

1925

Elam's Notes On Bible School Lessons 1926

E. A. Elam

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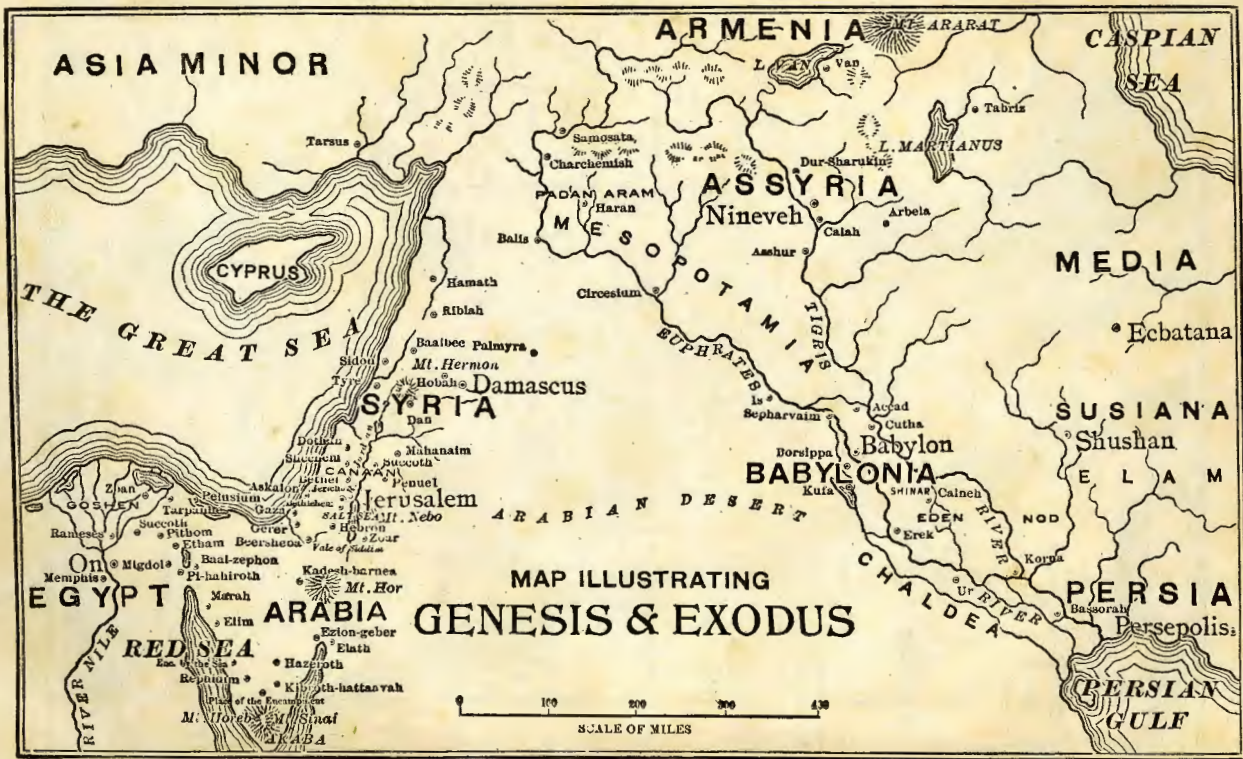


ELAM'S NOTES

on
Bible School
Lessons

1926

IMPROVED UNIFORM
INTERNATIONAL SERIES





E. A. ELAM.

ELAM'S NOTES

ON

Bible School Lessons

1926

Fifth Annual Volume

(Improved Uniform International Series)

E. A. ELAM, Editor

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NOTICE.

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In preparing the lessons of this book and his Bible lessons for twenty-five years past, the author has drawn valuable information from all available commentaries, histories, dictionaries, chronological tables, etc., and has endeavored to give due credit in proper form for all direct quotations; but he wishes further to acknowledge his indebtedness to all these for information he has expressed in his own language.

Above all, he is greatly indebted and most grateful to that thoroughly conscientious and most profound teacher of the word of our God, Brother David Lipscomb, now resting from his labors, while his work lives after him.

1926 LESSONS.

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(Second Half of a Six-Months' Course.)

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

FROM THE CREATION TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

ACCORDING TO USSHER'S CHRONOLOGY

PERIOD	DATE B. C.	EVENT	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
I From the Creation to the Deluge	4004	The Creation	Gen. 1, 2
	4002	Birth of Cain	Gen. 4: 1
	4001	Birth of Abel	Gen. 4: 2
	3875	Death of Abel	Gen. 4: 8
	3874	Birth of Seth	Gen. 5: 3
	3382	Birth of Enoch	Gen. 5: 18
	3317	Birth of Methuselah	Gen. 5: 21
	3074	Death of Adam	Gen. 5: 5
	3017	Enoch translated	Gen. 5: 24
	2948	Birth of Noah	Gen. 5: 28, 29
	2348	Death of Methuselah	Gen. 5: 27
II From the Deluge to the Call of Abraham	2348	Noah enters the ark	Gen. 7: 6, 7
	2347	Noah goes forth from the ark	Gen. 8: 18
	2234	Building the tower of Babel	Gen. 11: 1-9
	1998	Death of Noah	Gen. 9: 29
	1996	Birth of Abraham	Gen. 11: 26
III From the Call of Abraham to the Exodus	1936	Removal of Abraham from Ur to Haran	Gen. 11: 31
	1921	Abraham called to Canaan	Gen. 12: 1-5
	1913	Abraham's rescue of Lot	Gen. 14: 1-24
	1910	Birth of Ishmael	Gen. 16
	1897	Renewal of God's covenant with Abraham	Gen. 17: 18
	1897	Destruction of Sodom	Gen. 18: 19
	1896	Birth of Isaac	Gen. 21: 1-5
	1871	Abraham's faith tested	Gen. 22: 1-19
	1859	Death of Sarah	Gen. 23: 1, 2
	1856	Marriage of Isaac and Rebekah	Gen. 24
	1836	Birth of Jacob and Esau	Gen. 25: 24-26
	1821	Death of Abraham	Gen. 25: 7, 8
	1760	Jacob's flight to Padan-aram	Gen. 28-30
	1746	Birth of Joseph	Gen. 30: 22-24
	1729	Joseph sold into Egypt	Gen. 37
	1716	Joseph honored in Egypt	Gen. 41
	1706	Jacob's removal to Egypt	Gen. 43-47
1689	Jacob's death	Gen. 49	
1636	Joseph's death	Gen. 50: 26	
1574	Birth of Aaron	Ex. 6: 20	
1571	Birth of Moses	Ex. 2: 1-10	
1531	Moses' flight to Midian	Ex. 2: 11-22	
1491	Moses commissioned to deliver Israel	Ex. 3, 4	
IV From the Exodus to the Division of the Kingdom	1491	Crossing the Red Sea	Ex. 14, 15
	1491	Giving the law at Sinai	Ex. 19-40
	1452	Death of Aaron	Num. 20: 27-29
	1451	Death of Moses	Deut. 34
	1451	Joshua, Moses' successor	Deut. 34: 9
	1451	Crossing the Jordan	Josh. 1-4
	1443	Death of Joshua	Josh. 24
	1155	Birth of Samuel	1 Sam. 1: 20
	1095	Saul anointed king of Israel	1 Sam. 10, 11
	1055	Death of Saul	1 Sam. 31
	1055	David made king of Judah	2 Sam. 2: 4
	1048	David made king of all Israel	2 Sam. 5: 1-5
	1033	Solomon's birth	2 Sam. 12: 24
	1015	Solomon made king	1 Kings 1
975	Revolt of the ten tribes	1 Kings 12	

PERIOD	DATE B. C.	KINGS OF JUDAH	KINGS OF ISRAEL
V From the Division of the Kingdom to the Captivity of Judah	975	Rehoboam	Jeroboam
	958	Abijah, or Abijam	
	955	Asa	
	954		Nadab
	953		Baasha
	930		Elah
	929		Zimri
	929		Omri
	918		Ahab
	914	Jehoshaphat	
	897		Ahaziah
	896		Joram, or Jehoram
	892	Joram, or Jehoram	
	885	Ahaziah	
	884	Athaliah	Jehu
	878	Joash, or Jehoash	
	856		Jehoahaz
	839		Jehoash
	839	Amaziah	
	825		Jeroboam II
	810	Uzziah, or Azariah	
	784		Interregnum
	773		Zachariah
	772		Shallum
	772		Menahem
	761		Pekahiah
	759		Pekah
	758	Jotham	
	742	Ahaz	
	730		Hoshea
	726	Hezekiah	
721		Captivity of Israel	
697	Manasseh		
642	Amon		
640	Josiah		
609	Jehoahaz		
609	Jehoiakim		
598	Jehoiachin		
598	Zedekiah		
587	Captivity of Judah		
VI From the Captivity of Judah to End of Old Testament History	587	Destruction of Jerusalem	2 Kings 25: 8, 9
	538	Capture of Babylon by Cyrus	Dan. 5: 31
	536	Cyrus permits Jews to return	Ezra 1: 1-4
	536	Return under Zerubbabel	Ezra 2: 1, 2
	534	Foundation of second temple laid	Ezra 3: 8-13
	521	Building of temple stopped	Ezra 4: 24
	520	Building of temple resumed	Ezra 6: 14
	520	Appeals of Haggai and Zechariah	Ezra 6: 14
	515	Second temple dedicated	Ezra 6: 16-22
	478	Ester made queen by Xerxes	Ester 2: 17
	473	Haman's plot fails	Ester 7: 10
	458	Ezra given a commission	Ezra 7: 11-26
	445	Nehemiah appointed governor of Jerusalem	Neh. 2
432	Second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem	Neh. 13: 4-7	
VII From the Close of Old Testament History to the Birth of Christ	335	Alexander the Great becomes monarch of the East	
	320	Ptolemy Lagus surprises Jerusalem	
	277	Septuagint Version of the Scriptures ordered	
	170	Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian, captures Jerusalem	
	166	Jews revolt and Judas Maccabæus becomes governor of Jerusalem	
	63	Jerusalem becomes a Roman province	
	40	Herod made king	
	28	Augustus Cæsar becomes emperor of Rome	
18	Herod's temple begun		
4	Birth of Christ		

NOTE: Old Testament dates cannot be given with exactness. Some of the dates are uncertain.

ELAM'S NOTES

ON

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS

IMPROVED UNIFORM COURSE FOR 1926

INTRODUCTION.

There can be nothing of so great importance as studying the Bible in order to learn who God is and what his will is in order to obey it.

The Bible reveals above everything else two things:

(1) Who and what God is—his unfathomable attributes—the Almighty One, the All-wise One, the Omnipresent One, the Creator of all things, the Self-existing One—I Am that I Am—from everlasting to everlasting; the only True and Living God, the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and Our Father in Heaven; also his mercy and justice, righteousness and forgiveness, and that he is Light and Love.

(2) His will that man may know what obedience, sin, and salvation are.

From different viewpoints the Bible is the greatest book in the world. Its Author is the greatest Being in the universe. In literature it is the greatest classic; it contains the safest and best business principles in the world; it teaches sanitary laws which the best physicians have never equaled; the world of fiction has never presented anything so beautiful and impressive and inspiring as its true stories, romances, domestic happiness, heroism, devotion, sacrifice, and victories; or tragedies so fearful.

It is the book of God, revealing, as stated above, his wonderful works.

It reveals man to himself—his origin, the life he should live, and his destiny.

It tells when time began and when it will end.

Its supreme purpose in the wisdom and love of God is, however, to reveal the scheme of redemption through Christ. (See 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.) Christ is the Sun of Righteousness and center of the prophecies and promises of the Bible.

For different reasons all people should study the Bible—for the sake of its literature, business principles, sanitary laws, adaptation to all conditions and relationships of life, and, above all, to learn and obey the will of God that they may be saved. One who does not study the Bible is not well educated. If a man with but little education will study and follow all the principles of the Bible, he will become a practical man, with good judgment and everyday common and sound sense.

The Bible must be studied in order to learn upon what principles God deals with the nations of earth.

Submission to the will of God brings the greatest good to man on earth and salvation in the world to come.

The following are some passages showing some of the blessings of studying the Bible and making it our everyday book: Ps. 37: 31; 119: 9-16; Isa. 55: 8-11; John 5: 39, 46, 47; Rom. 15: 4; 2 Tim. 3: 14, 15; Luke 8: 15.

The following are some examples of studying the Bible: 2 Kings 22: 13; 23: 1-3; Neh. 8: 1-18; Luke 4: 16-21; 1 Thess. 5: 27; Col. 4: 16; Acts 8: 26-40.

The following is the condition of heart necessary to receive the word of God: Love of the truth (2 Thess. 2: 10); being honest with oneself, the truth, and God (Luke 8: 15); contrition and trembling at the word of God (Isa. 66: 2, 5); willingness and determination to do God's will (John 7: 17).

The following are the consequences of hating the word of God: Prov. 13: 13; Num. 15: 31; 2 Chron. 36: 16; Rom. 1: 18-32, especially verses 25, 28.

Many things connected with the study of the Bible cannot be too often repeated or too much emphasized. For instance:

No one has taught the Bible who has not taught the supreme duty of practicing it as it relates to all conditions and circumstances of life regarding both men and God. In this respect it is different and superior to all other books in the world. One may study law or learn astronomy whether or not one practices law or uses astronomy, but not so with the Bible. It must be obeyed. The one great end to be accomplished by both studying and teaching it is obedience to it. No one is fit to teach it who loses sight of this end.

Studying and teaching the Bible, then, is far more than studying and teaching literature, history, biographies, or philosophy, etc. There is such a thing as "holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof;" of "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3: 5, 7.) This should not be the case, but it will be unless great care and much earnestness are manifested in practicing what is learned.

One cannot study the Bible too much, but one can practice it by far too little. Meeting in groups—men or women—through the week and on Sundays in order to study the Bible is perfectly right, if done always according to God's will; but always studying or teaching it and not practicing it is hypocrisy.

Teachers are supposed to know more and to practice the Bible better than the pupils—at least, to take the lead in preparing, knowing, and practicing the lesson. Hence, the lessons are fuller for teachers.

THE STORY OF EASTER.

Since every year "The International Sunday School Lessons" call for an Easter lesson, just so often it becomes necessary to explain Easter so all students of these lessons may understand its origin.

In making this explanation, historical references which have been given must be given again and again.

There is no story of Easter in the Bible. Easter and Easter services do not come from the Bible. The word "Easter" is found in the King James Version of the New Testament in Acts 12: 4. This is the only place where it appears in the Bible. Verse 3 of the same chapter speaks of "the days of unleavened bread," which is the Jewish passover, and which shows that "Easter" of verse 4 is the same as the Jewish passover. All the use made of it here is to show when Peter was in prison and when Herod intended to behead him.

How, then, did the word "Easter" get into the King James Version at this place? When this version was made (1611), the Church of England was observing Easter as a religious ordinance and at the time the Jews kept their passover, because Jesus arose from the dead then, and the men who made this version put "Easter" instead of "passover." The word in the original is the one for "passover," and the Revised Version properly puts it "passover." There were no Easter services and no Easter in the days of Peter, or when the New Testament was written. Neither is there any connection between the Jewish passover and the day called "Easter" or "Easter services." And if there were, Christians are not commanded to keep the passover. The passover has been fulfilled in Christ, who has been sacrificed as the Christian's passover. (See 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8.)

Then the story of Easter is of human origin, not of Bible origin; man, and not God, ordained this service. After Christ had built his church and had given the New Testament, sealed by his blood, and had given, therefore, all that people can do and be in obedience to God, men, in their wisdom and in addition to the word of God, began to ordain fasts and feasts to commemorate principal events in the life of Christ—namely, his birth and circumcision; the coming of the wise men; his baptism; the first miracle; his death, called his "passion;" his resurrection; and his ascension and glorification. Humanity seems prone to celebrate noted events and marked epochs. It seems just as prone also to neglect and to even reject God's requirements and to institute ways and laws of its own. To honor God and Christ is to obey them and to trustfully follow their wisdom. It is self-glorification to follow human ways and human wisdom.

It is astonishing to learn the heathen origin of some of these celebrations.

"The name 'Easter' also comes from Ostara, goddess of the morning light, or return of the sun in spring." (See Fisher's "Church History," page 145.) On fasts and feasts, Fisher, in his "Church History," says: "Fasts, at first voluntary, came to be ordained by church law. The Christian festivals related to Christ and commemorated the principal events of his life, with his death, resurrection, and ascension to glory. . . . The first yearly festival generally observed was Easter, standing in the room of the ancient passover. . . . After Easter followed Pentecost, lasting for fifty days, and

commemorating the glorification of Jesus. Later the fortieth day was kept as a memorial of his ascension. About the end of this period [the beginning of the fourth century.—Editor] two new festivals came in. One was Epiphany, originating in the East, not improbably with Jewish Christians, and commemorating the baptism of Christ; the other was Christmas, a festival of Roman origin, taking the place of the heathen festival in honor of the sun, or of the deity bearing that name, which was celebrated at the winter solstice, or on December 25, the time erroneously assigned for the solstice in the Julian calendar." (Pages 64, 65.) This was during the period 100-313. During the next period—313-590—Fisher says: "Friday continued to be kept in memory of Christ's passion. . . . The first feast of the year was Epiphany, the manifestation, which in the East connected itself with Christ's baptism; while in the West, where it appeared later, it commemorated the coming of the wise men and the first exhibition of miraculous power in Cana. Christmas originated in the West, and from there passed over into the Eastern churches. Many Christians still took part in the heathen festival of New Year's. To put an end to this practice, a fast was proclaimed at this time, and was gradually developed into the festival of Christ's circumcision." (Pages 118, 119.)

Easter by this time had grown into "the great religious anniversary of the year," "with its associated feasts." A period of forty days' fasting preceded it. "The festival began with Palm Sunday. At that time, to increase the thanksgiving of the people, the emperor was accustomed to publish special decrees of mercy. On Thursday the Lord's Supper was joyously celebrated, without the usual fasting, in commemoration of its original institution. Good Friday was kept with great solemnity, not even the kiss of peace being allowed. Then came the Sabbath (Saturday) before Easter. On that day many were baptized and clothed in white robes. In the evening the people, with torches in their hands, filled the churches, where services were held until dawn. The Easter celebration was concluded, after the manner of the Jewish passover, on the eighth day, 'White Sunday.' Then the baptized laid aside their white robes and appeared with the rest of the church. The festival season was prolonged from 'White Sunday' to the day of Pentecost." (Page 119.)

The Growth of Error.

All this shows how error crept into the pure, simple worship required in the gospel, and was gradually fastened upon the church as laws of God. The farther the church drifted from the Bible, the more it grew into imposing ceremonies, empty forms, and expensive displays. These historic references are given that all may know the origin of these fasts and feasts. Not one word is said in the Bible about Christmas, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, or Whitsunday, with their displays and celebrations; yet thousands are more disposed to observe these than they are to go along quietly and without ostentation in the humble and simple worship of God. These make a display of piety and righteousness.

God does not require us to celebrate the birth of Christ, his circumcision, his baptism, his first miracle, and his ascension.

When God tells men to observe a day, he also tells what to do in

THE STORY OF EASTER.

observing it and why to observe it. He says nothing about these things. It is strange that, after being led out of all these things, and much more, people manifest such a desire to return to them. Behold the Easter services of to-day!

Christians should discourage everything that looks toward special services, preparations, and displays on this day. The surest and most effective way to prevent any corruption of the worship of God or any departures from it is to oppose it in its incipency.

The Cause of Strife.

The observance of Easter demonstrates another thing—that bitter strife and contentions arise over things not in the gospel. At first there was a long and bitter contention between the Jewish and Gentile Christians over the proper time to observe Easter. This controversy was settled by the Council of Nice (325), one purpose of which was to settle this controversy. But later another bitter controversy arose between the British Church and the Roman Church about the calculation of the time of observing Easter, and this was finally settled in favor of Roman rule.

We know something of the strife, contention, and division caused by practices which are no part of the gospel of Christ—no part of the pure worship of God. "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" can never be kept so long as some in the church add to the word of God or depart in any way from it. All who depart in any way from the word of God or add anything to it destroy this "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

All display and vanity manifested in various Easter services and other services not ordained of God are vain worship, for Jesus says: "But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Mark 7: 7.)

What Must We Do?

We are to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in so far only as we meet upon the first day of the week to break bread, and that is done on one Sunday as much so as on another, and on every Sunday alike. Celebrating it on Easter with special services and ceremonies is on a par with eating the Lord's Supper on Thursday before Easter. As Christians, we are taught to meet on the first day of the week to break bread—to eat the Lord's Supper (Acts 7: 20); to speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in the heart and making melody in the heart unto God (Eph. 5: 18-21; Col. 3: 16); to teach and admonish one another (1 Thess. 5: 27; Col. 4: 16); to pray together (1 Cor. 14: 14-17); and to contribute of our means as we may prosper (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). We may preach on the first day of the week, as did Paul, and should do so as the occasion demands. We should preach the gospel and teach the word of God, as Jesus and the apostles did, wherever and whenever we can reach the people—one man or a multitude. It cannot be acceptable worship to God to leave undone that which he has commanded or to do something which he has not commanded.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Let us begin at the first with "Hints and Helps for Teachers," by which it is trusted both teachers and pupils will be benefited.

