

## The Sabbath-School.

## INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

First Quarter-Lesson IV.—April 23.

**JOB'S CONFESSION AND RESTORATION.**—Job 42:1-10.  
**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.—James 5:11.

**FIRST ANSWER.** There is pathos and force in the fact that Jehovah spoke to Job at all. Even if Job had not understood a word of the divine remonstrance, the mere assurance that Jehovah was speaking to him would excite sacred emotion, before which all recollection of his misgivings and miseries would be carried away. Job had cried out for God that he might find him. And now he has heard the voice he longed for. We all need a voice direct from heaven. Nature is not enough for us. Nothing but a voice, a revelation from God, his own Son, living before us and teaching us can satisfy our souls. When we hear our Father's voice in Revelation and in Jesus his Son, the dawn has begun to come.

**SECOND ANSWER.**—Vers. 1-3. I know that thou canst do all things. Job's eyes are open at last to perceive the universality both of God's power and wisdom, and all-pervading care in which he is content to take his place, hushing all complaints and trusting where he cannot see. This is the grand outcome of Job's experience. Who is this that hideth counsel? Obscure or makes dark God's plans and dealings. Job quotes this question from Jehovah's address and says, I will now confess that I am the guilty one, for have I uttered that which I understood not. The one thing we need to know, is not the meaning of all our trials and the reason for all God does to us, but that God is our Father, his power limitless, his wisdom perfect, and his love as great as his power. Here we rest as a child in its mother's arms. Here we come close to God in love.

**THIRD ANSWER.**—Vers. 4-6. Hear, I beseech thee. This verse, like the first line of ver. 3, is practically a quotation from God's address to Job in 38:3 and 40:7, when God asked him if he knew enough to judge of God's actions, or to govern the world in a better way. Job seems to say. You asked me to hear; you made demands upon me. The result is, I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear. I thought I knew something about thee by hearsay. But now mine eye seeth thee. By a new and deep experience. Wherefore I abhor myself. I am so small, so ignorant, so unworthy, in comparison with the greatness and purity of God. And repent in dust and ashes. Most expressive symbols of humiliation. It was customary in times of grief, whether in view of sin or from calamity, to sit down in ashes, or on such an occasion the sufferer and the penitent would strew ashes over himself. Job had now become as a little child, and was ready to enter more fully into the kingdom of God. When he listened to his three friends, he knew he was not the monster they depicted him. He was as good as they. But when he saw God, then he felt his unworthiness, and longed for forgiveness and to rest in the love of God.

**FOURTH ANSWER.**—Vers. 7-10. From this point we leave the poetical form, and turn again to simple prose. My wrath is kindled against thee... for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right. Not that they had not said some true things, but their words had misrepresented God. They made God unjust in afflicting Job, by teaching that punishment was the only reason for afflictions. In trying to defend God, they had injured him by injuring his loved children. As my servant Job hath. "My servant" that expression was full of comfort. Not that every word he said was exactly right, any more than that every word his friends said was wrong. But (1) he was right in opposing the teaching that sorrow is always the divine measure of sin. (2) He was right in that by his conduct he had shown that God's children did not serve him for the good things he gave them, but that he could inspire them with a love for himself alone. He had shown the world a true picture of God, and vindicated his honor against the aspersions of Satan. (3) Job felt his weakness and sin, and repented; while his friends seem still to have held proudly their wrong opinions. They were the elder son at home, in the parable, and despised Job as the prodigal. Offer up yourselves a burnt offering. To show that they had been guilty. A proud, self-righteous, overbearing spirit is one of the very worst of sins. They needed atonement and forgiveness. For him will I accept. I will listen to his prayers. By this God testified his approval of Job, and declared that his sufferings were not on account of great but unknown sins, as the friends had charged.

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job. Job's sufferings had been as of one exiled from God, and home, and friends. And now God had brought Job back to home and friends and God. When he prayed for his friends, Job shows the nobility of his character by freely forgiving and praying for those who had said such hard and unjust things against him. His own forgiveness was complete when he forgave the "trespassers of those who trespassed against him."

Observe (1) God blesses us when we pray for our friends. God removes the sadness from his child who goes about comforting the sorrows of others. God blesses the church which is doing good outside of itself. A missionary church, a missionary religion, a one lives and grows and rejoices. (2) Often the best hopes, the prosperity and salvation of men, depend on those whom they reject and persecute.

**FIFTH ANSWER.**—Ver. 10. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. His health was restored; his family was renewed, and he was doubly blessed in them. His property was doubled; and his influence, his good works, his power to lead men to God, vastly increased. This outcome was essential in order to manifest the real truth to the world. God does love to make his people happy. God does not so much reward, as give his blessing, to a righteous life here or hereafter. Heaven, not hell, is the outcome of a true life. It is not said that God rewarded, but blessed Job.

This was given after the discipline had done its work for Job, so that the blessings would continue the growth in righteousness which the discipline had wrought.

## APPLICATIONS.

The truth taught by the Book of Job would help the people of Israel to realize the possibility of a suffering Messiah as described in the 53rd of Isaiah. Jesus suffered, but not for his own sins. His sufferings were no mark of God's displeasure nor of guilt in himself.

Job in some sense was a type of the true Israel, afflicted and oppressed in captivity; and his story gave hope and promise of return and triumph.

Job is a type of God's people in the world and their final victory over all evil.

All those in sorrow may be comforted amid the mysteries of Providence that surround their lives. "God is love," is the motto on the weathercock of a country friend. He was asked if he meant to imply that the love of God was as fickle as the wind. "No," he said, "I mean that whichever way the wind blows God is love."

