedience! Truly Abraham was worthy of that high distinction God bestowed upon him; and the promises made to him in Gen. xii.; xiii.; xiv.; xvii., and xviii. These promises made to Abraham are the Gospel, or "good news" of an everlasting inheritance on this earth. In Num. xiv. 21, it is recorded that "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of God." Now if you will read the passages I am giving, you will see how clearly they show God's purpose with this beautiful earth, for He has not created it in vain. (Isai. xlv. 18; Psa. lxxii. 17-19; Isai. xi. 9; Hab. ii. 14).

In Psa. xxxvii. this same idea is expressed many times. Notice verses 9, 11, 22, 29 and 34, and think how Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Canaan is called the "Land of Promise," because it was the land which God promised to Abraham. But Abraham is to be the "heir of the world" (Romans iv. 13), and according to God's promise the earth will be restored to the beautiful state in which it was before it was cursed by sin (Isai. lv., 10-12), when all who have Abraham's faith and obedience will share in this glorious inheritance.

We see that these promises were renewed to Isaac and to Jacob. You have often thrown a pebble into a pool, and watched the circles widening and widening until they cover the whole surface! This is like the promise in Gen. xii., it widens and expands until it embraces all the earth and that "great multitude" of redeemed ones referred to in Rev. vii. 9.

The seed of Abraham were to be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the seashore, innumerable: And the Apostle says this refers to Christ, in Gal. iii. 16. In Psa. ii. God is pictured as

saying to His Son, " Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen, or nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession," so that we can understand what this same Apostle meant when he said, " If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise " (Gal. iii. 29).

But these promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have never been fulfilled, and Abraham is dead as well as all the prophets who foretold the good time (Heb. xi. 13-35, 39, 40). Has God forgotten all about them? Oh, no. He has been waiting to be gracious to all those who right down the ages would believe this glorious Gospel first preached to Abraham (Gal. iii. 7, 8) and obey His commands. He has waited for your parents and teachers, and now, dear children, He waits still a little longer until you are old enough to enter into covenant relationships with Him and His dear Son. Just as truly as Abraham was called from his country and kindred, so God is " taking out of the Gentiles " a people for His Name " (Acts xv. 14).

Paul tells us that Gentiles in the flesh are " without Christ " . . . and strangers from the covenants of promise (Eph. ii. 11, 12). This is a pitiable condition, but God has opened up a way for sinners of the Gentiles to become saints in Christ, or His spiritual Israel. Jesus said, " Salvation is of the Jews " so we see how closely these promises are bound up with the Jewish nation (Rom. ix. 4, 5), and that Jesus is the central figure around which all God's wonderful promises revolve.

Jesus will be coming to the earth again very soon, then Abraham will be raised from the dead; for to enjoy an everlasting possession he must have an unending life.

How lovely it will be to share this glorious inheritance !

We might spend a long time talking about these promises made to Abraham, but we must pass on to those equally glorious promises made to David, another Bible character with whom you are all familiar. We read about God's covenant with David in 2 Sam. vii. It is just as beautiful and far-reaching as the one we have considered, but God's promises with David were concerning a glorious and everlasting Kingdom while those to Abraham had reference to the land. A kingdom is something very substantial and not an idea, or a reign of grace in the human heart. It requires a king, a capital city, and subjects. Jesus, and His disciples preached " the Gospel of the Kingdom of God " (Luke viii. 1; ix. 2). It was the good news of a better day when sin and sorrow, and even death itself should be done away. God's Kingdom once existed in the days of David and Solomon (1 Chron. xxviii. 5; xxix. 23). Its kings were Saul, David, Solomon, and others. The twelve tribes of Israel were its subjects, Jerusalem was its capital, and the land of Canaan its territory.

God gave to Israel the most beautiful code of laws, and they dwelt in peace and prosperity for some time and enjoyed many blessings, but these were forfeited through disobedience and the people were scattered to all lands. So we see that these promises were not fulfilled in the days of David or Solomon, for David says "Thou, O Lord, hast spoken of Thy servant's House for a great while to come" (2 Sam. xxiii. 3-5). They will be fulfilled after the resurrection of David and all God's faithful ones; for as Peter told the Jews, "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 34), as many believe, and we read in Jno. iii. 13 that "No man hath ascended into heaven." The Son promised to David was none other than the Lord Jesus, and you may remember the words of the angel to Mary in Luke i. 32, 33, "He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the Throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." It was when David should "sleep with his fathers" that this promised King would be raised up. Isaiah says, "Of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon His Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this" (ch. ix. 7).

The Tabernacle of David and the Throne of the Kingdom have long been overturned because of iniquity (Ezek. xxi. 27), and Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles for many generations, as foretold by Jesus (Luke xxi. 24), but, says God through His servants, in Acts xxv. 16, "After this (the visiting of the Gentiles) I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen. . . . and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old" (Amos ix. 11). Peter also reminded the Jews on the day of Pentecost how God had promised to raise up Christ to sit on David's throne (Acts ii. 30), and when this is fulfilled the Jews will be restored to their own land, for the prophet says "He that scattered Israel, will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. xxxi. 10). "I will . . . gather them on every side and bring them into their own land . . . and one King (even Jesus) shall be King to them all," we read in Ezek. xxxvii. 23, Jesus once came to His own, but He was despised and rejected: but when He comes again, "every knee shall bow in His Name," and those that pierced Him shall look upon Him and mourn (Rev. i. 7). What a grand time for all who humble themselves before this mighty Lord and King of all the earth (Zech. xiv. 9)! Then there will be "peace on earth, goodwill among men, and glory to God in the Highest." May we all be found worthy to join in that glorious song recorded in Rev. v. 9, 10, when all God's great and wonderful promises have been fulfilled.

THE LAND OF PROMISE.

*May be sung to tune " Missionary," No. 43 S.S. Book, or
Tune " Aurolia," on page 141.*

Oh, fair sweet Land of Promise,
Once with God's Presence blest,
What glorious things await thee
When Israel long oppressed,
With Christ, their Royal Leader,
Within thy borders stand,
A mighty, ransomed people,
The joy of every land.

Rejoice ! the day of freedom
Has dawned at length for thee,
And soon thy scattered exiles
Will hasten back to see
Thy ancient towers and bulwarks,
And David's royal seat
Raised up in regal splendour
And Majesty replete.

Then shall thy fragrant pastures
With milk and honey flow,
And in thy choicest valleys
Rich vines and olives grow.
The Prophet like to Moses
Whom Israel then will heed
Shall give them rest most glorious,
With peace and Life indeed.

Then shall the voice of gladness
Be heard in joyous song,
For nought of care or sadness
Will reach that happy throng.
All then will be made righteous,
Immortal, kingly, grand,
And dwell in thee for ever,
Oh, glorious Holy Land.

There are many reasons why we should be interested in the Holy Land, and some of these, no doubt, you know quite well. November 2nd and December 11th, 1917, were red-letter days in the history of God's chosen people—the Jews. Jerusalem was captured by the British Forces from the Power of the Turkish dominion, fulfilling many wonderful prophecies and gladdening the hearts of all who, for many years, had been watching for this grand event.

The British then entered Jerusalem, with General Allenby, and the Proclamation of Freedom was read in four languages, on the steps of the base of the Tower of David, that was standing when Jesus was in Jerusalem so long ago. The Chief Jewish Rabbi sent a letter to the King, saying, "The occupation of Jerusalem, following so close upon the epoch-making declaration of Your Majesty's Government on Palestine as the National Home for the Jewish People, causes the hearts of millions of my brethren to throb with deepest gratitude to Almighty God, who alone doth wondrous things." Christ is coming soon, and He will do even greater things for Israel yet. Let us be on the look out for them!

OBSERVATIONS.

I walked abroad one sunny morn,
 With footsteps like the sportive fawn;
 My youthful heart o'erflowed with joy,
 And music did my lips employ.

The heavens were decked in radiant hue,
 And morning zephyrs gently blew;
 A grassy carpet 'neath my feet,
 And trees above to shade the heat.

The thrush discussed his wild wood theme,
 The sunbeams sparkled in the stream;
 The corn was standing high and rare,
 And poppies peered resplendent there.

The swelling ocean, broad and deep,
 I viewed from off a rocky steep;
 And midst her tumult I did cull
 The moaning of the white sea gull!

As oft she skimmed the frothy foam,
 Or played around the huge steep Holme;
 Or lighted on the yellow strand,
 As monarch both of sea and land.

So in that tranquil morning hour,
 Soft cradled in a rocky bow,
 The law of love I did divine,
 And Nature's God, to all benign.

The coming Kingdom, all serene,
 Far brighter than this beauteous scene;
 On which my mortal eyes did gaze,
 That filled my soul with rapturous praise.

If scenes so fair are witnessed now,
While sin and death so freely reign,
What will the glorious vision be,
When Eden blooms on earth again!

And who is he that draws his breath
Unconsciously? And boldly saith
There is no God that reigns on high,
Man is but born to live and die.

O, were that man brought face to face
With death's grim might, in a short space,
Could he deny the All-wise Power
That guides the Universe each hour?

If so, I deem his last estate
For his defects will compensate;
And truly all will know ere long,
There is a God, both wise and strong.

HOLIDAYS.

(SEARCH TEXT).



NOW we all look forward to our Holidays! Winter or summer, we always seem ready for them. I expect you have many times passed through that delightful experience called "Breaking-up." How gladly the "dry old lesson books" as they are often named, are rudely thrust aside and boys and girls like birds freed from their barred prisons fly away to more congenial surroundings; to roast chest-nuts and chatter as loud and long as they please, round the huge fire, or to find out once again, buckets and spades, sand-shoes and bathing costumes, ready to be off to the seaside as soon as a satisfactory answer has been found to that rather puzzling question, "Where shall we go?"

Now I trust you will all have many of these happy times, and after each, return to your studies with fresh desires to learn all you can and thus be well equipped for life's service.

There are many ways of spending a holiday, so we will have a little chat together on "How to spend happy holidays." Of course you can all spell holidays!

H-o-l-i-d-a-y-s. Quite right. Now I think we will have two words for that big capital H. Holidays should be "happy days," but you know you cannot be really happy unless you are "humble." Humility is a beautiful little flower that grows in the hearts of those who truly love God and the Lord Jesus.

It is written in the Bible, "God . . . giveth grace to the humble" (James iv. . .). (I am leaving little spaces after some of the Bible verses I shall speak about, and I want you to find where they are written, and then fill the figures in just where the space is left; very carefully and neatly).

The Bible is full of beautiful lessons on humility; you remember it is said of our dear Lord, "He humbled Himself" (Phil. ii.). So to be "happy" we must be "humble."

Then we must be "open-hearted." Just as the sweet flowers open to the dew and sunshine, our hearts and minds must open to God's great love and teaching of His Holy Word. In the longest Psalm you will find these words: "The entrance of thy word giveth light" (Psalm). This will help you to be "loving" and "lovable," for if our hearts are open to receive God's blessings, we cannot help "loving" Him for all the good things He gives us.

Do you know where to look for these three words "God is love" (1 John iv.) and, "Let us love one another" (1 John iv.

)? To be happy, we must be "Innocent." How much happiness is lost by joining with foolish companions in idle gossip, and reading doubtful books, or following worldly amusement! Dear young friends, pray God to keep you innocent. See what is written of Jesus in Matt. xi. 29, and Heb. vii. 26. Then again, you must be "Dutiful." God always honours obedience. Dutiful children are always the happiest children. Obey your parents, and "honour father and mother" is the commandment with promise (Eph. vi.). Jesus was "dutiful" (Luke ii.). "He went down with them, and was subject unto them." Oh, to find more of this fragrant flower in the hearts of children; but we must hasten on to our next letter.

Did you ever hear of a selfish person being happy? No, never! Well, then, you must be "attentive to others." Do some little act of kindness every day. Look out for the little opportunities, and remember our dear Master "went about doing good" (Acts x.). Now what shall we have for letter "Y"? "Yield yourself unto God." That is, be whole-hearted for God. Keep nothing back from Him, for only as we "yield" or "give up" ourselves, can He use us in His happy service.

And, would you like to shine 'mid the dark'ning night? Ah, yes! So our last word must be about "shining." The Bible says such a lot about it that one scarcely knows where to begin. One verse is "Let your light shine. . ." (Matt. v.). Another, "God is Light," and another, "I am the Light of the World." The Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. cxix.). And there is a beautiful verse in Matt. xiii.) which speaks of the righteous shining as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. I hope you will be among them. It will be worth trying very hard for. God has some splendid things in store for those who do serve Him faithfully. Will you try? Ask God to keep you day by day—*Humble, Open-hearted, Loving, Innocent, Dutiful, Attentive to others, Yielded to Himself, and Shining brightly.* Then I am sure you will spend very happy holidays, and even more, live a happy life, and at last be made happy for ever in the Kingdom of God.

"LIKE A LITTLE SUNBEAM."

He leadeth me beside the still waters.

Shepherd.



Like a little sunbeam,
Sparkling in the light,
I would shine for Jesus
Ever clear and bright.
Doing deeds of kindness,
Speaking words of love,
Comforting the sad ones
For the God above.

Loving and obedient
To my teachers kind
And in useful studies
Pure enjoyment find.

Making the dear Bible
Daily my delight,
And with true heart seeking
First the Kingdom bright.

Like a crystal streamlet
Let my influence flow,
Smoothing the rough places
As through life I go.
Spent in willing service,
Lord, may my life be
Like a sweet, fresh offering
Pleasing unto Thee.



A CHAT ABOUT TIME AND RUNNING.

Perhaps you are all familiar with the saying that "Time and tide wait for no man."

During the great war many of our pleasures and plans were quite upset. Many good things came to an end, while others were brought to a sudden standstill, at least for a time. But there has been one grand exception. Nothing and nobody could hold back "Time," nor hinder the great "Purpose of God." Day by day "time" has been steadily running on. And what a many changes it has brought along with it! Through this constant march of time those who were just boys and girls, answering the "Junior Competitions" and taking "Junior Prizes" in the Sunday School, are now young men and women, viewing life in a much more serious manner, taking a share in home and business responsibilities, and best of all have started on the path for "Life Eternal," and are "looking unto Jesus" as their best Friend and their highest Example, while trusting in God for help and strength to live accordingly. Those who were "tiny tots" five or six years ago have also been keeping pace with "Old Father Time," and have learned many useful things.

Suppose we take the subject of "Running," because I have been thinking about it a lot lately. Of course you want to know why. Well, there are many reasons. One is because I had a nice talk with a dear Christian friend not long ago on the subject. As we get older the days that often seem so long in passing when we are young, seem to fly away almost before we are aware, so that unless we are watchful and diligent we should never put into

practice our best intentions. Now there is another reason, for a little while ago I stood watching a lot of children coming out of school, and could not help noticing that a number of them started to run as soon as they passed through the gate. They were glad to be once more in the fresh air and exercise their limbs, no doubt. Liberty, or freedom, is a very beautiful thing if used aright, and God desires all to be light-hearted and happy. In most cases it was the thought of home, kind friends, and the good dinner awaiting them that made them run so freely. They had an object in running, and the look on their faces betrayed the fact.

True, some were running about aimlessly, and when tired and exhausted would be no nearer home than when they commenced to run. (Not very sensible, indeed). A few ran past me laughing merrily as they endeavoured to reach the corner of the street first. While others, with bowed heads and shoulders nearly level with their ears, sauntered along as if they did not care in what direction they moved or whether they reached home at all. This is how many people go through life, I thought; with no aim or object in view, and yet they imagine all will come right in the end.

Now life is compared to a race, and the runners are very much like those children coming out of school. Some have an object in life, some have not; but the happiest are those who have. If we are to keep step with the expert runner—Time—we must know what we are about. We must just pull ourselves up sharp, and ask ourselves what we are doing with these precious days, one by one as they come along and then pass away for ever. Are we making the best use of them and doing the most good in them? Time is one of God's great gifts, and therefore all should value and use it aright.

When I was quite young I recollect learning the following verse from a framed sample worked by my great-grandmother when only eight years of age. It is just splendid, I think, don't you?

Now that my journey's just begun,
 My course so little trod,
 I'll stay before I further run
 And give myself to God.

Have you done it yet children? If not, why not to-day? In this race of life the idea is that of running forward and onward, while keeping your object well in mind, thus continually nearing that something you wish to reach sooner or later, if you do not "give up." It is not running round about and anywhere aimlessly. Have you ever been in what is called a "maze"? If so, you will recollect what a tremendous lot of running you had to do, round and round, in and out, backwards and forwards, and when you have finished, feeling very tired, you find yourself in the very spot from whence you started.

This makes us think of Paul's words in 1. Tim. iv., that "Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life than now is, and of that which is to come" (v. 7). And again in 1. Cor. 9, "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize: so run that ye may obtain." You know how disappointing it is to run for nothing! When you have done your best and another outruns you by a few yards and you have lost. But in this heavenly race all who run well, in the end, may win a prize. As I was returning from my holiday in the summer the train suddenly pulled up the whole length of a large field, where some juvenile sports were in progress, so I was pleasantly entertained free of charge, while comfortably seated. From the elevated position on the green bank, the boys and girls could be seen running in many curious races. First presenting themselves before the gentleman at the "starting point," then falling into line, and awaiting the signal to "run all." It was interesting to watch them putting forth all their energies, after throwing aside everything that might hinder. Some, of course, "gave up" before long; some made false steps and stumbled; a few had a roll over, but were helped up again and made a fresh start. One brave little fellow came in second in one race because he kept running steadily on.

If you run in the race that we have referred to and exercise yourselves in the way the Apostle suggests, that is to be true and just and upright, diligent and earnest in your endeavours to serve God, and do your duty to parents, teachers and friends, then you will at last receive the best prize that can be obtained—Eternal Life and a place in the Kingdom of God.

David said in his beautiful psalm that is so full of requests for help and guidance in the right way, 'I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast set my heart at liberty' (cxix., 32). This is the way in which to run, because it is the "narrow path" that leads to life (Luke xvi., 24), and God will help you to clear away all the difficulties and overcome all the obstacles if you trust Him.

Hindrance! Well, who could expect to gain anything worth having without? You know that the most interesting race of all is the "obstacle race," and what honours are given to those who come through successfully! The greater the difficulties surmounted, the greater the credit due to the victors. Speaking again of this better race, Paul said to the believers at Galatia, "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" (ch. v., 7). Perhaps they had a smoother course than some others; but just read down that long list of worthy runners in Heb. xi., 1-31, and then see what obstacles they overcame, in verses 32-40. Truly there awaits each one of them, and all such, the "Crown of righteousness that fadeth not away" (2 Tim. iv., 8).

If we would be like them we must " Run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus " (Heb. xii., 1). We must " So run that we may obtain " the prize. " Not as uncertainly," because God is faithful, and if we run the way of His commandments the reward is sure.

Will you try and find out more about what the Bible says of " Time " and " Running " ?

BUT ONE RECEIVES THE PRIZE.

What meaneth all that wild excitement yonder?
 What doth the minds of all that throng engage?
 Contemplating thereon, my soul is wrapt in wonder;
 A mottled crowd I view of every rank and age.

Foremost stands their stern and dignified commander;
 They watch his movements with their anxious eyes;
 Run all ! run well ! goes forth the insensate order,
 But one among ye can receive the prize.

Anon they cast aside each cumbering burthen,
 And clear the track of all that might impede
 Their eagle flight; and, 'mid enthusiastic cheering,
 They press toward the mark with breathless speed.

One object is in view, one aim, one purpose !
 One ideal doth each anxious heart enthral;
 The signal waves, one hope is set before them,
 For they who run a race, run all !

And what, when all is done? Oh, dark delusion !
 What recompense will meet those glaring eyes?
 Nought, but deep remorse and wild confusion—
 But one among them can receive the prize.

Oh, foolish throng ! why, why this strange, deep yearning?
 For what may seem, yet is not, and will never be
 More than an empty shadow ! stay, and here discerning,
 Another race is yet planned out for thee.

And all who run with patience and gradation,
 Nor from the path of duty ere refrain,
 Shall in the end (O sweet and blessed consolation)
 The gift of everlasting life obtain.



Bible Reader's Calendar.

JULY.

AUGUST.

SEPTEMBER.

Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.
1	2 Cor. 3-4	Acts 18	1 Sam. 17 38-58	1	Isaiah 51	Mark 16	John 19 19-42	1	Col. 2	Daniel 6	2 Sam. 19 1-14
2	" 5-7	2 Chron. 18	" 18 1-16	2	" 52-53	Luke 24	" 20 1-18	2	" 3-4	Acts 25-26	2 Kings 5
3	" 8-9	" 19	" 18 17-30	3	" 54-55	John 20	" 20 19-31	3	Jer. 13	Daniel 7	2 Sam. 19 25-43
4	" 10-11	" 20	" 19 1-11	4	" 56-57	" 21	" 21	4	" 14	" 8	" 20
5	" 12-13	" 21	" 19 12-24	5	Acts 23	Acts 21	1 Kings 15	5	" 15	" 9	" 21
6	Gal. 1-2	" 22	" 20 1-23	6	Isaiah 58	Ezra 1-3	2 Sam. 1	6	" 16	" 10	" 22 1-25
7	" 3-4	" 23	" 20 24-42	7	" 59	" 4	" 2	7	Eph. 1-2	" 11	" 22 26-51
8	" 5-6	" 24	" 21	8	" 60	" 5	" 3 1-21	8	" 3-4	" 12	" 23 1-7
9	Isaiah 24	" 25	" 22	9	" 61-62	" 6	" 3 22-39	9	" 5-6	Acts 27	1 Kings 2 1-12
10	" 25-26	" 26	" 23 1-15	10	" 63-64	" 7	" 4	10	Jer. 17	Acts 27	Daniel 3
11	" 27	" 27	" 23 16-29	11	Acts 24	" 9	" 5	10	" 18	Esther 1-2	Exodus 2
12	" 28	" 28	" 24	12	Acts 25	Acts 22	" 6	11	" 18	" 3-4	" 3 1-10
13	" 29	" 29	" 25	13	Isaiah 65	Ezra 10 1-17	" 7	12	" 19-20	" 5-6	" 7
14	Acts 21	" 30	" 26	14	" 66	Neh. 1	" 8	13	" 21-22	" 7-8	" 8
15	Acts 22	Acts 19	1 Kings 3	15	Jer. 1	" 2	" 9	14	" 23	" 9-10	" 9
16	Isaiah 30	2 Chron. 31	1 Kings 27	16	" 2	" 3	" 10	15	" 24-25	Acts 1	" 10
17	" 31-32	" 32	" 28	17	" 3	" 4	" 11	16	" 26	" 2	" 11
18	" 33	" 33	" 29	18	Acts 25	" 5	" 12 1-14	17	" 27-28	" 3	" 12
19	" 34-35	" 34	" 30 1-15	19	Acts 26	Acts 23	2 Kings 2	18	1 Tim. 1-3	" 4	" 13
20	" 36	" 35	" 30 16-31	20	Jer. 4	Neh. 6	2 Sam. 12 15-31	19	" 4-5	" 5	" 14
21	" 37	" 36	" 31	21	" 5	" 8	" 18 1-18	20	" 6	" 6	" 24
22	" 38	Acts 20	1 Kings 17	22	" 6	" 9 1-21	" 13 19-39	21	2 Tim. 1	" 7	Numb. 13 17-33
23	" 39-40	Matt. 26	Mark 14 1-21	23	" 7	" 9 22-38	" 14	22	" 2	" 8	" 14
24	" 41	" 27	" 14 22-52	24	" 8	" 10 28-39	" 15 1-23	23	" 3-4	Acts 28	Daniel 8
25	" 42	Mark 14	" 14 53-72	25	Acts 27	" 13	" 15 24-37	24	Titus 1-3	2 Tim.	Joshua 1-2
26	" 43	" 15	" 15 1-20	26	Acts 28	Acts 24	2 Kings 4	25	Acts 1	Acts 9	" 3
27	" 44	Luke 22	" 15 21-47	27	Jer. 9	Daniel 1	2 Sam. 16	26	" 2	" 10	" 4
28	" 45	" 23	" 16	28	" 10	" 2	" 17 1-14	27	" 3	" 11	" 6
29	" 46-47	John 18	John 18 1-18	29	" 11	" 3	" 17 15-29	28	" 4	" 12	Judges 6
30	" 48	" 19	" 18 19-40	30	" 12	" 4	" 18 1-17	29	" 5-6	" 13	" 7
31	" 49-50	Matt. 28	" 19 1-18	31	Col. 1	" 5	" 18 18-33	30	" 7	" 14	1 Sam. 1



AUTUMN.

'Tis golden Autumn returned again,
 With ripened fruit and bearded grain ;
 There's not a cloud on the spacious sky,
 And the lark is soaring away on high.

Bright King Sol, with his burning heat,
 Scorches the grass beneath our feet ;
 So come, to-day we will gladly look
 At the lovely pages of Nature's book.

Just gaze about you, above, below,
 The hills and meadows are all aglow ;
 The wild birds chant sweet songs around,
 And oh ! there is joy in every sound.

The dewdrops grace each humble flower,
 The spider has woven her silky bower,
 While softly, slowly, the gentle breeze,
 Is wafting the leaflets that fall from the trees.

And merrily on do the streamlets glide,
 Rippling swift to the ocean wide ;
 Whilst yon bright fountain, the live-long day,
 Shoots in the air its sparkling spray.

And at early dawn the reapers go
 With gladsome song to the vale below,
 To bind in sheaves a plentiful store
 Of barley and wheat for the garner floor.

How good and lovely, what picture fair,
 What painting rich or what sculpture rare,
 Could equal the splendour of this Autumn day?
 Ah ! would that its glory could ne'er pass away.

But yet we know in God's Kingdom bright
 Fairer scenes will gladden our sight ;
 And blessings untold that will never end,
 Upon the faithful will richly descend.



A BIBLE SEARCH-TEXT TREE.

❧
HILDREN, this is an extraordinary sort of tree, is it not? I wonder if any of you have seen one like it before! I must confess I have not. From the title you may see that it is neither apple, plum and if you will read on carefully you will understand all about it.

For some time I could not make up my mind what would be most interesting to talk to you about next, until one day last Autumn I went a nice walk into the country.

The trees looked so lovely with their golden and russet leaves gently moving in the soft, warm breeze, it made my heart rejoice to see them. "How beautiful and how wonderful they are, and how good God is to cause them to grow so tall and graceful," I said to myself as I gazed around from the green hillock where I stood. Yes, wonderful, beautiful trees, what lessons you teach of God's wisdom and love! Soon you will loose your leafy garments. Even now some of your leaves are falling, falling so lightly to the ground, and, by and by you will stand bare and cold, for the long dark winter is coming, but God who causes you to grow, will keep you alive and strengthen you to endure the frost and the storms: and when the bright, fresh spring-time comes again, you will shoot forth your tender buds and look even more beautiful than you have done before.

Of course, I decided there and then that you would all like to help me to make a "Bible Search-Text Tree," so I set to work at once to find some of the many references to trees in the Bible. I have numbered these references throughout this letter, so that when you come to a figure in brackets, you must turn to the Bible Tree and find the same number, then look through the chapter given till you see the verse required and write the number in the space left for you.

Now I hope you all understand, because, this Tree is not complete until you have done your part.

Trees are familiar objects to all, for there are few parts of the earth where trees of some kind will not grow.

PROVERBS XI. 30.

Buds. (Num. xviii.). (Isai. xxvii.). *Buds.*

Twigs (47) (Ezek. xvii.). (48) (Ezek. xvii.). *Twigs.*

Leaves. (32) (Gen. viii.). (12) (Psa. i.). (20) (Mark xi.). *Leaves.*

Blossoms. (21) (Song of S. ii.). (22) (Hab. iii.). (23) (Mic. iv.). *Blossoms.*

Fruit. (1) (Gen. i.). (14) (Matt. vii.). (15) (Luke vi.). (25) (Luke xxi.). *Fruit.*

(13) (Jer. xvii.). (24) (Gen. iii.). (58) (Gal. v.). (18) (Matt. iii.). (35) (Jude).

(59) (Jno. xv.).

Branches. (Lev. xxiii.). (8) (Dan. iv.). (Matt. xiii.). (44) (Rom. xi.). *Branches.*

(45) (Rom. xi.). **THE BRANCH.** (43) (Matt. xxi.).

(41) (John xv.). (40) (Psa. lxxx.). (Isai. iv.). (39) (Zech. iii.).

(Zech. vi.). (42) (Jer. xxiii.). (Jer. xxxiii.). (1 Pet. ii. 24).

Boughs. (Gen. xlix. 22). (49) (Ezek. xvii.). (Ezek. xxxi.). (Psa. lxxx.). *Boughs.*

(7) (Dan. iv.). (Isai. xli.).

Jno. xv. 4 ; Rom. vii. 4. ROD or SHOOT. Psa. lxxii. 16 ; Phil. iv. 7.

(56) (Gen. iii.).

(Isaiah xi.).

(56) (Rev. ii.).

(31) (Isai. iv.).

(26) (Deut. xx.).

(10) (Prov. iii.).

(6) (Isai. lix.).

(52) (Ezek. xvii.).

(11) Psalm i.).

(17) (Eccles. xi.).

(53) (1 Chron. xvi.).

(55) Exekiel xlvi.).

(54) (Revelations xxii.).

STEM or TRUNK.

Ground. (2) (Gen. ii.). (16) (Luke xiii.). (36) (Isai. xi.). *Ground.*

(4) (Gen. ii.). (5) (Gen. ii.). **THEROOT.** (3) (Gen. ii.). (27). (Gen. iii.).

(37) (Isai. liii.). (38) (Rev. xxii.). (Rom. xi.). (Rom. xv.). (30). Zech. viii.).

(29) (Gen. viii.). **Roots.** (49) (Ezek. xvii.). **ROOTS.** (9) (Dan. iv.).

(34) (Jude). (19) (Luke iii.). (50) (Ezek. xvii.). (51) (Ezek. xvii.).

(28) (Matt. xiii.). (33) (Ephes. iii.). (Ps. civ. 16 ; Ezek. xlvi. 12 ; Rev. xxii. 2).

At the beginning of the Bible we read of a time when "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," but God said, after He commanded the light to appear, and gathered the waters together, so that there was dry land as well as seas, "Let the earth bring forth grass (the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind). . . and it was so" (1). At that time, "There was not a man to till the ground" (2), so God made man "out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul" or person (3). We also read that, "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" (4).

These were the most lovely trees ever seen, bearing the richest fruit ever produced. Some of these beautiful trees were planted in the garden of Eden, and you remember the command given to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat; but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thou shalt surely die" (5). Many trees are mentioned by name in the Bible, such as the cedar, fir, box, pine, myrtle, olive, vine and fig tree. Sometimes they are used to represent people,—the good and noble in character as when Isaiah prophesied that in the future God's people shall be called "Trees of righteousness" (6), or the proud and lofty in mind like the king of Babylon to whom Daniel interpreted that wonderful dream, showing that the tree with fair leaves and spreading branches, bearing much fruit" (7) represented the king himself who attributed all his wealth and greatness to his own wisdom. But Nebuchadnezzar had to learn that God rules in the kingdoms of men, so an holy One came down from heaven and cried aloud, "Hew down the tree and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves and scatter his fruit (8), but leave the stump of his roots in the earth" (9). If you will read the chapter through you will understand the meaning more clearly. Wisdom is spoken of as "a tree of life" (10) and those who delight in God's law are said to be like "trees planted by the rivers of water" (11). These are fruit-bearing trees, "whose leaf shall not wither" (12). Jeremiah uses very similar words of the man whose hope and trust is in the Lord (13).

Upon several occasions Jesus referred to trees in this figurative manner. After teaching His disciples concerning the laws of the kingdom of God, He warned them of false teachers, saying, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (14). "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit. . . a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit" (15). The lesson for all is that to do good we must be good. There are some trees that are worthless, they only "cumber the ground" (16), and therefore must be cut down, for whatever is done to them they will remain the same.

This parable of the fig tree shows how merciful and patient God is towards sinners, but His loving-kindness has a limit. The great Preacher once said, "In the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be" (17). This means that if people live evil lives, forgetting God and wasting their opportunities for serving Him, they will never have the power to do so when cut down by death, so let us be wise and remember our Creator in the days of our youth.

The stern words of rebuke from the lips of the Baptist show too that God requires more than an outward appearance of goodness. When the multitudes came to be baptised of John in the Jordan he told them to "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance" (18), because it was useless to make profession of serving God if their hearts were not sincere. "And now also, he continued, the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down" (19). It was for this reason Jesus cursed the barren fig tree; having leaves He expected to find fruit thereon, but "when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves" (20).

Figs form a portion of the food in Palestine and they abound everywhere. The fig tree puts forth its fruiting stems before its leaf-buds expand and the green figs remain through the winter, the first small ripe figs sometimes appearing in the early spring.

In the Song of Solomon the bridegroom says: "The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell" (21). Habakkuk, who prophesied of a time of great distress, concluded by saying: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom neither shall fruit be in the vines. . . Yet will I rejoice in the Lord" (22); and Micah gives us a beautiful word-picture of what will be, when the trouble is all ended. The "they (Israel shall sit every man under his own vine. . . and fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (23).

The fig is the first fruit tree mentioned by name in the Bible. When Adam and Eve tried to hide from God among the trees of the garden, we are told that they "sewed fig leaves and made themselves aprons" (24). Many, many years later, Jesus called attention to "the fig tree and all the trees" (25), using them as a sign of His coming again, when He will clothe all His faithful ones with the glorious robe of Immortality.

Buds and blossoms in the Bible are used as emblems of an awakening to new life. You will find two references to buds at the top of our tree. Aaron's rod that budded is a beautiful symbol of resurrection and unending life, and I should like you to think over that glorious promise concerning Israel in the future. In the R.V. of our Bible this is how it reads: "In days to come shall Jacob take root; Israel shall blossom and bud: and. . . fill the face of the world with fruit."

The chief object of trees is their usefulness, although they are exceedingly beautiful. In early days no person dare lay hands upon the trees, and under the law of Moses, God gave a special command for the preservation of the fruit trees in time of war (26) and we may be certain that at all times He desired His children to protect them. It takes a long time for a tree to grow and this should cause everyone to consider well before injuring them.

Some trees are grown from seed, others from slips. Many in the great forests spring up from the roots of other trees, but fruit-bearing trees must be planted and require careful attention. God's trees have all to be planted by Him and He watches over and protects them from evil.

Ever since the day God "cursed the ground for man's sake" (27) it has brought forth thorns and thistles and needs to be cultivated before it will produce good results.

It was the seed that fell into good ground that sprang up and brought forth fruit (28). There is a beautiful promise about the ground in Genesis (29) and another which is yet future in Zechariah (30). Finally there will be "no more curse" and instead of the thorn shall come up the myrtle tree. . . ." (31).

The olive leaf in the mouth of the dove returning to the Ark proved to Noah that the waters had abated (32) and when we behold the lovely trees in the new earth which God will yet create, we shall know how true God has been to His Word, and that not one good thing hath failed of all that He hath promised.

Again, it is necessary that trees should be firmly and deeply rooted if they are to withstand the force of stormy winds. Often after a boisterous night the orchards and forests present a sorry picture. Many branches and thick boughs are broken off and strewn about the ground, and even great trees sometimes uprooted. Perhaps the Apostle had this in mind when he wrote to the early believers in Christ about being "rooted and grounded in love" (33) and Jude, when he compared those who loved their own way, like Cain and Balaam, to "trees. . . plucked up by the roots" (34) whose fruit withereth" (35).

You are all familiar with the beautiful words of Isaiah's prophecy "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (36). Having described the destruction of the Assyrian army under the figure of a mighty forest, he uses this to represent the great Person who is to come and rule for God and dwell with men. Jesus would be like a slender twig, shooting out of the trunk of an old tree; this slender twig, though weak in appearance, would become fruitful and prosper. In another chapter the prophet says, "He shall grow up as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground" (37). We know this refers to Jesus, for almost His last recorded words are, "I am the root and Offspring of David and the bright and morning Star" (38). In Zechariah He is called "The Branch" (39). Jesus is the great central Branch, that God has "made strong for

Himself ” (40) among many branches, for He said to His disciples, “ I am the Vine, ye are the branches ” (41). Through Jeremiah comes the sweet comforting message, “ Thus saith the Lord, I will raise unto David a righteous Branch and a King shall reign and prosper ” (42). We all recognise this to be Jesus the once despised King of the Jews, for many among that multitude who cut down branches from the palms and strewed them in the way (43) a little later cried out, “ Crucify Him ! Crucify Him ! ”

On account of Israel’s wilful rejection of their Messiah they have been broken off like unfruitful branches from their own Olive Tree and some Gentile branches have been grafted in. Read what the Apostle said to the Christians at Rome and you will see how truly the present position of both Jews and Gentiles is described. “ Thou wilt say then,” reasoned Paul, “ that the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in ” (44). Well, but there is no room for boasting or pride, but for humility and thankfulness. God has not cast away His people for ever, for “ There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” Many people forget God’s promises concerning the Jews and imagine the Gentiles are the most important people in all the world and that all the good things belong to them by right, instead of receiving them as a great privilege from God and looking forward to the time when Israel shall be regathered to their own land and be a praise in the earth, “ for God is able to graft them in again ” (45).

Speaking of Israel as a dry tree, which now bears no fruit, Ezekiel prophesied that it should “ flourish in the mountains of Israel,” where it should “ shoot forth boughs (46) and bear fruit and be a goodly cedar.” In the early part of the chapter we read how the king of Babylon, as a great eagle, came to Jerusalem and took possession, carrying off her people. “ He cropped off the top of his young twigs ” (47) and it grew. . . and brought forth branches and shot forth sprigs ” (48). Then he tells of another great eagle representing Egypt, and a vine that did “ bend her roots towards him ” (49). “ It was planted in a good soil by great waters ” (50) but God declared, “ It shall not prosper, but be plucked by the roots ” (51). There is coming a day when God will punish all the nations that have ill-treated the Jews, then “ All the trees of the field (meaning these nations) shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish ” (52) and then indeed, “ All the trees of the wood (God’s people) will sing for joy before the Lord ” (53).

These beautiful evergreen trees are referred to in the last book of the Bible (54). Ezekiel, who also saw them in vision, says, “ There were very many trees ” (55). To the prophet and the apostle they resembled a most glorious wood of trees, separated by a river, clear as crystal, upon whose fair banks they clustered.

THE BIBLE SEARCH-TEXT TREE COMPLETE.

Proverbs xi. 30.

Buds. Num. xvii. 8; Isai. xxvii. 6. *Buds.**Twigs.* (47) Ezek. xvii. 4. (48) Ezek. xvii. 22. *Twigs.**Leaves.* (32) Gen. viii. 11. (12) Psalm i. 3. (20) Mark xi. 13. *Leaves.**Blossoms.* (21) Song of S. ii. 13. (22) Hab. iii. 17. (23) Mic. iv. 4. *Blossoms.**Fruit.* (1) Gen. i. 11. (14) Matt. vii. 17. (15) Luke vi. 43 (25) Luke xxi. 29. *Fruit.*

(13) Jer. xvii. 8. (24) Gen. iii. 2. (58) Gal. v. 22. (18) Matt. iii. 8. (35) Jude 12.

(59) Jno. xv. 2.

Branches. Lev. xxiii. 40. (8) Dan. iv. 14; Matt. xiii. 32. (44) Rom. xi. 16. *Branches*

(45) Rom. xi. 17.

THE BRANCH.

(43) Matt. xxi. 8.

(41) Jno. xv. 1, 2. (40) Psalm lxxx. 15; Isaiah iv. 2. (39) Zech. iii. 8;

Zech. vi. 12. (42) Jer. xxiii. 5; Jer. xxxiii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 24.

Boughs. Gen. xlix. 22. (49) Ezek. xvii. 23; Ezek. xxxi. 5. *Boughs.*

Psalm lxxx. 11. (7) Daniel iv. 12; Isaiah xli. 19.

Jno. xv. 4; Rom. vii. 4.

ROD OR SHOOT.

Psa. lxxii. 16; Phil iv. 7.

(56) Gen. iii. 24.

Isaiah xi. 1.

(57) Rev. ii. 7.

(31) Isaiah iv. 13.

(26) Deut. xx. 19.

(10) Prov. iii. 18.

(6) Isaiah lxi. 3, 11.

(52) Ezekiel xvii. 24.

(11) Psalm i. 2, 3.

(17) Ecclesiastes xi. 3.

(53) 1 Chronicles xvi. 33.

(55) Ezekiel xlvii. 6, 7.

(54) Revelation xxii. 2.

STEM OR TRUNK.**GROUND.** (2) Gen. ii. 6. (16) Luke xiii. 6-9. (36) Isai. xi. 1, 11. **GROUND.**(4) Gen. ii. 9. (5) Gen. ii. 5. **THE ROOT.** (3) Gen. ii. 7. (27) Gen. iii. 17.

(37) Isai. liii. 2. (38) Rev. xxii. 16; Rom. xi. 16; Rom. xv. 12. (30) Zech. viii. 12.

(29) Gen. viii. 24. **ROOTS.** (49) Ezek. xvii. 9. **ROOTS.** (9) Dan. iv. 15.

(34) Jude 12. (19) Luke iii. 9. (50) Ezekiel xvii. 7. (51) Ezekiel xvii 9.

(28) Matt. xiii. 6. (33) Ephes. iii. 17; Psalm civ. 16; Ezek. xlvii. 12; Rev. xxli. 2.

Deep, firm-rooted trees, that have stood the test of many fierce storms; with branches spreading far and wide, and oh, what luscious fruit! Notice how many kinds too and think how many times in the Bible that same number is used. Even their lovely, fadeless leaves are of wonderful service to the nations. I should like to tell you much more about them but I think you will have enough to do if you find all the verses I have given you. In God's Holy Word we read of a Paradise lost through disobedience and the Tree of Life guarded (56), but it also tells of a paradise to be shared by all who love and obey Him, and in the midst is the Tree of Life" (57) of which all are invited to partake.

Whenever you look up at the tall, graceful trees, will you call to mind some of these glorious things? You will observe that not only are trees frequently mentioned but every part. Dear boys and girls, have a high ideal in life. Be noble and upright in character, so that you may be looked up to by the young ones. Try to cultivate all those golden fruits of the Spirit named by the Apostle Paul (58) and remember that Jesus said to His disciples, "herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit" (59).

Oh, exclaim some of my young readers, "Here is that Bible Tree again!" Yes, true enough. The same spreading branches and thick boughs—the same old trunk and deep-set roots, reaching to right and left of the same piece of ground. But stay a moment, young friends, for if you will compare this tree with the one that appears on page 105. I think you will notice a great difference and conclude that this is far the better. Indeed here is as much contrast as spring and autumn, or seedtime and harvest. The first represents a tree in early spring, just putting forth its vernal foliage, tender buds and fair blossoms; the latter, that same tree in golden autumn, laden with its wealth of ripe yellow fruit. The one gives pleasure, but the other is the cause of much joy. That which makes our second tree so superior to the first is that it now bears the precious fruits of loving labour and patience, and those who have worked and found all the verses that makes our tree complete, will rejoice with me and feel well rewarded.