Let it be hoped that all teachers will encourage their pupils to commit all Golden Texts to memory and be able to repeat them in the Reviews; also to make special preparations for, and to give special attention to, Reviews. These lessons should not be treated as child's play.

Teachers should encourage their classes to study their lessons daily through the week. Of course, no one who has not previously prepared the lesson is competent to teach it.

If some lessons seem too long for some pupils, they are not too long for good teachers, and the apt teacher knows the ability of his class and what in the lesson is most adapted and beneficial to his class. Besides, one has a whole week in which to prepare the lesson. Any lesson is too long for the one who never looks at it until the time of recitation comes, then hastily glances over it and expects to know it, or, at least, to recite it.

The lessons are only comments, giving the meaning of some words, describing some customs and places of Bible times, and helping all to a clearer understanding of the will of God. But all must study the will of God for themselves, receive it themselves into good and honest hearts, and themselves obey it.

If on any point these lessons fail to teach the will of God, reject that teaching and follow the will of God.

No teacher or student should confine his study of the Bible to these lessons or to any given number of lessons; yet these lessons are an honest and arduous effort to set forth the teaching of God on the subject considered.

No preacher of the gospel and teacher of the whole counsel of God can confine his study of the Scriptures to a few sermons he may preach with fluency; rather he must study the whole Bible in order to present himself "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2: 15.) Every teacher, as well as every preacher, must study to know "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," which God has granted unto all "through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue." (2 Pet. 1: 2-4.)

Very great responsibility rests upon teachers and preachers in the church—teachers of the young and old. The light and indifferent way, the careless and unprepared way in which very many go at this most important work shows that they feel but little, if any, responsibility.

Furthermore, upon all Christians, according to ability, rests the responsibility to teach others. (Study Heb. 5: 11-14.)

FIRST QUARTER.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

LESSON I.—JANUARY 3.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH.

John 1: 1-18.

- 1 ¶In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not.
- 6 There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John:
- 7 The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him.
- 8 He was not the light, but *came that he might bear witness of the light.*
- 9 There was the true light, *even the light which lighteth every man*, coming into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not.
- 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, *even to them that believe on his name:*
- 13 Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.
- 15 John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me.
- 16 For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace.
- 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him.*

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.*” (John 1: 14.)

TIME.—A.D. 27, when Jesus was baptized and began his public ministry and when John the Baptist bore witness of him.

Reckoning time from the birth of Jesus did not begin until several hundred years after his birth.

It has been agreed by those who have studied the question that a mistake of four years was made, which places the birth of Jesus in the year B.C. 4. “According to the received chronology, Jesus was born in the last year of Herod; and he was, therefore, less than a year old when Herod died. His birth occurred four years previous to our common era, the era having been erroneously fixed by Dyonisius Exiguus in the sixth century.” (McGarvey.)

This monk fixed the date of Jesus’ birth 753 after the building of

Rome; but this cannot be the right date, because Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great, and Herod the Great died in the spring of 750 after the building of Rome. Jesus, then, was born as early as 749 after the building of Rome, or B.C. 4.

The date fixed by this learned monk has been so long in general use that it is hardly possible to change it, and it is not necessary for practical purposes to try to do so.

There is no proof whatever that Jesus was born on December 25. On the contrary, it seems altogether probable that he was not born on that day.

PLACE.—Jesus was in heaven as the Word before he came to earth. Bethabara, or Bethany (not Bethany on the Mount of Olives, but a village whose site is now unknown), was the place "beyond the Jordan [on the eastern bank], where John was baptizing" (John 1: 28), and bore witness of Jesus.

PERSONS.—Jesus, John the Baptist, and the people.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Phil. 2: 1-11.

HOME READING.—

December 28.	M.	The Word Became Flesh. (John 1: 1-18.)
December 29.	T.	His Coming Foretold. (Gen. 49: 8-12.)
December 30.	W.	His Name Called "Immanuel." (Isa. 7: 10-17.)
December 31.	T.	Born in Bethlehem. (Matt. 2: 1-12.)
January 1.	F.	Lived in Poverty. (Luke 9: 57-62.)
January 2.	S.	Came to Minister. (Matt. 20: 20-28.)
January 3.	S.	The Mind of the Mightiest. (Phil. 2: 5-11.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The subject of this lesson, given by "The International Sunday School Committee" as "The Son of God Becomes Man," has been changed to the more appropriate one, "The Word Became Flesh," because this is a scriptural one, and the other is not, as this lesson shows.

All the lessons of this quarter are in the book of John, except a temperance lesson, which is in the book of Matthew.

The book of John was written by John, the apostle, toward the close of the first century, and after Matthew, Mark, and Luke had written their books, or life of Christ. He wrote also 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Revelation.

He was a fisherman by trade (Matt. 4: 21), a brother of James, and a son of Zebedee and Salome. (Compare Matt. 27: 56; Mark 15: 40.)

John's reference to much these other writers wrote is a corroboration of them.

He gives more of Jesus' early ministry than they, but omits his birth and childhood—his miraculous conception, visit of the wise men, destruction of the innocents, flight into Egypt, return to Nazareth, visit to the temple when twelve years of age, and baptism. His readers were familiar with these facts.

He records only one miracle common to the four—feeding the five thousand; but he records four not mentioned elsewhere: (1) John 2: 1-11; (2) John 5: 1-9; (3) John 9: 1-17; (4) John 11: 43, 44. What are they?

He omits the parables recorded by the others.

He devotes at least one-third of his book to the sayings and doings of the last twenty-four hours of Christ's life. For instance, chapters 13-17 record the facts of Jesus' washing the saints' feet and, after the Lord's Supper, his speeches and prayer before his departure from that upper room to go "over the brook Kidron" (John 18: 1) into Gethsemane. Chapters 18, 19 relate the events of the remainder of the night and the next day, while chapters 20, 21 give the account of his resurrection and appearance to his disciples.

John, Peter, and James were the closest to Jesus. They witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration, and the agony in Gethsemane.

John was the "beloved disciple" who leaned on Jesus' bosom.

He and Peter followed Jesus after the arrest and went into the house of Caiaphas.

He was at the trial before Pilate and stood by the cross, where Jesus committed to him the care of Mary, the Lord's own mother.

He outran Peter to the sepulcher on receiving the news of Christ's resurrection; but while he stooped to look in, Peter passed him and went in.

John and James were called by Jesus "sons of thunder." They desired to call down fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritan village which refused Jesus a night's lodging. (Luke 9: 54-56.)

John forbade others doing a good work in the name of Jesus because they were not literally following Jesus with the apostles. (Luke 9: 49), but was corrected by Jesus.

John and James asked for the highest positions of honor in the earthly kingdom they thought Jesus was about to establish.

John wrote much of love; but that does not mean he was not true, firm, and brave. It is he who says that those who claim to know God, and yet refuse to keep his commandments, are liars and the truth is not in them (1 John 2: 4), and that to love God is to keep his commandments (1 John 5: 3). To really love God and men is to be both true and courageous, uncompromising and steadfast.

Peter, James, and John "were reputed to be pillars." (Gal. 2: 9.)

John spent the later years of his life in Asia Minor, whence he was exiled to Patmos. He lived to be an old man, but we are unable to say how or when he died.

John (20: 30, 31) gives the prime purpose of Christ's miracles and why he recorded many of them: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." Nicodemus said: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." (John 3: 2.) Jesus says the works he did bore witness of him that the Father sent him. (John 5: 36.)

In his numerous miracles of compassion and mercy he relieved the variously afflicted; but the prime object of his miracles is to convince the world that the Father sent him, that all may believe on him and receive life through his name.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "The Word."

1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is the profound and sublime introduction of the life of Christ written by John. He begins his first Epistle in a somewhat similar manner. (See 1 John 1: 1-4.) Matthew, Mark, and Luke begin with Christ's life on earth. Matthew traces his descent from Abraham, showing him to be the seed of Abraham, in whom all the families of earth are blessed (Matt. 1: 1-16); while Luke traces his descent back to Adam, "the son of God" (Luke 3: 23-38). John goes back of the creation of the earth to that unknown period called "in the beginning." Similar to this statement is Gen. 1: 1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "In the beginning"—before time on earth began—the person known on earth as "Jesus Christ" existed with God as "the Word." He "was with God" and "was God." The "Word" was not created, but was the uncreated source of all things. God, "the Word," and the Holy Spirit existed "in the beginning"—always existed. John (1: 14) tells us that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." This was done in the person of Jesus.

2. "The same was in the beginning with God." By the repetition of this fact John makes clear another fact—namely, that while "the Word" was "in the beginning with God," there is a distinction between the Father and "the Word." The two points, then, in these two verses are (1) that "the Word" "was with God," "was God"—divine, eternal—and (2) was separate from God, the Father, as a distinct person. Jesus came "down from heaven." (John 6: 38.) He existed "in the beginning" and in heaven, not as "Jesus of Nazareth" and as "Jesus, the Christ," but as "the Word." "The Word became flesh" in the person of Jesus; and after his crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God in heaven and made "both Lord and Christ." (Acts 2: 36.) He was anointed on earth "with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10: 38), but did not rule as King and serve as Priest until exalted to heaven (Phil. 2: 5-11; Heb. 2: 9, 10; 7: 26-28; 8: 4).

3. "The Word" was not only with God "in the beginning," but "all things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." God created all things through "the Word." "The world was made through him." (John 1: 10.) Paul states the work of God and "the Word" as follows: "Yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him." (1 Cor. 8: 6.) Of the Son, Paul further says: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation [see John 1: 18; Rom. 8: 29]; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist ["that is, hold together"—margin]." (Col. 1: 15-17.) He upholds "all things by the word of his power." (Heb. 1: 3.) God

said to others—"the Word" and the Holy Spirit: "Let us make man." (Gen. 1: 26.) "And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us." (Gen. 3: 22.)

II. The Life of Jesus is the Light of the World.

4. "In him was life." He is the author of life, the source of life. "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself." (John 5: 26.) The self-existing, eternal, divine life which is in the Father is also in the Son. He conquered the grave (Heb. 2: 14), "abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1: 10). Truly he could say of himself: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." (John 11: 25, 26.) "All that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (John 5: 28, 29.) "The Word" made flesh is the source of all spiritual life and light on earth. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear ["hearken"—margin] shall live." (Verse 25.) "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." (John 6: 63.) "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." (1 John 5: 12.) "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.)

"The life was the light of men." Jesus says: "I am the light of the world" (John 8: 12); "When I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9: 5). Paul says that light makes manifest. (Eph. 5: 13.) "The Word" was the source of light "in the beginning," and on earth he is God "manifested in the flesh." (1 Tim. 3: 16.) He is a manifestation of the goodness, mercy, grace, and love of God.

On the other hand, his life on earth is a manifestation of righteousness, or implicit obedience to the Father. He says: "I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6: 38.) He was about his Father's business at twelve years of age (Luke 2: 49); was baptized in the river Jordan in obedience to God "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3: 15); and became "obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2: 8).

His life is the light of the world because he shows men what it is to obey God; hence, he says: "He that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8: 12.)

There is no such thing, then, as walking in the light without following Jesus in obedience to God.

Jesus is "the water of life," "the bread of life," "the light of life," "the Sun of righteousness," and "the resurrection, and the life."

5. "The light shineth in the darkness." Jesus was "the true light, . . . coming into the world" (John 1: 9); "the Sun of righteousness," shining upon the darkness of sin and showing men how to obey God and live. The light of the sun drives darkness away, and this light of the world drives out the darkness of sin.

"The darkness apprehended it not"—did not overcome it. One can resist this light, as he can hide from the light of the sun; but the darkness of sin can no more overcome this light than literal darkness can

put out the sun. Darkness can never overtake one, either, so long as one walks in this light. "Walk while ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not." (John 12: 35, 36.) Darkness overtakes one when one fails to walk in the light. Some love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. (John 3: 19.) They are left free to live in darkness or to walk in the light.

6. John now begins the life of Jesus on earth. He introduces this by referring to the work of John the Baptist. The man "sent from God, whose name was John," was John the Baptist. His work will be noticed in the next lesson.

7. John the Baptist was sent to bear witness of Jesus as the light. He did this in preparing a people for the Lord; in preaching, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" in declaring, when he baptized the people, that one mightier than himself would come; and in pointing Jesus out as "the Lamb of God." "That all might believe through him." This shows how people are made believers in Christ and that faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.) Later the apostles bore witness of Jesus.

8. John the Baptist "was not the light"—the Messiah—as some supposed, but was a "witness of the light." "He was the lamp that burneth and shineth" (John 5: 35), but "was not the light." Jesus was the source of light—self-existing light—while John was a "lamp."

9. Jesus was "the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." "Coming into the world" modifies "light." The true light was "coming into the world." Jesus is the source of all moral and spiritual light. He says: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness." (John 12: 46.)

10. "He was in the world." When was he in the world? He existed before the world, created the world, and was in the world from its creation (see Col. 1: 17); yet "the world knew him not"—did not recognize him.

III. What It Is to Receive Christ.

11. "He came unto his own." When did he come "unto his own?" When he came in the flesh to the Jewish race and himself and through the apostles preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. His own—the Jewish race—received him not, but in every way rejected him and finally crucified him.

12. But to "as many as received him" he gave "the right to become children of God." While the Jewish race, as a whole, rejected him, some received him as the Messiah, and to all such he gave the right to become the children of God. The Jews prided themselves on being descendants of Abraham. John the Baptist told them they could claim no rights and privileges in Christ's spiritual kingdom on that account. (Matt. 3: 7-10.) Becoming a child of God is a personal and individual matter of one's own faith in Jesus; hence, this right is bestowed upon those only who receive Jesus as the Christ.

The way in which Christ is received is stated as follows: "To them that believe on his name." To believe on Jesus is to accept him as the Messiah, which means to obey him, (Heb. 5: 9); to receive his teaching is to receive him, and to reject his teaching is to reject him (see Matt. 10: 40; Luke 10: 16; John 13: 20; 15: 7-10; 2 John 9).

13. Those who are born of God become children of God. Being born of "blood" (margin, "bloods"—that is, of any race), or "of the will of the flesh" (the natural, or fleshly, birth), or "of the will of man" (any earthly adoption), has nothing to do with making people children of God or bestowing upon them any rights and privileges in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus also makes this plain to Nicodemus (John 3: 1-15), which we shall study in Lesson III.

IV. The Word Made Flesh.

14. "And the Word became flesh." This was done when Jesus was born of Mary, "taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." (Phil. 2: 7; see also Rom. 8: 3; Gal. 4: 4; Heb. 2: 16-18.) At the time John wrote there were "many deceivers," or infidels—"they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist." (2 John 7.) To counteract their influence, John makes this statement. (See also 1 John 2: 22-24; 4: 2, 3.) "Dwelt among us"—that is, so long as Jesus remained on earth. "And we beheld his glory." John says this as proof of the above statement. He knew whereof he wrote. So he says: "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life," and the following verses. (1 John 1: 1-4.)

The glory of Christ was that of being "the only begotten from the Father." John, with the other apostles, saw Christ's Godlike and wonderful life; but he, James, and Peter also saw the transfiguration of Christ. No other being on earth or in heaven is "the only begotten from the Father," and no one is the Son of God as is Jesus of Nazareth. "Full of grace and truth." The mission of Jesus was one of grace, and he is the embodiment of truth; he is the truth. (John 14: 6.)

15. John the Baptist was sent to bear witness of Jesus. (John 1: 7.) This verse states that he did it and how he did it. He "crieth, saying." He spoke to the people and testified in clear and plain terms. As we have seen, "the Word" existed before John. Jesus says: "Before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8: 58.) "He that cometh after me is become before me" means that while the ministry of Jesus followed that of John the Baptist, Jesus had become first in regard to John. So John said: "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.)

16. Referring to the statement in John 1: 14 and to the testimony of John the Baptist, John now says: "For of his fullness we all received." Jesus was "full of grace and truth," and the apostles and all disciples of Christ received of this "grace and truth," and "grace for grace"—"favor upon favor."

17. "For the law was given through Moses." (See John 7: 19.) On account of human weakness "the law made nothing perfect" (Heb. 7: 19), and "grace and truth" here are placed in contrast with the law of Moses and embrace all the benefits and blessings which come through Jesus. Paul frequently contrasts the law of Moses and the system of grace and truth by which we are saved through Christ. (Rom. 6: 14, 15.)

18. "No man hath seen God at any time"—that is, with his natural

eyes (see John 6: 46; Col. 1: 15; 1 Tim. 6: 16; 1 John 4: 12); but "the Word" made flesh, "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Jesus says: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . . I am in the Father, and the Father in me." (John 14: 9, 10.) Christ reveals God to the world. He is "the effulgence of his [God's] glory, and the very image of his substance." (Heb. 1: 3.) "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2: 9.) "In the bosom of the Father" shows the dear and close relationship the Son now sustains to God.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Give the reasons for saying Jesus was born B.C. 4.
- Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
In what book is this lesson?
Who wrote it?
When was it written?
What does John omit that the other evangelists relate?
What do they relate that he omitted?
What miracles does he record which they omit?
What is recorded in chapters 14-17?
What is recorded in chapters 18 and 19?
What is recorded in chapters 20 and 21?
- What was John by trade?
Who were his parents?
Who was his brother?
What is John called?
In what particulars were he, James, and Peter closer to Jesus than the other apostles?
Relate the further facts in his history.
What other books did he write?
Why did he write the book of John?
What was the purpose of Christ's miracles?
- Where does John begin in giving his history of Jesus?
What three persons existed "in the beginning?"
How did "the Word" become flesh?
 - What two facts are stated in these two verses?
What was Jesus before he came to the earth?
What was he on earth?
What is he in heaven now?
 - Through whom and by whom were all things created?
To whom did God speak when he said, "Let us make man?"
 - In what way was life in "the Word"?
What is the source of all spiritual life and light?
What is Jesus to the world?
How is he "the light of the world"?
How can we walk in the light?
 - What is meant by the darkness not apprehending the light?
When will darkness not overtake us?
 - Who was sent from God?
 - Why was John the Baptist sent?
In what ways did John the Baptist bear witness of Jesus?
What declaration here shows how faith is produced?
 - What was John the Baptist, and what was he not?
 - Who was "the true light"?
Whom would Jesus light?
 - When was Jesus in the world?
What is meant by the world's knowing him not?
 - To whom did Jesus come?
Who were "his own"?
When did he come to them?
What did they do with him?
 - What did he give to as many as received him?
Upon what did the Jews pride themselves?
Upon what does becoming children of God depend?
What is it to receive Christ?
 - Of whom must we be born in order to become God's children?
What do born "of blood," born "of the will of the flesh," and born "of the will of man" mean?
 - What did some deny at the time John wrote this book?
When did "the Word" dwell among us?
Why did John know whereof he wrote?
What was the glory of Christ?
What is meant by Jesus' being "full of grace and truth"?
 - How did John the Baptist testify of Jesus?
How had Jesus become before John the Baptist?
 - Of what did John, the apostle, say we all received?
What is meant by "grace for grace"?
 - What are contrasted in this verse?
What do "grace and truth" embrace?
 - In what way has no man seen God?
How did Jesus declare him?
What is meant by "in the bosom of the Father"?

LESSON II.—JANUARY 10.

FIVE MEN BELIEVE ON JESUS.

John 1: 35-49. Read John 1: 19-51.

35 ¶Again on the morrow John was standing, and two of his disciples:
 36 And he looked upon Jesus as he walked, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God!
 37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.
 38 And Jesus turned, and beheld them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? And they said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Teacher), where abidest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come, and ye shall see. They came therefore and saw where he abode: and they abode with him that day: it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two that heard John *speak* , and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, Christ).

42 He brought him unto Jesus. Jesus looked upon him, and said, Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter).

43 ¶On the morrow he was minded to go forth into Galilee, and he findeth Philip: and Jesus saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!” (John 1: 29.)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—Bethabara, or Bethany (not Bethany on the Mount of Olives, but a village whose site is unknown), the “place beyond the Jordan [on the eastern bank], where John was baptizing.”

PERSONS.—Jesus, John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 53.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|-------------|----|--|
| January 4. | M. | John the Baptist a Believer. (John 1: 19-34.) |
| January 5. | T. | Andrew and Peter Believe. (John 1: 35-42.) |
| January 6. | W. | Philip and Nathanael Believe. (John 1: 43-51.) |
| January 7. | T. | John, the Apostle, Believed. (1 John 1.) |
| January 8. | F. | Saul of Tarsus Believed. (Acts 9: 10-22.) |
| January 9. | S. | Many Believe. (Acts 2: 37-42.) |
| January 10. | S. | Success Through Suffering for Others. (Isa. 53: 4-12.) |

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

John 1: 19-34 should be studied before this lesson.

A delegation of priests and Levites was sent out from Jerusalem by the Jews, or rulers, to ask John the Baptist who he was—if he was Elijah, or “the prophet” (see Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19; Acts 3: 22, 23), or

the Christ. John replied, "No;" but stated that he was the one sent to prepare a people for the Lord, as Isaiah had foretold.

