

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

AUGUST 2nd, 1857.

Subject.—PAUL AND BARNABAS PERSECUTED FROM ICONIUM.

For Repeating. For Reading.
Acts xiii. 40-41. | Acts xiv. 1-18.

AUGUST 9th, 1857.

Subject.—MISSIONARY LABOURS OF PAUL AND BARNABAS CONTINUED.

For Repeating. For Reading.
Acts xiv. 16-17. | Acts xiv. 19-28.

THE QUESTIONER.

Mental Pictures from the Bible.

Reader, you need but "search the scriptures,"
To comprehend our Mental Pictures.

[No. 23.]

It is a calm summer's evening, and the plain glows with the retiring heat of an eastern day; in the distance lies a populous city, its buildings bathed in the golden hue of the setting sun. In the foreground of our scene is a picturesque and ancient well, beside which stands an eastern traveler. His whole bearing is of a nature to command admiration and respect; his face, which exhibits by its serenity the inward piety of his heart, is turned upwards in silent and earnest prayer. There are seen coming out from the gates of the city, maidens with pitchers to draw water, and one of them, more comely than the rest, is quickly approaching the well.

QUESTIONS to be answered next week.

57. What one passage in the book of Daniel expressly contradicts a lying assertion of Satan's, addressed to our Lord during the temptation in the wilderness?

58. What four events mentioned in the Old Testament took place on new year's day?

SOLUTION to Picture No. 22.

The prophet Ahijah and the wife of Jeroboam. 1 Kings xiv.

ANSWERS to questions in last.

55. That recorded in Gen. xiv.

56. Abijah. 1 Kings xiv. 1-13.

Shutting Doors.

"Don't look cross, Edward, when I call you back to shut the door; grandmother feels the cold wintry wind; and besides you have got to spend your life shutting doors, and might as well begin now."

"Do forgive me grandmother! I ought to be ashamed to cross you. But what do you mean? I am going to college, and then I am going to be a lawyer."

"Well, admitting all that; I imagine Squire Edward C— will have many doors to shut if he makes much of a man."

"What kind of doors? Do tell me grandmother."

"Sit down a minute, and I will give you a list."

"In the first place, doors of your EARS must be closed against bad language and evil council of the boys and young men you will meet with at school and college, or you will be undone. Let them once get possession of that door, and I would not give much for Edward C—'s future prospects."

"The door of your EYES, too, must be shut against bad books, idle novels, and low, wicked newspapers, or your studies will be neglected, and you will grow up a useless, ignorant man; you will close them sometimes against the fine things exposed for sale in the shop windows, or you will never learn to save your money, or have any left to give away."

"The door of the LIPS will need special care, for they guard an unruly member, which makes great use of the bad company let in at the eyes and ears. This door is very apt to blow open; and if not constantly watched, will let out angry, trifling, or vulgar words. It will backbite, sometimes, worse than the winter's wind, if it is left open too long. I would advise you to keep it shut much of the time, till you have laid up a store of knowledge, or at least until you have something valuable to say."

"The inner door of your HEART must be well shut against temptation, for Conscience, the door-keeper, grows very indifferent if you disregard his call; and sometimes drop asleep at his post, and when you may think you are very well, you are fast going down to ruin."

"If you carefully guard the outside doors of the eyes, ears, and lips, you will keep out many cold blasts of sin, which will get in before you think."

"This 'shutting doors,' you see, Eddy, will be a serious business; one on which your well-doing, in this life and next, depends."

The Family Circle.

Ephraim Holding's Homely Hints to Mothers.

If kindness is to be found on earth it is among women; and if in one heart more than another, in the heart of a mother.

A happy and well-regulated family—and none that are ill-regulated can be happy—is a delightful object to gaze on: the obedience of the servants, the tractability of the children, the neatness and comfort of the dwelling, from top to bottom, what is it all owing to? Why, to the mother, the mistress of the household. She is the light and the life, the eye, the hand, yes, the very soul of the establishment. Come home when he will, the good man meets with a smile, a cheerful habitation, and a clean hearth. The father, as the head of the family, may be the most important abroad; he has to provide the "ways and means!" his are the weightier cares; but within doors the mother is the very centre of the domestic circle.

How anxiously she watches the sleeping infant! How sweetly she instructs the kneeling child in his morning and evening prayer! How forbearingly she endures the pettishness, the waywardness, the wilfulness of youth! How mildly she rebukes and how lovingly she reconciles the angry and quarrelsome. Again, I say, that the mother, is the light, the life, the eye, the hand, and the soul of a well regulated family.

But do not think that Ephraim Holding is heartless enough to become a flatterer! No; he will speak plain truths, for what would he get by deceit? Affectionate, and prudent, and pious mothers, are all, and more than all that I have said; nor have I words wherewith sufficiently to do them honour; but all mothers are not affectionate, and prudent, and pious. Thousands have some of these qualities, but it is the union of them all that makes a mother what she should be. You must let me talk with you freely. I know that you have many and constant solicitudes, and I feel that you are entitled to kindness, respect, and high estimation; but these things will not withhold me from a few friendly remarks.