All may now look up the verses in their Bibles, and compare the references, and see if their work is quite correct.



WHERE TO BEG.

Two beggars upon the high-road met
 Of a large and famous City;
 Ah! say you, beggars often do,
 'Tis neither rare or witty.

They set their burdens on the ground,
 'Twas for no agitation;
 For soon those friendly beggars were
 Absorbed in conversation.

One said, " My back is nearly broke,
 My burden is so heavy;
 " Ah!" laughed the other, " 'tis no joke,
 My bundle is no levy."

" I'm tired of this poor trade," said one,
 " 'Twill never, never pay."
 " Not so with me," the other smiled,
 " I'm richer every day."

" How strange! whatever plea I make,
 Or fain a broken leg;
 The people turn away and sigh—
 Ah! we have need to beg.

I try with courtesy and smiles,
 They answer stern and grim:
 " Go, lazy fellow, go and work!
 You're strong of heart and limb."

" I ne'er am treated thus, good friend,
 When I my needs display;
 And be it morning, noon, or night,
 I'm never turned away."

" A lucky fellow, true," quote he,
 And gave his load a twitch;
 " I dreamed not there could be such folks,
 So generous and so rich."

" There is but One, and it matters not
 How many beggars go
 To plead their cause, to ask for help,
 He always will bestow."

" Then tell me where you beg so free?
 The morning I'll not wait."
 " Good friend," the other calmly said,
 " I beg at Heaven's gate!"

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,

Let us think a moment. How are we going to spend those 365 days, at least, if God is pleased to spare our lives to the end of the year, and the Lord Jesus has not returned from heaven to make up His jewels?

Wisely and usefully, I trust. May it indeed be a very happy year for each one. Not all smooth and sunny, of course; we know that would not be good for us, but we may be sure that whatever God sends is for the best.

Those of you who attend Sunday School will agree with me that some of the happiest hours of our lives are spent there. Recall some of the beautiful lessons from God's Holy Word, the sweet influence of kind teachers, the bright happy faces of Sunday School companions, prize days, parties and summer pic-nics, and at once a thrill of gladness passes through our hearts and minds.



HARD NUTS CRACKED.

“ I have another hard nut for you to crack, Uncle,” said Georgie, a few days before his Uncle returned home.

“ Let me have it, then, nephew, and settle it at once,” replied Uncle Will cheerily. “ It is about the Devil this time, Uncle. I hardly like repeating the word, it seems so bad, but I have been reading some of my old hymns lately that have puzzled me a good deal, and I should like to know if there really is such a terrible monster as some of these writers picture.”

“ It is indeed a bad word, Georgie, because it stands for all that is opposed to God and His truth. If we behead it we have the word ‘ evil,’ and if we place the letter ‘ e ’ at the end, it gives the word ‘ vile ’; the last two letters spell ‘ il,’ and with a slight alteration the word ‘ lie ’ is also produced. But although this word is associated with badness, it has nothing to do with the popular idea of a wicked fallen angel, who has power to tempt poor weak creatures in all parts of the world at the same time, and the power of an endless life to continue his rebellion against God. The idea of a personal, supernatural devil is not found in the Bible. It has struck terror into the hearts of millions, and been the subject of much foolish jesting by millions more; and as it is very important that we should believe no doctrine that will dishonour God, we must give it one severe blow and cast it away for ever. God is loving, wise and all-powerful, and would not create an immortal being more powerful for mischief than He is for good, to entice us away from Himself.

“ The word devil occurs in the New Testament about thirty times. It comes from the Greek “ diabolos,” meaning ‘ an accuser, or slanderer,’ so that anyone who speaks evil or falsely accuses another is a devil in the Bible sense. Judas slandered and falsely accused his Master, and so became a devil (John vi. 70; viii. 2), and Jesus said to the Church at Smyrna, ‘ The devil shall cast some of you into prison ’ (Rev. ii. 10), meaning the pagan rulers who falsely accused, ill-treated and condemned the early Christians. This adversary ‘ as a roaring lion ’ went about seeking whom he might devour (1 Peter v. 8). Literally the word means ‘ that which causes to cross over.’ Hence, that which causes us to cross the line from right to wrong, or to sin, is the diabolos. Sin is our great enemy—the peril we all have to fear, because ‘ the wages of sin is death ’ (Rom. vi. 23).

“ Here are some Bible definitions of what sin is. You may like to enter them in your notebook. 1.—‘ Sin is the transgression of the law ’ (1 John 3, 4). 2.—‘ Whatsoever is not of faith is sin ’ (Rom. xiv. 23). 3.—‘ The thought of foolishness is sin ’ (Prov. xxiv. 9). 4.—‘ To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin ’ (James iv. 17). 5.—‘ All unrighteousness is sin ’ (1 John v. 17). Right is the doing of God’s will. Sin is either a wicked thought, word or act of a person, just as obedience is a good thought, word or deed. And perhaps it is because neither can exist without a person that ‘ sin ’ and ‘ obedience ’ are spoken of as persons in Rom. vi. 16. Cain was of the wicked one, that is, he was a servant of sin (1 John iii. 12). ‘ The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ’ (1 John ii. 16) came into our nature by sin, and is seen in all the children of sin. It is the Serpent—sin in the flesh, or ‘ the carnal mind ’ that Paul speaks of in Rom. viii. 7. Sin reigns in the mortal body and thus has dominion over us. It is the adversary of the law of God, and therefore called ‘ the devil and satan.’ Sin, the breaking of God’s law, has made man a Satan, or hinderer of right, as Peter was when he rebuked Jesus (Matt. xvi. 22). This sin-power bruised our Lord in the heel (Gen. iii. 15) when He was condemned and crucified; but Jesus rose again, and the serpent, or sin-power was bruised in the head, which is the vital part, and ‘ death has no more power over Him.’ Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh ‘ that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil ’ (Heb. ii. 14). And John says, ‘ For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil ’ (1 John iii. 8). Sin, in all its varied and subtle forms, is the Bible devil. Our greatest temptations come from within, and not from without. James tells us that ‘ Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed ’ (Ch. i., 14, 15). All the evils in the world up to the present moment came by ‘ one man’s disobedience ’ (Rom. v., 12, 19). Sin entered, and disease and death soon followed, so that disease came to be called by either of these two Greek words, *daimon* or *diabolus*, especially if it affected the mind. We often read of Jesus casting out devils. These were diseases in poor afflicted creatures—the deaf, dumb, or lunatic. In the East even now it is common to speak of such as ‘ possessed with a devil ’ (Matt. xvii. 18; Luke xvi. 32). When sin and all its evil effects are removed from the earth, then the devil and his works will be destroyed, and death, our last enemy, also (1 Cor. xv. 26), and there will be no more pain or sorrow (Rev. xxi. 3, 4).

“ Thank you, Uncle. I can see it quite clearly now. Evil thoughts come from our hearts, and if not checked soon become sinful words and actions; we break God’s law, and so are sinners worthy of death, but thanks be to God, we have forgiveness and ‘ eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord ’ (Rom. v. 21; vi. 23). “ I shall never forget this happy holiday, and will try with God’s help to keep from evil and walk in the path of right.”

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMN.



Tune 61 in S.S. Hymn Book.

We come, O Lord, to bless Thee,
 Within our Sunday School ;
 Our hearts are light, our faces bright,
 And as in worship we unite,
 Love is our golden rule.

We meet our faithful teachers,
 And read Thy precious Word ;
 And then Thy glorious truth we learn,
 And more of Thy great love discern
 From lessons well prepared.

With gladness, Lord, we welcome,
 The hour we gather here.
 It is indeed a holy place [face
 Where those who love Thee seek Thy
 And feel Thy Presence near.

Help us, O Lord, to practice
 What here we learn of Thee,
 And like Thy dear obedient Son,
 The race with joy and patience run
 Until His face we see.

To him that hath shall be given. Everybody has something to begin with.

Never try to cross a bridge until you get right up to it.

Do your best and leave the rest ; never mind to-morrow.

Never judge your future possibilities by your past failures.

In the presence of true greatness mere talent and cleverness are thrown into the shade, as stars pale before the sun.

THE OLD YEAR.

Speak gently ! the good old year
Is ending his brave career ;
With all its joys and sorrows ;
With all its bright to-morrows ;
Faster he draws his breath,
Sealed by the hand of death.
Weep for the blithe old year,
Sigh for his friendship dear ;
Think on his youthful days ;
Speak of his pleasant ways.
Lo ! like a babe he came
To this great world of fame ;
Joy-bells proclaimed his birth,
Welcomed with song and mirth ;
Baptized in April's showers,
Smiled among bright May flowers,
And spent his life's short prime,
With the sweet summer time.
Marked too the fading leaves,
Rejoiced o'er the golden sheaves,
And, ere Winter's winds did blow,
Traversed the deep white snow.
Bent o'er the sufferer's bed,
Mourned with us for the dead :
Sad when our hearts were sad,
Glad when our hearts were glad.
Brought us new hopes each day,
Cheered us on life's rough way.
Bury the good old year,
Drop o'er his tomb a tear ;
In the deep grave of time
Now he must rest sublime.
Break not the silent spell,
Hoard him in memories cell,
For, as he sinks to-day,
We soon may pass away.
But if God's Law we keep,
We shall awake from sleep,
And with our King appear
In the grand Crowning Year.

JESUS—HIS BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

The best and most acceptable thank-offering we can give to God is the daily, humble, obedient, service of loving hearts and willing minds. Some of my young friends may have had 14, 16,

or even 18 or 20 birthday anniversaries, some not quite so many. We trust you will enjoy many, many more, and spend all these years in serving your Creator and then you will have no cause for regrets or fears when you come to the last one.

Now Jesus had 33 birthdays, and although the Bible does not tell us exactly how He spent one of them, we are sure they were happy days, well and gratefully observed by Him who daily increased in wisdom. How eagerly He would look forward to that twelfth birthday, when He might visit the Holy City, see the glorious Temple, and even take part in its beautiful, divinely appointed services!

The birth of Jesus should be the source of much joy to all and everyone should remember to thank God for it.

The prophets foretold His wonderful birth long before and also mentioned His birth-place. The beautiful words of Isaiah referring to the event are well known to all young readers of the Bible (ch. ix. 6), and those of Micah (ch. v. 2).

Then we are not only glad to have birthdays, but we like to think of our birth-place and perhaps pay a visit to it sometimes if we have had to forsake it in earlier years.

Many glorious and holy things are recorded by the prophets about the country in which Jesus was born. The land of Palestine is only about the size of Wales, yet God from the beginning made choice of it and has blessed it with His presence and favour above all other lands.

In the second chapter of Luke we have described the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, with all the circumstances which led to Mary's journey there. We see that all God's promises are certain of fulfilment, however long we may have to wait and however unlikely the circumstances may seem to be.

At this particular time, Herod, known as "the Great," was the ruler of the land, although not the rightful king nor even a Jew; but by cruel deeds and cunning plots, he had managed to gain the throne and also to keep it in his own power.

Jesus was of lowly birth. There was no dainty embroidery work and rich tapestry in that humble compartment; no soft downy pillows where to lay His head. His cradle was a manger and His birth-place a cattle shed. Let us think of this if ever we are tempted to despise or scorn our birth-place. The very first lesson we may learn from the birth of our Saviour is contentment and humility.

The shepherds were the first to hear of His birth and the first visitors at His cradle. These men were doing their duty when they saw the glory of the Lord and heard the angels sing

Here is another important lesson—in the path of duty, however humble, are always to be met the greatest blessings.

David, you recollect, was called from minding his father's sheep to be king over Israel. Peter and John at their fishing and net-mending were called to follow Jesus and become fishers of men.

The shepherds were very glad to hear the good news and hurried off to see Jesus and worship Him, and should not we be willing to come to Him now in the way appointed, as soon as we have had brought to us the message of God's love in His written word and hasten to obey? David said, "I made haste and prolonged not the time to keep Thy commandments."

The angels praised God for His mercy to men, but how few really value it! How does it effect us? The birth of Jesus and the salvation of men are the cause of much joy to the angels. They rejoiced at His birth, for they knew what it brought to mankind, and Jesus when a Man, remarked the joy of the angels over one sinner that repenteth.

Let us give joy to the angels as we go through life, for they are always looking on and watching to see if we will bend our wayward hearts toward God and His word, and learn to love Him and the Lord Jesus, His Son. They also encamp around those that fear the Lord and deliver them from many dangers and trials, for they are "All ministering spirits, sent forth (by God) to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14). How they will rejoice when God sends Jesus again to the earth to accomplish the final work of redemption from sin and death—the fulfilment of those other promises referring to Him as the Judge and King. Let us now turn our attention to some of the circumstances attending the birth of Jesus.

Matthew tells us about Herod, the king, and his anxiety when he heard of Jesus being born King of the Jews. His haughty spirit is seen by the manner in which he demanded of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born. And by looking back to the prophecy by Micah they were able to satisfy his hasty enquiry (ch. ii. 5, 6).

This evangelist also gives the genealogy of Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, showing that Joseph was a descendant of Abraham (ch. i. 16). He gives us the kingly line through David and Solomon and speaks of Jesus particularly as king. In the first two chapters of his gospel he mentions seven different titles of Jesus. Perhaps you will find them and mark them off in your Bibles. They are:—Jesus, Christ, Emmanuel, King of the Jews, Governor, Son, and Nazarene.

Luke tells us how Mary, the mother of Jesus, was of the House of David by her father and of the House of Aaron by her mother, so that in her Son Jesus were invested all kingly and priestly rights.

He records how Cæsar Augustus extended over all the empire of Rome, an enrolment or kind of census, which had long been the custom. At this registration, where everyone had to state their

age, rank, business, and property (each as far as possible at their own native city) a capitation tax (so much per head) was laid on all those registered. It seems from Luke ii. 2 that the tax was not paid for twenty years afterwards, when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. This tax, laid on by a Roman Emperor, proved that the Jews were under his authority, and that the Sceptre was departed from Judah, that is, the Jews had lost their independence as a kingdom.

Quite unconsciously Augustus helped to fulfil God's promises, for he was the means of Joseph and Mary going from Nazareth, where they lived (ch. i. 26; ii. 51) to Bethlehem, where Christ was born (Matt. ii. 4-6) a distance of between 60 and 70 miles.

Also Mary's belonging to the tribe of Judah was thus openly shown and acknowledged.

Joseph, though of royal race, was a carpenter (Matt. xiii. 55), and thus Jesus again fulfilled the prophecy that He should be "a root out of a dry ground" (Isa. liii. 2). For both the nation and the tribe, and even the very family of David, were as a dry and barren ground.

So we see that it was truly when God's time was fully come (Gal. iv. 4) that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah.

Thus came the time that patriarchs, kings, and prophets had waited for and longed to see (Luke x. 24), but had not seen it, except more or less dimly by faith, for Jesus said to the Jews, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad" (John viii. 56).

Abraham, we know, did not behold it with his natural eyes, for the glorious day referred to here is yet in the future, and even if we take the words to mean the day when Jesus dwelt among men, Abraham could not see it for he had long been numbered with those who sleep unconsciously in the dust of the earth, awaiting the resurrection to life. God's promises are sure to be performed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but we must wait patiently for His good time, for God is never in a hurry like we often are, but we shall find at last how faithful He has been to His word.

When Jesus came unto His own, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, there were very few who welcomed or received Him; even at His birth He was numbered with the poor. For Him there was no shelter in the best rooms of the inn.

In eastern inns poor people who travel must often put up with accommodation in the same rooms with the cattle, and at that time everywhere would be crowded as so many travelled about for the registration. Have we a warm, large place in our heart's affections for Jesus now? When He comes again in glory, Oh may we all be ready to welcome Him and be received by Him!

Matthew tells us of the visit of the wise men from the East. They had come a long way to seek Jesus, probably from Persia, which was then noted for many such.

They were Magi or Magicians: for all magicians were not necessarily bad. Daniel was made a chief of "the wise men of Babylon." Their continued seeking is a proof of their earnestness and an example to us. As they neared the city guided by the star, they enquired, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews, for we have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him" (Luke iii. 2).

This was no ordinary star, for it is called "His star" and shows plainly that all these events were of God.

Balaam, who also came from the east, had foretold Christ under the figure of a star (Num. xxiii. 7). So God never forsakes those who earnestly desire to be led aright. These men, no doubt, expected to find all Jerusalem deeply interested in the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, but they were left to go alone to Bethlehem, a small town on a chalky ridge with olive groves, but not the least in importance as Micah foretold, for out of it was to come forth the future Governor of God's people (ch. v. 2; Jno. vii. 42). How strong their faith must have been for they were not disappointed to find the king they sought, a lowly babe lying in a manger, unheeded and uncared for by the great mass of the Jews.

They worshipped Christ, not His mother, and to Him, not her, they presented their gifts, emblematic of His royalty, divinity, and His sufferings. Have we any gifts to offer to our King? Indeed we have, and as one of our hymns says—

We'll bring Him hearts that love Him,
We'll bring Him thankful praise.
And young minds meekly striving,
To walk in holy ways.

And these shall be the treasure,
We offer to the King,
And these are gifts that even
The poorest child may bring.

Leaving the birth of Jesus we next notice in this second chapter of Luke's gospel that Jesus was circumcised and brought to the temple where He is seen by Simeon and Anna.

Jesus was born a Jew and He fulfilled the Jewish law, and by this, as well as other ordinances which he conscientiously observed through His life, shewed that He was indeed man (Gal. iv. 4, 5).

Mary was poor and could only offer the smallest of the offerings required—the two turtle doves or young pigeons, but God accepts our offerings, however small if the motive is good, and we know He can read the deepest desire of our hearts. So the First-born Son was presented before the Lord, in token that He was holy unto the Lord, who had spared all the Jewish first-born on the night of the Passover.

In the performance of these religious duties and ceremonies which God required, we see that the sincere Jew spared no time, trouble or expense. We may be very thankful we are not burdened with so many observances, but let us be careful that we do willingly and cheerfully all that God now requires of us, and be glad when we have the opportunity of going to His house, that we may learn His word and sing His praises, for praise is acceptable to God and we have much cause to offer it.

At that time the Jews were indifferent to the law and careless about keeping God's commandments, but still there were many like this good man we read of in verses 25 and 26, "waiting for the consolation of Israel," and many were looking for Christ's appearance (Luke iii. 15), and some there were, doubtless, like the aged Anna, "who departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day, and . . . spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Happy Simeon and Anna! How true it is that they who really love God, love His house also, and waiting upon Him there, receive many blessings. Their faith was turned to joy and sight, and they did not forget to thank God for His goodness to them and all mankind.

Taking the child Jesus up in his arms, Simeon blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. . . ." (v. 23).

In this hymn of praise, he proclaims Christ to be God's salvation, the light of the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel; thus fulfilling the words of Isaiah xlix. 6.

Simeon was "just," this is, "upright and consistent," towards men, and, "devout" or true towards God. He had the Holy Spirit for his teacher, not only in the sense in which all God's people may enjoy that blessing, but as revealing to him things which he otherwise could not foresee. He had longed and waited to see Christ—God had promised he should—and now the promise was fulfilled, and he had nothing else to wish for in this life. He was ready whenever God saw proper, to lie down and die, knowing that he would be awakened out of his deep sleep and rise after the likeness of Him who had come to be the "Resurrection and the Life," and then he would be satisfied (Psa. xvii. 15).

Some day, if God spares our lives and Jesus still remains away, we shall grow old like Simeon and Anna; how lovely to have the same confidence and faith in God and the same joyous hope for the future. All God's mercies deserve our grateful praise, but never was there more reason for thankfulness to Him than for the gift of Jesus.

So let us one and all come before Him and thank Him for that wonderful love that caused Him to give His Son that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have everlasting life (Jno. ii. 16).

AWAY IN FAIR BETHLEHEM.

Bible.



Away in fair Bethlehem, long, long ago,	How soon in His boyhood He earnestly sought
Was born in a stable a Child.	His Father's blest counsel to do,
His name, which was Jesus, the Saviour, we know,	And while in the Nazareth workshop He wrought,
So humble, so poor, meek and mild.	In wisdom and stature He grew.

Bright angels in chorus on that happy night,	Oh well may we hasten to honour Him now,
Sang out in the sweetest of lays;	And fear lest we put Him to shame,
While glad shepherds hastened to see the strange sight,	Since God has decreed that all nations shall bow,
With hearts full of wonder and praise.	And worship in His Holy Name.

JESUS—HIS BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER II.

In the Bible we are told very little about the childhood of Jesus. From His birth up to His manhood there are only three incidents recorded—His presentation in the Temple—His being taken down into Egypt to escape the avenging sword of Herod, to return when the wrath of the Monarch had been silenced by death; thus fulfilling the words of the prophet Hosea (ch. xi. 1). "Out of Egypt have I called My Son" (Matt. ii. 14-15). And His visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve years; events which all love to dwell upon.

We should be glad to know more of what Jesus was like when a child and perhaps think that we could follow His example much better if we knew more exactly how He behaved as a child in His home.

Although the Bible only gives us an outline and sketch of those early days we can fill in many details, sidelights and shadows by referring to books written by the Jews of that period, and thus find out much more about Jesus than we at first could imagine possible.

From these books we may learn many useful things about the Jews and also gather much concerning the manners and customs of the home and school life of Jewish children—enough indeed to prove the true character of Jesus, so that every boy and girl may make Him their example.

But returning to the incident recorded in Matthew ii. 11-23, Herod had a guilty conscience, having murdered his wife, her mother and brother, and two of his own sons, besides others.

He now feared a rival, who should drive him from his throne; and the Jews too who supported him would share his fears.

Egypt was near, and yet it was a place of perfect safety for Jesus, for there He was in God's keeping and beyond Herod's power.