THE LAMB OF GOD.—"On the morrow [the day after the visit of these priests and Levites] he seeth Jesus coming unto him." (Verse 29.) This was after Jesus' baptism and forty-days' temptation.

This is the first reference to the appearance of Jesus in person which is made in John's Gospel. The author of this Gospel passes over the birth and early life of Jesus, because his readers were familiar with these facts.

John the Baptist pointed Jesus out as "the Lamb of God" to the multitude. He intended for his own disciples to believe in and follow Jesus.

Jesus was mild and innocent, as a lamb. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." (Acts 8: 32.) Yet John meant here that he was a sin offering. Every lamb slain as a sacrifice under the law of Moses pointed to him. He is spoken of as "a Lamb . . . slain" (Rev. 5: 6; see also Rev. 13: 8); "the blood of the Lamb," as the power that gives the victory over the enemies of God's people (Rev. 12: 11), and in which the robes of the righteous have been washed (Rev. 7: 14). God prepared for him a body, which was bruised and offered up "once for all" (Heb. 10: 5-10.) His blood "cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 7.) "That taketh away the sin of the world"—not of the Jews only, but of the world. John, by inspiration, was enabled to make this declaration.

John had first told the multitudes he baptized that one mightier than himself would come (Matt. 3: 11), and enjoined upon them to believe on him when he should come (Acts 10: 4); now he has come, and John points him out as the one referred to. "After me cometh a man who is become before me: for he was before me." (See John 1: 15.) Jesus was first in importance, and he existed with God as "the Word" and was before John in point of existence.

HOW JOHN KNEW JESUS WAS THE CHRIST.—John the Baptist said: "And I knew him not." John knew Jesus as a man, for their mothers were cousins. Mary visited Elisabeth just before the birth of John the Baptist and remained about three months. (Luke 1: 39, 56.) John knew Jesus as a good man, knew Jesus was better than himself, and for this reason declined, at first, to baptize him (Matt. 3: 14); but John did not know Jesus as "the Lamb of God" and Messiah.

"But," said John, "that he should be made manifest to Israel [as the Messiah], for this cause came I baptizing in water." All his preaching and baptizing were to prepare a people for the Messiah and to make him known to the world. In John's baptizing, the Messiah, or "Lamb of God," became manifest in the way stated below.

As we have already learned, God sent John, as a forerunner of the Messiah, to preach "the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins" and to baptize the penitent "in water." In this way—that is, by teaching the people to repent and be baptized unto the remission of their sins—John prepared the people for the Lord.

God gave John a sign by which he could recognize the Messiah when he should be baptized. "Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit." When Jesus was baptized, this occurred, and John

saw it. Besides, God said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3: 16, 17.) In this way John knew Jesus was the Messiah and "the Lamb of God." So he "bare witness," or gave his testimony, saying: "I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him."

Christ, the Messiah, was to baptize "in the Holy Spirit." He did not do this until after his ascension. (Acts 1: 4, 5; 2: 1-4.) Christ alone could baptize "in the Holy Spirit."

John said: "And I have seen [this sign God gave], and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." John bore this testimony on different occasions. He gladly pointed out Jesus as the Son of God and "Lamb of God." John was the morning star; Jesus was "the Sun of righteousness." John said of Jesus: "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. John and Andrew.

35. "Again on the morrow." This is the day after the one mentioned in John 1: 29. On the preceding day, in a public discourse, John pointed out Jesus as "the Lamb of God," etc.; but on this day he declares him to be such to two of his own disciples. One of these was Andrew (verse 40), and from his own modest way of speaking of himself we conclude that most probably the other was John.

John was an apostle, and all the twelve apostles were present when Jesus was baptized and heard the testimony of John the Baptist concerning him. (Acts 1: 22.)

36. When John pointed him out as "the Lamb of God," he meant that God had prepared him as a sin offering "that taketh away the sin of the world."

37. John intended for the two disciples to follow Jesus; and having heard John's testimony, they did so. Had they not been first the disciples of John, they had not then been prepared for Jesus; now they cannot become the disciples of Jesus unless they leave John and follow Jesus. They must improve their opportunities. To follow the light they had was a sure way to greater light.

38. Jesus did not proceed until they overtook him; but he "turned, and beheld them following," waited for them, and said: "What seek ye?" He encouraged them to follow him and to make known their desires.

"Rabbi," as John interprets it, means "Master," "Teacher."

They desired to be with Jesus and to learn from him; hence, they asked: "Where abidest thou?"

39. He invited them to go with him by saying, "Come, and ye shall see;" and they accepted the invitation. He probably had some temporary stopping place near; but his home was yet at Nazareth, and he soon left this region for Galilee. (John 2: 1.) They went and "abode with him that day: it was about the tenth hour," or four o'clock P.M., counting from sunup to sundown as a day. Counting from twelve o'clock at night, according to the Roman reckoning, as in John 19: 14, it was ten o'clock A.M.; and this is more probable. They spent the day, no doubt, in receiving profitable information.

"What seek ye?" is one of the greatest questions of life, because people usually find what they seek. "Seek, and ye shall find."

40. One of these two was Andrew, who afterwards became an apostle. (Matt. 10: 2.) He was of Bethsaida (John 1: 44), probably a suburb of Capernaum (Mark 1: 21, 29). He and Peter were fishermen. Fishing was an honorable occupation. He was the one who suggested to Jesus the lad with five barley loaves and two fishes (John 6: 9), and who went with Philip to tell Jesus of the Greeks who desired to worship him (John 12: 22). He was one of the first two disciples of Jesus, becoming one before Peter; but later on Peter grew into greater prominence, and but little is known of Andrew. That he is here called "Simon Peter's brother" shows that Peter was the more prominent of the two when John wrote. Yet Andrew filled his mission. That is all any of us can do. Doing that, we do well.

II. Peter.

41. "He findeth first his own brother Simon." "First" to what? Either before the other disciple found his brother, or finding Simon was the first thing he did after leaving Jesus. The latter seems to be the meaning.

In the spirit of his new Teacher, Andrew at once sought to lead his own brother to Christ. This is the true missionary spirit. Christ came first to his own; the apostles preached first to the Jews. First "in Jerusalem," then "in all Judea and Samaria," and thence "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8), is God's order. A man is under greater obligation than any one else to teach his own family the Bible and to lead them to Jesus. Still, he must not stop with that.

From this and Philip's example in John 1: 45 we learn the value and power of personal work. Note also the example of Philip, the evangelist (not this Philip), preaching to one man. (Acts 8: 26-40.)

"Messiah" is Hebrew and means the same as "Christ," which is Greek—that is, "the Anointed One."

42. Peter soon became more prominent and accomplished more than Andrew, because he was bolder and more aggressive; yet Andrew "brought him unto Jesus." We may be weak ourselves and possess but one talent, yet we may lead to Jesus those who, by God's grace, may accomplish much. To bring our friends and dear ones to Jesus is the greatest service possible that we can render them. If every Christian would bring one soul to Jesus, how soon the world would be turned to God! This is the way the kingdom of God began, and this is the way to extend it. It cannot be done by proxy; we cannot send some one else, but must go ourselves and do our own work. If we will lead our own family to Christ, we will receive strength and courage by that to lead others to him. "To him that hath shall more be given." John the Baptist pointed out Jesus to two; one of these brought another, and that one brought thousands to Jesus.

"Simon" was the name by which Peter was known. He was the son of John, or Jonah. (Matt. 16: 17.) Jesus said he should be called "Cephas," which means "a stone." John interpreted the meaning for his readers. "Peter" is the Greek form; "Cephas" "is Aramaic, the modified form of Hebrew spoken in Palestine in our Lord's day." This

seems a prophecy as to what Simon would become in strength of character. He was impulsive and wavering at times in the beginning, but he grew to be a stone.

III. Philip.

43. "On the morrow"—the day after the meeting with these three disciples—Jesus "was minded to go forth into Galilee [go home], and he findeth Philip" and invited him to follow him. To him first, so far as the record shows, were spoken the words, "Follow me." That Jesus found him may imply that Jesus sought him, and, having found him, called him to follow. He became an apostle, and must be distinguished from Philip, one of "the seven," who became an evangelist. (Acts 6: 3, 5; 21: 8.) He and Andrew are associated in John 6: 7-9; 12: 20-22.

44. "Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter." "Bethsaida" means "house of fishing."

It is difficult to determine the situation of this place. There seems to have been two places by this name—one, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum and Chorazin (Matt. 11: 21; Mark 6: 45-53; Luke 10: 13); the other, on the northeastern shore (Mark 6: 31-53; Luke 9: 10-17). The first mentioned was the one of our lesson.

IV. Nathanael.

45. Philip, like Andrew, desires others to come to Christ; and he "findeth Nathanael" to tell him about Jesus.

Nathanael was a Galilean and lived at Cana. (John 21: 2.) In our lesson and in John 21: 2 are the only two places his name is mentioned in the Bible. He was "an Israelite indeed, in whom is [was] no guile."

"It is very commonly believed that Nathanael and Bartholomew are the same person. The evidence for that belief is as follows: St. John, who twice mentions Nathanael, never introduces the name 'Bartholomew' at all; St. Matthew (10: 3), St. Mark (3: 18), and St. Luke (6: 14), all speak of Bartholomew, but never of Nathanael. It may be, however, that 'Nathanael' was the proper name and 'Bartholomew' (son of Tolmai) was the surname of the same disciple, just as 'Simon' was called 'Bar-jona' and 'Joses' was called 'Barnabas.'" (Smith's Bible Dictionary.) If this be so, Nathanael was an apostle; and John 21: 2 favors this conclusion.

"Of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote," means that Jesus is the One to come foretold by Moses (Deut. 18: 18, 19, for instance) and by the prophets. "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24: 27.) "That all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me." (Luke 24: 44.) "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19: 10.)

"Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph," is the star of Jacob and the hope of Israel, the One to come. This was clear to Philip. Jesus was supposed to be "the son of Joseph." (Luke 3: 23.)

46. But the mention of Nazareth, an insignificant and despised Galilean town, raised a doubt in Nathanael's mind, and he asked: "Can

any good thing come out of Nazareth?" It was proverbial "that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." (John 7: 52.)

"Come and see" was the best answer to make to Nathanael. Seeing for himself would remove his doubts. He was not too prejudiced to investigate, and was soon convinced. An honest heart is necessary to the reception of the truth.

Christ asks the world to "come and see." He says that "the tree is known by its fruit." Christianity is known by what it has done. Christians are the light of the world through their charitable, godly lives and faithful service to God.

47. Jesus showed his divinity by declaring at once, as he approached, the character of Nathanael, whom he had never met: "An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" This was a high tribute to Nathanael's sincere and honest heart. He was free from hypocrisy and every form of deception—guileless. According to the law, he worshiped God sincerely.

48. It greatly astonished Nathanael that Jesus should know him, not having met him, and he asked: "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus replied: "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."

We have no way of knowing where this fig tree was or what experience, if any, Nathanael had under it. It seems that before Philip reached Nathanael to tell him about Jesus he was under this fig tree, where Philip found him. While there and before Philip reached him and where Jesus could not see him with the natural eye, Jesus saw him and knew him. This was done by the exercise of divine power, and proved that Jesus was more than human.

49. This convinced Nathanael that Jesus was the Messiah, and he confessed him to be "the Son of God" and "King of Israel."

Jesus also assured Nathanael that while he had been convinced by this fact, he should "see greater things than these." Nathanael witnessed the wonderful miracles of Jesus and saw him after he arose from the dead. If he was one of the apostles, he saw Jesus ascend into heaven.

Seeing Jesus ascend into heaven is probably what Jesus meant by saying Nathanael should see "the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (See Luke 24: 50-53; Acts 1: 9-11.) Paul (1 Tim. 3: 16) says Jesus was "seen of angels."

Jesus frequently speaks of himself as "the Son of man." In his humility he uses this expression to designate his humanity. He is not only the Son of Mary, of the seed of David, the promised seed of Abraham; but he is "the Son of man," and thus related in sympathy, service, and sacrifice to all the human family.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Readings?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What should be studied before this lesson?

What day is meant by "on the morrow?"

Who were sent to inquire of John the Baptist who he was?

What reply did John make to these delegates?

- Upon whom did John teach the people he baptized to believe?
 What had John told the people of Jesus?
 In what way did John not know Jesus?
 Why did he at first decline to baptize Jesus?
 How did John prepare a people for the Lord?
 How was Jesus manifested as the Messiah through John's baptism?
 Why, then, did John say he knew that Jesus was the Messiah?
 What testimony did John again bear?
 35 What day here is meant by "on the morrow?"
 To whom did John point out Jesus on this day?
 Who were they?
 36 In what sense is Jesus "the Lamb of God?"
 37 What did these disciples do?
 Did John the Baptist intend for them to do that?
 How can we receive more light?
 38 What did Jesus do?
 What reply did they make?
 39 What is meant by "come and see?"
 What was the hour?
 What do you seek?
 40 Relate all you know about Andrew—where he lived, what he did, and what he became.
 41 Whom did he find?
 What is meant by "first"—first to what?
 What did he do with Peter?
 What spirit did he manifest?
 What should we do?
 42 What did Jesus say to Peter?
 What does "Cephas" mean?
 What did he become as to character?
 43 What day is meant by this verse?
 Where would Jesus go?
 Whom did he find?
 What did he bid Philip do?
 What did Philip become?
 44 Where did he live?
 What does "Bethsaida" mean?
 45 What did Philip do?
 Who was Nathanael?
 Why is it supposed that he was the same person as Bartholomew?
 What did Philip say to him of Jesus?
 Of whom did Moses and the prophets write?
 46 What reply did Nathanael make to Philip?
 What did Philip invite him to do?
 What is essential to the reception of the truth?
 How is Christianity known?
 47 What did Jesus say of Nathanael?
 48 What did Nathanael ask Jesus?
 What reply did Jesus make?
 49 What did Nathanael confess Jesus to be?
 What does "Rabbi" mean?
 What "greater things" did Nathanael see?
 What is meant by "angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man?"
 Why did Jesus speak of himself as "the Son of man?"

Go win some precious soul to-day
 That in the darkness long has trod;
 Go win some soul to wisdom's way,
 For every soul is dear to God.

Go help some soul to feel and know
 That Jesus died for sinful men
 Upon the cross in bitter woe;
 Eternal life was offered then.

Perchance some soul is standing by,
 And longs for words that you may say;
 O, bring God's invitation nigh!
 Go win some precious soul to-day. (Selected.)

LESSON III.—JANUARY 17.

JESUS AND NICODEMUS.

John 3: 1-17. Read John 7: 45-52; 19: 38-42.

1 ¶Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
2 The same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew.

8 The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?

13 And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up;

15 That whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.

16 ¶For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.

17 For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.*” (John 3: 16.)

TIME.—A.D. 27, soon after Jesus cleansed the temple the first time.

PLACE.—Probably in the house of some friend in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Nicodemus and Jesus.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 3: 31-36.

HOME READING.—

January 11. M. Jesus and Nicodemus. (John 3: 1-17.)

January 12. T. Nicodemus Defends Jesus. (John 7: 45-52.)

January 13. W. Nicodemus Assists at Christ's Burial. (John 19: 38-42.)

January 14. T. Begotten of God. (John 1: 6-13.)

January 15. F. Begotten of Christ. (1 John 2: 23-29.)

January 16. S. Begotten of the Holy Spirit. (1 Pet. 1: 12.)

January 17. S. Eternal Life Through God's Son. (John 3: 31-36.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Begin the study of the lesson with the understanding that “the new birth” can be understood and is essential to the salvation of the soul.

To be born of God and to be his child is very different indeed from having one's name merely enrolled on some church book.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Nicodemus.

1. Nicodemus was a Pharisee and "a ruler of the Jews." He was a ruler among them—that is, a member of the Sanhedrin and a rabbi, or teacher. (John 3: 10.) His name is mentioned only three times in the Bible. In John 7: 50, 51 he speaks out in the Jewish council and protests against condemning Jesus unheard, and in John 19: 39-42 he brings a hundred pounds of mixture of myrrh and aloes and assists Joseph of Arimathea in burying Jesus.

The Pharisees were the most numerous and most "orthodox" religious sect among the Jews. They believed in angels, spirits, and the resurrection, and in this were opposed to the Sadducees, another religious sect. Paul was a Pharisee. (Acts 23: 6-8.) They were scrupulous and punctilious as to outward forms, but paid little regard to purity of heart and life. They, with the Sadducees, strongly opposed Christ. They tithed "mint and anise and cummin," and "left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith." They should have done the former, but should not have neglected the latter. As it was, they were "blind guides." They strained out the gnat and swallowed the camel. (Matt. 23: 23, 24.) They were great critics, faultfinders, and exacting in telling others what to do; but they said, and did not. They presented a beautiful outward appearance, made long public prayers and great pretensions, but in heart were full of extortion, excess, and rottenness. They were filled with all uncleanness, corruption, iniquity, and hypocrisy. They split hairs over theories, liked chief seats in meetings, sought to be considered the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and loved religious titles. With all this, they were zealous for their own righteousness, while living in disobedience to God, and were intensely missionary, compassing sea and land to make one convert, making him at the same time "twofold more a child of hell [Gehenna] than" themselves. Study Jesus' exposition and denunciation of the hypocrisy and corruption of the Pharisees in Matt. 23.

II. A Lesson for the Church.

There is such a thing now as being church members nominally, or pretended Christians, and even professed guides of the blind, lights to those in darkness, teachers of babes, and instructors of the ignorant (Rom. 2: 17-23); and yet, with all these pretensions and professions, there is such a thing as being "lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God," and yet "holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." These, says Paul, are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," "take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts." (2 Tim. 3: 1-7.) What can be the difference between these and the Pharisees, except the Pharisees may have been more moral? One person cannot be all these bad things at once, but any one of them is bad enough in a pretended teacher and leader.

There can be nothing more pharisaical than to split hairs over various theories and to neglect justice and mercy and faith; than to make laws where God has made none, while disobeying some God has made; than to hold "a form of godliness," while denying the power thereof. The "power of godliness" is the transformation it makes in one's own heart and life—godlikeness in one's own character; mercy, justice, uprightness, purity, truth, and love; also, hatred of evil and wrongdoing anywhere and in any one. Jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity. (Heb. 11: 8, 9.)

One's "logical deductions" are far more binding on some than the teaching of the New Testament. The Pharisees by some process of logic had drawn the conclusion and law that to "swear by the temple" is nothing, but to "swear by the gold of the temple" is binding; and to "swear by the altar" is nothing, but to "swear by the gift" upon the altar is binding. But Jesus says they were blind and fools.

Are not some theories and contentions to-day as foolish? Are not some who make such contentions as blind?

I cannot undertake and am not able to specify various instances of pharisaism. But saying and doing not is one; binding burdens upon others, while doing nothing to lighten them, is another; forever criticizing and finding fault, while not setting a proper example, is another; seeking religious titles of any sort is another; seeking prominence and boasting and self-exaltation is still another. A vast amount of pharisaism can be sifted out by studying and especially practicing 2 Tim. 3: 1-7. Think a while on "lovers of self," "lovers of money," "boastful," "puffed up," "haughty," "slanderers," "no lovers of good," "without self-control," "silly women laden with sins," "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God;" and yet all these are pretending to learn and to teach the truth! In some places such seem more popular than the humble, meek, modest, truly pure, and sincerely godly. But the Lord knows all who are his.

III. Why Nicodemus Went by Night.

2. Why he came to Jesus "by night," we do not know, since the record does not give his reason.

Here we learn the difference between faith and opinion. That he came to Jesus and came "by night" are two facts. These we all believe, because the Bible states them. About these there is no controversy. Why he came "by night" cannot be a matter of faith, because the record does not say. This is a mere conjecture, or opinion. Some say that it was through fear of the Jews, already enraged over the cleansing of the temple, and he did not wish to encounter the hostility of the priests; yet he wanted to know more of a teacher who he believed was sent from God. Others say that since he was a member of the Sanhedrin and the business of that body was greatly increased during the passover, the night was the only opportune time for an interview. Still others say that it was a matter of prudence on his part; he wanted to know for certain what he was doing before he made a change. Others yet say that he sought the quietude of the night, after the multitudes had dispersed, because Jesus was busily engaged with them during the day. Still others say that he had mingled motives; that all the above motives had something to do with it. Now, why did he come "by night?"

Whatever God says, that we believe, we know. Concerning that about which he does not speak we can have no faith, for faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.) Opinion is not faith, and "we walk by faith" in the service of God. (2 Cor. 5: 7.)

"Rabbi" means "teacher," or "master," and was a title of honor. (Matt. 23: 1-12.) Nicodemus was respectful, candid, honest, sincere, and sought information, whatever may have been his reason for going "by night." He confessed at once his faith in Jesus as a teacher sent from God, and assigned his reason: "For no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." (See John 5: 36; 20: 30, 31.)

IV. The New Birth.

3. Jesus recognized Nicodemus' desire for information, saw where his point of difficulty lay, and replied directly to it. Nicodemus, like those who went to John's baptism, doubtless thought that because he was a son of Abraham he was already prepared to enter the promised kingdom.

