

The Sunday-School.

THIRD QUARTER.
LESSON VI.—Aug. 7.

GOD TAKING CARE OF ELIJAH.

1 Kings 17: 1-16.

THE LESSON.—The entire chapter, completing the story of the widow and her son. There is no parallel in Chronicles.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He careth for you.—1 Pet. 5: 7.

HISTORICAL SETTING.—Time. Ahab's reign extended from B.C. 918 to B.C. 877 (common chronology), or B.C. 876-822 (revised chronology). Sir George Grove thinks that Elijah appeared in Ahab's tenth year and prophesied sixteen to eighteen years.

Place.—Samaria, Ahab's capital. The brook Cherith, emptying into the Jordan probably from the west. Zarephath, a town between Tyre and Zidon.

Rulers.—Ahab, king of Israel, Jezebel, his queen. Asa, king of Judah. Benhadad II., king of Syria. Mesha, king of Moab. Ethbaal, (Ithobal), king of Tyre and Zidon.

Place in the History.—The introduction of Phœnician idolatry under the patronage of Ahab and Jezebel leads to a public protest from Elijah, and Jehovah's imposition of a great drought as punishment.

LEARN BY HEART.—Vs. 13, 14; Matt. 10: 41, 42; Luke 12: 24; Psa. 23.

ELIJAH AND THE RAVENS.—Vs. 1-7. And Elijah the Tishbite. His name means Jehovah is God. Who was of the inhabitants of Gilead. Though a native of Galilee, had become a citizen of Gilead. Gilead lay east of the Jordan. It was wild and rugged. Its inhabitants were the Highlanders of Palestine. The young prophet must have mediated long on the glorious past of his country, and must have been filled with horror as tidings came of the introduction of rankest heathenism. Indignation burned within him, till it suddenly burst forth upon the king and his court.

The Prophet's Message.—Elijah appeared before Ahab, and in few, terrible words, announced a long and distressing drought. As the Lord God of Israel liveth . . . there shall not be dew or rain. Dwellers in a more humid clime can hardly understand the terrors of the threatened visitation. The springs are dried up, the brooks and rivers become beds of stone, the trees wither, the grass vanishes. But according to my word. As God shall proclaim through me.

Why Were the Drought and Famine Sent?

1. Because rulers and people were so wicked that only a terrible object lesson would move them from their sins.

2. Because, bad as the nation was, severe punishment might lead to repentance and forgiveness.

3. Because Baal, whose worship was at the bottom of the nation's wickedness, was regarded primarily as the god of agriculture and fertility, so that Elijah's curse was a direct challenge to him from Jehovah.

4. Because the three and a half years of drought and famine prepared the nation for Elijah's reform as nothing less terrible could prepare them.

Elijah at Cherith.—Get thee hence,

from Ahab's court. Longer parley would be useless. Turn thee eastward. Toward the Jordan and Gilead, his own country. Hide thyself. Not in cowardice but that his prophecy might have time to fulfil itself. The brook (the torrent course or wady) Cherith, whose location is unknown, except that it was before Jordan, i.e. on the eastern side. Drink of the brook, where water would linger longest. I have commanded the ravens to feed thee. The raven is one of the commonest birds of Palestine. It is a solitary bird, living in the wildest district that it can find. Elijah was hiding in such a region. It is probably the most highly developed of all birds, quick-sighted, sagacious, and bold. . . . It measures 26 inches in length, and has an expanse of wing considerably exceeding a yard.

A missionary in India, writing in *The Sunday School Times*, declares it to be his firm conviction that the ravens took the food for Elijah from the bazaars of Jerusalem or Jericho. God worked the miracle along the lines of nature.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH.—Vs. 8-16. Probably Elijah remained at Cherith less than a year before the brook dried up. Ahab was searching everywhere for him, and it would have been torture or death for Elijah if he had been found. Get thee to Zarephath. The name points to furnaces or workshops for the refining of metal. So he arose and went to Zarephath. Elijah has been called, from this event, the first Apostle to the Gentiles. Gate of the city. It must have been a considerable town. A widow gathering sticks. For her fire. Fetch me . . . a little water. His first need after his long walk. The gift of water to the thirsty is regarded as a sacred duty in the East. As the Lord thy God liveth. She recognized Elijah as an Israelite. I have not a cake. The common bread used is a flat cake of unleavened dough, no thicker than a pancake, ten or twelve inches in diameter. Barrel. An earthen jar. And a little oil. Olive oil, eaten with bread as we eat butter. A cruse. A bottle, earthenware. Two sticks. A few. Dress it. Prepare it for eating. That we may eat it, and die. It was her last food. Make me thereof a little cake first. This request was enforced by the solemn promise which followed, and was a test of her faith. For thus saith the Lord, the barrel of meal shall not waste. Receiving a prophet in the name of a prophet, she was to receive also a prophet's reward. Did eat many days. Between two and three years.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW'S SON.—1 Kings 17: 17-24. The widow's faith was still further rewarded during Elijah's stay. One day her young son sickened and died. In the bitterness of her grief she cried out upon the prophet. Elijah carried the lad to his own upper chamber, imploring God for his life. And God heard him. the soul returned to the boy's body, and he was delivered to his rejoicing mother, who testified eagerly her faith in the prophet as a man of God, and her faith in the divine messages he uttered.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

The three events we have studied are all of them conspicuous illustrations of God's care for his children.