I have known mistresses who have been high and haughty, requiring from servants more than what is reasonable; wives who have been extravagant, disorderly, and provoking, foolishly striving for the mastery; mothers who have been careless, injudiciously indulgent, and partial.

Mind, if Ephraim Holding plays the archer, if he draws the bow at a venture, he wounds no one willingly. His shaft is not pointed by severity, nor poisoned with ill-nature.

How do you behave to your servants? Are you satisfied with your own conduct towards them? Do you sufficiently consider that you are quite as dependent on them for comfort, as they are on you for support? Are you interested in their welfare, and do you try to mitigate their little troubles? And, more than all, do you look upon them as fellow-creatures, fellow-sinners, and fellow-pilgrims to a better world? Do you try to render them happy on earth, and endeavour to help them on their way to heaven?

How do you behave to your husbands? Are you helpmates to them in the best sense of the word? Do you study their comfort, consult their tastes, clear their cloudy brows, bear with their testy humours, and encourage them in their heavenly course?

How do you behave to your children? Do you watch over your own heart in forming their characters? Do you pull up the loathsome weeds that grow in their bosoms, and plant the lovely flowers that will adorn their lives? Do you check every evil, foster all that is good, and teach them that all they can learn will be worthless, unless they learn to "remember their Creator in the days of their youth?" These are straight-forward questions, but I want you not to answer them to me; answer them to your own hearts.

In my calls the other day I met with some lovely instances of affection, prudence, and piety, in domestic life, and some wherein these qualities are not so conspicuous. Two or three of the latter shall be described—not that I like shadows better than sunshine, but that you may avoid the errors that attracted my attention.

Yet, who am I, that I should dwell for a moment on the infirmities of my fellow-sinners? I, who have as many infirmities in my heart, as I have grey hairs on my head!

I called on Mrs. Brownlow at an unfortunate moment, for she, not knowing that I had entered the house, was rating one of her maids in a very unfeeling way, because the girl was dis-

abled by sickness from doing her work properly. I am afraid Mrs. Brownlow has a lesson or two to learn, that can only be taught her in the school of affliction; but perhaps something had ruffled her temper, and I judge her too harshly.

I had not seen Mrs. Simmons for some time, and it might have been better had I not called just when I did, for, while waiting a minute in the sitting-room, Mr. Simmons left the house, evidently in anger. I heard a few words that passed before he went. "This is always the case," said he, petulantly, "though I particularly requested you this time to attend to it." "Do not make yourself angry about such a trifle," said Mrs. Simmons; "it may be done in a minute." "Trifle as it is," replied Mr. Simmons, "you knew that doing it would add to my comfort, and that neglecting it would give me pain!"

What the neglect might be I knew not; perhaps it was as Mrs. Simmons said, a mere trifle, and perhaps Mr. Simmons is a little withered and hasty; but, however this might be, if it could have been done "in a minute," to say the least of it, it was neither kind nor prudent in Mrs. Simmons to neglect it.

Mrs. Rollins appeared as glad to see me as if I had come from a far country; but somehow, her two children required so much of her attention, to manage them, that it a little interfered with the comfort of my call. First, she had to stroke down their hair, which certainly was rather rueful; then to drag them forward to me. "Why don't you make a bow to the gentleman?" said she; "I am quite ashamed of you. Where have you been, and what have you been doing, to rumple your collars so? Charles, keep your fingers out of your mouth. Robert, hold up your head." Then I was treated with hearing both of them make a vain attempt to repeat some verses, which she assured me they could say very prettily. In my next call I may drop a word or two that may be useful. Had the poor lady been taught to make a bow when a stranger came in, to keep their fingers out of their mouths, to hold up their heads, and to repeat what they learnt correctly, it would not have been necessary to have gone through so much drilling in my presence. Mrs. Rollins seems, however, to be an affectionate parent; and, though I could not admire her management of her children, I did admire the love she manifested for them.

I looked in on Mrs. Horton, too, and sat down to dinner in a plain way; but her son Harry tried my patience a little. Before I had been in the house five minutes, turning round rather suddenly, I caught Harry making a face at me. Now, I like young folks to be full of life and merriment, and thought but little of Harry's prank, though it was by no means approved of; but his indulgent mother fairly tittered again, saying, "That is one of the drollest boys in the world." With such encouragement as this, no wonder that Harry pulled another face at me soon after.