In this we see how easily God can defeat man's purposes when they are not in harmony with His will and purpose, while protecting His own. Herod was mocked or disappointed, and died long before his intended victim—Jesus.

Jesus was in Egypt probably about two years, and when Herod was dead God spoke to Joseph in a dream and bade him bring Jesus and His mother into the land of Israel.

Joseph was at first afraid to go thither, because he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the room of his father Herod, but God warned him in a dream and he withdrew into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that He should be called a Nazarene. This teaches us that they whom God keeps are safe indeed, so that if the Lord is on our side, we need not fear what man can do.

What trouble and sorrow Herod had caused among the mothers of Israel by his wicked revengeful wrath in slaying their innocent baby boys! Rama was close to Bethlehem and Rachel is taken as the representative of the Jewish mothers, who were weeping and wailing for their little ones.

God knew that this would happen, as He foretold through the prophet Jeremiah (xxxii. 15). He could also have prevented it had He chosen, but we must ever remember that God has given to man a free will, and Herod abused this great gift instead of exercising it for good. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it"? God said through the same

prophet, " I, the Lord, search the heart, and try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings " (xvii. 9-10) and this I think explains many of God's dealing with men, and answers many of the " whys " and " wherefores " which so often seem to trouble us. Matthew concludes this incident by telling us how Joseph and Mary went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.

Can we get any idea of what Joseph's house was like? Yes, for there would be many similar houses in Palestine. Let us peep into one of these. Of course rich Jews have large mansions, but as Joseph was neither very rich nor very poor, his dwelling would be about the size of any ordinary cottage.

Many Jews lived in small flat-roofed houses, some containing two or even one room only, with very little comfort or convenience. Thus a light placed in the middle would give light to all in the house, as Jesus said (Matt. v. 15). It would also light up the street, as the windows faced towards them (Eccles. xii. 3).

What should we think of a house without a chimney, and the fireplace on a stone floor in the middle of one room, while burning logs of wood snapped and sputtered smoky embers around the hearth, the only outlet for the smoke being a few holes over the door?

Thinking of this Solomon says, " As smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him " (Prov. x. 26). Every Jew would know from experience what this meant. To show how annoying and objectionable many of God's chosen people had become to Him through their rebelliousness, He says through Isaiah " These are as a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day " (lxv. 5).

Think of home lessons under such conditions if you are tempted to be discontented with your own happy fireside.

Then more than one third of the room must be left for the oxen, the ass, the horse or the mule, if the person possess them, and in winter, when wet, they must spend the nights within.

Part of the room is slightly raised and this is where the family live. In case of the poor this sort of dais serves for dining, bedroom, and kitchen. In the middle of the raised part, would be the rounded oven of clay, which is always heated with the wild grass and rough herbage growing around the village.

Jesus would grow up quite familiar with this indispensable object, using it in after years to illustrate the shortness of human life and the bountiful love of His heavenly Father (Matt. vi. 30-31). No doubt He would often as a little child watch His mother take from the oven sweet-smelling loaves and little brown crisp cakes.

When the bread has been baked, the oven top is covered with a stone slab, making a low table around which the family sit for meals and warm their feet, and when cold they bring their beds near and sleep on them, for these beds are only rugs and mattresses and may easily be rolled up and carried about.

Looking across the raised dais, we should see the little window of lattice work, not glass, and close by, the lamp stand, the mill for grinding the corn and the clothes chest made of sun-dried clay. There would also be the manger for the cattle, the curious skin bottles which Jesus mentions in Matt. ix. 17, while against the outside wall, the stairs would be seen, leading up to the flat-roof, where summer nights are often spent in the cool fresh air.

These flat roofs are most useful for storing all kinds of fruits, and for drying flax and corn.

Rahab hid the spies among the stalks of flax upon the roof of her house, and Peter, we know, went on to the house-top for prayer. Usually there was a lot of dust and rubbish up there and the pigeons could find plenty of good roosting places among the broken pots and pitchers, which seldom or never were cleared away.

David uses this as a figure in Psa. lxxviii. 13. When God arises to do His great work among the Jews and Gentiles, not only will kings of armies flee, but all who have chosen to live in blissful ignorance of God's purpose, will be discovered and disturbed, unexpectedly, and have to fly like birds suddenly startled, they know not whither.

As a rule Eastern houses are most uninviting, ugly and dirty looking from the outside, but within they may be beautifully cosy and clean.

When we consider that Eastern Rulers had absolute power and that if they desired a house or a vineyard they would soon possess it, for they could easily get someone willing to rob everything, we see why the people usually hid away their wealth and treasure as far as possible.

Solomon truly said, "He that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction" (Prov. xvii. 19) for the rich men of this very city where the words were written knew the truth of this saying, when Nebuchadnezzar burnt "every great man's house" (2 Kings xxv. 9).

The doors of the houses have two leaves much like many of our buildings. This kind of door was made for the Temple and for David's beautiful house of cedars.

In passing through the door we should first come to the Porter's lodge—a small room before entering the house.

The Porter is called "Baweb" which means literally "a door-keeper." If we knocked at the door, he would not open it quickly, but call out, "Who is there?" and when satisfied, he would open to us and bid us welcome. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," said Jesus, if any man will open the door (of his heart and understanding) "I will come in and sup with him" (Rev. iii. 20) as a familiar friend.

Jesus as a child would be accustomed to seeing the Baweb opening the doors of the larger dwellings around Nazareth.

Perhaps you have read His beautiful words in the tenth chapter of John "He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the

sheep." To Him the Porter openeth; (as he would to a recognised friend of the household) and the sheep hear his voice."

The thieves and the robbers who came plundering houses, vineyards or sheep-folds would not stay for the door to be opened; indeed, if they did the porter within would answer, "I know you not," and refuse to open. But they would climb the wall and get in the best way they could, into the court which was always open to the sky, for all houses have courts, the great palaces of the rich have several.

Sometimes one court led into another and they were paved with stone or beautiful marble.

Here were kept pots of lovely flowers, such as can only be seen in the Holy Land, and trees of most delightful shades, and the most luscious fruits, such as figs, oranges, dates and pomegranates; while all around are beautiful bowers of vine branches.

The home of the little girl whom Jesus raised from the dead would be like this, for her father was a Ruler of the Synagogue (Matt. ix. 18). The rooms in these large houses are built all round the Courtyard, with the windows and doors facing it.

Many are built entirely of stone, walls, floor and ceiling included. The upper room is usually the largest and coolest. This is called the guest-chamber (Luke xxii. 12).

Around the roofs of these houses was a wall, called a "battlement." This was for the safety of those who went upon the house-tops to sleep or to meditate. God had told the Jews to make "a battlement" for every "new house" and for this reason, that no one might fall and be killed. On many house-tops there were two upper rooms and the space between them was covered with boards, branches of trees, straw-matting or tiles.

Do you recollect how four men once brought a poor man to Jesus to be cured, and they could not get near Him for the crowd had come to hear Him preach? They had great faith in Jesus and soon found a way out of their difficulty. What did they do? Simply carried the poor man into the next house and got him up on to the roof of the house where Jesus was, and then removed the coverings and let him down.

The bedroom furniture would not be any obstacle, for in eastern homes there was very little, so that the rooms looked very bare.

There would be a great contrast between the room where Jesus lay asleep at night when a little child, and your nice, cosy bedroom with its bright walls adorned with pretty pictures and motto cards, the carpeted floor and warm snug bed with curtains drawn around; the clean white covers, tidies and nick-nacks.

In 2 Kings iv. 10, there is a list given of the articles of furniture usually to be seen in the best or special room, called the guest-chamber—a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick.

No bedsteads, but a low couch, called a divan, placed against the wall or built into it, and some rugs for bed-clothes. The table

would be a low stand about 18 inches high, and the stool, just a low wooden seat.

The candlestick or a small lamp would also be of wood and give a very poor light, but this would not trouble the family, for they would not work after dark, but would light the candle more to cheer up the room than for use. Perhaps David was thinking of the dim candle light and the comfort it afforded when he said "Thou wilt light my candle (or cheer and comfort me) the Lord my God will lighten my darkness" (Psa. xviii. 28). But going downstairs again, another curious object would attract our attention—the jar kept for drinking purposes.

The Jews are very particular that the water should be quite fresh and cool, and free from any infection, so they are careful not to let their lips touch the vessel. They hold the jar up and pour the water into their mouths.

The jar in common use is called the "goolah" and is made of sun-dried clay, but there are several kinds of pitchers and jars used.

In some parts of the East a great many jars are required for getting water from the wells or river, and as they may be easily broken, it would not be unusual to find pieces about the streets.

Very often in the evening might be seen quite little children carrying shreds or pieces of these jars to fetch hot ashes from the baker's oven so that their mothers could light the fire to cook the evening meal.

Then there are the leathern bottles for holding milk, water, and wine, made of goat's skins. Near the door too we should observe the ewer, or basin for washing the feet. A very necessary duty, as sandals were worn; and as knives and forks were not in use, there was also the basin for washing the hands before and after the meals.

There are a number of other interesting things we should notice within and around these Jewish homes, but for many reasons I do not think you would like to change homes with Jewish children.

One thing you would soon find out, that it is much better to live in the Light and love of the Lord Jesus, than to be under the Law of Moses; yet there is much that is very beautiful about these homes, as well as in the customs of the people as you will see as we proceed.

If we entered a real Jewish home even to-day we could not fail to notice how each member of the family contributes to the happiness of another by doing their duty and using their influence each in their own sphere. The Bible gives us many little sidelights into such homes and the Psalmist pictures one of these in Psa. cxxviii. and Solomon in Prov. xxxi. 28. David speaks of the children growing up like olive plants around the table—clean, fresh, healthy, and useful.

JESUS—HIS BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER III.

Hebrew children are expected to honour and obey their parents. They are also taught to rise up in the presence of old age, according to God's command in Levit. xix. 32; for, says the wise King "The hoary head is a crown of glory, or beauty, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (Prov. xvi. 32). They must therefore always answer their elders respectfully.

To break the fifth commandment would be considered as a crime, and an undutiful son or daughter would be a disgrace not only to their parents, but even to the neighbours.

Hebrew children are also taught to help and comfort their parents, and support them in declining years if necessary (Matt. xv. 3-6).

What is it that makes joy and happiness in the home circle? We all know it is love. Sometimes we sing, "There is beauty all round, when there's love at home; Hate and envy ne'er annoy, when there's love at home." This is very true, for real love is active and shows itself in kind deeds, by unselfishness and obedience. So if all unite with loving hearts to help one another and to fear God, there can be no happier place than home.

Let us see now some of the things that helped Jewish children to remember their Creator and grow up in the fear of his Holy Name.

No doubt little Hebrew boys and girls would like to hear stories just as much as you do. So we may picture them sitting on their little mats around their mother, while the youngest sat on her knee, as she told them stories of Joseph, David, and Moses, and taught them some of the Psalms.

Many a Hebrew boy could thank his mother in after-life for his grounding in the Bible. We can imagine with what thrilling interest they would listen whilst she repeated the history of their own people in Egypt, in the wilderness and in the good land which God gave them. And here we may think of Jesus as a little child listening intently to these wonderful things which so closely concerned himself, being a Jew. As a child at Nazareth, Jesus was willingly subject to Joseph and Mary, and He would be very happy in His obedience—respectful to those about Him and full of tender care for His mother. He did not forget His mother even when suffering on the Cross (John xix. 25-27).

Children do not always half realise how much they owe to their parents who love and care for them, nor the anxious hours that are spent thinking and planning for their good, and the many earnest prayers sent up to God on their behalf.

The character of Isaac, as revealed in after years, his tender affection for his mother and his contentedness with the home circle and immediate surroundings—not desiring to become great in worldly possessions — always exercising a submissive faith and loving, clinging disposition, showed that he appreciated the home influence.

We may take Esther as an example of an Hebrew girl. Brought up with the greatest tenderness from her earliest years, and from the situation of her people at that period she was perhaps educated with even more than usual care in her father's faith. Her affections, habits and associations were all confined to the home of her childhood, and yet when torn away without warning, she was so firm in that faith, and so unselfish in her conduct, continuing her course of meek submission and trust in God through all her trials.

Although so young she showed such a gentle and sweet character, and offered no resentment to those who had taken her from her lowly and retired home, and separated her from all she so dearly loved: and when raised to such high position as to share a mighty kingdom, her gentle mind and loving heart remained unchanged, showing how carefully and thoughtfully Mordecai must have trained her childhood years, that even in her loneliness she could still be true and never turn aside.

Among the earliest lessons at home Jewish children learn the Commandments. They commit them to memory, with many verses from the Scriptures, besides a number of short prayers; and their parents take great pains that they should remember the words accurately as well as pronounce them distinctly. Jewish parents are very fond of their children and call them by many endearing names, so we may be sure that Jesus shared with them in these loving caresses and affectionate words. When a Man Himself we know how He called little children, and took them up in His arms and blessed them, and perhaps many times He pressed a sweet kiss on the smooth brow of the little ones who came with their mothers to see and hear the Great Teacher and be healed by Him.

Like most English boys and girls the Hebrew children are called by several pet, household names. These are given by their parents at certain stages of their early years, and for particular reasons. A little new-born son is called the "Jeled" and when grown a little, he is called "Gamel," and everyone is very proud of him as he becomes interesting. After this stage he is the "Taph," which means "one who trips lightly." When the Hebrew child is about three years of age he receives his first little "coat" or "tunic." This is a very important occasion, and although he feels very pleased and perhaps rather excited, he listens attentively to his mother, while she explains the meaning of this change in his dress. No doubt you have all seen the picture

of the child Samuel wearing "the little coat" brought to him by his mother, because she had lent her darling to the Lord. If so, you may think of Jesus and picture Him being presented by His mother with a similar dress, and what it would mean to Him, for every Jewish boy wears a garment called the "Talith." It is usually worn under the outer clothing and is thought much of.

On the talith are four tassels. Each tassel is made of four white threads knotted together with one of hyacinth blue—the colour so often mentioned in the rearing of the Tabernacle and the holy garments worn by the priests. Although these tassels look very pretty, this is not the reason they are worn on the Talith. God had commanded the children of Israel to wear fringes or tassels, so that they might be continually reminded that they were His chosen people and had promised to serve Him. In the book of Numbers we find these words: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them make them fringes in the borders of their garments . . . and that they put upon the fringe of the border a ribbon of blue. . . that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them. . . and be holy unto your God" (ch. xv.). The Pharisees were not condemned for wearing the Talith or putting fringes upon their garments, but because they enlarged them so that they might be seen by others, and thought to be more righteous. God looks at the heart and desires all His people to worship Him only, in spirit and in truth and then He is pleased with them.

Every Jewish boy is taught to be most careful about the Holy Tassels, and the greatest care is taken to keep them clean and unharmed. So like all other boys, Jesus would be sure to wear His little Talith, and looking upon the tassels be constantly reminded of His Father in heaven. But there are other things in the Jewish home to remind the children, as well as their parents, that there is a God in heaven to be honoured and be put first and above all. Over the door-post is fastened a curious little box called the "Mezuzah." Perhaps you wonder what the Mezuzah is like and what it is for, so I will tell you.

The Hebrew word "Mezuzah" means a "door-post." But the Mezuzah here referred to is a kind of cylinder made of metal. Inside is placed a small square of parchment, folded lengthways: and upon this parchment, in exactly twenty-two lines is written the two portions of Scripture that are repeated in Deuteronomy (ch. vi. 9: and xi. 20) God had said concerning His laws, "Thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and upon thy gates." The Jews took this to mean literally, and so made a queer little round object to hold these particular words. Up to the present time, they are very careful to have the "Mezuzah" on the door-

posts of their houses. Jesus would be quite familiar with it, and no doubt as a Child would often place His fingers upon the bright little case, following the example of the most devout persons around Him.

One important rite to be observed was the weekly Sabbath (Exod. xx.), and we can imagine how much impressed the little ones must be when father places his fingers on the Mezuzah case and then kisses the fingers, repeating in Hebrew the eighth verse of Psalm cxxi. "The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore." All the members of the family doing likewise when coming in, and going out of the house.

Mezuzah cases are made of wood, tin, or glass. They contain a small opening showing the Hebrew word "Shaddai," which means "Almighty." These cases are nailed to the right-hand door-post, and the Jews consider the Mezuzah a sort of charm to keep away evil spirits, believing thus they are under the protection of the great Name (v. 5). The Sabbath is welcomed in a very beautiful way, that must also impress even the youngest member of the family very deeply, besides showing to all the sacredness of the Day set apart by God Himself. Many of the things which the Jews perform are not to be found in the Bible, but in the Talmud; a book that the Hebrew considers equal to the Law of Moses, but which Jesus refers to as "the traditions of your fathers."

Every Friday evening the children watch mother light the "Manora" or "Sabbath Lamp" for this is her special duty. And as she lights it she thanks God for the privilege in these words,— "I thank Thee, O God, that Thou has commanded me to light the Sabbath light." Father also welcomes the Sabbath, repeating each week the beautiful words of a Hebrew Psalm beginning, "Enter in my beloved."

What lovely devotion all this shows! Although we are not commanded to keep the Jewish Sabbath, yet we should love and welcome the first day of every week, which is set apart for rest from daily duties and with gladness enter into the service of God.

The Sabbath is a happy day, we may be sure to the sincere Hebrew, as the first day should be to every true Christian, because it begins and ends with thoughts of God. Neither father or mother would do any work on that day, nor even open a letter.

At the close of the day "Havdallah Tapers" are used, and the youngest in the family holds the light, while father takes a glass of wine and a box of spices called "Haddas," and pronounces a blessing, while looking at the light. He tastes the wine and smells the spices, and in this way the holy Sabbath ends, and it is bed-time for little Jeled and Taph.

Every little Hebrew boy must keep the Sabbath holy, and when his father comes home from the synagogue he always turns to him and blesses him before all the family sits down to the table to partake of the Sabbath meal, which is always the very best that can be provided. During this meal the Sabbath Lamp is kept burning. The lighted Tapers must especially appeal to Baby's eyes as something very pretty, and gradually he learns why these things are done, and with this greater knowledge, receives yet another name, that of "Elem" meaning, firm and strong.

JESUS—HIS BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER IV.

Another attractive ceremony takes place in the Jewish home usually in the month of December. It is called by the Jews "Chanuccah," and in the Gospel by John, "The Feast of Dedication" (Jno. x. 22). Among the Jews up to the present time every male of the household is obliged to light the "dedication light." One candle is lighted for every member, and the number gradually increases until, on the eighth night there are eight times as many brightly shining lights. These are in a row, not in a circle, and are placed not far from the entrance of the room to the left of the door. When the first light is lit they say:—"These lights do we light to commemorate the miracles and wonders and the salvation, Thou O Lord, didst perform for our forefathers," etc. They are called "Chanukah Lights," and this Feast is also called the "Feasts of Lights." Each light is held sacred all the feast days, and is looked upon with gratitude to God for His mercy. It commemorates the cleansing of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus, and tradition says, that a miracle then took place, the oil lasting eight days until the Jews were able to get fresh.

The Feast of the Passover is another occasion of great interest for Jewish children, for which there is such careful preparation in the home, every corner of the house being searched so that "no leaven be found therein." At Passover time it is the custom for the youngest child to rise from the Pascal table and ask his father what all this ceremony means, and why this night is so different from all other nights. Then the father relates in simple language the story of Israel's deliverance from Egypt (Exod. xii.; xiii. 6-9). The food also would taste so different from the usual, and there are the unleavened cakes to eat for seven days, reminding them that God is holy and that sin must be put away from before Him.

Another very beautiful and joyous occasion for the Israelites and their children is that of the "Feast of Tabernacles." This is the last of the three great Feasts appointed by God to be observed each year and throughout their generations. Coming at the end of the Jewish year, which is usually in October, it affords also a very pleasant holiday. Sometimes it is called "Succoth" and "the Feast of Ingathering," because it celebrates the great Harvest Home.

It is a very happy time indeed even now for Hebrew boys and girls, although, of course, it cannot be carried out just to the same extent as it was when Jesus was a Child; yet we find that the Jews still live in tents of trees' branches for seven days once a year, to remind themselves of God's past mercies and goodness towards them (Lev. xxiii.; Neh. viii.). This is perhaps the most joyous and beautiful of all the Jewish Festivals. Although it is something like the Harvest Festivals of the present time, it has a much deeper significance to the Jews, in that it carries them back in mind to their 40 years' sojourn in the wilderness when they dwelt in tents. The ingathering of the harvest is celebrated with the plentiful supply of fruits and vegetables with which the "Tent" or "Tabernacle" is decorated. But the Tabernacle, or Succah, as it is called, is only the outward symbol and remembrance of that distant exile, and of the rejoicings for the deliverance of the Hebrew race from the bondage of Egypt. "Thou shall dwell in the tabernacle for seven days. . . (Lev. xxiii. 42, 43). This is the command, and throughout the world the Jews have observed it through all the centuries.

In the East every Jew erects a "Succah" of his own. Very often it is only a flimsy and loosely-built hut with a covering of lattice and boughs through which the sky peeps. The inside is tastefully decorated with flowers and fruit, and there is a well filled table for the entertainment of friends. Here the Jews spend the greater part of the seven days, taking their meals amid these symbolic surroundings, and frequently sleeping there, with the stars peeping through the leafy roof. Some of the more wealthy Jews turn their conservatories into tabernacles, and in large cities, such as London and Birmingham, a Succah is attached to the Synagogue for the use of all who wish to avail themselves of its pleasant retreat.

A few years ago it was my privilege to visit a large and beautifully decorated synagogue at the time this joyous Feast was being held, and I can assure you it was a very pretty sight. A permanent wooden structure is erected in the school-yard adjoining some synagogues, and although the roof is open except for a thick covering of evergreens, amongst which fruits and vegetables are tastefully arranged, a lot of time is spent therein. A covering of tarpaulin is also provided, which is used for shelter in case of rain.

