Sabbath School Department.

March that

[From the Christian Helper.]

International Bible Lessons. Lesson XII. March 23. THE ALL-SEEING GOD.

Psalm 139: 1-12. GOLDEN TEXT .- Thou God seest me. - Gen. 16: 13.

Exposition.

V. 1. O God, thou hast searched me and known me. Under the clear and ceaseless scrutiny of obscurity for Him. His eye, everything in us is perfectly seen and known. God knows us, as no human being knows us, and as we certainly do not know ourselves. He knows the remote springs of all our actions. Our souls, in their entire structure, and with all their movements, lie naked and open before His eyes.

V. 2. Down-sitting . . . up-rising. Whether at rest or in motion; in every state, every posture, we are not forgotten, but God still observes us. Afar off. This is generally supposed to mean, that when thoughts are just dawning in our minds, before they have assumed a definite form, or approached utterance, even then God knows them.

"My thoughts, before they are my own, Are to my God distinctly known, He knows the words I mean to speak Ere from my op'ning lips they break."—W.

V. 3. Compassest, or, winnowest, that is, distinguished most exactly, separating, in the judgment of my actions, right from wrong, most accurately. Path . . . lying down. The public and the private life, that which is done before the eyes of men, and that which is done in secret, God knows all. When the eye of man no longer rests upon us we are still beneath the eternal gaze. The unsleeping eye beholds us when we close our eyes and surrender ourselves to sleep. Acquainted, quite familiar with our ways. Even those things we would fain hide. and sometimes succeed, with painful effort, in hiding from our fellow-men, God knows. Our darkest secret, our crookedest ways, One, at least, is acquainted with. And, also, those better thoughts and intentions wherein the world may have misjudged us, He knows, and judges rightly. Men censure sometimes where God approves.

V. 4. Not a word. Thoughts, deeds, words all are known to God. Could we always remember the listening ear into which enters our every word, we would, perhaps, not utter so many rash, uncharitable, or foolish words. We might weigh our words better before we uttered them. We should remember, however, that not even the thought of God's presence will cause good words and deeds to flow from the natural heart. It is only in the renewed heart that the consciousness of His presence in an efficacious means to produce right living.

me in, so that whichever way I turn, whether love. He went to the prison where the man this or that, I can only go where and so far as was that was to be hung, a few days before the Thou dost permit." Whichever way we turn, time fixed for the execution. He said to the we face God. Laid thine hand upon me. God is sheriff, I wish you would take me to his cell. not to us simply a spectator. We are under His do not tell him who I am.' He went in, and power. He has "hedged us in." Job 3 23 But for that restraining power, so irksome at times to the natural will, we should soon rush Son into the world to save sinners. He read into utter destruction. as bhors

when we remember the immensity of God's created works, amid which our little world floats-a tiny speck, and then when we remember the other side of nature, the minute creation, the tiny organisms, compared with which man is "a colossus, a world, a universe," as Pascal says, what wonderful suggestions of His omniscience are given to us! His tender mercies are over all these His works. Not a sparrow falls to the ground, not a hair of your head. perfectly, as though it were the sole study of His eye. Verily, such knowledge is high, we cannot attain unto itsili . Midw

V. 7. Whither shall I go. Not only does the eye of God penetrate all things, but all things are forever in His presence. The psalmist is you; He does not want you to perish and be not seeking a place of escape. He is simply ex- lost. He came to give you a pardon. Do you pressing his sense of the impossibility of finding a single spot where God is not. The child of God loves to be with his Father. That is his home. He may, like Jonah, wander from it, and even seek to hide himself from God for a time, but like Jonah, it will surely be to God he will turn when reduced to an extremity. He will cry unto the Lord by reason of his affliction.

V. 8. Hell, that is, the grave, sheel. The dea is that of antithesis to heaven in the matter of locality-heaven, in the heights above; hell, sheol, in the bowels of the earth. Of ourse, there were certain conditions associated with these localities, but perhaps no reference to these conditions is intended. Were any reference intended, however, the same idea would still be expressed: one can never find himself in back in safety. How much more responsible is such a place or state that God cannot reach him.

V. 9. The wings of the morning. Could I travel with the swiftness of light, and fly farther fruit of his sermons, his eye must be upon them. than the limits of the habitable earth, the Creator of light would meet me wheresoever

my journey might end. V. 10. Thy hand lead me. The psalmist derives comfort, not dread, from the thought of God's continual presence with him. In all his goings, in all places where he might be, God would be there to lead him, and to hold him. Guidance and protection he was sure of, even if he sojourned on the outer verge of creation, for even there, God, his God resided and reigned.

and yet the records of the night are all inscribed his hands."

in the book of God's remembrance clearly and luminously. And when darkness descends on the earth, many a timorous child lies in fear, as though isolated from all who could help or protect. But God sees His children through it al!, and they are safe beneath His eye, for the night shall be light about them.