By "verily, verily," Jesus lays emphasis on the statement he is about to make: "Except one be born anew [or "from above"—margin; see John 3: 31; 19: 11; James 1: 17; 3: 15, 17], he cannot see the kingdom of God"—that is, any man, every man; must be "born anew" in order to enter Christ's kingdom. This is similar to what John the Baptist told the multitude in Luke 3: 7-9. Every one must repent, be baptized from his heart, continue to obey God, and thus show by a new life that he has repented, and all upon his own responsibility to God. He who does not do this will be destroyed.

"Born anew" is a strong and expressive figure which shows the complete change that must take place in a man before he is prepared to enjoy the kingdom of God. This change is comparable to being born anew. One is represented as coming out of darkness into light; called out of darkness into "marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2: 9); delivered from "the power of darkness" and "translated" into the kingdom of the Son of God (Col. 1: 13); "a new creature" (2 Cor. 5: 17); walking "in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 4); "dead unto sin, but alive unto God" (verse 11); a partaker of "the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2 Pet. 1: 4.)

Many people do what is called "joining the church," when really they are not in it. They have "joined" after the fashion, because they think they "ought to belong to some church." A struggle and a scramble for numbers may have placed the names of thousands on the church roll who have never been "born anew."

To "see the kingdom of God" means to enter it, to appreciate it, and to enjoy it. One must become a new creature to do this.

"The kingdom of God is . . . righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14: 17.) In it God reigns as King. He is the supreme object of love, adoration, and service. His will is its law, and men must love and obey him in order to enter it. People may get their names on the church roll without regard to character, but they cannot enter Christ's kingdom, or church, that way.

4. Nicodemus took Christ's language literally, and asked how one could "enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born." The woman at Jacob's well thought Jesus meant literal water (John

4: 10-15), and the Jews took him to mean his literal flesh (John 6: 53-71). It is no more difficult to understand being "born anew" than to understand what Jesus means by "the water of life," or "living water," and "the bread of heaven."

5. In this Jesus does not reply so much to Nicodemus' difficulty as he explains the new birth. He emphasizes again by "verily, verily," and repeats the declaration that one must be "born anew" by saying: "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Christ's "must be born anew," or "born of water and the Spirit," stands between every sinner and the kingdom of God.

"Born of water and the Spirit" means one birth; it cannot mean two births.

This birth concerns the heart, the inner man. One's heart is engaged and enlisted through the gospel of Jesus preached "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven." (1 Pet. 1: 12.) The gospel is God's power to save. (Rom. 1: 16.) It is spiritual power addressed to the hearts of men. They hear it, believe it, are moved by it to repent of their sins and to obey God in baptism. This is the change in one which Jesus calls being "born again." All who have been "born again," or "anew," continue "to walk in newness of life."

Speaking without a figure, Jesus says: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16: 15, 16.) The apostles did this. On Pentecost they preached the gospel; exhorted all to know it "assuredly"—that is, to believe it, and to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus unto the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 37, 38.) People who did all this were "born anew," "born of God," "born of water and the Spirit."

"All agree that the birth of the Spirit refers to the inward, or spiritual, change that takes place; and all candid authorities agree that 'born of water' refers to baptism. So Alford, Wesley, Abbott, Whitby, Olshausen, Tholuck, Prof. William Milligan, the Episcopal 'Prayer Book,' the 'Westminster Confession,' the Methodist Episcopal 'Discipline,' the Methodist Episcopal 'Doctrinal Tracts,' and also the writers of the early church, all declare. Alford says: 'All attempts to get rid of this have sprung from doctrinal prejudices.'" (Johnson, in "The People's New Testament.")

6. In this verse, and without stopping, Christ informs Nicodemus that he is speaking, not of a fleshly, but a spiritual, birth. One is born of the flesh in the natural birth; but the spiritual birth has to do, not with the physical nature, but with the heart. One's spirit, not one's body, is born again. One's physical constitution remains the same; but there is wrought in one's heart, in one's spiritual nature, so great a change from love of sin to hatred of sin, from love of Satan to love of God, from disobedience to God to loving and delightful obedience to him, that it is called a "new birth."

7. This is necessary from the very nature of the case, and should not astonish Nicodemus.

8. In this verse Jesus further shows that it is not a visible, physical birth, but an invisible, spiritual one. As the wind blows and we hear it and know it exists, although we cannot see it or tell whence it comes or whither it goes, so is this birth, or so is every one that is born of the Spirit. It is a reality—it takes place—although not a visible,

physical affair, as the natural birth, or birth of the flesh. It is the spirit of man, not the body—the heart, not the physical structure—that is changed.

But suppose Christ is explaining here how the Spirit of God operates on the hearts of men; it must be remembered that the comparison is not between the effects of the wind, such as feeling it, and the effects of the Spirit, but between hearing the one and hearing the other. People must hear the Spirit.

The word "pneuma," here translated "wind," is, in the last part of this verse, translated "Spirit," and also in every other place where it occurs in the New Testament. In this very place, in the margin of the version we use in these lessons, it is also translated "Spirit." Then the verse would read: "The Spirit breatheth where it will [or pleases], and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The sound the Spirit makes is its "voice." One hears the Spirit speak. He speaks through the apostles. They spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2: 4.) The Spirit speaks the word of God. The word of God is the incorruptible seed by which one is "begotten again" (1 Pet. 1: 23), by which one is "quickened" (Ps. 119: 50), and by which one is "brought . . . forth" (James 1: 18). The word of God is spiritual seed, and by it God begets spiritual children. (1 Cor. 4: 15; Phile. 10.) Through it the sinner is warned and aroused, and his heart is warmed and broken (Jer. 23: 29), and its secrets are laid bare (Heb. 4: 12).

Again: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." (1 John 5: 1.) Faith comes through hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.)

To love God is to be begotten of him. (1 John 4: 7, 8.)

To do righteousness is to be begotten of God. (1 John 3: 20.)

All these are not different births, but the one birth. One hears the gospel, believes it, loves God because God first loved him, and does righteousness, and is thus born of God. So when one hears the voice of the Spirit through inspired men preaching the incorruptible seed—the gospel—and receives that seed into the heart and obeys it, one is born of the Spirit, is "born of water and the Spirit," because the Spirit leads that one by faith in Jesus to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ unto the remission of sins. (Acts 2: 37, 38.) The gospel was preached to Onesimus (Phile. 10) and the Corinthians by Paul (1 Cor. 4: 15). So Paul is called their "father in the gospel." They were "born again." The Corinthians "hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18: 8.)

All children of God have been "born of God," or "born again." "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) These are God's children, hence have been born of him; but this birth was through faith, which led to repentance and baptism into Christ.

Then, where is the mystery about the new birth?

9, 10. Nicodemus still wondered; and Jesus asked him if, as a "teacher of Israel," he did not know these things. He ought to have known them.

11. Nicodemus and his associates did not receive this testimony of Jesus and his disciples.

12. "Earthly things" seem to be the things belonging to the kingdom on earth; "heavenly things," the things of the "everlasting kingdom"—God and eternal glory.

13. Heaven is Christ's home. He existed "in the beginning"—long before he appeared on earth. He came down from heaven to tell of heavenly things. He who was with God knows. To hear him is the only way to be saved. (See Rom. 10: 6-11.)

V. How Healed by the Brazen Serpent.

14, 15. (See Num. 21: 4-9.) Great numbers of the Israelites were bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness, and not a few died. The bite was incurable. If God did not heal them, they must die. He directed Moses to make a serpent of brass and to put it upon a pole in the camp, and promised that whoever, when bitten by a deadly serpent, would look "unto the serpent of brass," should live. The look was an act of faith.

So Christ was lifted up on the cross that whosoever believeth in him should be saved. To believe in him is to trust and obey him. This faith must be expressed in whatever act of obedience God now requires, as the faith of the Israelites was expressed then in a look. All who refused to look refused salvation from the poison of the serpent. God requires now all who believe in Jesus and have repented of their sins to show their faith in the burial and resurrection of Christ by being baptized. (Col. 2: 12.)

In 2 Kings 18: 4 we learn what became of this brazen serpent.

16. This verse declares the great love of God manifested in the gift of his Son for the world under the condemnation of sin. It sets forth (1) what God has done to save the world, (2) what Jesus has done to save the world, and (3) what the world must do to be saved. God so loved the world as to give his Son, the Son so loved the world as to come and die, and all must believe in Christ with the faith which works through love (Gal. 5: 6) and which is made perfect through obedience (James 2: 14-26).

17. God did not send his Son to condemn, but to save, the world. God does not hate, but loves, the world, and sent his Son to save the world. Jesus did not come to hunt up all the sins of the world, to sum them all up, and prosecute and condemn the world. He knew the world was condemned already, and he came to call sinners to repentance and to seek and to save the lost. "He that believeth not hath been judged already," and Jesus brings the way of salvation. "He that believeth on him is not judged," or condemned.

VI. Active or Obedient Faith Saves.

Verses 18-21 show that this is active or obedient faith. So does verse 35. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

If people in the church have the spirit of Christ, they will in gen-

tleness and humility try to restore all other members who have been overtaken in any trespass, but will not scour the country hunting up all faults and mistakes against such in order to condemn them.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
- 1 What particular one sought Jesus?
What was he?
Where else and in what connection is his name mentioned?
Who were the Pharisees?
What were they in character, pretense, and practice? (Give examples.)
Show from 2 Tim. 3: 1-7 and other scriptures in what ways church members and teachers may be pharisaical now.
 - 2 Why did Nicodemus go by night?
Show the difference between faith and opinion.
What did he say to Jesus?
What does "rabbi" mean?
Is it right to wear titles of distinction in religion?
What convinced Nicodemus?
Was he honest?
 - 3 How did Jesus treat him?
What was his difficulty?
What was Jesus' reply?
What does "verily" mean?
What is meant by "born anew?"
What is "the kingdom of God?"
 - 4 How did Nicodemus take this language?
 - 5 Of what did Jesus say one must be born?
What is it to be "born of water and the Spirit?"
 - 6 What is "born anew"—one's body or spirit?
 - 7 Why should Nicodemus not marvel at this?
 - 8 What does this verse mean—between what is the comparison and what does it show?
How is the heart of man influenced by the Spirit?
 - 9, 10 Ought Nicodemus to know these things?
 - 11 Did he receive Christ's testimony?
 - 12 What are the "earthly things," and what are the "heavenly things?"
 - 13 Who came from heaven, and who knows these things?
 - 14, 15 What was "the serpent in the wilderness?"
Who lifted it up, and why?
What did the people do in order to be healed?
What obedience does God now require?
What became of the brazen serpent?
Who is lifted up for us?
How?
What must people do now to be saved?
 - 16 What does this declare?
What has God done to save the world, what has Jesus done, and what must men do to be saved?
When does faith save?
Who are condemned already?
Why?
What did Jesus come not to do, but to do?
What do verses 18-21 and verse 35 show?
What will Christians do, and what will they not, in regard to others who do wrong?

On! Fear not nor falter, but give of your best;
It is all that an angel can do. Leave the rest
Unto God; he is sure, and he loves more your flags
When the powers of darkness have rent them to rags.
The law of the soul is eternal endeavor,
And bears the man onward and upward forever.

(Edwin Markham.)

"The greatest joy to mortals given
Is inward joy of sins forgiven."

LESSON IV.—JANUARY 24.

JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

John 4: 13-26. Read John 4: 1-42.

13 ¶Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst well, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: this hast thou said truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father.

22 Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (he that is called Christ): when he is come, he will declare unto us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”* (Isa. 12: 3.)

TIME.—A.D. 27.

PLACE.—Jacob's well.

PERSONS.—Jesus and a fallen woman.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 55: 1-11.

HOME READING.—

January 18. M. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman. (John 4: 13-26.)

January 19. T. Still Waters. (Ps. 23: 1-6.)

January 20. W. Satisfying Waters. (John 7: 37-44.)

January 21. T. Cleansing Waters. (Ezek. 36: 22-31.)

January 22. F. Healing Waters. (Ezek. 47: 1-9.)

January 23. S. Wells of Salvation. (Isa. 12: 1-6.)

January 24. S. The Invitation to the Waters. (Isa. 55: 1-11.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Sychar was the ancient Shechem, so famous in the early history. It was about forty miles north of Jerusalem, and was situated between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, the mounts of blessing and cursing.” (Josh. 8: 30-35.) Abraham encamped here (Gen. 12: 6), and here the covenant was renewed after Joshua had conquered Canaan (Josh. 24: 1-25). It was on the road from Judea to Galilee. Jacob bought this ground “of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for a hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it El-Elohe-Israel” (Gen. 33: 19, 20)—that is, “God, the God of Israel.” He gave this to

Joseph (Gen. 48: 22), and here the bones of Joseph were buried after the children of Israel had brought them out of Egypt. (Josh. 24: 32.)

JACOB'S WELL.—"The well of Jacob lies about a mile and a half east of the city, close to the lower road, and just beyond the wretched hamlet of Balata. . . . The well is deep—seventy-five feet when last measured—and there was probably a considerable accumulation of rubbish at the bottom. Sometimes it contains a few feet of water, but at other times it is quite dry. It is entirely excavated in solid rock, perfectly round, nine feet in diameter, with the sides hewn smooth and regular. Of all the special localities in our Lord's life, this is almost the only one absolutely undisputed." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.) It was found to be one hundred and five feet deep in 1697. The thirty feet of rubbish at the bottom has covered up the water. It must have been curbed around with stones, and perhaps covered. This was a well-watered country; hence, Jacob must have dug this well in order to be independent of the people of that country.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

After his visit to Jerusalem, the passover, his miracles here, and his conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus and his disciples went into the country of Judea; "and there he tarried with them, and baptized." (John 3: 22.) He was there probably until fall.

Jesus preached, as did John the Baptist, "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4: 23), saying: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (verse 17). When he sent out the apostles "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," he commanded them to preach the same (Matt. 10: 6, 7); and the "seventy," as they went "two and two," preached the same (Luke 10: 1-16).

Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. He did the baptizing through his disciples. (John 4: 1, 2.)

While Jesus and his disciples were thus busy at work in Judea, John "was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there." (John 3: 23.) He had not yet been cast into prison. Here John bears testimony again of Jesus in replying to the statement of his disciples that Jesus was baptizing also, "and all men come to him." He and Jesus were each filling the mission each received from heaven. This is clear, strong, and noble testimony.

When the fact that Jesus was making so many disciples was known by the Pharisees, they became jealous and aroused; and Jesus departed from Judea and went to Galilee.

His time had "not yet come" for this open conflict. He had many truths yet to teach and disciples to train.

In order to reach Galilee from Judea "he must needs pass through Samaria," because Samaria lies exactly between the two. (See the map.)

Galilee was the northern division; Samaria, the middle division; and Judea, the southern division of Palestine. The city of Samaria was the capital of Samaria.

In his journey Jesus came to Jacob's well. "Wearied with his journey," Jesus sat on this well. We have seen that Jesus became hungry. Here he was weary, tired, and thirsty. He sat down to rest.

It is right to rest sometimes. He exhorted his apostles, after a preaching tour, to retire "into a desert place, and rest a while." (Mark 6: 31.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Woman.

Jesus rested there while his disciples were gone into Sychar to buy food. At this time a woman of Samaria came from "the city" (John 4: 28) to draw water, and Jesus asked of her a drink. He had no means of drawing the water himself. (Verses 7, 8.)

By his speech or appearance, or by both, she recognized him as a Jew, and asked why he would ask a drink of her, a Samaritan. This was not a refusal of his request, but an expression of surprise. The Jews, as a class, looked upon the Samaritans as dogs; and this woman was astonished that a Jew would ask a favor of her. The Samaritans were a mongrel race. (Verse 9.)

When the king of Assyria had overthrown the kingdom of Israel (the ten tribes) and had carried the Israelites into captivity, he brought men from Babylon, from Cuthah, from Ava, from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and settled them in the cities of Samaria. They mixed with the few and poor scattered Israelites that were left; also their idolatry was mixed with the worship of God, so that they neither served God nor practiced altogether their former idolatrous ordinances. (2 Kings 17: 24-41.)

The Jews and the Samaritans differed in nationality and in religion and had rival places of worship. (John 4: 20, 21.) The bitterness entertained by the Jews against the Samaritans is seen in the following vituperation: "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a demon?" (John 8: 48.) We can hardly conceive of a greater racial, social, and religious intolerance. The Jews had commercial dealings with the Samaritans, for the disciples had gone then to buy food in Sychar.

II. The Living Water.

The greatest "gift of God" is Christ and salvation through him. God gave his "only begotten Son." (Verse 10.)

Jesus was really thirsty, but in asking this favor he sought an opportunity to confer a greater one.

"Living water" is "springing water" (Gen. 26: 19), or "running water" (Lev. 14: 5)—perennial—in contrast with cistern, or standing, water. But Jesus uses the term figuratively. "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." (Isa. 12: 3.) God is the source of "the wells of salvation." "For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jer. 2: 13.) To leave God and his ways is to turn away from the "living water."

Christ is this "living water," as he is "the bread of heaven" or "the light of the world." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" and he who drinks of Christ will himself become a fountain to dispense the "living water" to others, as he who walks in the light

himself becomes light to others. "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7: 38, 39.) Filled with the Spirit on Pentecost, the apostles were "rivers of living water" to their hearers; and guided by the Spirit and having "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8: 9-14), Christians bring forth "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5: 22, 23) and become "living water" to others.

Like Nicodemus in regard to being born again, the woman took Jesus literally; yet she was impressed with what he said, and wanted to know where he could get "living water." He could not draw it from that well, because he had nothing to draw with. Then, could he obtain it from some other source? Was he greater than Jacob, who gave the well? (Verses 11, 12.)

13, 14. Christ shows her that he does not mean the water of the well or water like that. To drink that is to "thirst again." The water he gives satisfies—"shall never thirst." Christ satisfies the thirst of the soul. Nothing earthly can do this. Christ fills it with wellsprings of joy, sweet peace, abiding contentment, permanent happiness—in a word, with heaven.

15. The woman still mistook him, but was still interested, and thought that if she had that water she would not have to go to the well and draw.

III. Jesus Convinces the Woman He is a Prophet.

16-18. To lead her to a knowledge of himself and to recall her life and convince her of her need of salvation, Jesus said to her: "Go, call thy husband." These words had the desired effect, and she confessed that she had no husband. Jesus replied: "Thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband."

19-24. The woman then acknowledges Jesus to be a prophet. Since he was a prophet, she appealed to him to settle the question of the place of worship—in the mountain of Samaria (Mount Gerizim) or at Jerusalem. Some have said that this woman sought to direct the attention of Jesus from her past life by raising the question of the proper place of worship, but that cannot be. She thought that Jesus, being a prophet, could tell her which is right.

IV. God Must Be Worshiped in Spirit and Truth.

Jesus explained to her that she knew not what she worshiped, and that in this controversy the Jews were right; but, under him, people must worship God "in spirit and truth." "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

25, 26. The woman acknowledged that when the Messiah should come he would declare unto the people all things. Here John again explained that "Messiah" is "Christ." In this way Jesus led her to acknowledge him as the Messiah.

No "sacred place" is now essential to acceptable worship. "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in houses made with hands; as saith the prophet, The heaven is my throne, and the earth the footstool of my feet: what manner of house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or

what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?" (Acts 7: 48-50.)

Anywhere, everywhere, God may be worshiped under the reign of Christ, but the two important elements of worship are necessary—spirit and truth. One must be in earnest, honest, sincere, and zealous; his whole inner man—his heart and his spirit—must be enlisted and engaged. Then he must serve God according to God's word. His "word is truth." (John 17: 17.) However earnest and zealous, sincere and honest, one may be in doing a wrong thing, that does not **make the wrong thing right.** Or one may do right in a formal, technical, heartless manner—having the form of godliness, while denying the power thereof—and even then be not an acceptable worshiper of God. One may have zeal without knowledge (Rom. 10: 1-3) or knowledge without zeal. Both are necessary.

V. Leading Others to Christ.

(Verses 27-30, 39-42.)

As these verses state, this woman, notwithstanding her past sinful life, accepted Christ in faith and led many of her neighbors to him. He, being besought by her neighbors, remained there two days. Some believed through this woman's word concerning Jesus, and others believed because they heard him themselves. They were open and frank, and it seems that Jesus worked no miracles to convince them. They believed in him without that.

This teaches the church to-day the very important lesson of seeking the salvation of the lost and to what great results such efforts may lead. This woman was not beyond the attention and love of Jesus, and such should not be beyond ours.

VI. Jesus' Meat Was to Do the Will of God.

(Verses 31-34.)

Having returned with the food they went to purchase, and the woman having gone into the city to tell her neighbors about the wonderful prophet she had just met, who must be the Christ, his disciples prayed Jesus to eat. But he declined, saying he had meat to eat they knew not of. They did not understand his meaning, and said to one another: "Hath any man brought him aught to eat?" Then he answered: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work."

It was Jesus' mission on earth to do God's will. He declares of himself: "I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6: 38.) His judgment was righteous, because he sought not his own, but God's, will. (John 5: 30.) So in his severest trial and deepest sorrow he prayed God's will and not his be done. There was no unrighteousness in Jesus, and he was true in all things and to all persons, because he sought not his own glory, but the glory of God. (John 7: 18.)