Perhaps the most interesting thing for boys and girls to notice is a table running the whole length of the building laden with flowers, fruit, cake and wine, which certainly complete the picturesque scene. At the service in the synagogue, special psalms are read, called the "Hallel," which is short for "Hallelujah" (cxiii. to cxviii.), and in the course of the ceremony palm branches, citron, myrtle and willow, are carried in procession round the synagogue, while glad hosannas are chanted.

Each of these symbols has its inner meaning. The unbroken palm signifying uprightness and rectitude; the citron expressing gentleness and sympathy; the myrtle being the emblem of constancy, and the willow of self-restraint and modesty.

At the conclusion of this glad service most of the congregation adjourn to the Succah, and there continue the joyful Feast, in the midst of these beautiful surroundings and sacred remembrances. Another Feast which affords much pleasure to Jewish boys and girls as well as their parents, is the "Feast of Purim." Although it is more than 2,000 years since Esther the Queen lived, yet the influence of her beautiful character and good service to her people is still felt, and her words still remembered. Her decree has never been broken (ch. viii. 13-17), but generation after generation God's ancient people, the Jews, on the return of "Adar," the twelfth month of the Hebrews, which means "glory," and is so-called from the beauty of the flowers, the Feast of Purim is kept (ch. ix. 21). It is also called the "dark" month, on account of the trouble the Jews passed through during the days before the King's command went forth that turned the month of "darkness" into light and gladness; the day of mourning into "a good day" of feasting and gladness, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor (v. 23).

Although so widely scattered and down-trodden, the people of Esther's nation still meet in their synagogues on the two days appointed by Esther and Mordecai (ch. ix. 18). Year by year they recall those hours of suspense, and bitter grief—the day of fasting and wailing, while death seemed at their very doors: the day turned from fearful terrors and shame into a day of great gladness and rejoicing and thankfulness to God. The roll of Esther, or the "Megillah" is then solemnly and reverently taken from its resting place, and read aloud, while all listen with earnest attention to the beautiful record of God's dealings with His people at that time. And then once more return with gladness to their homes.

"Wicked Haman" is still known as "the Jews' enemy," and whenever his name is mentioned, the people cry "May his name be blotted out," and the boys show their feelings with laughter and shouting, and make a dreadful noise beating trays

and pans as they march or jump about. Whether Jesus ever took part in this noisy mirth we do not know, but as a Boy of Nazareth, year by year, He would listen with intense interest to the reading of the Megillah, and perhaps with much satisfaction and joy in His young heart, to learn of His Father's mercy and goodness in the past. The great Feast of Purim is sometimes called "Mordecai's Day." While Haman is hated and despised, Mordecai is loved and honoured even more than he was at the time the declaration of his greatness was made, and his name is still an household word. The Jews call these days "Purim," after the name of "Pur," which means "the Lot"; for they were reminded not only of the deliverance from death but of all the events which led up to the great victory over their enemies, even that special time set apart for their destruction, when wicked Haman had "cast Pur" or "the Lot" until the twelfth month had arrived, and God had over-ruled the day of "Pur," and set His people free. Thus, year by year, as these happy days came round, Jesus would take part in the festivities, and learn from these beautiful object lessons, not only of God's dealings with His own people in the past, but also His glorious purpose concerning their future.

But besides these joyous feasts there is the great "Day of Atonement." A very solemn day of heart searching, and humbling before God, that must make even the little ones feel very serious. At the time when Jesus was a Child too, the Jews offered their sacrifices and sin-offerings. Sometimes a lamb or a kid, and sometimes a pair of turtle doves or young pigeons; and as these things concerned the whole family, we can imagine the children often kneeling with their parents around the sin-offering, while the High Priest performed the solemn rite. So you see that in one way or another the Hebrew children were being reminded that "God is holy" very frequently; and we may be sure would often ask questions which their parents were delighted to answer: for from their earliest years they were instructed in God's Law, for the Hebrews believe that God loves the children and desires them to serve Him, and will hear their prayers.

Like other Jewish parents, Mary and Joseph would teach their little Child to pray morning and evening, and before each meal to wash the hands, and then pray; also afterwards to give thanks.

Then little Hebrew children are taught to sing in very earliest days, for the Jews are great lovers of music, and fill their hearts and homes with pleasant melodies. The Jewish mother's cradle song is most often a sweet psalm, and so in the home at Nazareth a beautiful psalm of thanksgiving would often be heard from the lips of Mary, and at morning and evening prayers we should have heard her leading the Baby lips to tune His first little songs of praise to God above.

A very beautiful custom in the Jewish home is that of teaching Baby his " Birthday Text." As soon as the little one can talk he is taught this text, which has a very interesting feature in that it must contain the letters of his name, or begin and end with them.

It is most probable Jesus learned His Birthday Text from His mother, repeating the words after her in the same way that children do now. We should very much like to know what Birthday Text Jesus learnt, but as we are not told, we can only try and guess a suitable one. Jesus came to be the Saviour of the world—to save His people from their sins. He came to seek and save the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but Isaiah foretold how, " by His knowledge God's righteous Servant should justify many "—not Jews only but Gentiles also.

The name " Jesus " can be produced from the words " Servant " and " Justify," yet this signifies very little because the all-important thing for us, is to believe in His saving Name, and to come to God through Him. Ever since the day when Abraham made a " great Feast " the day that Isaac was weaned (Gen. xxi. 8) the Jews have made the occasion of the naming of their baby boys a season of much rejoicing, and of special remembrance of God's goodness towards them, in sparing their little ones throughout the first three years of their lives. (Many Hebrew children are not weaned until this age even to-day). This joy is shared by the elder brothers and sisters we may be sure; while they are reminded that Baby is not only an addition to the family, but a gift from God, and that they have a duty to perform towards him. Cain said, " Am I my brother's keeper?" and you recollect the trouble Ishmael caused by his rude, disrespectful conduct at this particular time, and the unhappy results. How different the behaviour of Miriam towards her baby brother—Moses!

God had commanded that every new-born son of Israel should enter into the holy Covenant of his fathers, hence this time of rejoicing. But although there is this special gladness at the birth and naming of a boy, we must not think that the Hebrew girls are looked upon with indifference, or that they are considered inferior to their brothers, for this is not true. Both are equally dear to their parents, and their names are also mentioned in the House of God. It is not necessary for the same amount of ceremony in their case, because God intended the girls to occupy a very different sphere in life from that of their brothers, yet both are equally acceptable in His Sight.

As a " Son of Israel " as well as " Son of God " both the entering into the holy Covenant, and the festal rejoicings would be carried out on behalf of Jesus, Who came to fulfil both the Law and the Prophets.



PHILIPPIANS III., 7—16.

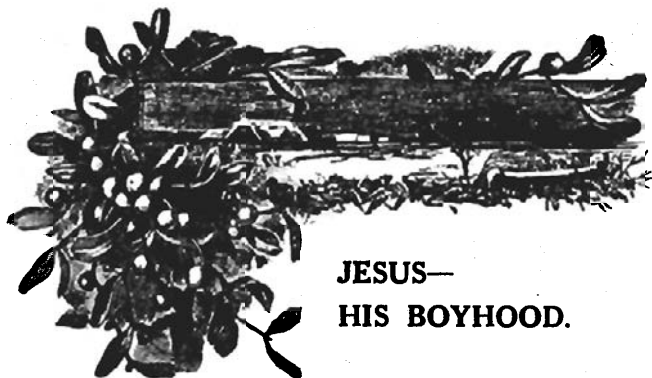
(Sent to a young friend after Immersion).

Soldiers of Christ, "Be strong,"
 Life's battle lies before thee,
 Jesus, your Captain, is ahead,
 And God is watching o'er thee.
 Clad in the armour Christians wore
 When foes were fierce and perils sore,
 The Faith that helped them to endure
 Will lead you on to victory.

Servant of Christ, "Beware,"
 Evil is ever nigh thee!
 And enemies by subtle snare
 May purpose to belie thee.
 Then up and wield the Spirit's sword,
 The weapon cherished by your Lord—
 No power is equal to God's Word,
 So keep it always by thee.

Brother in Christ, "Press on,"
 There's a useful life before thee!
 Work for the Master, till He come
 With royal honours for thee.
 Oh, what joy when the race is run,
 The battle over and victory won,
 Only to hear Him say "Well done,"
 Come now and reign with Me!





JESUS— HIS BOYHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

ONE of the happiest experiences of childhood is that of being known as "Mother's darling." There are very few children who have not delighted in the fact. You know how happy you felt when you ran home from school when you were in "tiny tots" class, and jumped on mother's lap, and gave her a sweet kiss, and she loved you up in her arms and said, "Come along, darling, tell me what you have been learning at school to-day."

When a little Hebrew boy is from three to six years of age, he is mother's little Taph, or darling, so Jesus may have been called "Taph" when a Boy in the home at Nazareth. We read of Jesus as an Infant, or "Jeled," lowly born, but worshipped by a few believers; we read of Him as a Child, "Elem," growing up in heavenly grace: and thus, though so few details are given, we see that every step from birth to Manhood was passed through by Him.

Isaiah prophesied that He should "grow up as a tender plant" as well as be "a root out of a dry ground." What care and attention is bestowed upon a tender plant! If you have any idea of the skill and thoughtful patience the gardener must give to the training and nourishing of such, you will realise better the beauty of this figure. Let us try and picture this lovely Boy growing up day by day in wisdom and stature, or age, and at the same time in favour with God and men, under the loving, prayerful influence of a tender, kind and patient mother (Luke iv. 16), in the home at Nazareth: receiving doubtless from her lips those first early impressions of the great truths contained in those old Jewish writings—the Holy Scriptures; for the teaching and training of both boys and girls was the happy mission entrusted to all mothers in Israel, which accounts for the fact that the names of the mothers of the kings of Israel and Judah are so frequently

mentioned in the Bible, and not the fathers. Perhaps you will look this up and see what a number of times the words, "And his mother's name was" occurs throughout the books of the kings. What a big secret we are let into by these few simple words concerning the Boy Jesus—His "growing in wisdom"; and what a beautiful lesson for all boys and girls to learn.

We are not told whether Jesus attended school, or if He received all His early instruction from His mother, but Jewish children commenced school about six years of age and their parents took great interest in their lessons, teaching them to be respectful to their teachers and attentive and punctual. The Jews had schools adjoining their synagogues, and we know from Luke iv. 16 that there was one at Nazareth, and that Jesus had formed the habit of attending the services regularly. You will think that the little Hebrew boys and girls had a good time, for during the hottest part of the summer days they had no lessons, but accompanied their teachers into the lovely fields, while their minds were impressed with good and noble ideas from the objects around them. Was Jesus among any of those groups of happy children? We cannot say, but we know how many of His great lessons were drawn from the common objects about Him. When teaching His disciples whom He sometimes called "little children," the things of the Kingdom He bade them "consider the lilies of the field."

School would begin very early in the morning, because in Palestine the sun rises to scorching heat, and be most trying for teachers and scholars. If we peeped into a Jewish school-room we should find the scholars sitting around their teachers in a class, for they never are placed in rows like children in most of our schools. This the Jews do for what they consider a very important reason, believing that thus they carry out the words of the prophet, "Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers" (Isai. xxx. 20). Words referring to Israel's future blessedness, as may be seen from their context, but also showing that their teachers were to be respected.

Very often the Chazan, or attendant of the synagogue, was appointed teacher, but in every village throughout Palestine where at least twenty boys resided, a school master had to be provided. These schools were free, and were supported by free-will offerings, and anyone who wished especially to help, keep, or educate any of the poorer children, or those who were orphans were gladly allowed the privilege of doing so, although these were provided for through the Temple offertory, known as the receipt of "the Secret," because this money was used privately. Jesus taught the special blessedness of giving in secret, and He also pointed out that the poor are always with us, and whenever we will we may help and do them good. You will, no doubt, be

interested to know what Hebrew children learned at school, and we may find out something about it. Of course they had to begin with the Alphabet; but this was not our English letters, although for many years they have been taught the English language, and can speak and read nicely. It was the Hebrew Alphabet,—Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth, He, Vau, and so on. (See heading of Psalm cxix.) These had to be learned by heart, and when the scholars could read distinctly in a loud, clear voice, then they were allowed to read the Hebrew Scriptures for themselves. If you heard Jewish children taking reading lesson perhaps you would think they were singing out loudly some strange mixture of meaningless sounds, but it is not so. This is the manner in which they are taught to read, and it is the most beautiful of all languages, as well as the earliest spoken. It has been sadly polluted, for Israel has taken upon their lips the names of strange gods and suffered their children to mix among the nations and learn their ways, but through the prophet Zephaniah God has given a glorious promise concerning their future, when they will turn to the Lord and serve Him with one consent. Probably this will be the language in which all God's people will lift their voices to Him in praise when all the earth is full of His glory—a language pure and musical in itself. I have heard several Jewish boys read, and it has always been in the same, high-pitched musical tone, so that whenever I think of them, I seem to hear the echo of their young voices still ringing in my ears, and the Pattern Boy rises up before my mind's eye. When boys are about ten years of age, they study the "Mishnah," a Hebrew commentary on the Law, and at fifteen they commence the Talmud. It is then he is called "Naas," or "a youth"—a name meaning "one who shakes himself free."

Perhaps the Apostle Paul had this in mind when he said to the believers at Corinth, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought, or reasoned, as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things?" (1 Cor. xiii. 11). A Jewish youth is certainly expected to be sincere, true and manly, and also to understand a great many things, and when a little older he receives yet another name, that of "Bachur," or "young warrior," showing that he has reached the responsible position of manhood. And again Paul speaks of believers growing in grace, and going on from one stage of the Christian life to another, until at length they reach to full grown manhood in Christ Jesus.

But the Hebrew boy's education does not consist entirely of books and head knowledge. He is not only taught to read, write, and study history, but to fear God and obey those who are over him: to love what is good and to hate evil, and also may indulge in healthful recreations. Kindness and courtesy are two of the most important lessons he has to learn. Thus, acting upon this

principle, Jesus grew in favour with those around Him, for, by good behaviour and pleasant manners He won their affections and respect, and was much beloved.

Children who love and honour their parents by observing their wise counsel will sure to be happy, and will be fitted for their station in life. God's law demanded this of Jewish children, and the spirit of this beautiful law is still binding upon the young to-day.

The chief object of education among the Jews from earliest time has been based upon "the fear of the Lord" (Prov. i. 7). Moses' character was formed while under the prayerful influence of His godly mother. He had been so thoroughly grounded in the faith of his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—so firmly established in the love of the God of Israel, that even the daughter of Pharaoh had no influence to turn him from the effects of that early training. He refused the honours of the Egyptian Court and nobly made choice of his course in life, proving the power of a mother's work and influence in the home.

One can scarcely say when or where the Jewish child's lessons commence, for the development of character depends quite as much on home influence as school discipline. Children reflect honour upon their parents and teachers by good conduct, and it is often easy to tell the sort of home they come from by their conversation and deeds. "Train up a child in the way he shall go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," said Solomon, and so, neither Sarah, Jochebed, or Hannah feared for the welfare of their boys; they knew that the effect of their example upon their children would not be lost, and that their constant earnest prayers would be heard.

JESUS—HIS BOYHOOD.

CHAPTER II.

God expects all children to help make home happy and not to shame or disappoint their parents, but requite their love and kindness by courtesy and good behaviour, not only in their presence but everywhere they go. The Israelites were commanded not only to love the Lord their God themselves, and lay up His words in their hearts, but to teach them diligently to their children, and this they held as a very sacred duty (Exod. xxi. 15-17; Deut. v. 16), so even if Jesus did not attend school at the synagogue He would be well instructed in all things necessary for a young Jew to know; and He was also taught of God in a special way. In after years, when He went up to the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles, "the Jews marvelled, saying, 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?' And Jesus said, 'My teach-

ing is not Mine, but His that sent Me ' ' (Jno. vii. 14-16). They did not recognise His divine mission, and only looked upon Him as Joseph's son. Joseph was a carpenter by trade, or "Harash," and so it became quite natural for Jesus to be spoken of around Nazareth as the "Carpenter's Son," and as every Jewish father was expected to teach his son a trade, we can imagine with what interest Jesus would watch Joseph measuring and planning all kinds of implements used by the Jews for agriculture, besides the various articles of furniture and curious vessels for household purposes. Like most boys He would doubtless delight to be among the litter of curly shavings; also making Himself useful in many little ways whilst learning gradually, and we may be sure skilfully this ancient and much respected trade, for it would have been considered a disgrace if He had not. The Jews were very thorough in their work, so Joseph's bench would be sure to afford opportunity for the best handicraft. Was this one of the ways Jesus increased in wisdom? Most likely He had learned the words of His great ancestor, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccles. ix. 10). Surely boys and girls may imitate Jesus here, and be thorough and diligent in their work, using aright the abilities which God has given them, remembering that it is only by patience and perseverance they may succeed in life. No doubt Joseph would be well-known to the villagers, or fellaheen, around, for his business would make him popular. The carpenter's services would always be in great demand, wood being used for so many things by the Jews, and the skilled workman was always busily employed. This was one of the earliest trades invented by man, and is frequently mentioned in the Bible. Both David and Solomon employed skilled Phœnicians in the works of constructing the beams, &c., for the Temple (2 Sam. v. 11; 1 Kings v.; vi.). The wood in common use was olive, sycamore and cedar. This wood was used for making ploughs, yokes and other field instruments. A good deal also was used in house building; all the windows, bolts and hinges being of wood, and lattice work served the purpose of glass (1 Kings vi. 4; Judges v. 28). These lattices were of ornamental wood-work, and showed great artistic skill, the small laths crossing and intertwining so as to form very beautiful patterns. They kept the rooms nice and cool by letting in the fresh air while keeping out the direct rays of the sun.

In the fields around Nazareth Jesus might often have watched the farmers ploughing, possibly using the very ploughs made by Joseph. He would be quick to observe how carefully the instruments were guided over the land so as to make straight furrows. He knew that unless the man kept looking right before him the lines of earth would soon be crooked and his labour useless. In after years He said, "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke ix. 62). Most likely Jesus pictured the man ploughing in a storm of rain

or hail, almost tempted to turn back home instead of facing the stormy elements; but see what Solomon says in Eccles. xi. 4. Some of the ploughs were very light and could easily be carried by one man. In Syria they are often nothing more than the branch of a tree cut below a bifurcation and used without wheels. These are drawn by asses and cows, seldom by oxen. One writer says, they are often drawn by a little cow. The husbandmen holds the handle with one hand and just gently guides the plough. Being so light and easy they just scratch the ground a few inches deep; and so upon another occasion, Jesus said, Come unto Me. . . . My yoke is easy and My burden is light." The plough is fastened to the necks of the animals with a yoke. Some yokes fitted much better than others, and could be used with ease. There would be plenty of yokes at the carpenter's shop of varying sizes, besides threshing instruments, seed baskets, reaping-hooks, sieves, tent-pegs (called nails in the Bible), and wooden hammers or mallets. To make good implements good tools are essential, and so if we looked around we should have seen in addition to the nicely finished work, and smooth boards of wood, trellis laths, plough-handles, parts of kneading-troughs and small mills waiting to be joined together; near the carpenter's bench if not in immediate use the measuring line or foot-rule, and pencil (Zech. ii. 1), the plane and compass (Isai. xlv. 3); the saw (Isai. x. 15), the hammers and axes (1 Kings vi. 7); the awl, graver and chisel (Psalm lxxiv. 5).

Then again, we may even know the kind of garments worn by Jesus in Boyhood, so that we may picture His general appearance if we have not His exact likeness. The artist has given us a beautiful portrait of Jesus as a Boy, and in Manhood, and many believe we have the true likeness. There is a story abroad that the real portrait of Jesus does exist. According to the writings of Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsaria, in Cappadocia, who died in the year 315, Christ sent a portrait of Himself to Abgar, King of Edessa, to-day called Urfa, in Mesopotamia. Abgar learning of the Saviour's power, sent Him a letter begging Him to cure him of the leprosy with which he was afflicted. He professed faith in Jesus, whom he addressed as "Son of God." Jesus sent a reply by the disciple Thaddeus commenting upon the faith of the king, in One he had never seen. After the Resurrection of Jesus, Thaddeus journeyed to Edessa where he baptized the king, and presented him with the letter and portrait of Christ, which latter, learned writers say, is the only one in existence. The original is said to have been taken in the tenth century to Constantinople, and in the fourteenth century to Genoa, where it is said to rest jealously guarded in the Church of Bartholomew. But to return to our subject, we must recollect that Eastern costumes are as changeless as the sun; so with very little difference Jesus wore the same kind of garments as did Isaac, Joseph, Moses, and David. Clothing in the East too, always marks the position or rank, and of the character, and social bearing of the owner.