THE

V. 12. Both alike. God has created the light. His omniscience is independent of it. He does not require the sun to shine as a torch to show Him His path. Were the sun, and meon and stars extinguished, His ways would not be darkened. God is light, and there is no

Remarks.

1. To the Christian the omniscience of God is a source of comfort and delight. If it were BLACK LUSTRES, 121/2, 15, 18, 20, 22 and 25 possible for the Christian to wander into a place, where the loving and protecting eye of God could not follow, he would find that a dark and dreadful place. He would desire never to enter it. He wishes to sun himself always in the smile of God. But if there were such a place where a man might go, and be hidden from God, many a sinner would flee thither. To such a sinner, the omniscience of God means only an awful scrutiny from an enemy's eye, which may paralyze his spirit with fear, but can bring him no joy.

2. We like to preserve outward decorum and have a good reputation with our friends and neighbours; but, what the Christian should desire, is that purity of heart, that integrity of character, which will please his Master.

3. The presence of this Great Witness of all things adds solemnity to the merest trifles of life. It exalts all our deeds above the realm of littleness to consider that One is beside us, who is grieved or pleased, according to the spirit in which we do our duties, whether the duty itself appears to us great or small.

4. Let us cultivate the sense of God's presence. Let us try to maintain that relation to God which will make His presence a great joy and support to us. We shall not then feel that He is an oppressive taskmaster always goading us on to distasteful duty. Alas! that any should so regard His presence. But we shall feel that we have a stimulus, a support, an encouragement in Him, and then, even when we sin, we shall come to Him and say, "Search me, try me." The physician must probe the wound, but it is that he may heal it. When God's children sin, it is better for them to fall into God's hands to be dealt with than into any other, for His treatment is merciful and healing.

The Governor in the Cell.

The following incident is related by Mr. Moody: "When Mr. Pollock was Governor of Pennsylvania, there was a man whose deathwarrant he had signed. He felt that he could not let him die, being a Christian man himself, V. 5. Beset me, that is, "enclosed" or "shut without going down to tell him of a Saviour's talked and prayed with the man. He told him of Christ and heaven; how God had sent His him some portions of the Word of God, and got V. 6. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. down and prayed with him, and commended This is the language of admiring awe, not of him to the God of all grace. Some little time fear. The psalmist is lost in rapturous wonder after that, the sheriff was passing by the conin contemplating the omni-science of God. And demned man's cell, and he said: 'Who was that man that talked with me so kindly, and prayed with me? The sheriff answered, 'That was Governor Pollock. The condemned man turned deadly pale, and lifting up both hands he said: 'O sheriff! was that Governor Pollock? Why didn't you tell me? Oh, if I had known it I would have fallen at his feet and cried Mercy! I would have asked him to save me. Why didn't you tell me that was the Governor?" He wept and swung his hands in agony to think that the but He knows it. Each creature is known Governor had been right in his cell, and the sheriff did not tell him it was the Governor.

> "Sinner, I bring you good news to-night. There is one greater than any Governor. He is here to-night, and he is here for a purpose. He want a pardon? Take it. It is for every one." D. L. Moody agos by volley out can

the Larry Monks, and there is so much Bishop Simpson in his recent Yale lecture said: "Last summer I passed over the great mountains and plains which lie between us and the Pacific Ocean. I frequently watched the shepherds, with their immense flocks, and marked their constant diligence and care. I saw the herders, with their numerous herds of cattle, and was surprised to observe the constant vigilance which they exercised. The herder was always in the saddle, his eyes were continually on the cattle. If one wandered toward a precipice or became separated from the herd, it was immediately followed and brought the office of the Christian pastor? If he expects to gain the affection of all the members of his congregation, if he desires to realize the full and he must exercise over them a sleepless vigicovaing the brow of the mileting

Getting Down a Revival.

A Methodist minister in the midst of a Union meeting during the Week of Prayer, where ministers and people of all denominations were present said: "I hear much about getting up a revival, and our people want to set about it. I do not believe in it at all. God is a sovereign. V. 11. Darkness shall cover me. The dark. His Spirit must revive us. It must come down ness of night hides many things from the eye of from Him who is the giver of all good. We man. When it descends like a thick pall over must get the revival down, not up, and that is the land, it is welcomed by many a one, whose the feeling with which we must approach the deeds are more fit to be covered up and for- subject when we are pleading with a sovereign gotten, than to be brought out in the daylight, God, who has the issues of time and eternity in

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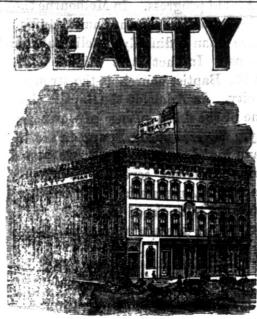
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