In his consuming desire to do God's will and to accomplish God's work he lost sight of his hunger and his own comfort. Filled with this spirit, Christ's disciples to-day lose sight of their physical com-

fort and appetite in their burning desire and earnest efforts to save souls and to accomplish God's work otherwise.

Let us learn, too, the wonderful lesson that the more fully people seek to do God's will and not their own and to glorify God and not themselves, the more nearly righteous and just they are with all others and in all things. Being governed by the will of God renders people righteous, just, merciful, of sound mind, and of sound judgment. Let's try this.

VII. Fields White unto Harvest.

(Verse 35.)

It was four months at that time until the grain harvest, and the grain could not be harvested until that time had come; but looking upon the Samaritans, ready to receive him as the Messiah, he declared to his disciples that the fields were "white already unto harvest." On another occasion he said, "The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few;" and he exhorted his disciples to pray "the Lord of the harvest" to "send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10: 2; see also Matt. 9: 36-38.)

There is a crying need to-day of the plain, simple, all-powerful, soul-saving gospel of Christ, and of men to preach it in all the world. Hence, there is great need of faithful and true, righteous and godly laborers who are satisfied with "the wages" Jesus here mentions. God's way of obtaining such laborers is to pray him for them. Note that the harvest is "*his*," and he must send into it such laborers as he desires. Jesus declares that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and, therefore, this is true; but God's way of obtaining more laborers is not to increase the carnal pay. Some men will do anything for money, even preach; but comparatively few men will preach the gospel of Christ fully and truly for the love of souls and the glory of God, or for the wages which Christ pays.

God then, really sends laborers into "his harvest," and all he sends are the right kind. All who preach are not God-sent. Note:

1. "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife" and "of faction." (Phil. 1: 15-17.)

2. Some preach their own wisdom and theories and speculations, seeking their own glory. (John 7: 18.) He only seeks God's glory who seeks and does and preaches only the will of God—all of it, but no more, and for the wages which he pays.

3. Some preach themselves—their own exploits, families, experiences, and wisdom and ways. (2 Cor. 4: 5.)

4. Paul says in his day "many" were "corrupting the word of God," and the margin says "making merchandise" of it, while he preached Christ in sincerity and as of God in God's sight. (2 Cor. 2: 17.)

5. Some "with feigned words make merchandise" of the churches. (2 Pet. 2: 3.) Pretending to seek the good of the churches, they seek their own profit. This is hypocrisy; hence, Paul says "with feigned words."

6. Some walk "in craftiness" and handle "the word of God deceitfully," but Paul commended himself "to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. 4: 2.)

7. "Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light," and "his min-

isters also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11: 14, 15.)

With at least seven classes of teachers and preachers prompted by wrong motives and striving to accomplish unholy purposes, we must feel the force of the necessity of praying God to send the only one true and faithful class into "his harvest."

There have been false, mercenary, self-seeking teachers and preachers since Cain killed Abel, and there will be to the end of time. The church of God should have sufficient knowledge of the Bible, sufficiently clear and conscientious convictions, and sufficiently strong courage to distinguish always between the false and true and to turn away from the former.

Verses 36-38 state the true coöperation of the sowers and reapers. Both rejoice together. While God has ordained that true preachers of the gospel should be supported, the wages, or fruit, reaped is "life eternal" for themselves and all they help to save. Who will work for such wages?

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Principal

Characters of the lesson.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Where and what was Sychar?

Name the facts which occurred there.

State all the facts about Jacob's well.

Where did Jesus go from Jerusalem?

What did he do?

Who performed the act of baptizing the people?

What did Jesus and his disciples preach?

Where was John the Baptist now?

What statement was made to him about the work of Jesus?

What reply did he make?

Why did Jesus leave Judea?

Why must he pass through Samaria to reach Galilee?

Why did Jesus stop at this well?

Where were the disciples?

Who came to the well?

For what did Jesus ask?

Why was she astonished?

Who were the Samaritans?

What did Jesus say to this reply of the woman?

What did he mean by "living water?"

What did the woman think he meant?

13, 14 What did Jesus say?

15 What reply did she make?

16-18 Whom did Jesus tell her to call?

19-24 What convinced her that Jesus was a prophet?

What question of worship did she desire Jesus to settle?

25, 26 Who were right in this controversy? Under Christ, how must God be worshiped?

Where may God be worshiped now?

What do "spirit" and "truth" mean?

What is it to worship in spirit and truth?

How did this woman lead others to Christ?

How long was he there, and why?

Why did many believe on him?

What lesson should the church learn from this example of Jesus?

When the disciples returned with food, what did they exhort Jesus to do?

What reply did he make?

What was Jesus' mission to earth?

Filled with the Spirit of Jesus, what do his disciples lose sight of, and what will they do?

What does "white unto the harvest" mean?

Why did Jesus say this?

What did he say on other occasions in regard to this?

Of what is there a general and crying need?

What is God's way of increasing the number of laborers?

Give the seven different motives named here which are not acceptable to God, but which move men to preach. (Let the teacher dwell on each.)

What is the only right motive and purpose to be accomplished?

LESSON V.—JANUARY 31.

JESUS FEEDS FIVE THOUSAND MEN.

John 6: 1-14. Read John 6: 1-71.

1 [After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea of Tiberias*.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they beheld the signs which he did on them that were sick.

3 And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.

5 Jesus therefore lifting up his eyes, and seeing that a great multitude cometh unto him, saith unto Philip, Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred shillings' worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?

10 Jesus said, Make the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down; likewise also of the fishes as much as they would.

12 And when they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost.

13 So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten.

14 When therefore the people saw the sign which he did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* (John 6: 35.)

TIME.—A.D. 29, just before the passover (John 6: 4) and soon after the death of John the Baptist.

PLACE.—“A desert place” near Bethsaida; not Bethsaida near Capernaum, but on “the other side of the Sea of Galilee” (John 6: 1), on the northeastern shore, just east of where the Jordan flows into the sea.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the twelve, and the multitude.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 34: 3-11.

HOME READING—

January 25. M. Jesus Feeds Five Thousand Men. (John 6: 1-14.)

January 26. T. Jesus the Bread of Life. (John 6: 41-51.)

January 27. W. Feeding on Ashes. (Isa. 44: 12-20.)

January 28. T. A Promise of Bread. (Ps. 132: 11-18.)

January 29. F. A Prayer for Bread. (Matt. 6: 5-15.)

January 30. S. The Broken Bread. (1 Cor. 11: 23-29.)

January 31. S. The Divine Provider. (Ps. 34: 1-11.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Bethsaida” means “house of fish.” There seems to have been two cities by this name—one, on the western shore of the sea of Galilee, near Capernaum and Chorazin (Matt. 11: 21; Mark 6: 45-53; Luke 10: 13), the “city of Andrew and Peter” and Philip (John 1: 44); the other, on the northeastern shore, as stated under “Place,” near which Jesus fed the five thousand (Mark 6: 31-44; Luke 9: 10-17).

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Learn all the facts.

Feeding the four thousand occurred later than feeding the five thousand.

Between chapter 5 and chapter 6 John passes over about a year of Jesus' history.

This miracle is the only one recorded by all four of the evangelists—that is, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Feeding the four thousand later on is recorded by Matthew and Mark only. Many other miracles were recorded by at least three of these writers.

As has been stated, John wrote after the other three and passes over much they had recorded and records much they had left unwritten.

It must be remembered that when more than one record the same miracle, one may record a fact which the others omit. In such a case we can obtain all the facts only by putting together all which they all record. This is true with reference to every Bible subject. We must put together all the Bible says on every subject before we can know all that God teaches on it.

WHY JESUS SOUGHT "A DESERT PLACE."—In this miracle recorded by the four we see all the motives which cooperated in prompting Jesus to seek retirement in "a desert place" over the sea and beyond Herod's jurisdiction. (a) The desire of Herod to see him (Luke 9: 9, 10), which desire he had no intention of gratifying; (b) the needed rest for himself and his apostles, just returned from toilsome journeyings, for "they had no leisure so much as to eat" (Mark 6: 30, 31); (c) and the news of the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14: 13). Jesus was deeply grieved and the multitudes were greatly enraged over the sad, cruel murder of John the Baptist. These facts prompted Jesus to seek the privacy of the desert.

Herod feared the multitudes, or he would have beheaded John the Baptist before this. (Matt. 14: 5.) They were now ready to revolt, and, with their misconceptions of the nature of Christ's mission, to crown and proclaim him king, which they really attempted, anyway. (John 6: 15.) Hence, he withdrew into privacy for meditation and rest and to allow the excitement among the people to subside.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Facts.

1-5. Upon hearing of the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14: 12) and upon the return of the apostles from their preaching tours (Mark 6: 30; Luke 9: 10), Jesus and his disciples went into "a desert place apart," across the northern end of the sea of Galilee.

They crossed the sea in a boat. The multitudes from all the cities, intensely interested, saw them "going," recognized them, and followed them, running "together there on foot," and "outwent them." That the multitude was great we learn from the fact that it numbered about five thousand men, besides the women and children. The multitudes followed him "because they beheld the signs which he did on them that were sick." (John 6: 2.) The public roads passed around the head of the sea, and the people took these roads on foot and "out-

went" the boat, which they could see almost all the journey. When the boat landed, they were there awaiting Jesus.

Again all opportunity for rest was gone, and again, in his sympathy for the people, Jesus lost sight of his own personal needs and "came forth" out of the boat; and seeing the "great multitude," "he had compassion on them" and "welcomed them," "because they were as sheep not having a shepherd," "and spake to them of the kingdom of God, and them that had need of healing he cured." (Matt. 14: 14; Mark 6: 34; Luke 9: 11.) The compassion of Jesus is frequently mentioned in the New Testament. (Matt. 9: 36; 15: 32; 20: 33, 34; Mark 1: 41; 5: 19; Luke 7: 13.)

This was near the passover, and the people were collecting to attend this annual feast at Jerusalem. It was in the spring, when the grass was fresh and green. (Verse 10.)

If the feast in John 5: 1 is a passover, it was the second one since Jesus began his public ministry and one year since he cleansed the temple the first time. (John 2: 18.) The one of this lesson would be the third one.

From John 6: 3 it seems that Jesus retired with his apostles a while into a mountain; but from the other writers it appears that the multitudes followed and there was no time for rest, and he spent the day teaching them and healing the afflicted. Matthew (14: 15) says "when even was come," Mark (6: 35) says "when the day was now far spent," and Luke (9: 12) says "and the day began to wear away," the conversation between Jesus and the apostles about feeding the people took place.

Jesus had compassion on them, not only because they were hungry, but because they were destitute of the bread of life. They had no spiritual food and no shepherds, save the blinded and bigoted scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus asked Philip about feeding them: "Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat?" All the twelve thought it would be impossible for them to buy a sufficient quantity; hence, they came "and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and country round about, and lodge, and get provisions: for we are here in a desert place" (Luke 9: 12); "and buy themselves somewhat to eat" (Mark 6: 36; see also Matt. 14: 15). To this Jesus replied: "They have no need to go away; give ye them to eat." (Matt. 14: 16; see also Mark 6: 37; Luke 9: 13.) The apostles replied through Philip, "Shall we go and buy two hundred shillings' worth of bread, and give them to eat?" (Mark 6: 37); or: "Two hundred shillings' worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little" (John 6: 7). This was the estimate of the apostles as to how much it would take to buy enough for all to have a little. A "shilling" was equal to about seventeen cents in our money; hence, "two hundred shillings' worth" would be about thirty-four dollars' worth. But a shilling then would buy five or six times as much as it will now. It was the ordinary price of a day's work by a common laborer. The apostles either did not have that much money or, having it, did not think it sufficient. Jesus then asked: "How many loaves have ye? go and see." (Mark 6: 38.) They did not know;

but when they had ascertained, they reported through Andrew: "There is a lad here, who hath five barley leaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?" (John 6: 9.)

II. Jesus Can Feed the Soul.

6. Jesus knew before he raised these inquiries what he would do, but he did this for the spiritual benefit of the apostles—"to prove" Philip. They, like ourselves, were sometimes slow to learn.

7, 8. These verses are embraced in explanations under verse 5.

9. This was plain, common food—the food of the poor classes. It was all the apostles could command at that time and place. The multitude, as well as Christ and the apostles, were so greatly interested as to lose sight of temporary needs.

In compassion Jesus fed the multitude, while at the same time by the miracles he wrought he demonstrated his divine power and showed his authority to teach. By healing the bodies of men he showed his power to heal their souls; by feeding their bodies he showed his power to feed their souls. He is the bread of life.

That a lad should have five loaves and two fishes is only a mere incident, from which Jesus draws no lesson. We might just as well give to the five loaves and two fishes some spiritual signification. He was no better than a thousand other lads because he happened to have these. He represented no "aid society" or separate organization from the church to help it along, or to supplement the wisdom of God!

III. Jesus Gives Thanks.

10. When the five loaves and the two fishes were reported, Jesus said: "Bring them hither to me." (Matt. 14: 18.) Then he directed the apostles to seat the men upon the grass in companies of fifties and hundreds. (Matt. 14: 19; Mark 6: 39, 40; Luke 9: 14.) This was orderly, and was done for convenience in waiting upon them. It was comfortable and convenient to sit upon the ground, for "there was much grass in the place," it being about the first of April. The apostles, in obedience to Jesus, went about arranging the companies as he had directed. There "were about five thousand men, besides women and children." (Matt. 14: 21.) It was customary then, and is yet in the East, for men to eat alone, reclining, and for women and children to eat to themselves, sitting.

11. This done, Jesus took the loaves and the two fishes, "and looking up to heaven" (Matt. 14: 19) as the source of all blessings, he gave thanks, then broke the loaves and distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples distributed them to the multitudes; and "likewise also of the fishes as much as they would." Thus Jesus gave thanks when he fed the "four thousand men, besides women and children," with seven loaves and a few fishes (Matt. 15: 32-39; Mark 8: 1-9); so Paul gave thanks after the fast in the ship at sea (Acts 27: 35). Read also 1 Cor. 10: 30; 1 Thess. 5: 18; Heb. 13: 15.

If Jesus, who could magnify the few loaves and the small fishes until they fed thousands of people, first gave God thanks for them, should not we, in our helplessness and dependence upon God, offer thanks for the great abundance with which he has blessed us?

God does not ignore means and human effort in blessing men. Jesus could have called down bread from heaven and had the angels to serve it to the multitudes; but here are the five loaves and two fishes and the disciples, and he used them all. Let the five loaves and two fishes which we have be offered to God, and he will take them and do the rest.

IV. Jesus Teaches Economy.

12. All of the hungry multitude ate "as much as they would," and "were filled." Then Jesus directed the disciples to "gather up the broken pieces that remain," assigning as the reason "that nothing be lost." God teaches economy in nature and all through the Bible. Jesus could magnify loaves and fishes again; he could make bread of stones; yet God wastes nothing, and he teaches us to follow his example. These "broken pieces" will do for food on other occasions. There is nothing wasted which does not bring a corresponding want after a while. Wastefulness is sin.

13. After all had eaten, there were twelve basketfuls left. Jesus not only gave here an object lesson in economy, but by this amount left he showed this was a miracle beyond all doubt.

14. So all present recognized it and said: "This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world." All expected such a prophet. (Deut. 18: 15, 16; Luke 7: 20; John 1: 21.)

V. An Attempt to Make Jesus King.

They misconceived the mission of the Christ and the nature of his kingdom. All, not excepting the apostles, thought he would reign as a temporal, political king on earth. This miracle wrought the multitude up to the highest pitch, so that they desired to crown him and proclaim him king at once. That meant, too, that they would follow him and fight with carnal weapons to sustain his kingdom. Therefore, John (6: 15) says, "Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew again into the mountains himself alone," and Matthew (14: 23) says "to pray," where he spent most of the night (verse 25). To this place of solitude and prayer he had started that morning, but he had been intercepted by the multitude.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Where were the two Bethsaidas?

What was the "desert?"

Who are meant by the four evangelists?

What one miracle do they all record?

Which one wrote after the other three?

What does he omit which the others record?

What does he record which the others omit?

When two or more record a miracle, or anything else, how can we get all the facts?

Give the different motives of Jesus for going over the sea into a desert place at this time.

1-5 How did Jesus and his disciples cross the sea?

What did the multitude do?

Who reached the place first?

How did Jesus receive the multitude?

Why?

What did he teach them?

What did he do for the diseased?

What is said of his compassion?

Is he still interested in us?

Why did the multitude follow him?

What time of year was it?

How many passovers does this make in Christ's public ministry?

- Where did Jesus first go with his disciples?
 Was he allowed to remain there?
 When did he propose to feed the multitude?
- 6 Why did Jesus raise the question?
 Repeat the conversation, in order, which occurred between him and the apostles in regard to this. (Let the teacher see that this is done correctly.)
- 7 How much in our money is "two hundred shillings' worth?"
- 8, 9 How many loaves were there?
 How many fishes?
 What kind of food was this?
 How did Jesus show his power to feed and to heal and to save souls?
- 10 What did Jesus direct the disciples to do?
 After whose customs did the Jews arrange their feasts?
 How were the tables arranged?
- Why seat the multitude in companies?
 What was the custom regarding women and children?
 How many men were there?
- 11 Why did Jesus give thanks?
 Who else gave thanks for food?
 Should we?
 Can you cite any passage showing that we should?
- 12 Did all eat enough?
 How much was left?
 What did Jesus tell them to do with it?
 What lesson does he teach by this?
- 13 What shows this to be a miracle?
- 14 What did all the multitude say?
 What were their conceptions concerning the nature of Christ's kingdom?
 What did they try to do by force?
 How would they establish Jesus' kingdom?
 What did Jesus do?

It is so sweet to know,
 When we are tired and when the hand of pain
 Lies on our hearts, and when we look in vain
 For human comfort, that the heart divine
 Still understands these cares, both yours and mine.

Not only understands, but, day by day,
 Lives with us while we tread the earthly way;
 Bears with us all our weariness, and feels
 The shadows of the faintest cloud that steals
 Across our sunshine; ever learns again
 The depth and bitterness of human pain.

There is no sorrow that He will not share;
 No cross, no burden, for our hearts to bear
 Without His help; no care of ours too small
 To cast on Jesus. Let us tell Him all—
 Lay at His feet the story of our woes,
 And in His sympathy find sweet repose. (Selected.)

LESSON VI.—FEBRUARY 7.

JESUS HEALS AND SAVES A BLIND MAN.

John 9: 1-9, 24, 25, 35-38. Read John 9: 1-41.

- 1 ¶And as he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth.
 2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?
 3 Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.
 4 We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
 5 When I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
 6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay.
 7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing.
 8 The neighbors therefore, and they that saw him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?
 9 Others said, It is he: others said, No, but he is like him. He said, I am he.

 24 ¶So they called a second time the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give glory to God: we know that this man is a sinner.
 25 He therefore answered, Whether he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

 35 ¶Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and finding him, he said, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?
 36 He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?
 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he it is that speaketh with thee.
 38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.*” (John 8: 12.)

TIME.—A.D. 29, in the autumn, at the feast of tabernacles.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the disciples, the man born blind, his neighbors, and the Pharisees.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 42: 1-7.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|-------------|----|---|
| February 1. | M. | Jesus Heals a Blind Man. (John 9: 1-12.) |
| February 2. | T. | The Blind Man's Testimony. (John 9: 13-25.) |
| February 3. | W. | The Blind Man Believes in Jesus. (John 9: 35-41.) |
| February 4. | T. | Walking in the Light. (1 John 1: 5-10.) |
| February 5. | F. | The Light of the Gospel. (2 Cor. 4: 1-6.) |
| February 6. | S. | The Light of the World. (John 8: 12-20.) |
| February 7. | S. | Christ Gives Sight. (Isa. 42: 1-7.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

There was “the upper spring of the waters of Gihon,” which Hezekiah stopped “and brought them straight down on the west side of the city of David.” (2 Chron. 32: 30.) This pool, or spring, was in the Kidron valley and was the same as “En-rogel,” which means “spring of the water channel,” or “well of the fuller fount. On “En-

rogel," see Josh. 15: 7; 18: 16; 2 Sam. 17: 17; 1 Kings 1: 9. Hezekiah made from En-rogel "a rock aqueduct tunnel through the hill to Siloam, near the mouth of the Tyropœon" valley. (See the mouth of this valley on a map, which locates this pool.)

The following inscription copied from Nelson's Bible is very interesting: "The inscription which was cut on the wall of the conduit which fed the pool of Siloam states that the excavators began to work at the ends and met in the middle of the tunnel. When as yet the two bodies of miners were separated by a distance of three cubits, they heard each other's voices; they hewed away, 'pickax against pickax,' and the waters flowed from the spring to the pool, a distance of one thousand two hundred cubits. (2 Kings 20: 20; 2 Chron. 32: 30.) This is the oldest Hebrew record of the kind extant. It was discovered by a boy wading in the conduit in 1880."