We have already noticed the little dress or tunic known as the Talith, with the sacred tassels attached to it, worn by all Jewish boys. Palestine being a land of much sunshine and dry warm weather, light loose clothing only is required for many months of the year. The humble Hebrew peasant's garment is like a loose mantle drawn in around the waist with a girdle, or sash. This mantle is called "Abbayeh," and is usually made in white and brown colours, or white and red; but red ones are worn by the girls. Although the rich wear mantles of costly linen and silk fabrics, and most beautifully embroidered girdles and shoes, they are all much after the same style of cutting, hanging loosely around the shoulders as you have doubtless observed from eastern pictures. While beautiful shoes are worn by the wealthy, the humbler ones must be content with sandals. These are fastened to the foot with straps, called "Latchets," and we may be quite sure that those beautiful, willing feet that once trod the streets and lanes of Nazareth were bound in sandals (Luke iii.). Thus Jesus would be recognised around the Home of His Boyhood as the Son of well-informed, godly, though humble, parentage. As the "Son of God," Jesus was entitled to the clothing of the highest rank; but there is something far more precious in the sight of God than the wearing of beautiful clothes, and Jesus was not to attract any to Him by outward looks. He might have worn garments that would have distinguished Him as one of the noble and learned of His day, but He was meek and lowly in heart, and was among men as "he that serveth," and so His garments were in keeping with His beautiful, self-sacrificing character. He came to be "Servant of all," a Prophet indeed, whose coarse clothing classed them with the peasants, or "fellaheen," while the Priests were "effendis" or gentlemen, who on account of their office were commanded to wear linen clothes, according to pattern. Now Jesus has become the High Priest of His people and is clothed with the beautiful robe of immortality, of which the High Priestly garments were a type, and when He comes again, we may behold Him in all the glorious beauty in which He is arrayed.





HYMN FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.

May be sung to tune 61 in S.S. Hymn Book.

Oh, how may little children
 Their love for Jesus show?
 Each little one may try to be
 As pure and holy as was He
 Who loves the children so.

Each day may little children
 Be gentle, kind and meek,
 The happy hours they may employ
 In loving deeds that give much joy,
 And sweet words they may speak.

Each one in their small corner
 May seek to brightly shine,
 For little lips God's praise may tell,
 And little hearts may love Him well,
 And have His smile Divine.

Then help us little children,
 Dear Father now we pray,
 To love Thy Word and learn Thy Truth
 And in the days of early youth
 To walk in wisdom's way.

JESUS—HIS BOYHOOD.

CHAPTER III.

We come now to the third recorded incident in the life of Jesus, the one in which we find many more details given and some of the most beautiful character touches, that seem to make the story of this wonderful Childhood so full and complete.

Sometimes young people say, "Oh, but it was so easy for Jesus to be good, in fact, how could He be otherwise! With God for His Father, and the Holy Spirit for His guide, He could not have done wrong. Quite true that God was His Father, and He had the Holy Spirit without measure, but still He was Mary's Son who took upon Himself our nature, which is prone to sin. "He was tempted in all points," like we are, but never yielded to sin. He was tired and hungry, thirsty and sorrowful, but never went beyond His Father's will. Do you think the first temptation came to Him when a Man? No, no; the moment He was conscious of existing good and evil, of a right course and a wrong, the struggle would begin, and temptations beset Him as truly as they do all of us. How firmly and persistently He must have resisted evil, and how near and dear to Him was His Father's Will. Why should not all the boys and girls try to be like their Saviour in this? not only growing in years but in grace and in wisdom of the highest quality. All may aim at becoming more like Him if they cannot reach to the same perfection. When He comes to earth again all who have earnestly endeavoured to follow Him now, shall be made like Him, in the love and mercy of God. We have examples of boys and girls who loved and served God quite early. Josiah was a good, pious king at the age of eight years, and Timothy, from a child knew the Holy Scriptures, proving that He began in early days to walk in wisdom's ways and to fear the God of Israel; and I trust there are many such children to be found even to-day. God knows every one of them by name.

Timothy was brought up at Lystra, where there was no synagogue in which he could listen to the Law and the Prophets read each Sabbath Day and twice a week. His father was not a Jew, but a Gentile, so we are told how his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois taught him the Truth, which he practised and preached in later years. Probably Timothy's mother owned a copy of the Old Testament Scriptures, or part, and was able to read to her son. At that time, and very likely too when Jesus was a Boy, there were little parchment rolls especially prepared for children to read. These contained a sort of creed or statement of the faith, beginning with the words found in Deut. vi. 4; and Psalms cxiii. to cxviii., besides the history of the Creation and the Flood. Also the first eight chapters of Leviticus. Although there was no printing in those days, and the Scriptures had to be copied by hand,

yet many a Jewish family possessed their own copy. We should like to be sure if there was one at the Carpenter's house at Nazareth, but most likely there was, and Jesus would love to read it. As a Boy perhaps He used to read aloud to Joseph and Mary, and afterwards would study the Scriptures at the Synagogue as well as at home. Will you think of this when you read your daily portions from the Sacred Word? The example of Jesus is not something quite out of your reach, but you may study the Bible even as Jesus did and try to follow the Pattern of His wonderful Boyhood in your regular daily reading. We will now think of Jesus as He is pictured to us in Luke ii. 40-52, going up to Jerusalem for the first time to keep the Feast of the Passover. Before His last Passover, twenty-one years later, Jesus said to His disciples, "With desire have I desired, I have heartily desired, to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (Luke xxii. 15), showing what a privilege he considered it was to keep the ordinance appointed by His Father instead of thinking as some do, "Oh my trouble is so great, I must stay away from God's House until it is all over, and I feel happy." How closely we should follow the example of Jesus and not follow our own inclinations; asking what He would do if in our place. This going up to Jerusalem was not only to keep the great Feast, but was a holiday for the Jews, and would be eagerly looked forward to. In the Holy Land people usually travel in numbers for safety and companionship. Many joyous companies there would be hastening towards the City of God's choice, thankful that once more their feet would stand within the courts of the Lord's House and again visit His Temple. Think what this would mean to those living in small towns and villages at remote distances—the excitement of leaving their homes in proper order, besides all the necessary preparations for a long journey, for there were no trains or motors to take people on their holidays. A ride on a camel's back, or in a caravan was the quickest and best means of accomplishing a journey; but still these pilgrims were very happy, and did not mind the difficulties by the way: and as they wended their steps along the steep and rugged path they lifted their voices in beautiful psalmody and made the hills resound with joyous music.

Can we imagine the gladness brimming over in the heart of the fair intelligent Boy pressing forward the road that led to "the City of the Great King"? With what happiness He would join in those songs of Zion which frequently burst forth from the lips of Joseph and Mary's kinsfolk and acquaintance, and echoed far across the hills and vales. "I was glad (oh, so glad) when they said unto Me, Let us go into the House of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. . . Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love Thee" (Psa. cxxii.). "Serve the Lord with gladness and come before His presence with singing. . . Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His

Courts with praise; be thankful unto Him and bless His Name." Nazareth was about seventy miles from Jerusalem, a long way for those who must go on foot, and yet there was no complaining about the distance. Mary and Joseph valued these ordinances, and set us an example. All Jewish boys were required to appear in Jerusalem at the Feasts as soon as they were twelve years of age, and so Jesus with His parents went up to keep the Feast of the Passover. We see that God intends all to worship Him, whether old or young, for among these numerous families there would be many boys and girls, and happy little children like Samuel, who was taken to the house of the Lord when only about three years of age.

How was this Passover Service conducted you will naturally ask? Some of the most important features are recorded in Deut. xvi. and full instructions were given to the Israelites in Exod. xii. In later years the Jews made this ceremony much more elaborate, details of which are given in the Mishna. The priests stood in two rows, one had golden bowls and the other silver, in which they received the blood of the animals slain in sacrifice, and all through the service the Hallel, or Psalms cxiii. to cxviii. were sung; and when it became evening all the Israelites left the Temple to roast the pascal sacrifices, being very careful that a bone was not broken. Afterwards they partook of the lamb, and unleavened cakes. But we are more interested in the manner in which it was observed when Jesus was a Boy, and this we may find out also.

After the ceremony in the Temple, the parties or families returned to the dwellings to which the pascal lamb had been taken, and then every circumcised person, including the boys of 12 years and over reclined around the low, long table at the Passover meal.

At the beginning (most probably) of the Feast, a cup was filled with wine and a blessing pronounced in these, or very similar words,—“Blessed art Thou, O eternal Jehovah, King of the Universe, who has created the fruit of the vine, &c.” After the wine was drunk a basin of water with a towel was handed round, and the members of the party washed their hands. Bitter herbs and unleavened bread were then brought in, as well as the “Haroseth” made of dates, raisins, &c.; also the roasted pascal lamb, and “chagigah” or festal offering. The one who presided at the table then took the bitter herbs and dipped them in the “Haroseth,” and afterwards took a small portion himself, and handed likewise a morsel to the other members who also partook. Before the lamb was eaten, another cup of wine was poured out, and the questions were asked in accordance with Exod. xii. 26, to which suitable replies were given. The first part of the Hallel was then sung, after which the lamb was divided and eaten. Then followed a third cup of wine, and the service concluded with the second part of the Hallel (cxv.-cxviii.).

The Feast ended and the appointed days fulfilled, then the homeward journey commenced; but we read, "The Child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem"; purposely it seems from v. 49, and the object may be gathered from what follows. He was on a holiday—He knew the distance between Jerusalem and Nazareth, as well as the dangers and difficulties of the way, and yet He lingers of His own free will among the learned Doctors of the Law in the Temple, "both hearing and asking them questions," when He might have joined the other boys in their amusements and conversation on their homeward way. Jesus made good use of all His opportunities of improving His mind, and was so well acquainted with the Scriptures that the Rabbis were astonished at His understanding and answers. Jesus set all boys and girls an example of diligence at lessons. No one can really follow Him and be slothful and negligent at work. All must put to good account the abilities that God has given. "A day's journey" was about thirty-three miles so that Joseph and Mary were about half way home before any enquiries were made. Had they forgotten Him? Oh no. The very fact of His taking part in the great Feast would keep Him most thankfully in their minds. They supposing Jesus to have been in the company, and not taking any trouble to know whether He was safe for so long a time shows what a spirit of confidence in Him they had, as well as in their fellow-travellers. They expected to find Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

Although a diligent scholar, Jesus was a pleasant companion, for it does not follow that all studious boys are dull and uninteresting company. It rather appears as if Jesus had many friends. His gentle and graceful disposition won the hearts of those about Him. As a Man, He was accused of being "a friend of . . . sinners." Perhaps Jesus felt that good and pleasant as it was to visit God's Temple, it was better far to abide therein, for, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House: they will be still praising Thee," said the sweet psalmist (lxxxiv. 4). And from henceforth He must be about His Father's business (or, "In His Father's House," R.V.). This was the one great object He had in view.

We may be sure Jesus did not cause His mother anxiety without good reason, for He never had grieved her before. This would not for a moment enter her mind, but her fears would be lest some accident had befallen Him. Though Jesus was Mary's Son according to the flesh, yet He was also her Lord, the Messiah, Teacher, and Saviour of the world. Perhaps both Joseph and Mary needed to be reminded of this, for we know how impressions gradually become weakened as time goes on, and it was now more than twelve years since the Angel's message (Luke i. 33). In a very special sense Jesus belonged to God, and it was at the age of twelve that He knew it was time to "put away childish things" and begin His father's business in real earnest.

JESUS—HIS BOYHOOD.

CHAPTER IV.

We see that Jesus made His Father's business the chief thought in His mind. There was nothing He prized so dearly, and no earthly joy could take its place. What an example, dear boys and girls! We read that it was after three days Jesus was discovered; that is, on the third day. It was on the third day after His crucifixion that He rose again triumphant over the grave, and Jesus also referred to a third day in which His great work would be perfected.

The Jews always counted in the day up to which they reckoned, and so called a week eight days. Here there was one day spent in travelling, and the second in returning: on the third day finding Jesus in the Temple. Now take the other instance, for it is worth considering. Each Gospel narrative records that Jesus rested in the grave for three days and three nights, and rose again on the third day. We remember too that Jesus told His disciples before His death that this should be so, using Jonah as a type (Matt. xii. 40). We believe Jesus to have lain in the tomb from Friday sunset to very early dawn on Sunday. How many nights was that? Two only, Friday and Saturday. Here we seem to have a difficulty; which certainly is at first sight contradictory, and some are inclined to doubt the truth of the Bible account. What are we going to do with it? Think again of some of these ancient customs of the Jews that throw light on so many dark passages of Scripture, and we shall be helped. Well, here the expression "three days" and "three nights" meant civil days, and a Jewish civil day was from sunset to sunset; and this or any part of it was called "a day and a night." We speak in much the same way ourselves. We say, I was there from Friday to Sunday, or Friday, Saturday and Sunday, not meaning from midnight when Friday began, till the midnight when Sunday ended; but from some time on Friday to some time on Sunday. It would be called three days, but would include only one whole day, and two nights, and so in the case of Jesus.

Jesus was found in the Temple, "sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers." This was a custom among Jewish doctors, who sat in some part of the Temple generally on raised seats, to give instruction to their disciples. Paul mentions how he sat at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts xxii. 3), and Mary, recognising Jesus to be the greatest of all Teachers, sat at His Feet and heard His Word" (Luke x. 39). Jesus, as a Boy, sat as a learner, but He was able to teach. We see humility and greatness in Him united, and

this beautiful lesson children may learn from their Saviour, to be respectful to their teachers, and receive instruction humbly and thankfully. At first the answer of Jesus may appear harsh and unkind, but not when we consider who He was. They had to learn that He had a heavenly Father whose work He came to do : and that work was beyond all others in importance (Luke xii. 50). No one would know better than Jesus, the commandment " Honour thy father and thy mother " (Exod. xx. 12), and other parts of the Law which so plainly show the duty of children to their parents would be familiar to Him.

Yes : " Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right " (Eph. vi.), remembering also your duty to God, which comes first of all. Jesus was never afraid of what others would think of Him. " How is it that ye sought Me?" He asked. " Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them. Friends sometimes misjudge us, they cannot read the motives deep down in our hearts that prompt us to a certain course of action, but God knows everything. Do not fear, but dare to be true, and learn the lesson again from Jesus, that they who best fulfil their duty to God will also best perform all other duties.

Jesus had shown His true character, and the higher duties laid upon Him; now He fulfils the duty of loving obedience and filial subjection to those over Him without a single rebellious thought, or word of complaint. " He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." Did He continue to be a loving, obedient Son after this? We can be certain of it; and at the age of thirteen He would doubtless be the subject of another interesting and solemn ceremony, and become a " Bar Mizvah," or " Son of the Commandment," as it means in Hebrew; for all Jewish boys become such at that age.

They receive this name on their thirteenth birthday, when a service is held and there is much rejoicing and festivity, and also much satisfaction among their families. This is still kept up by the Jews to-day, and I have had the pleasure of witnessing three boys become " Bar Mizvah." It is then the Jewish boy is first allowed to wear the phylacteries, so this ceremony is of much importance to every young Hebrew. The first phylactery is placed upon his left arm before the early morning prayers, for these are intended especially to be worn at prayer times. While the phylactery is being fastened on, these words are repeated,— " Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with Thy commandments, and bidden us to put on phylacteries." Afterwards he binds another little box on his forehead, with another thanksgiving. And from that day forward he must conduct himself as a true Son of Israel, who is responsible for his duty to God and to his neighbour. The next Sabbath he is called upon to read one of the lessons for the day in the service at the syna-

gogue. For this ceremony Jewish boys are carefully trained by their teachers so that they may give satisfaction. When his turn comes to read, the scroll of the Scriptures is placed in his hand, which he unrolls until he comes to the portion selected (Luke iv.). He then says, Blessed be the Lord, Who is blessed for ever; and the whole congregation reply, "Blessed be the Lord, Who is blessed for evermore." Then the boy says, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, King of the Universe, Who hast chosen us from all nations, and hast given us Thy Law. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Giver of the Law." Beautiful words reminding us of that scene of awful grandeur on the Holy Mount long centuries ago, and the Apostle's words to the Gentile believers at Rome (ch. iii. 1, 2; ch. ix. 4, 5). He then reads aloud the lesson and rolls up the sacred scroll, and gives it back to the minister, saying, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, who hast given us Thy Law, the Law of truth, and hast planted among us everlasting life. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Giver of the Law." Then he returns to his seat at his father's side, no doubt very glad it is all over, and that he has come through successfully.

On the occasions I have referred to everyone present seemed well pleased with the boys, expressing their appreciation with nods and gestures: of one in particular it was afterwards remarked, that he read beautifully.

He then went his way, a "Son of the Commandment, with feelings of intense gladness, and full of good resolutions to serve God faithfully. But how came the Jews to observe all this ceremony you may well ask? In Deut. xi. Israel read certain verses which warned them to bear in mind God's laws and promises, and being anxious to obey this command they devised phylacteries. These were small cubical boxes, intended to be fastened by narrow straps, one on the arm and the other on the forehead. Each little box is divided into four tiny cells, containing four strips of folded parchment. Upon these strips the following texts were written (Exod. xiii. 2-10; xiii. 11-16; Deut. xi. 12-22). Phylactery comes from a Greek word meaning an "amulet" or charm. The little parchments were folded and placed in the cells, tightly packed with hairs from one of the clean animals mentioned in the Law (Deut. xiv. 4-6). The box then was placed on three thicknesses of leather to form the base which rests upon the forehead, and these pieces were stitched to the box with twelve stitches, to represent the twelve tribes, three on each side. Instead of thread, fine sinews, from the foot of a clean animal were beaten into proper fineness, and passed through. Special pens, I believe, were used for writing upon the parchment. So you see a great deal of care and trouble was taken with them, and these the devout Jew wears on every week-day in the year before morning prayer.

Jesus did not condemn the Pharisees for wearing the phylacteries, but for using extra large ones to be seen of men, and be admired of them. Let us also remember that Jesus said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

And now, young friends, our story is ended, for neither the Bible nor Jewish history throws any more light upon this beautiful Boyhood, or gives any further details of the daily walk—the trivial round of duties faithfully performed to God and man. Around the next sixteen years of the most wonderful life that has ever been lived on earth, God has closely drawn the curtain of divine love, and deep secrecy; so we must be content. But we linger a while to think over what has been revealed to us of our Saviour's youthful days, can we say after all, there is so little known of His inner life and character, that we cannot follow His example as we might? I think not. From the manger-cradle up to His perfect Boyhood, with the eye of imagination, we have watched Him, growing year by year, "in stature and in favour with God and men." We have been with Him at Bethlehem, and seen the humble shepherds, and the rich Magi hastening to do Him homage and offer their gifts, and learned how wonderfully He was protected, and preserved from cruel jealousy for nearly two years in Egypt, by God's over-ruling power. We have seen Him presented in the Temple in accordance with the divine law, to the great joy of the aged Simeon and Anna. We have followed Him through the coasts of Galilee till we found the low, flat-roofed home of the Carpenter nestling among the hills of Nazareth; and entered the two-leaved door and looked around at the many objects of interest in the happy home of His Childhood, and better still, listened to the sweet low, cradle-song, the holy psalm of the Hebrew mother bending over her lovely Baby.

We have gazed with loving admiration at the picture of the fair little Child sitting at His mother's knee learning to read and understand the sacred Scriptures, and watched Him with bowed head and bended knee, pray to His Father in heaven for guidance and protection, each morning and evening; washing His hands (which were always kept so perfectly clean from sin) before offering His little prayer and thanksgiving at His humble meals.

We have also visited the busy Carpenter's Shop; examined some of his tools and observed what a many clever and curious implements he made, and what a popular person he was. We have noticed the youthful figure at his side, willingly helping his imputed father while mastering the much respected trade.

We have seen the bright happy Boy at His lessons, learning all He could so as to be the better able to do His Father's business—the thoughtful, obedient Son with His parents—the joy and

comfort of His mother—the cheerful help and companion of Joseph. The respectful, diligent scholar and true lover of God's Law, as well as the earnest seeker after divine knowledge.

We have found him out in the fields among the trees and birds, and beautiful flowers, studying their wonderful formation and colour, thus training His eyes to see in all nature the glorious handiworks of His Almighty and loving Father. In the synagogue, and at home reading daily the sacred roll of the Scriptures. Keeping holy the Sabbath and regularly attending the services. Gladly visiting the Temple at Jerusalem and observing the appointed Feasts. And as the beloved and only begotten Son of God, setting Himself to do the will of His Father. We have recognised Him as a little Child, the lovingly cared for and tenderly reared charge, by the holy garments upon Him; and as a Boy, His general appearance and gentle demeanour has revealed Him to be the Son of much respected, godly parentage.

And thus Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, until fully prepared by God for His great Life-work and untold suffering on our behalf. The first lesson we learn from Jesus, is that of humility and contentment; the last, submission and obedience (Heb. v. 8).

From the obedient, submissive Boy, He grew to Manhood, and at length was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," that we through Him might become obedient children of God.

All that is truly good and noble was centred in Jesus of Nazareth, even in early Childhood; and thus, the children's Pattern—the sinner's Friend—the Saviour of the world, in the obscurity of a humble home, and busy carpenter's shop, lived and laboured until nearly 30 years of age: and then, full of heavenly zeal and tender compassion, came bearing the good news of the Kingdom of God to all who would receive it—came to glorify His Father in heaven by laying down His life for our sakes, and so finished the work that had been designed for Him to do. Let us all try earnestly to follow the example of this glorious and perfect Life of Jesus.



“JESUS. . . WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD.”

(*Acts x.*).

May be sung to tune “ Hesperus,” No. 53 S.S. Book.

Sweet are the lessons I may learn,
When to God’s Holy Word I turn,
And the dear Saviour’s life retrace,
So full of beauty, love and grace.

How many happy He did make,
How precious were the words He spake,
Come, heavy laden unto Me,
And I will give sweet rest to thee.

The poor who sought Him day by day,
With joy and gladness went their way,
He healed their sickness, cured their pain,
And raised their dead to life again.

But though He was so good and wise,
The children He did not despise ;
Placing His hand upon each head,
“ Oh, let them come to Me,” He said.

GOD’S EPITAPH.

I wandered in a pensive mood,
Through a quiet burial ground ;
A stranger in that neighbourhood
I came to look around.

’Twas when the sunset’s purple hues
Illumined the far west ;
When nature sank into repose,
And wild birds sought the nest.