Harry had not been out of the room ten minutes, after dinner, before a noise was heard in the kitchen. While the two maidservants were having their dinner, Harry had half emptied the vinegar cruet in the plate of the one, and pulled off the cap of the other. The girls were, of course, not a little angry; when Mrs. Horton told Harry that she would not have such pranks played with the servants. "But, bless you," said she, turning to me, in Harry's hearing, "he can no more help it than I can help breathing—he is of so comical a disposition." I took an opportunity of pointing out, in as kind a way as I knew how, my mind on such comicality; but I saw that Mrs. Horton was far from being pleased with me. Poor lady, she is rearing a thistle whose points will get stronger and sharper every day. She is stuffing a pillow with thorns, that will, by and by, affect her head and her heart.

Mothers! mothers! you have cares enough with the most tractable children; what a pity it is that your ill-timed indulgence should in any case add to the weight of your solicitude! But, if I go on at this rate you will think Ephraim Holding a spy in the camp, an interloper, a listener, a talker of scandal. No, no; I should hate myself if I deserved such a suspicion. Not willingly would I trespass on the peace of any one: to see a family living in harmony is a delight to me; but if there be one member more than another that I honour, and that I should regret to wound, it is an affectionate, a prudent, and a pious mother.

MIRTH AND CHEERFULNESS.—Mirth is like a flash of lightning that breaks through the gleam of clouds, and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with perpetual serenity.

The Wreck of the Soul.

A storm gathers in the horizon,—the sky is soon overcast with dark and threatening clouds, and the waters begin to roll their waves mountain high. A ship is on the deep. See, the storm begins to beat upon it, and now it dashes with mad fury down into the gulf of waves.

Ship ahoy? There are breakers ahead; but it is of no use, for the storm is completely the master, and on that noble ship plunges.

The tempest at length spends its fury, but where is that once proud vessel! A sad wreck among the breakers. What a dreadful picture! You stand and gaze upon it with feelings of sadness. But what an insignificant wreck is such a thing, compared with the wreck of the soul! Could we stand just by the gate of eternity, and see the countless millions of souls rushing before the driving tempest of God's wrath unto the eternal world of dark despair,—souls that have been wrecked upon the breakers of time,—with what pain should we gaze upon the spectacle! How our hearts would swell with emotion, and how our eyes would run down with tears! A soul big with immortality, capable of highest bliss, yet turned from the presence of God for ever! What a spectacle! The shore of time is strewn with wrecks. We every day see them around us, yet we take no warning from their fate, but quietly submit to the driving tempest. When, at last, we find ourselves among the breakers, then we become conscious of our danger, and strive to extricate ourselves, but alas, it is too late!

Voyager upon life's ocean, there are breakers ahead. A fearful whirlpool is in the distance. Perhaps now the waters may all be calm around,—not a ripple may be seen,—the skies betoken no storm; but, ah, there is a vortex down which your noble ship will plunge, if you keep not away from the fearful whirl. Oh, be wise in time! Trust not to appearances. Seek at once the only sure ark of safety, which shall bear you bravely o'er life's dangerous sea, and bring you triumphant into the haven of eternal rest. Reader, that ark is Christ, only believe on him, and you are safe for time and for eternity.

Spiritual Beings.

Higher orders of beings do not address themselves to our senses. This fact produces unbelief in many as to their existence. But is this philosophical? Is it reasonable? The microscope has revealed to us millions of animalcules that our senses can no more detect than they can a spirit; but do they on that account any the less really exist? Those who lived before the microscope was discovered, had the same grounds of unbelief as to the existence of these animalcules; that we have as to the existence of spirits. And yet, their unbelief would not annihilate the fact. Nor can ours affect the reality of angels and spirits. If we had organs to detect them, we might see all nature pervaded by these higher and more ethereal forms of life. It might in that case be with us as with the young prophet who, when his eyes were opened, saw the mountains covered with horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

ANGELS IN THE BIBLE.

What we have before said has respect simply to the indications of nature and reason in reference to the spiritual universe. How remarkably does divine revelation coincide with these indications! From Genesis to Revelation, we have a history of the doings of God and angels, as well as of men. Not only holy angels, but devils or evil spirits, are actors in the great drama which the Bible opens to our view—hence, nature and revelation alike concur to make us feel that we are surrounded on the one hand by evil spirits tempting us to sin, and on the other hand by good angels ministering to the heirs of salvation.—N. Y. Chron.

Amusements.

"The natural and only safe mode of enjoying amusements is in common. Where one sex, or any one particular class, enjoy their amusements alone, they are sure to run into excess. . . . The division of the human family into man, woman and child, father, mother, brother and sister, is the only conservative principle of society; they act and re-act upon each other like the different seasons upon the earth. Each age and each sex has its peculiar characteristics, that serve to modify and check certain mischievous tendencies in the other sex, and in others of different ages. . . . For one sex to attempt to amuse themselves agreeably and innocently alone, is like trying to make music on a one stringed instrument; it has about it a sameness that is tedious and annoying. . . . The union of the aged with the young, the fair with the manly, in our diversions, brings every source of social improvement and enjoyment within the reach of all."