1. God cares for us as we obey Him. Notice how prompt was Elijah's obedience. Our obedience is the only bridge over which God can send us blessings.

2. God cares for us in danger, as he cared for Elijah at the brook Cherith. Satan is angrily pursuing us, as Ahab pursued Elijah, but God "will with the temptation also make a way to escape."

3. God cares for us in perplexity. He will guide us as really as the guided Elijah to Cherith and to the widow at Zarephath.

4. God cares for us in little things, as in the sending of the widow to pick up sticks just at that time.

5. God cares for us as we care for others. Elijah proved this in his care for his country, and the widow in her care for Elijah.

6. God cares for us in sickness and death. He will not always work for us and our loved ones the miracle of Zarephath, though many a life has been brought back by prayer from the brink of death; but he will do the best; he will instruct the physician, add power to the medicine, invigorate the wasted body, or if death is best, his love will illuminate even the valley of the shadow.

A TEACHER'S DREAM.

Week by week I taught my pupils,
Taught them of the way of truth;
And they gave themselves to Jesus
In the early day of youth.
I, one Sabbath evening, dreaming,
Thought my class and I were gone;
And I heard them far above me
Singing in that dear old Tune—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save from wrath and make me pure."

Though my soul had not found refuge,
As had found my little flock,
Yet with heart and prayer I sang it,
Seeking shelter in the rock.
Then I thought I saw them going,
Rising higher in their flight,
And I heard them singing sweeter
Of that land forever bright—
"There's a land that is fairer than
day,
And by faith we can see it afar,
For the Father waits over the way,
To prepare us a dwelling place
there."

And my heart was filled with sadness,
For that land was not my home;
They had given themselves to Jesus,
I had yet refused to come.
Now before them could my vision
See that land of light above,
Shining in its radiant glory,
And I heard their song of love—
"Beautiful Zion, built above,
Beautiful city that I love,
Beautiful gates of pearly white,
Beautiful temple, God its light,
He who was slain on Calvary
Opens those pearly gates to me."

Then their feet pressed in the gateway,
And the lambs were safe in fold;
But their earthly shepherd dared not
Press her feet on streets of gold.
Then, with heart so hopeless, stood I,
Wondering if for me they'd wait,
But I heard their song of triumph
As I stood without the gate—
"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast,
There by his love o'ershadowed,
Sweetly my soul shall rest,"

Ayer's

Falling hair means weak hair.
Then strengthen your hair;
feed it with the only hair food,
Ayer's Hair Vigor. It checks
falling hair, makes the hair

Hair Vigor

grow, completely cures dan-
druff. And it always restores
color to gray hair, all the rich,
dark color of early life.

"My hair was falling out badly and I was
afraid I would lose it all. Then I tried Ayer's
Hair Vigor. It quickly stopped the falling and
made my hair all I could wish it to be."
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\$1.00 a bottle. J. C. AYER & CO., Lowell, Mass.
All druggists.

for
Falling Hair

They were safe, and I was singing
With them, though without the gate;
When I heard their voices pleading;
"Master, she without doth wait."
And a voice of wondrous sweetness
Said: "I heard you, little flock,
While on earth. She'll soon be with
you,
Now she trusteth in the Rock."

Then there rang throughout the city
Such a song I never heard,
Angels echoing back the chorus
"One more saved through Christ, the
Lord."
In the thrill of joys past telling,
My glad voice the silence broke,
For the pearly gates stood open—
When, alas, the dream, I awoke.

**Good Digestion Should Wait on Ap-
petite.**—To have the stomach well is to
have the nervous system well. Very
delicate are the digestive organs. In
some so sensitive are they that atmos-
pheric changes affect them. When they
become disarranged no better regulator
is procurable than Parmelee's Vegetable
Pills. They will assist the digestion so
that the hearty eater will suffer no in-
convenience and will derive all the ben-
efits of his food.

Be not forward to assign reasons to
those who have no right to ask.

A skin that burns with eczema, and is
covered with eruptions that discharge
a thin fluid, may be made smooth and
slightly with Weaver's Cerate. But this
external remedy should be used in con-
junction with Weaver's Syrup.

Think nothing in conduct unimport-
ant or indifferent.

The TOILET
IS INCOMPLETE WITHOUT
POND'S EXTRACT

RELIEVES CHAFING, ITCHING OR IRRITATION. COOLS, COMFORTS AND HEALS
THE SKIN, AFTER SHAVING.

Avoid dangerous, irritating Witch Hazel
preparations represented to be "the same as"
Pond's Extract, which easily sores and often
contains "wood alcohol," a deadly poison.