When nought but rustling leaves disturbed
The stillness of the dells ;
Or floating on the zephyrs came
The music of the bells.

A spot more picturesque and calm
 I ne'er had seen before ;
 The sweet solemnity that reigned
 Soon filled my soul with awe.

I gazed upon the stately tombs
 Of men of noble race ;
 I read the shining epitaphs
 That marked their resting place.

There, standing boldly out on high
 Some figure, white and fair ;
 A marble monument, or urn,
 Amid the scented air.

And here, a simple wooden cross,
 There, a wreath of flowers ;
 And yonder, an old moss-grown vault,
 Shaded by hawthorn bowers.

And now a narrow grassy mound,
 With stone reared at the head ;
 While close beside, a tiny tomb
 With choicest flowers o'erspread.

But looking to my right I spied
 Where high the grass did wave,
 Sheltered from summer sun and shower
 A little nameless grave.

No token of affection true,
 No epitaph, no stone :
 A cold, deep bed o'er-run with weeds
 Unheeded and alone.

I thought, ah sleeper, hast thou not,
 In this wide world, one friend ?
 Who could'st beside thy resting place
 Some quiet moments spend !

Yet though no trace of love I see,
 Or sculptured marble rare,
 All unobserved by human eye
 God's epitaph is there.

And what is all this pompous sheen
 That tells where mortals rest ?
 'Tis wealth that rears the marble fine,
 But God knows who served best.

'Tis man who sets o'er brother man
 His works of shining art;
 We look upon the outward scene,
 But God, the inward part.

The deeper shades of night drew on,
 The moon beamed through the trees,
 The bells had ceased their joyous chimes
 And chilly blew the breeze.

Then, silently, I took my leave,
 Of that calm, peaceful spot;
 And soon retraced the moonlit track
 That sped me to my cot.

Yet, musing still on solemn things,
 These words I seemed to hear—
 Deep written on the lives of all
 God's epitaph shines clear!

God's epitaph, most just and true,
 Whatever we may be;
 Oh! does it seals our souls for death
 Or Life eternally?

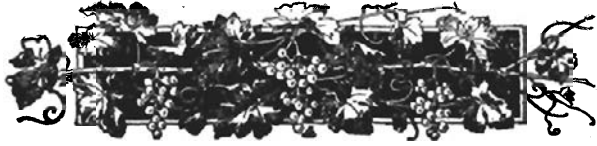
MY BIBLE AND I.

We've travelled together, my Bible and I,
 Through all kinds of weather, with smile or with sigh,
 In sorrow or sunshine, in tempest or calm,
 Thy friendship unchanging, my lamp and my psalm.

We've travelled together, my Bible and I,
 When life had grown weary, and death e'en was nigh;
 But all through the darkness of mist and of wrong,
 I found thee a solace, a prayer, or a song.

So now who shall part us, my Bible and I?
 Shall ism, or schism, or new lights who try?
 Shall shadow for substance, or stone for good bread
 Supplant its sound wisdom—give folly instead?

Thou sword of the Spirit, put error to flight;
 Ah, no! my dear Bible, Revealer of Light,
 And still through life's journey, until my last sigh,
 We'll travel together, my Bible and I.



THE PROPHET LIKE UNTO MOSES.

We have thought of Jesus as "the Son of God, the Saviour of men, High Priest, and King of kings. The great Teacher and Healer, and gracious Lord and Master. Now let us think of Him as "the Prophet." There can be no doubt that Jesus is "the Master" and "the Teacher," for no other ever so completely fulfilled the office as He did. Many and varied were the claims made upon Him, but He was always equal to the occasion. At one time it was the frightened disciples in the tempest-tossed ship on the Galilean Lake who aroused Him from sleep with their cries of "Master, Master, carest Thou not that we perish." At another, the Centurion beseeching Him to heal his servant; and yet another day the commotion at the foot of the Mount of Transfiguration, a father pleading in pathetic tones for mercy towards his lunatic boy. Jesus could indeed by the finger, or power of God cast out terrible diseases and bring gladness to the poor sufferers. He had come to bind up the broken-hearted and set the captives free. He was God's Servant raised up for this very purpose. His Elect One, chosen to restore the scattered tribes of Israel (Act i. 6). By Sonship and service He is linked with the Father in the bonds of that divine love which encircled all God's dear children (Jno. xiv. 10), but now I shall leave you to find some of the titles of Jesus yourselves, and tell you something about Jesus as "the Prophet."

You may have thought of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and the Light of the World, but not as a prophet, and yet He was the greatest of all prophets. Let us go back to the fifth book of Moses (Deut. xviii. 18). There we read, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee (Israel) a prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me (Moses) unto Him shall ye hearken." Was it Elijah? No. Jeremiah or John the Baptist? Oh no: because none of these were like Moses. Well, what was Moses like? Here we have it in Num. xii. 3. He was very meek. Yes, very meek, but not weak in character, or he could not have advised and guided God's chosen people for so many years. The prophet like unto Moses then can be no other than Jesus of Nazareth, who said to those around Him, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. xi. 29). He who was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isai. liii.), of whom Paul also wrote,

saying, " I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, . . . to put down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bring under control every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. x. 1-3). And again, " Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus " (Phil. ii.). It was a meek and lowly mind, for he continues, " He humbled Himself," and although by reason of His close relationship to God, He did not consider it a thing to be grasped at, to be on an equality with God, as Father and Son, for it was His privilege by right of birth, yet " He made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

We have already referred to one of His deeds of lowly service (Jno. xiii.), but how many there were, for we read that day by day, " He went about doing good " (Acts x. 38), and our hearts are drawn towards Him as we think of His wonderful love and condescension. Praying for His enemies, healing the wounded ear of a common soldier when about to be arrested Himself, and blessing little children, Peter confirms the words of Moses and proves to the Jews that Jesus was the prophet long promised to Israel (Acts iii. 22-25; vii. 37).

But what is a prophet? One who foretells future events, you answer promptly. Well, quite right, but more than this! A prophet is God's spokesman. Moses made slowness of speech an excuse for not going into the presence of Pharaoh (Exod. iv.). How patiently God bears with him! Aaron is allowed to help Moses, to be to him, " instead of a mouth " (vii.). And " thou (Moses) shalt be to him instead of God " (ch. vii. 1). " I have made thee (Moses) a God unto Pharaoh, and Aaron thy spokesman." The Jews expected a great prophet to arise, but they stubbornly refused to accept Jesus as this expected Prophet (Jno. i. 21). How truly Jesus was God's spokesman! To the Jews He said, " I am come in My Father's Name and ye receive Me not " (Jno. v. 43). And again, " The words that I speak unto you are not My words but the Father's who sent Me." He that heareth My words. . . and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." When many of the people heard these sayings they said, " This is of a truth the Prophet (Jno. vii. 28-40). The woman of Samaria said also, " Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet " (v. 19). " I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ (or the Anointed) when He cometh He will tell us all things " (v. 25). The people who saw the miracle of Jesus in the Wilderness, exclaimed, " This is of a truth that Prophet which should come into the world " (Jno. vi. 14) so we see that " Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth " (Matt. xxi. 11) was not only meek and lowly in heart, but " Mighty in word and deed " (Luke xxiv. 19). Let us hear Him.

"AS NEW BORN BABES."

(1 Pet. 3).


Only a little child, dear Lord,
I am so small and weak,
I know so little of Thy Word,
And hardly how to speak.
Yet I will place my tiny hand
In the warm tender grasp
Of Thy strong Hand, and
firmly stand
Within Thy loving clasp.

Only a little child, dear Lord,
I need Thy constant care,
Give me the things Thou seest
best
The path for me prepare.
Right early in life's happy
youth,

Help me in grace to grow,
Teach me the treasures of Thy
truth,
Cause me Thy Will to know.

Only a little child, dear Lord,
One day I hope to be
Full-grown in stature, pure,
complete,
Through Him who died for
me.
When moulded thus, and
fashioned right,
His image bright I'll bear,
A place within His kingdom
find,
And all its glories share.

JESUS—THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME.

 HAT is there in a name"? we often hear people asking. One may as well be called Jack as John, Mary as much as Marian, it will not make them any wiser, wealthier or happier which ever it may be. Quite so: and yet I suppose every one attaches a certain amount of importance to their name!

All boys and girls like to have a becoming name, for it is constantly with them through life.

There is always a feeling of satisfaction too in knowing that another person who happens to bear the same name bears also a good character. Children are frequently named after their parents and friends on account of some peculiar virtue or quality they possess, or to keep certain names in the family.

"What is your name?" I once enquired of a dear little girl. "Ser-ran," she answered, shyly hanging down her head. "Is that what they call you?" I asked, rather surprised and amused. "Yes," she replied softly. "It was Mother's name and poor Granny's, but I do not like it a bit." From several children standing by there was a loud titter, followed by an emphatic exclamation of, "Wel-l-what a name!" But it was not long before little "Ser-ran" (Sarah Ann) became a general favourite, and when some eight years later I lost sight of my young friend, the plain, old-fashioned name had grown quite familiar and pleasant.

In the old Bible days children were often named according to the circumstances in which they were born. We readily call to mind the circumstance which led to the naming of the baby boy discovered among the bulrushes by the river's bank, and know why the rejoicing Hannah called her son Samuel.

Perhaps you may recollect too what Naomi said about her name when she returned to her Home-land and her people exclaimed, when they saw how changed was her appearance through much sorrow of heart, "Is this Naomi?" She said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara : for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me" (Ruth i. 19-21). Naomi means "pleasant" and Mara "bitter."

The changing of Abram and Sarai's names to Abraham and Sarah, Jacob into Israel by God Himself shows the importance attached to them, especially if you will study the meaning of each name. There are some excellent lessons to be learned from the significance of Bible names, for in them is revealed both character and type.

For New Testament examples we might consider Peter (John i. 42), and Saul of Tarsus (Acts xiii. 9).

There are also some notable instances in the Bible of children being named even before their birth. Both Jesus and His forerunner, John the Baptist, were thus named.

Sometimes we read or hear of someone making a name in the world, or leaving a name behind them, and we quite understand what is meant by it. Having achieved some noble, praise-worthy end, their name became prominent. In their day and generation they lived to bless and elevate their fellow creatures, and so their name is associated with pleasant recollections. Whenever it is mentioned, it breathes forth a sweet refreshing fragrance which influences others for good, and their great deeds or lowly works done faithfully pass before the mind's eye, causing others to take courage and endeavour to do likewise.

Well we know it is not the mere grammatical sound or the bare name by which the individual was known that affects us thus, but the person himself, his character—his words and works. And so the wise king wrote, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. xxi. 1), and again in Eccles vii. 1, "A good name is better than precious ointment," and why? Because here "name" stands for "character," and to build up a good character should be the chief aim and object of our life, for it is the great thing that will count with God in relation to our future destiny.

In the primary sense then, a name is a word which indicates or points out the person or thing named, as when Adam gave names to all the animals and fowls to distinguish one class from another (Gen. ii. 20), or as Adam himself was so named "red-earth," because man originated from the dust of the ground (Gen. ii. 7), and the first

woman was called Eve, because she was the mother of all living (Gen. iii. 20), but as we observe there is also a far deeper significance.

We are about to consider the Name which is above every name; the precious sweet and holy name of Jesus, and try to learn some of the beautiful lessons associated with it.

The name or word "Jesus" occurs over 600 times in the New Testament and represents a person who has had already and will have in the future more influence upon the affairs of the world than any man who has ever lived.

"The destinies of individuals and nations are closely connected with this name—Jesus," writes the late Benjamin Wilson.

Every letter of His sweet name reminds us of the fulness of the blessings we have in Him.

Before the birth of the Divine Son of God, the angel messenger was sent to Mary, telling her not only that her Holy Child should be called "Son of God," but "Jesus," and for this reason, "He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 23), and when we think how sin has separated all mankind from God, for "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii.), the expression of each heart should be—Saviour—I—need—Salvation, or, Saving from Sin.

Here are some of the blessings that come to all who truly believe in the name of Jesus:—

1. J—Justification. (Rom. v.).
2. E—Eternal Life. (John iii. 16; Rom. v. 21).
3. S—Sanctification. (1 Cor. 30; Heb. x. 10).
4. U—Union or peace with God. (John xvii. 11, 22, 23; Eph. ii. 13-22).
5. S—Satisfaction. (Psalm xvii. 15; 1 Peter i. 8).

The name Jesus is above every name and is often referred to as "the Saving Name" and "the Sin-covering Name."

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe" we read in Prov. xviii. 10. What can this mean? Each of these phrases suggests safety and protection by being sheltered beneath a name. How is this possible? The words of the apostle Paul make this clear. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv.). Here are two names "Adam" and "Christ." Every one born into the world comes under the first name, Adam. It is a name covered and stained with sin, bearing the sentence of death, and places all under condemnation. All who remain in Adam must ultimately die, for "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). By nature all are named "Sinners" in Adam, but God has provided a remedy and offers to all the glorious privilege of changing their relationship with Adam by becoming associated with the name of His dear Son, in whom are centred all the blessings of a holy, happy life now, and eternal life hereafter.

“ In Christ shall all be made alive.” This does not mean that as Christ died for or on account of all, that everybody will have eternal life. To obtain this gift of life unending, those in Adam must necessarily have taken the all-important step, out of Adam into Christ, before they may hope for the blessings attendant upon the Name.

All in Jesus are covered with His righteousness and accepted of God, being sheltered beneath the sin-covering Name—the Name that saves or frees us from our sins and justifies us in the sight of God. In a figure our names are transferred from one roll to another, so that all who believe the Gospel of the Kingdom and are baptized into the Name of Jesus, pass from a condition of condemnation and death into a state which brings justification and life. (Rom. viii. 1).

Peter told the rulers of the Jews that if they wished to know by what means the lame man had been cured—“ By the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole: Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved ” (Acts iv. 10-12).

We see then that this name is to be believed (John i. 11, 12; iii. 3, 8). John recorded the miracles of Jesus, “ that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we may have life through His Name ” (John xx. 31). The apostles were sent by Jesus to preach the Gospel, and offer to both Jews and Gentiles the forgiveness of sins, if they would believe and obey (Matt. xxviii.; Luke xxiv. 47; Acts ii. 38), and those who put on the Name of Jesus must endeavour to walk worthy of that Name and not be ashamed to confess Him before men (Luke xii. 8, 9).

Jesus has obtained a more excellent name even than the angels, for God says of Him, “ Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee ” (Psa. ii.; Heb. i.). This reminds us of the covenant God made with David: “ I will be His (David’s greater Son, Jesus) Father, and He shall be My (God’s) Son ” (2 Sam. vii.). And Paul tells us how God raised Him up and exalted Him to His own right Hand in the heavens, far above all authority and power and every name that is named, not only in this, but in the future age (Eph. i. 20), and on account of His obedience even unto death on the cross, God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name (Phil. ii. 9).

Isaiah prophesied “ His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God (or Warrior), Everlasting Father (or Governor of the future age).” (Chap. ix. 6, 7). This teaches us that Jesus will be both glorious and great, and that some day He will sit upon the throne of David and govern the kingdom of Israel for God as David did in the past, but unlike David, or Solomon his son who succeeded him, His reign and government

will be "from henceforth even for ever": or, in the words of Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, "It shall never be destroyed. . . . but. . . it shall stand for ever. (Dan. ii. 44). It will be an everlasting kingdom whose King all people shall serve and obey. (Dan. vii. 27).

Let us observe too, how beautifully the truth about this kingdom and the name, mentioned so frequently in the Old Testament is linked with the teaching of the New Testament. If we turn to Luke i. 32, 33, we shall see this idea carried forward and established beyond all doubt. Jesus was to be great, and to be called the Son of the Highest, for the Lord God would give unto Him, in His own appointed time as He promised to David long years before, the throne occupied by David before he died. There can only be one answer to the repeatedly asked question: Where will the Kingdom of God be, and where will Jesus reign? Many say it is in heaven, but this is a great mistake, for the Bible tells us plainly that Jesus is coming again, and when He comes He will rule for God and dwell with men.

I will give you two references which prove that Jesus will reign upon this earth and not continue for ever in heaven; then, with the help of a concordance, I must leave you to find out many more that confirm these two. The first is in Zechariah xiv. By looking through the whole chapter it is not difficult to see that it refers to the second coming of Christ, the conquering of the nations, the gathering of His saints to be with Him for ever, and the setting up of the Kingdom of God, when all shall be "Holiness to the Lord"; and in verse 9 we read: "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord and His Name one." The second reference is Rev. v. 10, which proves that both Christ and His Saints will reign upon the earth in the future. How glad David will be when awakened from the long deep sleep of death to know how wonderfully God has fulfilled His Word in raising up Jesus first and sending Him again to restore all things. (Acts i. 6; ii. 34; iii. 20). The purpose of God as it gradually unfolds before us, reveals Jesus not only as King of the Jews, but King over all the earth.

When there is one King—Jesus, and one Kingdom—God's Kingdom, under the whole heaven, we can understand how there will be "Peace on earth and goodwill among men," for Jesus is the "Prince of Peace," as well as "Mighty Warrior." Men will not wish to fight then, for there will be no kingdoms to conquer; they will have been broken to pieces and consumed (Dan. ii. 44, 45) in the terrible battle of Armageddon (Rev. xvi.), which takes place before this peaceful reign begins.

From the prophet Jeremiah we learn another beautiful lesson concerning the Name of Jesus. In chapter xxiii. 5, 6, it is written: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up to David a righteous branch and a King shall reign and prosper and

shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely : and this is His name whereby he shall be called, " The Lord our Righteousness."

We have no righteousness of our own, therefore God has made Jesus to be unto us "righteousness, sanctification and redemption," and given Him to be "the propitiation," or covering for our sins. (1 John ii. 2), and so Paul says to the believers "Ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26, 27) "for as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ."

All such are covered with the Saving Name, and happy are they, for God looks upon them through Jesus, the Righteous One, and accepts them as His dear children. (Psalm xxxii. 1).

What a glorious position to occupy ! When you are older, and understand the purpose of God more perfectly, I trust you will gladly accept this glorious offer of Salvation from sin and death, and so change your name from "sinner in Adam" to a "child of God," by being baptised for the forgiveness of your sins into the sin-covering Name. Many have chosen their own way and thoughtlessly or wilfully set aside the command and teaching of Jesus and His Apostles concerning this, but if we really love Jesus we shall eagerly obey Him.

I wonder whether you have ever tried to find in the Bible any verses that uphold the idea that sprinkling a few drops of water on the forehead of a little helpless baby, and making the sign of the cross with the finger, regenerates him into a child of God, or if such persons as godfathers and godmothers have a place therein.

If you have not, I will save you the fruitless toil by telling you that once upon a time I set myself the task, and searched the whole Bible carefully through and could not discover any trace of either, because they are not to be found in the Holy Scriptures.

Now if you will read the passages I have given here, you will see that grown up people were baptised and not little children who could not understand (Acts viii. 12 ; ix. 18 ; xviii. 8 ; xxii. 16 ; ii. 38). For the command Jesus gave to His disciples before leaving them was that they should preach the Gospel and so make disciples or learners, and when all such believed the things that they had been taught they were to be baptised. (Matt. xxviii. 29).

The Acts of the Apostles shows how faithfully the command of Jesus was followed, and what a number of persons believed and obeyed.

One reason why they kept so strictly to their Master's charge was that baptism is a beautiful symbol of death and resurrection, and there is no resemblance between it and sprinkling.

"We are buried with Christ by baptism into death," said Paul, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also [baptised believers in the Truth] should walk in newness of life." (Rom. vi. 3-4).

“ He that believeth [the Truth] and is baptised shall be saved,” said Jesus (Mark xvi. 16), and “ if ye love Me, keep My commandment,” for “ Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.” (John xv. 14).

In Psalm xlv. 7, it is testified of Jesus “ Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness,” and this is the glorious King Who is coming soon to reign in righteousness over all the earth (Isaiah xxxii. 1) and “ His Name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in Him ” (Psalm lxxii.). “ All nations shall call Him blessed.”

His people also will be “ all righteous ” (Isaiah lxi. 10, 11), for every one will have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and Jesus will confess their names before His Father and write upon them His New Name (Rev. iii. 12), which entitles them to a place in His glorious kingdom, and they will live with Him for ever and ever.

THE TONGUE.

“ The boneless tongue so small and weak,
Can crush and kill,” declared the Greek.
“ The tongue destroys a greater horde,”
The Turk asserts, “ than does the sword.”
The Persian proverb wisely saith :
“ A lengthy tongue, an early death.”
Or sometime takes this form instead,
“ Don’t let your tongue cut off your head.”
“ The tongue can speak a word, whose speed,”
Says the Chinese, “ Outstrips the steed.”
While Arab sages this impart,
“ The tongue’s great storehouse is the heart,”
From Hebrew wit the maxim sprung,
“ Though feet should slip, ne’er let the tongue.”
The sacred writer crowns the whole,
Who keeps his tongue, doth keep his soul.

Realise the good within you and get it out.
Don’t be a “ used-to-be ” or “ going-to-be,” but an “ am-now.”
What ripens fast does not last ; soon ripe, soon rotten.
Knowledge advances by steps, not by leaps and bounds.



“THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.”

(Luke xxii. 19).

(Sent to a young Sister after Immersion).

Lord, on this happy First-Day Morn,
 I rise to think of Thee,
 Oh may the memory of its dawn
 Be ever dear to me.
 For all Thy great and wondrous love,
 What can I render Thee?
 The Cup of Blessing I will take,
 In love prepared for me.

Of't as upon Thy table spread
 The symbols there I see,
 I'll think of Thee, my glorious Head,
 And nearer draw to Thee.
 And as with joy I onward go,
 Striving to faithful be,
 Help me, in measure, Lord, to know,
 How much I owe to Thee.