The Book of Job is a book of consolation for the New Testament Church. From it we learn that we have not only to fight with flesh and blood, but with the prince of this world, and to accomplish our part in the conquest of evil, to which, from the first promise onward, the history of the world tends.

We are taught that trouble and affliction do not prove God's displeasure.

We are taught, as Jesus taught by the blind man in John 9:1-3, that there are sufferings whose end is for the glory of God in ways we cannot understand.

Whoever has learned to see in suffering a proof of God's love, and beyond the darkness of death a land of light, in which all wrongs shall be redressed, and all virtue meet its due reward, a land, in fine, in which the varied discipline of this world shall issue in a life conformed to its fair and high ideal, he has a solution of the great problem in which he may rest and rejoice.

## W. C. T. Union.

OUR MOTTO.—If God be for us, who can be against us.

## Will Become Law.

We are glad to be able to record that the Scientific Temperance Instruction bill passed the legislature, after an interesting discussion, by a unanimous vote.

## Prohibition and Christian Temperance.

A friend and sympathizer of the W. C. T. U. recently remarked in our hearing that inasmuch as the aim of our organization was not temperance but total prohibition he thought its present name did not properly belong to it.

This surprised and disappointed us for we had reason to suppose that our friend better understood the aims and purposes of the W. C. T. U.

It is quite likely that there exists a large class of people who imagine that to glorify prohibition and enjoy it forever is the chief aim of the W. C. T. U. woman, and that when the manufacture and sale of intoxicants is forbidden by national law her occupation will be gone. We wish that a greater number of persons, especially those within our

own ranks, might grasp more fully the breadth and comprehensiveness of W. C. T. U. purpose. We regard prohibition as only a milestone on the road to the final goal. It is but a means to an end, that end being as our name truly implies, Christian temperance.

Our leaders, like all good generals, concentrate their forces upon the necessities of the hour. They are moving forward on the prohibition line to-day because that means the storming of those fortifications which the enemy is bending all its energies to have and to hold.

Law is a stronghold coveted alike by the temperance hosts and by the liquor forces. It has become one of the most powerful intrenchments of the rum power; therefore the W. C. T. U., while not neglecting to lay siege to all important outposts, makes it a strategic point.

The tactics of the white ribbon army are eminently scientific and orderly. How can they be otherwise when they are of the Lord of Hosts himself? In the divine plan for the evolution of the human race we find the orderly sequence to be, first, the thunders of Sinai, afterward the Sermon on the Mount; first the tables of stone, afterward, the law written in the heart; first Moses, afterward Christ. Following this precedent we must have, first, "thou shalt not" to the liquor evil, then gospel liberty; first prohibition, then Christian temperance.

With regard to the liquor question the world at large is as yet in the Mosaic period of its development. As yet it needs the stern discipline of external law to awaken and educate its moral and spiritual sense.

Legal prohibition is the school-master that shall lead it slowly but surely up to the standard of true Christian temperance. It is the evolutionizer and the revolutionizer which shall usher in that higher dispensation when—as our Chief said in her address to the white-ribboners at Denver—"no law shall be needed as a dyke to protect humanity against the inroads of the sea of intoxicating drink."

But how does prohibition aid in producing that "consensus of opinion" which shall write the law in the hearts of the people and thus bring about a Christian temperance? In just the same way as the Mosaic law prepared the way for the gospel era. It is an educative force, and that in more senses than one. The liquor traffic stands to-day the greatest impediment to human progress. If Great Britain and America, the leading nations of the modern world, can advance so rapidly in spite of it, what would not be possible to them if this tremendous obstacle were removed?

Fifty years of real prohibition would result in a greater bound forward on all lines than is possible in a cycle of rum rule. It would be found that not only would the law concerning the liquor evil be well-nigh universally written in the hearts of men, but that laws concerning all phases of vice and crime would necessarily and naturally be writing themselves there also.

The W. C. T. U. recognizes the mission of statutory law. It also recognizes its limitations. Its aim is—borrowing the Pauline interpretation of divine purpose—to bring man into bondage to the law that he may eventually through the law attain that better state, the climax of all Christian culture and philosophy—freedom from the law. Law has fulfilled its mission when man no longer has any desire to commit the sin or error which it prohibits. He is then no longer under the law, but under grace.

If he who thinks our organization is misnamed will familiarize himself with the work of its forty-three different departments, he will become convinced that prohibition—excellent vantage ground though it may be—is not its objective point. He will begin to realize something of the heights and depths of the possibilities which lie beyond the gates of external law, and toward which the W. C. T. U. is leading humanity.

The hand of God was in the organizing of the white-ribbon army; the hand of God was in its naming. That little band of consecrated women twenty years ago banded better than they knew when they formulated the gloriously inclusive name—Woman's Christian Temperance Union.—Union Signal.

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 Express from Chicago, Quebec and Montreal (Monday excepted).....10.25  
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Railway Office, Moncton, N. B., 29th June, 1892.

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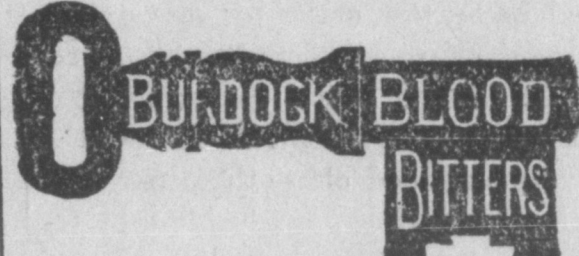
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