"Siloam" means "sent," as verse 7 states. "Siloam," "Shelah" (Neh. 3: 15), and "Shiloah" (Isa. 8: 6) are the same. Compare Luke 13: 4 and Neh. 3: 15. Siloam was a large pool on the south-east of Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

We must study the whole of the case. (John 9: 1-41.)

Opening the eyes of this blind man occurred during the feast of tabernacles in the fall before Jesus was crucified.

Other important and interesting things occurred then. (See John 7, 8, 9; 10; 21.)

Besides opening the eyes of the blind man of this lesson, Jesus opened the eyes of many others—two at Capernaum (Matt. 9: 27-31); another at Capernaum (Matt. 12: 22, 23); one at Bethsaida (Mark 8: 22-26); two at Jericho (Matt. 20: 29-34; Mark 10: 46-52; Luke 18: 35-43); and others, we know not how many (Matt. 11: 4, 5; 21: 14).

Blindness was common in that country. It is stated upon the authority of those who have visited that country and have investigated the matter that in Egypt "one in every hundred is blind, while in this country there is only one in nineteen hundred," and that Palestine is next to Egypt in this respect. This is said to be due to the glare of almost tropic suns and burning sands, and sometimes to the lack of cleanliness. But not so many are born blind; no more are born blind there than in other countries.

The cause of human suffering should be studied, understood, and removed as far as possible.

In John 8: 59 the Jews took up stones to cast at Jesus for declarations which seemed to them blasphemy; but he "hid himself, and went out of the temple."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Cause of Suffering.

1. "As he passed by," he saw this blind man—not casually, but he looked upon him with pity and sympathy.

Human suffering and helplessness always aroused his compassion.

The man was a beggar. (John 9: 8.) He was in a hopeless and helpless condition.

To be spiritually blind is worse and still more hopeless. (Matt. 13: 15, 16.)

2. While Jesus looked in sympathy on this human sufferer, his disciples asked the question: "Who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" This was a troublesome question—not to Jesus, but to men. They did not stop to consider that it was impossible for the man to have been born blind for any sins of his own; neither did God hold him responsible and punish him for any sins of his parents.

So far as accountability and responsibility for moral guilt or sins are concerned, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (Ezek. 18: 20; read Ezek. 18: 19-32; 33: 10-20.)

Yet children suffer bodily affliction and other troubles as a consequence not only of their own sins, but of their parents' sins, even unto the third and fourth generation. (Ex. 20: 5.)

In a general way, then, all affliction comes from sin. Death came through sin. (Rom. 5: 12.) Had there been no sin first, there would have been no thorns to prick our feet or briars to pierce our hands, no pain, no sorrow, no death. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life eternal." (Gal. 6: 7, 8.)

One begins to reap in this life many times the evil fruit of his sad sowing. By his own sins of drunkenness or licentiousness, for example, one sows in his own body the seeds of numerous diseases and transmits them, with evil tendencies, to his children. He may repent afterwards of his sins and be saved; still, he suffers bodily afflictions all his life on account of his sins.

The Jews did not have as clear conceptions of future punishment and rewards as were presented in the gospel of Jesus. It was a current opinion among them that all bodily afflictions came as punishment for sin. Job's friends thought he was a great sinner because he was a great sufferer.

Men, however, were sometimes smitten with bodily afflictions because of their sins. The Syrian army and Elymas were smitten with blindness (2 Kings 6: 18; Acts 13: 8-12); Jeroboam, with a paralyzed arm or hand (1 Kings 13: 4-6); Uzziah, with leprosy (2 Chron. 26: 16-23); and the wicked Herod was eaten with worms while alive (Acts 12: 23). Drought, famine, pestilence, the sword, captivity, and national destruction are sent upon people because of their sins. Yet all bodily affliction is not punishment for one's sins, as in this blind man's case. Paul suffered from "a thorn in the flesh," but not as punishment for his sins. (2 Cor. 12: 7-10.)

God overrules the afflictions, misfortunes, and sorrows of his children for their good—their greatest good. Such become training and discipline to them, and yield in them "peaceable fruit" when rightly received. (Heb. 12: 7-13.)

3. Jesus replied, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents"—

that is, that he was born blind. Jesus does not teach that they were sinless, but that their sins were not the cause of this blindness. This blindness may have resulted from physical inability and weakness in themselves or in their progenitors without sin on their part.

What is meant by, "But that the works of God should be made manifest in him?" Jesus says something similar to this concerning the death of Lazarus: "This sickness is not unto death [because Jesus would raise him from the dead], but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." (John 11: 4.) Lazarus did not die and the man was not afflicted with blindness for over twenty-one years simply and only to furnish Jesus subjects upon whom to show his power. This death and blindness came as natural results in the providence of God; and, having occurred, Jesus used them as opportunities to manifest the glory of God.

II. The Works of God.

4. "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Jesus came to do the work of God. All he did was the work of God. "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not." (John 10: 37.) "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." (John 17: 4.) All his teaching came from God. (John 7: 16-18; 12: 48-50.) He came to do God's will. (John 5: 30; 6: 38.) He pleased God always, and not himself. (John 8: 29; Rom. 15: 3.) All his miracles were manifestations of God's goodness and glory, and were divine attestations to the truth which he preached. By these God confirmed the truth. (John 5: 36; 10: 38; 14: 11; 20: 30, 31; Heb. 2: 3, 4.) At the age of twelve he said he must be about his Father's business. (Luke 2: 49.) He industriously worked at it all his life, taking time occasionally to rest, and finished it on the cross. (John 19: 30.)

The "day" of life is the time to work. Death is the "night," in which no man can work. God has something for us all to do, a work for us to accomplish; and if, like Jesus, at the end of life we would say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," we must do this work now zealously.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, whither thou goest." (Eccles. 9: 10.)

III. Jesus the Light of the World.

5. About to give sight to the blind, Jesus first made the very important and significant announcement that he is "the light of the world." He is the "dayspring from on high" (Luke 1: 78), and "the sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4: 2). "For everything that is made manifest is light." (Eph. 5: 13.) Jesus is the manifestation of God's goodness and glory. (Heb. 1: 3.) He is a manifestation of absolute obedience to God's will. He is "the light of the world" in both precept and example. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1: 4.) "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light

of life." (John 8: 12.) We must follow Jesus in order to walk in the light. Like him, we must implicitly obey God. (John 12: 35, 36; 1 John 1: 5-7.) The most impressive thing in all Christ's life is that he came down from heaven to do God's will and was obedient unto the death of the cross. (Phil. 2: 8.) How can men, then, hope to reach the light and be saved without obedience to God?

IV. Faith Without Works is Dead.

6. Jesus spoke as above to emphasize the fact that what he was about to do was the work of God and that God should have the glory. He then anointed the blind man's eyes with an ointment of clay and spittle. These have no virtue in themselves, especially to cure one born blind. Jesus used them as a test of this man's faith and to show that whatever means God ordains must be used in order to be blessed, whether man sees any virtue in them or not. Others whom Jesus healed manifested their faith in some way—by going to him and requesting help, for instance. He volunteered to heal this man, but the man must manifest his faith. In faith man obeys and God blesses.

7. The blind man obeyed, "and came seeing." He went from the pool seeing from the moment he washed.

Naaman dipped seven times in the Jordan, and was healed of leprosy (2 Kings 5: 8-14); the bitten Israelites looked at the brazen serpent, and were healed (Num. 21: 7-9).

Nowhere in the Bible can it be found that God blesses a man through faith before that faith is expressed in action. Faith without works, or action, is dead. (James 2: 14-26; see also Gal. 5: 6.)

Jesus says now, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 15, 16); and: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 38.) This faith does, as the blind man went and washed and then came seeing; and God forgives and saves in this obedience, just as he opened the blind eyes, and a blind man should see this.

8, 9. This blind man was a well-known beggar, for he "sat and begged" at a public place, and his "neighbors" all knew him; but they could scarcely believe that he was the same man, since his eyes had been opened. Hence, they raised the question: "Is not this he that sat and begged?" Some said, "It is he;" others, "He is like him;" he said, "I am he." His statement settled the question.

V. Cast Out of the Synagogue.

(Intervening verses.)

At the blind man's statement his neighbors were astounded, and asked in verse 10: "How then were thine eyes opened?" He explained the details of the occurrence, and said in verse 11: "The man that is called Jesus" did this.

He was then taken to the Pharisees for further investigation. They carried him through a preliminary trial, and asked him, as his neighbors had done, how he received his sight. Again he stated the facts clearly. (Verses 13-15.)

Not able to dispute the fact, these Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath. This trial resulted in division among the Pharisees themselves. In this divided condition they asked the man his opinion of Jesus, and he answered: "He is a prophet." (Verses 16, 17.)

After this preliminary trial, the blind man, whose eyes were now open, was taken before the official power in Jerusalem. In verse 18 "the Jews," as in other places (John 1: 19; 2: 18, 20; 5: 10, 15-18; 6: 41, 52; 7: 1, 11, 13, 15; 8: 22, 48, 52, 57; 10: 24, 31, 33, etc.) represent the rulers. These Jews examined this man, cross-examined him, and were unable to meet his arguments. They refused to believe that he was born blind and that he had received sight until, as verse 19 states, they had called in his parents and had asked them concerning him.

As verses 21-23 say, his parents acknowledged that this man was their son and that he was born blind; but, being ungrateful cowards, they declined to state how his eyes had been opened and threw all the responsibility upon him, saying: "Ask him; he is of age; he shall speak for himself." They said this "because they feared the Jews [the rulers]: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man should confess" Jesus to be the Christ, "he should be put out of the synagogue."

There was nothing involved—no danger—in these parents' owning this man as their son and stating the fact that he was born blind. Had there been, they would have denied these facts, too. They lacked courage, gratitude to Jesus, and common respect for their brave and noble son.

Some brethren now are very bold (!) when there is no danger in making a show of courage; but they straddle and dodge and cringe when to speak out clearly and boldly involves loss of popularity, or money, or personal comfort, or might bring persecution. For instance, for Christians to engage in carnal warfare—bloodshed, devastation and ruin, and making widows and orphans by the thousands—is either obedience to God or disobedience to him; but were not some brethren during war times afraid to say which?

24, 25. The son of these cowardly parents was not afraid. He was a beggar and had been blind, but he was true, courageous, and declared the truth in the face of danger involving persecution. When called before the rulers "a second time" and asked concerning the fact of how he had received his sight, being told to "give God the glory" and that Jesus was a sinner, he openly answered again that Jesus had opened his eyes, call him a "sinner" or not. He knew how his eyes had been opened, if his parents had declared they did not. Let the authorities say what they chose about Jesus, he knew Jesus had opened his eyes and was a prophet of God.

(Other intervening verses.)

The authorities asked again how Jesus had opened this man's eyes and what Jesus did. The man responded: "I told you even now [as we would say, "I have just told you all the facts"], and ye did not hear [or would not believe me]; wherefore would ye hear it again?" This means they would not believe it should he tell them again. And

in sarcasm, it seems, he asked: "Would ye also become his disciples?" (Verses 26, 27.)

They reviled him for this question, while they felt the force of it, and said: "We are disciples of Moses. We know that God hath spoken unto Moses: but as for this man, we know not whence he is." (Verses 28, 29.)

To this the man replied: "Why, herein is the marvel." This is a wonderful statement you make—that ye know not whence he is, and yet he has opened my eyes. You are great teachers, unerring guides to the blind, yet cannot tell whence a man is who has performed so great a miracle as opening the eyes of one born blind! If you cannot tell this, how can you tell the difference between the false and the true prophets? (Verse 30.)

This man could tell, as could Nicodemus: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." (John 3: 2.)

This man grew stronger as he proceeded. God had heard Jesus and had opened his eyes, and he knew for this reason Jesus was a prophet and no sinner. His reason was: "We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and do his will, him he heareth." (Verse 31.)

How did the rulers and the man—"we"—"know that God heareth not sinners," etc? God had taught: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." (Ps. 66: 18.) "Jehovah is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous." (Prov. 15: 29.) "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." (Prov. 28: 9.) "For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears unto their supplication: but the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil." (1 Pet. 3: 12.) "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." (John 5: 14, 15.) Prayer must be in faith (Heb. 11: 6; James 1: 5-8); it must be in penitence (Acts 8: 22); it must be in humility and deep reverence for God (Luke 18: 9-14); it must be in the spirit of forgiveness (Matt. 6: 12, 14, 15); it must be in submission to God's will, as our lesson states, and in accordance with any other condition of acceptable prayer. Hence, this man knew Jesus was not what these rulers said he was, but a prophet who feared God and did righteousness—that is, the will of God.

Continuing his proof that Jesus was from God, this man said, "Since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind;" and: "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing" of this kind. (Verses 32, 33.)

In response, but in hopelessness, the authorities attributed this man's blindness to sin—sins of his parents—and said he was "altogether born in sin," and then asked if he would presume to teach them. Unable to answer his humble, straightforward, frank, and true reasoning, "they cast him out." (Verse 34.)

This has been the course all such characters and councils have pursued ever since. True and godly men, who have contended humbly and steadfastly for the will of God in their love for the truth, and with the same heroic courage, have been reviled, cut off, "cast out," or even crucified by the very professed conservators of the right way of the Lord.

VI. Jesus Accepted as the Son of God.

35-38. Having heard that this man had been cast out of the synagogue, Jesus, in sympathy and compassion, sought him and said to him: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" This man knew Jesus was a prophet and was from God, but he did not know he was "the Son of God;" so he asked: "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?" Jesus said to this man that "the Son of God" was standing before him, and he it was then speaking to him. The man then declared his faith in Jesus as "the Son of God" and worshiped him.

"Worship" here, as the margin says, means an act of reverence, whether paid to a creature or the Creator.

Physical healing is not conversion, and did not necessarily lead to it. It led to conversion frequently, but not always. Ten lepers were physically healed, but only one, and he a Samaritan, returned to glorify God, and to him Jesus said: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." (Luke 17: 11-19.) The nine were not spiritually benefited, it seems. Opening this blind man's eyes finally led him to accept Jesus as "the Son of God."

VII. The Chief Point in the Lesson.

The chief point in this whole chapter is Christ's sermon on himself as "the light of the world." (Verses 5, 39-41.) He came into the world to save the world, but his coming revealed the difference between those who would walk in the light and those who would not. Publicans and sinners in spiritual darkness who desired the light entered into the kingdom before the Pharisees and Sadducees, who professed to have the light. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Closing their eyes against the light, they added the sin of rejecting Christ to all their other sins.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Locate and tell what you know of the pool of Siloam?
Name others whose eyes Jesus opened.
What causes so much blindness in the East?
Where did Jesus go from the place of the last lesson to the place of this one?
- Where was Jesus going when he saw this blind man?
How long had the man been blind?
How old was he?
 - What question did the disciples ask?
Could one be born blind for his own sins?
For whose sins is one responsible?
How, then, do children suffer on account of their parents' sins?
Of what is all suffering, sorrow, and death the result?
What must one reap?
What was the current opinion among the Jews about bodily afflictions?
 - Were men ever bodily afflicted for their sins? (Give examples.)
What else was sent because of sin?
How can we be benefited by our afflictions, misfortunes, etc.?
 - What reply did Jesus give to this question?
Were the parents sinless?
What use did Jesus make of these afflictions?
How did the death of Lazarus and this blindness come?
 - Whose work did Jesus do?
Can you give any other passages on this statement?
Whose will and whose pleasure did Jesus seek?
How did he accomplish so much?
What must we do?
 - How is Jesus "the light of the world"?
What is the most impressive thing in all Christ's life?
 - What did Jesus mean in opening this man's eyes?
Why require this of the blind man?
 - What did the blind man do?
When does God bless one through faith?

- What obedience is required of men for the remission of sins?
- 8, 9 Was this blind man rich?
- What did his neighbors say about him?
- What did he say?
- What effect did this have upon them?
- What did they ask him?
- What did he reply?
- To whom did they carry this man?
- For what purpose?
- On what day was this?
- To whom was he sent from the Pharisees?
- What course did the rulers pursue with him?
- How did his parents show their base cowardice?
- Why, then, did they acknowledge him at all as their son?
- When are courage and faith put to the test?
- 24, 25 What next was done with this man?
- What did the rulers say of Jesus?
- What reply did this man make to that?
- When asked again how Jesus had opened his eyes, what reply did this man make?
- What reply did the rulers make?
- Why was what the rulers said "a marvelous thing?"
- What reason did this man give for knowing God was with Jesus?
- What scriptures show that God does not answer those who do not intend to obey him?
- Give the conditions on which God will answer prayer.
- What further reason did this man give for believing God was with Jesus?
- What hateful thing did the rulers say to this man?
- What did they do with him?
- What course have such people pursued ever since?
- 35-38 What did Jesus do when he heard this man had been cast out?
- State the conversation which followed.
- Are physical healings and conversions the same?**
- Give examples of some who were healed, but not converted.
- What is the chief point in this chapter?
- How does Jesus give sight to the spiritually blind?

If faith produce no works, I see
 That faith is not a living tree.
 Thus faith and works together grow;
 No separate life they e'er can know;
 They're soul and body, hand and heart;
 What God hath joined, let no man part.
 (Hannah Moore.)

If I can let into some soul a little light;
 If I some pathway dark and drear can render bright;
 If I to one in gloom can show the sunny side,
 Though no reward I win, I shall be satisfied.
 (Stockport, England, Sunday School Magazine.)

LESSON VII.—FEBRUARY 14.

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

John 10: 1-5, 11-16. Read John 10: 1-30.

1 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 When he hath put forth all his own, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

11 ¶ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.
12 He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them:

13 *He fleeth* because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd; and I know mine own, and mine own know me,

15 Even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep."* (John 10: 11.)

TIME.—A.D. 29—the time of the last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus and the Jews. (Verse 19.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 23.

HOME READING—

February 8. M. Jesus the Good Shepherd. (John 10: 1-11.)

February 9. T. Jesus the Great Shepherd. (Heb. 13: 12-21.)

February 10. W. Jesus the Chief Shepherd. (1 Pet. 5: 1-11.)

February 11. Th. The Good Shepherd Guides. (Luke 1: 68-79.)

February 12. F. Jehovah Cares for His Flock. (Ezek. 34: 11-16.)

February 13. S. A Redeemed Flock. (Acts 20: 28-35.)

February 14. S. The Shepherd Psalm. (Ps. 23.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Study the relation of the shepherd and his sheep.

This lesson grew out of a conflict between Jesus and the Jews. They, the pretended shepherds of God's sheep, had cast a lamb out of the fold, or turned a man out of the synagogue, because he denied that Jesus, who had opened his blind eyes, was a sinner.

Jesus points out the difference between the true Shepherd and false teachers, who are thieves and robbers. The Jews were perfectly familiar with the relationship of shepherd and sheep. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs were shepherds; Moses was a shepherd; and David, a shepherd lad, was called from the flock to the throne. Under this figure of shepherd and sheep, God teaches many impressive and beautiful lessons. What is more beautiful and consoling than Ps. 23?

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Facts of the Parable.

1, 2. "Verily, verily" emphasizes that which Jesus is about to say. In verse 7 he says: "I am the door of the sheep."

From those who have traveled in the East we learn that "sheep-folds" were large inclosures open to the sky, surrounded by stakes set in the ground, with the top end sharpened, or a brick or stone wall, covered all over with thorn bushes as a protection against thieves and wolves and other beasts of prey. Within these large inclosures are low, flat-covered buildings for protection from severe weather. During ordinary weather the sheep remain in the open inclosure, or yard; but when the nights are cold, they are shut up within these buildings. There is a large door through which the shepherds enter with their sheep. One such inclosure, or fold, serves for a large district, and will protect thousands of sheep. Sometimes wolves and panthers will clamber over or leap over the thorn-covered walls, and, with one mighty bound, light among the frightened flock. That critical moment develops the true shepherd. The hireling flees. (Verse 12.) Thieves also climb over the walls to steal the sheep. There are prowlers whose business is sheep stealing, but to them the porter will not open. The porter is the doorkeeper, and it is his business to guard the fold against thieves and robbers. Hence, in order to get in, they must necessarily climb "up some other way."

3. The porter opens to the shepherd, and he enters "in by the door." The shepherd, whose the sheep are and who has their interest at heart, has the right to enter. In the morning every shepherd calls his own sheep forth, and they "hear his voice" and follow him. It is literally true that the sheep recognize the voice of their own shepherd, when "he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

4. Shepherds name their sheep, as we name our dogs, cows, horses, and other animals, and every sheep knows his own name and will come when called. We drive our sheep, but shepherds of the East go before and lead theirs. The different flocks of sheep and goats come out of the fold together in a confused mass; but when each shepherd takes a different path and utters his own peculiar call, his own flock recognizes it above all the rest and follows him. This confused mass is soon thus separated into different flocks, each following its own shepherd.

5. The sheep do not recognize the stranger's voice, but will flee from him. Were the stranger to put on the shepherd's dress and the shepherd that of the stranger, the sheep would still recognize the shepherd's voice and follow him. These are the facts of the parable; but when Jesus gave it, his hearers did not understand it. (Verse 6.)