For all Thy precious gifts of grace
 I would truly thankful be,
 And in my daily walk through life,
 Show forth my love to Thee.
 When e'er I suffer pain or loss,
 Lonely or grieved I be,
 I'll think of Thee and of Thy cross,
 And bear mine patiently.

In all my joys, however great,
 My chiefest joy shall be,
 That Thou art mine, oh gracious Lord,
 And I belong to Thee.
 And when Thou sittest on Thy throne
 In power and majesty,
 Wilt Thou Thy humble servant own
 And let me dwell with Thee?

WORKS.

(SEARCH TEXTS.)

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You will see by the title of this letter that it is intended to follow two others, the first about our "*Thoughts*" and the second "*Words*." But perhaps you are thinking this will be a very uninteresting subject, as you are not particularly fond of work. You cannot see any good in it, and wish you could have just a jolly time as you call it, and do as you please. If so, I trust this letter will help you to change your minds, so I will ask you to be patient and read it through.

Before we consider works in general, we will have a little talk together about work itself.

It is quite certain that God never intended any of His creatures to be idle. When He made man and placed him in that beautiful garden of Eden, which means, delight, He gave him some work to do. Adam could not spend all the time idly strolling about among the fair flowers, leafy trees and pleasant fruit.

In Gen. ii. 15, we read, "And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." God made him also ruler or lord over all the animals, birds and fishes, so you see it was a very great work.

If you have some pet rabbits or mice to feed, and a little garden of your own to keep and cultivate, you will readily understand what an important work Adam had been commanded to perform, for no doubt you are aware that such things require much care and attention.

Adam must have taken great pleasure in his work and felt very happy, and often those beautiful angels, called "Morning Stars" and "Sons of God" in Job 38, who sang together for joy when all these wonderful things were created, would come and talk with him.

Someone has said, and rightly too, that the nobility of life is in work.

One day, not very long ago, you were born into the world a little helpless creature, entirely dependent upon the love and kindness of your parents, and under their protection. Day by day, you grew a little bigger and soon began to look around and observe what was going on.

You noticed that everybody was doing something, and that "something" they called "work." Then your own baby fingers, guided by an active little brain, unconsciously obeyed that law implanted in your very nature, and you began to run about and

gather pebbles from the garden path to fill your tiny waggon, hammer nails into the door-posts, pull up some of the choicest flowers in father's garden (much to his dismay) or cut pieces out of the best covers, because curiously enough you must work like everybody else, for you soon learned the way to be happy.

I want you to get this fact well into your minds. Work makes people happy. Learn it by heart and do not let it slip. Do you know, the most pitiable individual in the whole world is the person who has nothing to do.

Now I expect the youngest reader of this book can spell work. **WORK.** Well done! Then to make this letter simple and interesting even for the little ones, I will take each letter in the word "work" and give you something to remember about each.

We commence with a capital, of course, and as this is extremely important, our first shall be doubled. Here it is—**WORK WILLINGLY.** Did you notice Harry's face suddenly change colour? What has caused that curled lip and ugly frown? Why, Father asked him to do a little work for him and he did not want to do it. Stay, can that sulky-looking girl, biting the corner of her handkerchief and kicking her foot angrily against the table, be my little friend Lilian? Yes, I am sorry to say it is. Mother bade her watch baby awhile and this is the result.

Oh, what a pity Mr. Grumble and Miss Discontent should have so many followers, when we are so much in need of happy "willing workers."

Boys and girls, will you not turn over a new leaf and resolve that from to-day you will work willingly.

We have some good examples of willing workers in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. In the fourth chapter of Nehemiah it is recorded that, "The people had a mind to work." That is, they had a heart to work. Their heart was engaged in the work and they went about it cheerfully and vigorously. Just as Paul exhorted the faithful ones at Colosse to do—"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men." Col. iii.). King Solomon also said, many years before the Apostle, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccles ix.). In Nehemiah ii. we read, "So they strengthened their hands for the good work" (verse), and after many hindrances and much difficulty, with God's help they accomplished the great work and rejoiced over it. "For God made them rejoice with great joy; and the women and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off" (Ch. xii.). Think of Jesus too, who was known around Nazareth as the carpenter's Son, and Paul, who while preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, worked with his own hands

at a common trade, for he was a tent-maker. And there are many other willing workers, whose names we cannot stay to mention now (1 Cor. iv.).

Then work must not only be done willingly, but "ORDERLY," and here the Bible helps us again. "There is a time for every purpose and for every work" says the wise king (Eccles. iii.). So we must study to do the right thing at the right time. Have you a place for everything and put everything in its place? Do not read your Bible when you should be preparing home lessons, or weed your garden when you should be on your way to school. All are quite necessary and proper in their place. How often our elders have to overlook some good work because it has been done at the wrong time, and then it displeases rather than gives them pleasure. "Let all things be done decently, that is, properly and in order." (1 Cor. xiv. 40). Always finish one thing before commencing another. "One thing at a time and that done well, is a very good rule as many can tell."

Depend upon it, the orderly boys and girls are the happiest, for they know where to find what they need, because they have formed the habit of returning things to their proper places ready for use. This saves time and trouble, and therefore gives more time for leisure.

Such boys and girls go right away to work and get their tasks finished, while others are considering what to do first or are searching hopelessly about for the necessary materials which have been pushed into some forgotten corner when last used.

Untidy, careless children usually grow up dilatory and thoughtless men and women, so I would repeat—Be Orderly.

Work too must be done "REGULARLY." Do not work by "fits and starts," as we sometimes say. These sort of people seldom accomplish much good. They are over-busy one day and extremely lazy and indifferent for several days following. Then up again and to work, and should you venture a word with them, you find they are so dreadfully hard-worked that it irritates them exceedingly to give you a civil answer.

All this is avoided by working regularly. The grace of promptitude and regularity may be cultivated just in the same manner as we may learn to be true and sincere in our thoughts and words.

Every day let us endeavour to do our duty faithfully, for this is the secret of real happiness. Remember life is a great bundle of little things, and to do these faithfully is a very great thing. By and by, we hope to hear our dear Lord and Master say, "Well, done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of your Lord" (Matt. xxv.).

Then, lastly, our work must be of the "right KIND," for if we are to work with all our might, putting our hearts and minds into it, certainly it should be something worth doing.

There are many "kinds" of work mentioned in the Bible, from the humblest daily task to that which is often considered more particularly work for God.

Good works and bad works are all recorded here for our learning, so that we may love the good and hate the evil. I will tell you the chapters in which some of these occur and leave you to find the verses and put them neatly in the little spaces.

We will take first the kind of works and workers to be avoided. In Col. i. we read of some who were once enemies to God, in their minds by "wicked works" (v.). They had a mind to work, but like Saul of Tarsus and others who persecuted the Church of God, their works were evil and had they continued in them, would have ended in their destruction, for it is written, "All the wicked shall God destroy" (Psa. cxlv.), and, "All that do wickedly shall be as stubble" (Mal. iv.).

Speaking of the rebellious children of Israel, God says through the prophet Isaiah, "They are . . . evil doers, children that are corrupters" (Isa. i.). This was a fearful character to bear, and all the more shameful because they knew better, and when Jesus came to be the Light of the world, these evil doers were again condemned, for they still "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John iii.), and the greatest of all their evil works was to reject and crucify the Lord Jesus, their King.

The leaders of the people in our Lord's time, we are told, "Did all their works to be seen of men" (Matt. xxiii.). Jesus said, "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." We might class these among the conceited workers. Later we find the apostle Paul writing to the Christians at Philippi, warning them of "evil doers" (Phil. iii.), and there were some unfaithful persons at Corinth also, whom he calls "deceitful workers" (2 Cor. xi.). In Psalm ci. we read, "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house" (v.). Then there are those who work mischief, plotting against the righteous, planning it all as they rest upon their beds, and the indolent, slothful workers, like the servant in the parable (Matt. xxv.). Solomon says that, "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether . . . good . . . or evil" (Eccles. xii.), and these "workers of iniquity" are all to fall and not be able to arise" (Psa. xxxvi.). Some works the Apostle mentions in Heb. vi. as "dead works," that is, useless, unprofitable, the meaning of which you will understand better when you are older.

Now let us contrast these "unfruitful works of darkness" with which God's dear children should have no fellowship (Eph. v.), with all those good works that God has prepared for us to engage in (Col. i.).

It is not always easy to do good and especially to be good, but if we have resolved like the psalmist, "I will take no wicked thing in hand," then God will help us if we look to Him. You remember how Jesus once compared a good man to a good tree that brings forth good fruit. If you will read Matt. vii. 16-23, I think you will realise how important it is that our works should be of the right kind.

What we say and do is the outcome of what we are. Like Mary of Bethany, who loved to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His words, we should take time to be holy, and grow in grace, by reading our Bible and quietly thinking over its glorious lessons, for these Holy Scriptures are given for our learning . . . and are able to furnish us unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii.). We shall then go about our duties with a smiling face and have a kind word for those around us, and "A heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathise." God does not wish us to be over anxious about the things of this present life. Do not be a busy Martha, careful and troubled about many things and neglect the one thing needful (Luke x.), or like the man who spent all his time getting rich and building larger barns to store his wealth, and then had to die without any hope of a future life. And yet,

There's a work for me and a work for you,
Something for each of us now to do.

And we need not wait to accomplish some great work but do the thing that lies nearest, faithfully and well, for it is this that tells most.

You may only be a little maid like the one who waited on Naaman's wife (2 Kings v.), or just a small boy whose work is as humble as that of the little lad who accompanied Jonathan into the field and at his bidding ran to find the lost arrows, gather them up and bring them to his master (1 Sam. xx.), but if you do your very best God will be pleased with you. Even in your own homes and among your friends, you may be like Phoebe, "a succourer of many" (Rom. xvi.), or as Samuel, you may help and comfort some dear aged servant of God.

Remember, boys, Samuel began his great life-work in the service of God by lighting the lamps in the Temple. Do you mind that Bibles and hymn books are carefully collected after use in your Sunday School and the room left tidy and free from papers? so that the place where God's name is recorded may be honoured? I am very fond of a hymn, the third and fourth verses of which read:—

There are small crosses I may take, small burdens I may bear,
Small acts of faith and deeds of love, small sorrows I may share;
And little bits of work for Thee, I may do everywhere.

I ask Thee, Lord, to give me grace my little place to fill,
That I may ever walk with Thee, and ever do Thy will,
And in each duty great or small, may I be faithful still.

All our work must spring from a right motive. It is well for us to ask ourselves often if this or that work is good and pleasing to God. It was with confidence that Nehemiah could say, "I am doing a great work." The quality of the work made it great, and he was quite satisfied that it was a good work. All work is great that comes in the path of duty, and like Nehemiah we should allow no one to turn us aside or prevent us from doing our work faithfully.

"Why should the work cease?" he enquires. It is cowardly indeed to give up a good work because some one may scoff or try to hinder us. Let us rather take a firm stand and overcome all difficulties by being strong in faith and earnest in prayer (Neh. vi.).

"Be strong . . . and work, for I am with you," saith the Lord, is one of the many beautiful promises to be found in the Bible, and we have the sweet consolation that God will not forget our work and our labour of love (Heb. vi.), but when the time comes for every man's work to be tried, to see if it has been of the right kind, then will be the reward (1 Cor. iii.), for, "The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels, and then shall He reward every man according to his work" (Matt. xvi.). And now, dear boys and girls, I hope you have made up your minds that work is a right, noble, and good thing for all. There is a great work before each one who desires to stand approved of God in the end, so let us be up and doing, "for the night cometh when no man can work" (John ix.). There are duties binding upon all. Use the ability God has given you. Exercise your intellects and your hands in the right direction. If you have only one talent, use it well, it must not lie dormant, indeed it must not, for those who have a little entrusted to them are most in danger of neglecting, instead of increasing the precious gift.

Work with an object in view. There is knowledge to be acquired, and a character to be built up. Friends to be considered, a God in heaven to love and honour, and a perfect Master to serve and obey. All this is the work of a life-time, so begin at once. Work willingly, orderly and regularly—Work heartily, diligently, and faithfully, and if your work be of the right kind the reward will be sure. When you come to the end of life's journey as you now come to the end of this book you will hear our Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

WORK FOR THE NIGHT IS COMING.

Work for the night is coming,
 Work through the morning hours,
 Work while the dew is sparkling,
 Work 'mid the springing flowers ;
 Work when the day grows brighter,
 Work in the glowing sun,
 Work for the night is coming,
 When our work is done.

Work for the night is coming,
 Work through the sunny noon ;
 Fill brightest hours with labour,
 Rest comes sure and soon.
 Give every passing minute,
 Something to keep in store ;
 Work for the night is coming,
 When all work is o'er.

Work for the night is coming,
 Under the sunset skies,
 While their bright tints are glowing ;
 Work for daylight flies ;
 Work till the last beam fadeth,
 Fadeth to shine no more ;
 Work while the night is darkening
 Then all work is o'er.

WORKING FOR JESUS.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus !
 In this life's little day ;
 To spread around the joyful news,
 As those forgiven may ;
 To tell His loving kindness,
 His promises so true,
 To urge the young that they may come
 And trust this Saviour too.

'Tis sweet to work for Jesus !
 Oh ! weary not of this,
 But onward press with cheerfulness
 Tho' rough the pathway is.
 Hold on—unmoved and patient,
 Till all the work is done,
 Soon you shall stand at His right hand
 And serve before the throne.



LABOUR.

O say why should the rich man boast ?
 And why the poor man mourn ?
 Seeing unto one common end
 All in the world are borne.

And no one liveth to himself,
 Though some the truth may spurn ;
 Nothing we brought unto this earth,
 With nothing shall we return.

And, what if fame and wealth some gain,
 And sumptuous be their board ;
 One labours hard, then falls, and lo !
 Another claims his hoard.

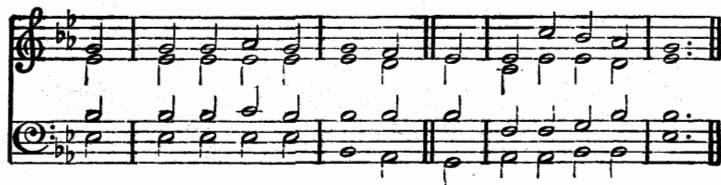
What profit is there then in work ?
 Is honest labour vain ?
 Should we our daily duties shirk,
 And poor always remain ?

Nay, nay, O man, 'tis false, 'tis false,
 Lay all such notions by ;
 Christ wrought with chisel whilst on earth
 And toil doth sanctify.

So we must labour one and all,
 Yet not for earthly pelf ;
 Vain all the riches we may heap,
 If our prime thought is self.

A moment let us pause and think—
 The choice is ours to-day ;
 Riches live only for a while,
 A noble life for aye.

TO OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Aurelia.

Oh little band of workers,
 Who toil in Jesus' name,
 By this dark world despised
 And often put to shame ;
 Come, labour on with courage,
 Ye do not toil in vain,
 Your work will be rewarded
 When Jesus comes again.

The good news of the Kingdom
 Which prayerfully ye teach
 And things concerning Jesus,
 Some trusting hearts must reach.
 What though in tears, unheeded,
 Ye sow the precious seed,
 The God who gives the increase,
 Can make you rich indeed.

The fields are white to harvest,
 The faithful labourers few,
 So then with zeal untiring
 Your work of love pursue.
 Still sow beside all waters,
 At morn, at noon, at eve,
 Ye know not which may prosper,
 Nor which the truth receive.

Oh happy band of workers,
 What joy your Lord to meet
 And bring before His footstool,
 The choicest of the wheat.
 The fruit of all your labours,
 The end of toil and pain,
 Ye shall behold with gladness
 When Jesus comes to reign.

THE HOUSE OF OUR FATHER.

In the home of the Father, there will only be children. Some will be young and some of older growth, but all will be obedient loving children, the older ones will have learned obedience in the school in which Jesus Himself was taught, the school of suffering, for the Word says, "He learned obedience through the things which He suffered." Suffering does not only mean bodily pain, it means much more. It means forgetting one's little self in the duties of a higher service. Those who do not want anything higher, will, either intentionally or otherwise, cause others to suffer. It was just so with Jesus and the rich young man, who when Jesus told him to sell all he had and he would have treasure in Heaven, left Jesus sorrowfully because he was not willing to obey. And Jesus, too, went on His way suffering, because He loved the young man, and was grieved that his love for what was best and highest was not strong enough to enable him to sell his earthly treasures that he might have lasting treasures in the home of his Father.

In the home of the Father there are many little homes, suited for those who have not learned sufficient of the Father and must still be taught further, for in that wonderful home they will all be "taught of God," and the more fully they are able to learn of Him the more they will be able to understand and love the Father, for of the Father, Jesus says, "God alone is good." All in that dear house will learn more and more that everything works together for good to those who love God. The entrance into God's house is through a little narrow door, and then a very straight road that those who seek it will not fail to find it, and at the end of the road they will find the door of the house will be opened by the hand of the lover of little children, the one whose coming the angels longingly looked to see, and inside the door will be seen all that our Father has been hiding in that great house, and Jesus Himself, radiant in light and beauty, as seen on the Holy Mount in the days of His sojourning on earth.

MY TASK.

To love someone more dearly every day,
 To help a wandering child to find its way,
 To ponder o'er a noble thought, and pray,
 And smile when evening falls.

To follow truth as blind men long for light,
 To do my best from dawn of day till night,
 To keep my heart fit for His holy sight,
 And answer when He calls.

Bible Reader's Calendar.



OCTOBER.

NOVEMBER.

DECEMBER.

Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.	Date.	Senior.	Intermed.	Junior.
1	Acts 8	Acts 15	1 Sam. 2	1	Jer. 51	Ps. 38-39	Ps. 26-27	1	Amos 1-2	Ps. 106	Mark 1 29-45
2	" 9	" 16	" 3	2	" 52	" 40-41	" 28-30	2	" 3-4	" 107	" 2
3	" 10	" 17	" 8	3	Lam. 1	" 42-44	" 31	3	" 5	" 108-109	" 3
4	" 11-12	" 18	" 9	4	" 2	" 45-47	" 32-33	4	" 6-7	" 110-113	" 4 1-20
5	" 13	" 19	" 10	5	" 3	" 48-49	" 34	5	" 8-9	" 114-116	" 4 21-41
6	" 14-15	" 20	" 17	6	" 4-5	" 50-51	" 35	6	Obadiah	" 117-118	" 5 1-20
7	" 16-17	" 21	1 Kings 3	7	Daniel 1	" 52-54	" 36	7	Jonah 1-2	" 119 1-56	" 5 21-43
8	" 18-19	" 22	" 15	8	" 2	" 55-56	" 37	8	" 3-4	" 119 57-112	" 6 1-29
9	" 20	" 23	" 17	9	" 3	" 57-58	" 38-39	9	Micah 1-2	" 119 113-176	" 6 30-56
10	" 21-22	" 24	2 Kings 2	10	" 4	" 59-61	" 40	10	" 3-4	John 1	" 7 1-23
11	" 23-24	" 25	" 4	11	" 5	" 62-64	" 41-42	11	" 5-6	" 2	" 7 24-37
12	" 25-26	" 26	" 5	12	" 6	" 65-66	" 43 44	12	" 7	" 3	" 8 1-21
13	" 27	" 27	Daniel 1	13	" 7	" 67-68	" 45-46	12	Nahum 1-2	" 4	" 8 22-38
14	" 28	" 28	" 3	14	" 8	" 69-70	" 47-48	14	" 3	" 5	" 9 1-29
15	Jer. 29	Ps. 1-3	" 5	15	" 9	" 71-72	" 49	15	Hab. 1	" 6	" 9 30-50
16	" 30	" 4-6	" 6	16	" 10	" 73-74	" 50	16	" 2	" 7	" 10 1-27
17	" 31	" 7-8	Ps. 1-2	17	" 11	" 75-77	" 51	17	" 3	" 8	" 10 28-52
18	" 32	" 9-10	" 3-4	18	" 12	" 78	" 52-54	18	Zeph. 1	" 9	" 11 1-19
19	" 33	" 11-14	" 5-6	19	Hos. 1	" 79-80	" 55	19	" 2-3	" 10	" 11 20-38
20	" 34	" 15-17	" 7-8	20	" 2	" 81-83	" 56-57	20	Haggai 1-2	" 11	" 12 1-17
21	" 35	" 18	" 9	21	" 3-4	" 84-85	" 58-59	21	Zech. 1-2	" 12	" 12 18-44
22	" 36	" 19-21	" 10	22	" 5-6	" 86-88	" 60-61	22	" 3-4	" 13	" 13 1-23
23	" 37-38	" 22-23	" 11-13	23	" 7-8	" 89	" 62-63	23	" 5-6	" 14	" 13 24-37
24	" 39-40	" 24-26	" 14-16	24	" 9	" 90-91	" 64-65	24	" 7	" 15	" 14 1-21
25	" 41	" 27-28	" 17	25	" 10	" 92-94	" 66-67	25	" 8	" 16	" 14 22-42
26	" 42-43	" 29-30	" 18 1-24	26	" 11-12	" 95-97	" 68	26	" 9-10	" 17	" 14 43-72
27	" 44-45	" 31	" 18 25-50	27	" 13-14	" 98-100	" 69	27	" 11-12	" 18	" 15 1-21
28	" 46-47	" 32-33	" 19-21	28	Joel 1	" 101-102	" 70-71	28	" 13-14	" 19	" 15 22-47
29	" 48	" 34	" 22	29	" 2	" 103-104	" 72	29	Mal. 1-2	" 20	" 16
30	" 49	" 35-36	" 23-24	30	" 3	" 105	Mark 1 1-28	30	" 3-4	" 21	Acts 1
31	" 50	" 37	" 25					31			