II. The Application.

The sheepfold is a figure of the church, the door into which is Christ. The porter seems to be only an incidental part of the parable. It is always safe and best not to try to make more out of a parable than Jesus does himself. Jesus declares that he himself is "the door" through which the sheep must enter into the fold, or church, of

God. There is no other entrance. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.) All Christians are the sheep, or flock. Jesus, as we shall learn below, is also "the good shepherd" (verse 11); and under him, as "the chief Shepherd" (1 Pet. 5: 4), there are other shepherds, or teachers, who enter by him, "the door." There will be a great advancement in spiritual Israel when every congregation is blessed with scriptural elders who, under Jesus, truly "tend the flock of God," "exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to" them, but making themselves "ensamples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5: 2, 3.) To "tend" means to shepherd the flock—not only to give them food and water at intervals, but to watch after them by day and to abide with them by night, to protect them against "grievous wolves" from without and false teachers—hirelings, thieves, and robbers—within. (Acts 20: 28-30.) At the time the parable was spoken the scribes and Pharisees and all false teachers who did not receive Jesus, but who led their followers away from him and who did not serve the flock and lay down their lives for the sheep, were the thieves and robbers.

III. Thieves and Robbers.

Since Jesus is "the door of the sheep" (verse 7), verse 1 says: "He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

All teachers now who would enter some other way than through Christ and who serve through self-interest, desiring to provide for themselves and families the comforts, ease, and conveniences of life, are mere hirelings, thieves, and robbers, who seek the fleece, and not the flock. A "thief" is one who takes property by stealth, and is sly and sneaking; a "robber" is a plunderer, a freebooter, or brigand. These sneaking, creeping (2 Tim. 3: 6, 7) fellows, or bold plunderers of the church of God, may be seen at work now.

All who came before Jesus, claiming to be the Messiah, were "thieves and robbers." Likewise, as stated above, the scribes and Pharisees, for the reason given, were "thieves and robbers;" and, as seen, this principle applies to all false teachers now. "But the sheep did not hear them." The children of God heard his voice, obeyed his will, clung to his way, and, hence, did not follow false teachers and false Christs. To hear God is to obey him. All who did that before the coming of Christ were ready to receive him. "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me." (John 5: 46.) So God's children to-day hear his voice. (Verse 8.)

IV. Jesus is the Door.

"I am the door." (Verse 9.) Christ himself is the door. Baptism, then, is not "a door" into the church. Through faith in Christ one repents of all sin and is baptized into Christ (Gal. 3: 26, 27), and by him enters into the fold of God and is saved (see Mark 16: 15, 16; Acts 2: 37, 38). These put one "into Christ," "the door," through which he enters into the fold, or church. Christ is not only "the door,"

but is "pasture," or food. This parable has a double significance. Christ is "the good shepherd," as well as "the door;" and as the shepherd, he leads the sheep into the green pastures of truth and beside the still waters of peace. Under other figures he is the bread of heaven and water of life. To "enter in" by Christ is to enter according to his directions, and to feed upon him is to do his sayings in faith and trust. Going in and out and finding pasture does not mean going in and out of God's spiritual fold, or church, but it means both the spiritual food and protection which are in Christ. Here Jesus uses a different part of the figure.

Jesus came to save the lost—not to destroy, but to save the sheep, "that they may have life, and may have it abundantly." He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Matt. 15: 24.) "The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy." (Verse 10.) This is the marked difference between "the good shepherd" and false teachers. False teachers seek not the good of the sheep, but that which the sheep possess; they steal the truth from the people. "Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith Jehovah, that steal my words every one from his neighbor." (Jer. 23: 30.) Jesus frequently spoke of the people as scattered like sheep without a shepherd.

V. Jesus is the Good Shepherd—His Sheep Hear His Voice.

11. "I am the good shepherd." The test of "the good shepherd" is that he "layeth down his life for the sheep." Literal shepherds sometimes did this in their encounters with robbers. Jesus laid down his life at the hands of false teachers for the salvation of the race. Every teacher, therefore, who has the spirit of Jesus seeks the good and salvation of men. "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ." (Phil. 2: 5.)

Jehovah also is the true Shepherd; false teachers and pretenders are hirelings. (See Isa. 40: 10, 11; Jer. 23: 1-4; 50: 6.) In Heb. 13: 20 Jesus is "the great shepherd of the sheep," in 1 Pet. 5: 4 he is "the chief Shepherd," and in 1 Pet. 2: 25 he is "the Shepherd and Bishop" of our souls. The following facts give us some idea of the duties and work of true shepherds. Jacob says: "Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep fled from mine eyes." (Gen. 31: 40.) In defending his flock and in rescuing the lambs, the youthful David slew a lion and a bear. (1 Sam. 17: 34-37.) When Jesus was born, the shepherds were in the field "keeping watch by night over their flock." The sheep must have the service and constant attention of the shepherd.

12, 13. The hireling is mercenary, seeking his own personal interest, making godliness a way of gain (1 Tim. 6: 5) and turning religion into a cloak of covetousness and means of obtaining a livelihood. The hireling seeks not the flock, but the fat and fleece; hence, he flees when the wolf comes, when danger approaches. Paul says to the Corinthians, "For I seek not yours, but you" (2 Cor. 12: 14); and, like Paul, while a true teacher or preacher receives a support from those he serves, he serves for the sake of souls, and will preach, support or no support.

14, 15. Jesus, as "the good shepherd," knows his sheep. He knows them personally by name, as literal shepherds know their sheep; he

knows them tenderly and lovingly; he knows their needs and dangers; he knows their sorrows and bereavements; and they know him—his love and tenderness, his power to protect and save—even as the Father knows him and he knows the Father. There is that tender bond between Jesus and Christians which exists between him and the Father. Hence, he says: "I lay down my life for the sheep."

16. The "other sheep . . . not of this fold" evidently means the Gentiles, who would believe and obey the gospel when they should hear it. They would hear his voice; enter through him, "the door," into the same fold with the Jews; "and they shall become one flock, one shepherd." The Gentiles were his sheep prospectively. They had not yet accepted him as their Savior, but he knew they would do so. So God said to Paul at Corinth: "For I have much people in this city." (Acts 18: 10.) God prophetically called them his people before they had heard and obeyed the gospel. There is only one flock. "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. 12: 50.) There is one fold, or church (see Eph. 2: 13-22; 4: 3-6; 1: 22, 23); there is one door into this one fold; there is one Shepherd over this one flock. All must enter through Christ; all must hear his voice, follow him, and receive food from his hand. All who live in disobedience to him are following false shepherds—hirelings, thieves, and robbers. Denominationalism is wrong, and division into contending sects is sinful. Again, Jesus says (John 10: 27): "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Heeding what Christ says in the gospel is hearing his voice. What he says is recorded in the New Testament. (Matt. 28: 19, 20.) He who does not hear that does not hear Christ. Then, since Christ's sheep hear him, they heed what he says in the New Testament. It is encouraging, then, to believe that above the din, clash, and clatter of warring sects, saying, "Lo, here is Christ, or there," the good Shepherd makes his voice heard and the "sheep" recognize and follow it into the rest, peace, and unity of the one fold. "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4: 3) depends upon unity in Christ—"even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us" (John 17: 21); and unity in Christ depends upon hearing his voice, and not upon the authority and decrees of earthly shepherds. This declaration shows us, too, that Jesus is the Savior of Jews and Gentiles alike. He died for all and sent his gospel to the whole creation. (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16; Luke 24: 44-49.)

Jesus says in verse 15: "I lay down my life for the sheep." This shows that he is the true and good Shepherd, seeking the salvation of the race; and for this cause, as stated in verse 17, the Father loves him.

"No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself." (Verse 18.) Jesus laid down his life—came to earth, suffered, and died—of his own consent. The wicked plots of the Jews to kill him would have availed nothing had he not consented to die. He existed "in the form of God" and was "on an equality with God," "but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant," "humbled himself," and became "obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." (Phil. 2: 6-8.)

He laid down his life on the cross and took it up again when he arose from the dead. He did this in obedience to God. "This commandment received I from my Father."

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What gave rise to this lesson?
Why were the Jews acquainted with this figure of shepherd and sheep?
Repeat Ps. 23.
- 1, 2 Describe a sheepfold of the East. (Let the teacher see that all the class get a correct idea of this.)
How many sheep would one fold protect?
 - 3 Who was the "porter," and what was his business?
To whom does he open the door?
 - 4, 5 Whose voice will the sheep hear?
What clearly demonstrates this?
What does the sheepfold represent in this parable?
Who is "the door?"
How many ways are there of entering God's fold?
Whom does the "porter" represent?
Who are the flock?
Who is the "good shepherd?"
Who are undershepherds?
What is their duty?
What is the meaning of "tend?"
Who are the "thieves" and "robbers?"
How do thieves and robbers get into the fold?
Who are "hirelings?"
What are all who came before Jesus, claiming to be the Messiah?
To whom does this apply in principle?
Whom did the sheep not hear?
What is it to hear God?
Who were ready to receive Christ?
Who is the door to God's spiritual fold?
What is baptism?
Through whom does one enter the church, or fold?
- How does one enter by Christ?
What does going in and out and finding pasture mean?
What double significance has this parable?
What did Jesus come to do?
Why does the thief come?
What, then, is the difference between true and false teachers?
When will the church be all that God teaches that it should be?
- 11 What does Jesus here declare himself to be?
What is the test of the good shepherd?
Whose mind must we cultivate and manifest?
 - 12, 13 What does the hireling seek?
What does the true teacher do, whether supported or not?
How is the true teacher supported?
 - 14, 15 Whom does Jesus know, and how well does he know them?
 - 16 What other sheep had Jesus?
In what sense could the Gentiles be called Christ's sheep before they became Christians?
When the Gentiles should come in, how many folds and shepherds would there be?
How many churches did Jesus build?
Whose voice do the sheep hear?
How can we now hear the voice of Jesus?
In the midst of the confusion of denominationalism, how can it be told who are Christ's sheep?
Upon what does unity in Christ depend?
For whom did Jesus die?
What proves that Jesus is the true Shepherd?
Why does God love Jesus?
How was it that Jesus was betrayed and crucified, and yet laid down his life of his own accord?

Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need thy tender care;
In thy pleasant pasture feed us,
For our use thy fold prepare.

We are thine; do thou befriend us,
Be the Guardian of our way;
Keep thy flock, from sin defend us,
Seek us when we go astray.

(Dorothy A. Thrupp.)

LESSON VIII.—FEBRUARY 21.

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD.

John 11: 32-44. Read John 11: 1 to 12: 11.

32 ¶Mary therefore, when she came where Jesus was, and saw him, fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews *also* weeping who came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 The Jews therefore said, Behold how he loved him!

37 But some of them said, Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

39 Jesus saith, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time the body decayeth; for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldst see the glory of God?

41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hearest me.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the multitude that standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me.

43 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live.*” (John 11: 25.)

TIME.—January or February, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Bethany, near Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, his disciples, the family of Bethany, and the Jews.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 15: 50-58.

HOME READING.—

February 15. M. The Death of Lazarus. (John 11: 1-16.)

February 16. T. Jesus' Message to the Sorrowing Sisters. (John 11: 17-31.)

February 17. W. Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead. (John 11: 32-44.)

February 18. T. The Proof of Christ's Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 1-11.)

February 19. F. The Pledge of Our Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 12-23.)

February 20. S. The Process of the Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 35-49.)

February 21. S. Victory Over Death. (1 Cor. 15: 50-58.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Bethany” means “house of dates.” It was a village about two miles east of Jerusalem, just over the crest of the mount of Olives. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It was the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Jesus often lodged there. (Matt. 21: 17; 26: 6.) From there Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Near there—“over against Bethany”—from the mount of Olives, Jesus ascended to heaven.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Jesus' sermon on “The Light of the World” and the one on “The Good Shepherd” were delivered at Jerusalem during the feast of tabernacles in the fall before his crucifixion. Other important occurrences at that time are recorded. (John 7: 1 to 10: 21.)

Between the feast of tabernacles and the feast of dedication (John 10: 22) some suppose that Jesus returned to Galilee and thence went back to Jerusalem through Galilee and Samaria eastward to the Jordan and through Perea, "beyond Jordan." It is supposed that Matt. 19: 1; Mark 10: 1; and Luke 9: 51 record the final departure from Galilee.

Others suppose that Jesus remained at Jerusalem or in Judea during this interval, making a final and mighty effort to teach and save the nation.

As has been stated, it is not necessary to know, and not possible to give, the exact chronological order of the events in Christ's history. We can group the events together and know that they occurred during a certain period of his life. The feast of dedication marks a point of time in his history.

This feast was "instituted to commemorate the purging of the temple and the rebuilding of the altar after Judas Maccabæus had driven out the Syrians—B.C. 164." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.)

It began about the 20th of our December and continued eight days. It was observed somewhat like the feast of tabernacles, and in all the towns and cities of Judea as well as in Jerusalem. It was not by divine appointment, and Jesus did not observe it as such.

Jesus used the occasion as an opportunity to teach the people. The discourse he preached then is recorded in John 10: 22-38.

The Jews "sought again to take him: and he went forth out of their hand. And he went away again beyond the Jordan into the place where John was at the first baptizing [see John 1: 28]; and there he abode. And many came unto him; and they said, John indeed did no sign: but all things whatsoever John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there." (John 10: 39-42.)

During the feast of tabernacles and the feast of dedication, which were only nine or ten weeks apart, the Jews tried twice to arrest Jesus (John 7: 30, 32, 45; 10: 39); twice to mob him (John 8: 59; 10: 31); and, it seems, laid secret plans to assassinate him (John 7: 19; 8: 37).

During the time between the feast of dedication and our lesson it is probable that Jesus dined with the Pharisee and gave the parables of the lost coin, lost sheep, and prodigal son. (Luke 14: 1 to 17: 10.)

John alone gives an account of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Some have supposed there was a special reason for this; but why should there be, when John omits the account of raising Jairus' daughter and of raising the son of the widow who lived at Nain?

INTRODUCTION.

The Family at Bethany.

(Verses 1-3.)

In order to appreciate the lesson, we must know the family of Lazarus.

Martha, Mary, and Lazarus constituted this happy family of Bethany. It is not certain that Martha was the oldest of the three, but that is indicated by the order of their names in verses 5 and 19 and

Luke's (10: 38-42) reference to Martha and her work. Mary's name is mentioned first, it seems, because the anointing referred to had made her more prominent. Martha appears to have been at the head of the household, was energetic and active, and "was cumbered about much serving." Mary was retiring and reflective. To Martha Jesus said: "Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10: 41, 42.) Owing their home, the costliness of the ointment used in anointing Jesus (John 12: 5), the guests at the funeral, and the family burying place—these indicate that this family was in good financial circumstances. Jesus was accustomed to visit this family. (Matt. 21: 17; Mark 11: 11, 12; Luke 10: 38-42.) "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." (Verse 5.) "Lazarus was sick;" and these sisters sent to Jesus while he was at Bethabara, or Bethany, "beyond the Jordan" (John 10: 39, 40), about thirty miles away, "saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." There is in this an implied request for assistance; and the statement of both Martha and Mary, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (verses 21, 32), shows that they believed Jesus could have healed the fatal sickness of Lazarus. In their distress these sisters turned to Jesus, because they knew of his sympathy, willingness, and ability to help.

We now should "carry everything to God in prayer," but not without the use of means, for means are gifts of God.

Lazarus Dies.

(Verses 4-16.)

Jesus said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby"—that is, the final result of this sickness was not death. Jesus would raise Lazarus from the dead, and thereby lead many to believe in himself as the Messiah, and thus glorify God and himself. Lazarus soon died (we know not just when), and, according to the custom in that warm climate, was buried probably on the day of his death. (See Acts 5: 6, 10.) After hearing of Lazarus' sickness, Jesus remained where he was two days, for reasons not given. That Lazarus had been dead four days was no hindrance to divine power; but the longer he had been dead when Jesus raised him, the greater seemed the miracle to men. The apostles were opposed to Jesus' returning to Judea for the reasons given. To them Jesus said: "Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." The Bible frequently speaks of death as sleep. Jesus knew by his divine power that Lazarus was dead.

Jesus the Resurrection and the Life.

(Verses 17-31.)

When Jesus reached Bethany, he found that Lazarus "had been in the tomb four days already." (Verse 17.)

On learning of Jesus' approach, Martha went out to meet him, and said, as stated above, that if Jesus had been there, Lazarus had not

died, and, with yet some hope, added: "And even now I know that, whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give it thee." (Verses 18-22.)

To prepare her for what he was about to do, Jesus said: "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha replied that she knew he would "rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Leading her on in development of faith, Jesus said: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die [physically], yet shall he live [be raised and live eternally]; and whosoever liveth [physically] and believeth on me shall never die [eternally]." Jesus himself is "the resurrection, and the life." He has "the keys of death and Hades." (Rev. 1: 18.)

Martha then confessed Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of God, even he that cometh into the world," and, confessing this, acknowledged that he possessed the power to raise the dead; yet from verse 39 it appears that she did not see clearly how at that time he could restore Lazarus to life.

Martha returned to the house and secretly informed Mary that Jesus had come and called for her. As Mary arose quickly to go to Jesus, the Jews who were there to console her thought she had gone to the tomb to wail there.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jesus Groaned and Wept.

It was the custom of female relatives—daughters, sisters, wives—to weep at the grave of loved ones, at times, for months, and there they were joined by their friends.

32. Coming to Jesus, Mary "fell down at his feet" and repeated the words of Martha. This shows again the difference between the sisters. Martha did not fall at Jesus' feet. These sisters had, doubtless, expressed themselves thus to each other. Doubtless the presence of the obtruding Jews prevented further conversation between Jesus and Mary.

33, 34. "He groaned in the spirit." "The word translated 'groaned' occurs five times in the New Testament—verses 33, 38; Matt. 9: 30; Mark 1: 43; 14: 5. . . . In all cases . . . it expresses, not sorrow, but indignation and severity." (Cambridge Bible.) In Matt. 9: 30 and Mark 1: 43, which see, it means to charge sternly, and in Mark 14: 5 it is rendered "murmured." The margin at verses 33, 38 says: "Moved with indignation." His indignation must have been aroused over the hypocritical lamentations of the Jews, his enemies, weeping in empty form. "And was troubled"—was moved with emotion. Without stopping to console Mary, he asked where Lazarus had been buried. Martha and Mary answered: "Lord, come and see."

35. "Jesus wept"—shed tears, or wept silently. The word "wept" in verse 35 is different from the one in verses 31, 33. In verses 31, 33 it means to "wail." (See margin.) Jesus wept in sympathy with Martha and Mary. In sympathy with humanity, Jesus attended the wedding of Cana and wept on the way to the tomb of Lazarus. It is neither wrong nor a sign of weakness to weep. "Rejoice with them

that rejoice; weep with them that weep." (Rom. 12: 15.) Jesus wept over sinful Jerusalem.

36. Some of the Jews, not all present, said: "Behold how he loved him!" They were moved by the earnest love of Jesus for his friend.

37. "But some of them"—others, not those who had just spoken—said: "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?" This was said sneeringly, meaning that if Jesus opened the blind man's eyes recently at Jerusalem, he could have prevented Lazarus' death; he did not do it, because he could not do it, and went to the tomb weeping instead; and, hence, it was doubtful that he opened the blind man's eyes.

38. "Groaning in himself"—that is, moved with indignation—at the sneering doubts expressed above, Jesus went on to the tomb. "It was a cave, and a stone lay against it." Graves were cut sometimes perpendicularly in the rock and sometimes horizontally in the sides of the hills. Sometimes natural caves were used. They would contain whole families. On graves, see Gen. 23: 9; 35: 8; 50: 5; 2 Chron. 16: 14; Isa. 22: 16; Matt. 27: 60. The stone was placed against the entrance of the cave to protect the bodies from wild beasts.

II. Jesus Prayed

39. Jesus directed that the stone be removed. Through respect for her brother—not wanting him seen disfigured by decay—the practical Martha objected to the removal of the stone by suggesting that, since Lazarus had been four days dead, decomposition had begun. She did not understand Jesus' purpose in having the stone removed.

40. Jesus reminded Martha of what he had said in verse 4 to the messenger sent him and what he had said to her in verses 25, 26—that, if she would believe, she should "see the glory of God." The glory of God was seen in his power over death, the exaltation of Jesus as the Messiah, and the blessings these would bring to the world. The faith of these sisters must be manifested in obedience. Faith must lead to obedience in order to bless.

41. "So they took away the stone."

Jesus then "lifted up his eyes to heaven" and prayed. On another occasion it is said that in praying he lifted up his eyes to heaven. (John 17: 1.)

"Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me." The prayer here referred to is not recorded, but was offered probably with reference to what he was here about to do. Jesus said on another occasion that "the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner." (John 5: 19; see also verses 20-29.) God and the Son are one.

42. "And I knew that thou hearest me always." Not only in the prayer referred to was Jesus heard, but he was heard in all prayers. Even in Gethsemane, while the cup was not removed, he was "heard for his godly fear" (Heb. 5: 7-9), and God sent an angel to strengthen him (Luke 22: 43).

"But because of the multitude that standeth around I said it." Then, in thanking God that he had heard one prayer, Jesus would not leave us to infer that he had offered other prayers which had not been

answered. He desired the multitude to know that the power he exercised was from God and proved his relationship to God.

"That they may believe that thou didst send me." Jesus knew God had always heard him; but he wanted the multitude to know it, and he wanted the multitude to know that God, and not another, had sent him.

III. Lazarus Raised

43. Having prayed, "he cried with a loud voice," as awakening one out of sleep and with authority: "Lazarus, come forth!" He, doubtless, cried aloud that all standing around might hear and realize that he performed the miracle of raising Lazarus.

44. "He that was dead came forth." The decomposition of the body was stayed, and soundness and health were restored; the blood flowed again in the veins; and the spirit came back from the abode of spirits and dwelt again in the tabernacle of clay. "Bound hand and foot with graveclothes," and his face "bound about with a napkin," Lazarus arose. It was the custom to bind the spices and winding sheet around the body with bands and to bind the face with a napkin to prevent the lower jaw from falling. From Martha's remark in verse 39 it is probable the spices (John 19: 40) were omitted. These graveclothes would hinder Lazarus in walking; hence, Jesus said: "Loose him, and let him go."

He who raised Lazarus "shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4: 16); and "all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (John 5: 28, 29).

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Locate and describe Bethany.

What occurred there?

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What discourses were preached during the feast of tabernacles in the fall before Jesus was crucified?

What else occurred there?

What did Jesus do between the feast of tabernacles and the feast of dedication?

When and by whom was the feast of dedication instituted, and why observed?

When was it observed?

If not by divine appointment, why did Jesus attend it?

Why did Jesus leave Jerusalem after this feast?

Where did he go?

Why did many believe on him there?

Give the different efforts the Jews made in a short while to arrest and kill Jesus.

How many persons did Jesus raise from the dead?

Learn from the Bible and relate who else was raised from the dead.

Who constituted this family at Bethany?

Why is it thought that Martha was the oldest member?

State the different dispositions between Martha and Mary.

Why is it thought that this family was in good circumstances?

Why did Jesus frequently visit this family?

What affliction befell Lazarus?

Why did Martha and Mary send to Jesus?

What reply did Jesus make to this?

How was the sickness not unto death?

How long did Jesus remain where he was before going to Bethany?

Why were the apostles opposed to Jesus' returning to Judea?

How does Jesus speak of death?

How did he know Lazarus was already dead?

Who went first to meet Jesus?

- What did she say to him?
How does she express some hope yet?
 What reply did Jesus make?
 When did she say Lazarus would rise?
 What reply did Jesus make to this?
 How is Jesus "the resurrection, and the life?"
 What confession did Martha then make?
- 32 Whom did Martha tell of Jesus' coming?
 Why did she secretly inform Mary?
 Where did the Jews think Mary had gone?
 What did Mary do and say?
- 33, 34 What does "groaned in the spirit" mean?
 Why was Jesus indignant?
 Why was he troubled?
 What did Jesus ask?
 What reply did the sisters make?
- 35 Why did Jesus weep?
 Repeat Rom. 12: 15.
 At what other time did Jesus weep?
- 36 What did some of the Jews present exclaim?
- 37 What did others say?
 What was meant by this?
- 38 Why was the indignation of Jesus aroused this time?
 What was the grave?
 Describe the tombs of that country.
 How long had Lazarus been dead?
- 39 Why did Martha oppose removing the stone?
- 40 What did Jesus say to Martha?
 Why would this be to the glory of God?
 How did these sisters manifest their faith?
- 41 Repeat the prayer Jesus offered at this time.
- 42 Why did he offer this prayer? (See that the points are brought out clearly.)
 Did God always hear Jesus?
- 43 What did Jesus then do?
 Why did he cry with a loud voice?
- 44 What then occurred?
 Why did Jesus command them to loose him?

When as of old in her sadness
 Mary sat weeping alone,
 Softly the voice of her sister
 Whispered: "The Master has come."
 So in the depths of thy sorrow,
 Gail though its fountains may be,
 List, for there cometh a whisper—
 Jesus is calling for thee.

O, when thy pleasures are flowing,
 Fading thy hope and thy trust;
 When of the dearest earth treasures
 Dust shall return unto dust,
 Then, though the world may invite thee,
 Vain will its offering be.
 List, for there cometh a whisper—
 Jesus is calling for thee.

Down by the shore of death's river
 Sometime thy footsteps shall stray,
 Where waits a boatman to bear thee
 Over to infinite day.
 What then, though dark be his shadow,
 If when his coming thou see,
 Cometh there softly a whisper—
 Jesus is calling for thee?

(Selected.)

LESSON IX.—FEBRUARY 28.

JESUS TEACHES RESPECT FOR LAW.**(Temperance Lesson.)**

Matt. 22: 15-22.

15 ¶Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might ensnare him in his talk.

16 And they send to him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why make ye trial of me, ye hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a denarius.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22 And when they heard it, they marvelled, and left him, and went away.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill."* (Matt. 5: 17.)

TIME.—Probably Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, the Herodians, and the Pharisees.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 1.

HOME READING.—

February 22. M. Jesus Teaches Respect for Law. (Matt. 22: 15-22.)

February 23. T. Teaching the Law of God. (Deut. 6: 1-9.)

February 24. W. Rewards of Obedience. (Deut. 7: 12-16.)

February 25. T. Men Must Love and Obey God. (Deut. 10: 12-22.)

February 26. F. The Law of the Friendly Life. (Lev. 19: 9-18.)

February 27. S. Obedience to Rulers. (Rom. 13: 1-7.)

February 28. S. The Law-Abiding and Lawless Contrasted. (Ps. 1.)

Temperance.

"Temperance," as we know, means "self-control," not simply abstinence from intoxicating liquor.

This lesson, being on "Respect for Law," furnishes a good temperance lesson, because respect for law requires self-control. If all people practiced self-control, there would be no criminals, no breaking and dodging the various laws of the land.

We have written at different times that which the Bible says on self-control and against all intemperance, and cannot do better than that now.

The reason so many temperance lessons are given is because it is so greatly needed. The greatest lesson of life is to learn to control oneself; the greatest victory of life is to conquer one's passions and lusts. This is the one great fight which all have to make, and where so many fail. Famous are many victories of many wars, but the greatest of all is the silent victory over self. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16: 32.)

This was embraced in Paul's subject before Felix and Drusilla, an unrighteous and profligate pair. He "reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come." (Acts 24: 24-26.)

Temperance is embraced in the fruit of the Spirit in contrast with the works of the flesh. "And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." (Gal. 5: 16-24.) It is one of the duties and virtues essential to an entrance into heaven. (2 Pet. 1: 1-1.)

We are impressed most seriously with the vast importance and absolute necessity of self-control by Paul's famous declaration: "And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected." (1 Cor. 9: 25-27.) If Paul thus keenly and sensibly realized that he must keep his own body under, we should as fully appreciate the importance of doing the same.

Christians are not to be temperate in all things, because some things they are not to do at all. They cannot steal temperately, lie temperately, give away to their temper temperately, drink temperately, etc. They must eat temperately, sleep temperately, work temperately, and in all things so control their bodies as to make them fit temples for the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17; 6: 19, 20) and to be saved in heaven.

Much is said, too, against the use of intoxicating liquors, because this feature of intemperance is a fruitful source of so many other sins and of so much suffering and shame. A drunkard brings suffering and trouble, poverty and want, upon so many innocent ones. Almost every kind of sin will spring from drunkenness, and no drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God.

Parents cannot impress upon their children too seriously the evils of strong drink and the danger of indulging in such.

The only absolutely safe rule is to touch not, taste not, handle not this great enemy of our present comfort, peace, and prosperity, and of our souls.

Note how much is said in both the Old Testament and the New Testament against strong drink. (See Prov. 20: 1; 23: 29-32; Isa. 28: 7; Hab. 2: 15; 1 Cor. 6: 9-11; Eph. 5: 18; 1 Thess. 5: 7, 8.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. An Important Question.

15. This lesson embraces a very important question—namely: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?" The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders—the leaders, or the rulers—felt the force of Jesus' teaching against themselves, and sought to kill him; but they feared the multitude, who were astonished at his teaching. (Mark 11: 18; 12: 12.) They then "left him" for a while and sent a delegation of Pharisees and Herodians that "they might ensnare him in his talk." This was a plot, for they "took counsel" how they might do this.

16. The Herodians were a Jewish political party, rather than a reli-

gious sect, that adhered to the Herods and favored the Roman rule and, therefore, the payment of tribute to Cæsar. In order to condemn Jesus, the Pharisees joined in with the Herodians.

17. "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?" Should Jesus say not to pay tribute to Cæsar, he would incur the disfavor of the Herodians and would be accused of rebellion against the Roman authorities; should he say pay tribute to Cæsar, that would bring him into disfavor with the multitudes, to whom the Roman government was as a yoke of bondage, and who stood in the way of his destruction by the scribes and Pharisees. They urged him to answer, saying: "Shall we give, or shall we not give?" Mark 12: 15.) They could see but one of two answers—"Yes" or "No"—and it would serve their wicked purpose for Jesus to make either one.

II. The Relationship of Christians to Civil Government.

18-20. In this lesson Rom. 13: 1-7; 1 Tim. 2: 1-4; 1 Pet. 2: 13-17 are referred to in order to show the relationship of Christians to civil governments at the time the New Testament was written, their relationship to such governments now, and that their relationship to such governments will remain always the same.

For the benefit of the student of this lesson it is necessary to add here further teaching of the Bible on the subject.

Famines, pestilences, and wars cannot change the will of God. The recent great upheaval of nations and the World War have not changed the relationship of Christians to "the powers that be."

God, his will, the Holy Spirit, Christ, his church, Christ's preaching, and therefore the life of Christians, and heaven, are always the same. They cannot be changed to suit the changed conditions of the affairs of the world or adapted to the changed conceptions of worldly-wise men concerning civilization and progress; but all men of all grades of progress and civilization and in all relationships of life must adapt themselves to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church of God, the teaching of Christ, and must practice this teaching.

Christianity is the teaching of Christ—no more, no less. It is unchangeable. The gospel of Christ remains forever the power of God unto salvation to all who believe it. (Rom. 1: 16.) There can be no other gospel. (Gal. 1: 6-10.)

The relationship of Christians to civil government, whether a kingdom, an empire, a monarchy, or a republic, is that of submission. The New Testament says: "Be in subjection to the higher powers." "Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." "Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." "Honor the king." All kinds of taxes must be paid.

Civil government is "the ordinance of God," for "the powers that be are ordained of God." To withstand this power is to withstand "the ordinance of God," and all who do this "shall receive to themselves judgment."

But for what purpose has God ordained civil government? This is a most important question, and the answer to it must be received with all seriousness. God gives the answer—namely, to restrain evildoers and to protect the righteous; to be, "not a terror to the good work, but

to the evil;" "a minister [not a preacher of the gospel, but God's servant, although not a Christian] of God to thee for good." Civil government "bears not the sword in vain," but is God's "avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil."

God gives his reasons for requiring Christians to be in subjection to civil rulers: (1) For conscience' sake, or because it is right. Christians must be law-abiding, peace-loving, peace-maintaining, orderly, industrious, honest, righteous, and God-fearing people. (2) That they may by "well-doing" "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" and may have "the praise" of the civil authorities—may let their light shine by showing what kind of lives Christians live. (3) To escape the wrath or vengeance of God visited upon evildoers through civil government, because it is God's "avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil."

Paul declares that "law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for menstealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine; according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." (1 Tim. 1: 8-11.) This means that this teaching in regard to law is according to the gospel of God.

Christians need no law to restrain them from lying, stealing, swearing falsely, committing fornication, abusing themselves with men, murdering fathers and mothers or any one else, because they will not commit these sins, anyway, but are law-abiding, peaceable, righteous, godly, and holy—all for conscience' sake—for right's sake, and, therefore, for Christ's sake.

Hence, we see that the relationship of Christians to civil government is that of submission, not that of aggression. They are forbidden to have lawsuits with one another, are commanded to settle their differences among themselves and not before unbelieving civil authorities, and must suffer wrong rather than do wrong. (1 Cor. 6: 1-11.) They are forbidden to take vengeance. "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath [vengeance] of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me: I will recompense, saith the Lord." On the contrary, God's command to Christians is: "But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12: 19-21.)

How, then, or through what, does God take vengeance? Through civil government. This is one of the purposes for which God has ordained civil government. It should be a terror, therefore, to all evildoers, "an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil"—God's avenger for God's wrath. This is God's ordained way of punishing on earth evildoers and of protecting all who do well; of restraining evildoers and suppressing wrong and making it so his children can pursue their tranquil, peaceable, quiet, and godly lives.

Because God has ordained and overrules all civil governments as his ministers (not preachers or Christians, but his servants), "attending continually upon this very thing," Christians are commanded to pray, to make supplications, to make intercessions, and to offer

thanksgivings "for kings and all that are in high place" (the civil authorities or officers), that God will use them—his servants—so that his children "may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." (1 Tim. 2: 1-4.)

Christians cannot take the matter of vengeance and the manner of administering it out of God's hands. This is not their work, and God assures them that he will attend to it. "O ye of little faith!" Can you not trust God?

We see, then, again, as clear as light, that the relationship of Christians to civil government is to "be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evildoers and for praise to them that do well." (1 Pet. 2: 13, 14.) Whether Christians like the form of government or the laws of the government under which they live, they must cheerfully and humbly submit "for the Lord's sake."

Christians cannot join mobs or in any way encourage mobs of any kind; they cannot encourage lawlessness in any form.

In no case can Christians disobey that government under which they live or refuse to submit to any of its laws or regulations, *except only when it forbids their doing something God has commanded or commands them to do something he has forbidden. In that case they must obey God rather than the government.* This way is so plain that "wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein."

According to this, Peter and John said to civil authorities with power to imprison and even to behead them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard" (Acts 4: 19, 20); and, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5: 29). According to this, the three Hebrew children disobeyed Nebuchadnezzar and were cast into the fiery furnace, heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated," declaring to Nebuchadnezzar: "God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king." (Dan. 3: 17.) According to this, Daniel disobeyed King Darius and went "into the den of lions." According to this, Jesus was crucified, and the apostles went into prison, some were beheaded, and early Christians suffered martyrdom. By the authority of Cæsar's government—the civil authorities—Jesus was crucified, the church was persecuted, many were imprisoned, and not a few were killed in different ways.

When Pilate said to Jesus, "Knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and have power to crucify thee?" Jesus replied: "Thou wouldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath greater sin." Upon this Pilate sought to release Jesus, but was a coward and was afraid of the Jews. (John 19: 10-12.)

Whenever there comes a clash between God's law and civil government, God must be obeyed at all cost—at the cost of life.

It may be added that to place personal comfort and protection, money and other property, or even life itself, before obedience to God is a traitorous and most fearful thing.

21. The above comments, setting forth the relationship of Christians to civil governments, clearly show what is meant by rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that

are God's. It is to honor civil officers; to pay tribute, custom, or taxes to whomsoever due; to be law-abiding and peace-maintaining citizens, and always submissive to authorities, except only when they forbid obedience to God in any way or require something which he forbids. To render unto God the things that are his is to love him as fully as he directs and to obey him at all hazards.

III. The Herodians Could Not Reply to Jesus.

22. When those who put this question about paying tribute to Cæsar heard Jesus' answer, "they were not able to take hold of the saying" (Luke 20: 26)—that is, to make their intended point against Jesus; and "they marveled, and left him, and went their way."

They were sorely disappointed in their efforts to trap Jesus, were utterly unable to reply to his teaching in regard to his and his disciples' relation to civil government, and were determined not to accept his teaching, but to kill him, and left him. All to-day do one of two things: they either accept Christ's teaching in full or turn away from it. No man can serve two masters.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
- 15 What question does this lesson embrace?
Why did the leaders of the Jews seek to kill Jesus?
Why did they not kill him?
- 16 Who were the Herodians?
- 17 What question did they ask Jesus?
Why did the Pharisees join them in this question?
Why did they ask this question?
- 18-21 How did Jesus expose their wicked purpose?
What was his answer to their question?
What does this show the Jews should do under Cæsar?
What is the relationship of Christians to civil government?
Name the scriptures which teach this relationship, or show what Christians must do.
Can pestilences, wars, or upheavals of nations change God or his will, the church, or the life Christians should live?
Is the relationship of Christians to civil government changed in any way by the form of government?
Who ordained civil government?
For what purposes did God ordain civil government?
What should civil government or officers be to evildoers?
What weapon of vengeance is mentioned?
- What is civil government to all who do well?
What three reasons are given why Christians should submit to civil authorities?
Against whom does God teach that law is made?
Against whom is it not made?
According to whose gospel is this teaching?
Why do not Christians need this law or civil authority to restrain them from all these evil things?
What are Christians forbidden to have with one another?
What must they suffer rather than to do wrong?
Can Christians take vengeance?
Instead of taking vengeance, what are they commanded to do?
Who will take vengeance?
How does God take vengeance here on earth?
How are civil officers God's ministers?
Can one be God's minister and not be a preacher or Christian?
Instead of taking vengeance, what kind of life does God teach Christians to live?
For what purpose should Christians make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for kings and all earthly rulers?
Can Christians take this matter of vengeance out of God's hands?
What do many lack?
What must Christians do, whether they like the government and its laws or not?
Can Christians join mobs?

When only are they justifiable in refusing to obey civil authorities?

What does the Bible make very plain in regard to this?

What did Peter and John say they must do in this case?

Why did the Hebrew children not obey Nebuchadnezzar, but went into the fiery furnace?

Why did Daniel not obey Darius, the king, but went into the lions' den instead?

Who or what imprisoned and killed some of the apostles and many Christians?

What nailed Jesus to the cross?

What did Pilate tell Jesus he had power to do?

What answer did Jesus make to this?

Whenever there comes a clash between God's law and civil government, what must be done?

21 What is meant by rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's?

22 What did the Herodians do?

Why turn away from Jesus?

What one of two things do people do to-day?

Sometimes in life we wonder why
 The heart must ache, the lips must sigh;
 Why disappointments cross our way
 To thwart the hopes we hold to-day.
 Ah, soul, the Father hath his plan
 Beneath the ways we cannot scan,
 And ever shall his purpose be
 Worked out for good to you and me—
 If we will wait.

To know that through the strain and stress
 Of human hearts when burdens press,
 To know that when life holds care,
 The Son of God, the Christ, is there,
 Will give us faith for paths of night,
 Will change the darkness into light
 Along the way.

(Selected.)

LESSON X.—MARCH 7.

JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET.

John 13: 1-15. Read John 13: 1-17.

1 ¶Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,

3 *Jesus*, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came forth from God, and goeth unto God,

4 Riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments; and he took a towel, and girded himself.

5 Then he poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 So he cometh to Simon Peter. He saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt understand hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew him that should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 ¶So when he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and sat down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me, Teacher, and, Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."* (Matt. 20: 28.)

TIME.—Thursday evening, probably April 6, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in an upper room.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 138: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- March 1. M. Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet. (John 13: 1-15.)
- March 2. T. Jehovah's Requirement. (Mic. 6: 1-3.)
- March 3. W. The Childlike Spirit. (Mark 9: 30-37.)
- March 4. T. The Reward of Humility. (Prov. 22: 1-9.)
- March 5. F. Laboring With the Lowly One. (Matt. 11: 25-30.)
- March 6. S. Having the Mind of Christ. (Phil. 2: 1-11.)
- March 7. S. The Lord Respects the Lowly. (Ps. 138: 1-8.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Washing the disciples' feet by Jesus, the last passover supper eaten by them, and the institution of the Lord's Supper occurred on Thursday evening of the most eventful week of the world's history.

We have learned heretofore of Jesus' triumphal entry probably on the preceding Sunday and his retirement to Bethany.

His return the next morning to Jerusalem, cursing the barren fig tree, cleansing the temple, and his discourses to the Greeks were, in that event, on Monday.

Tuesday was spent in a stormy conflict in the temple with his enemies and in delivering different discourses. (Read Matt. 21: 23 to 23: 39.)

After this, Jesus retired from the temple forever. Then followed his instructions and warnings to his disciples. (See Matt. 24, 25.)

The rulers had determined to put Jesus to death, and Judas had already bargained to betray him into their hands. (Matt. 26: 1-5.)

Some say that Jesus spent Wednesday in retirement and rest at Bethany; this may be possible; but to others it seems he would be as busy on that day as on other days of that wonderful week. We cannot tell exactly on what day each of all these events occurred; neither is this necessary. That they occurred during this week is the matter of vital importance to us.

On Thursday, probably in the morning, Jesus said to two of his disciples: "Go and make ready for us the passover, that we may eat." (Luke 22: 8.) The two disciples were Peter and John. A man in the city carrying a pitcher of water would meet them and enter a house. Into this house they should go and inform "the goodman of the house" (A. V.) that the Lord would eat the passover there, and the goodman of the house would show them "a large upper room furnished." This goodman of the house was, doubtless, a friend and disciple of Jesus. In the evening, with the other ten, Jesus went into the city. (See Matt. 26: 17-19; Mark 14: 12-16; Luke 22: 8-13.)

WHEN THE SUPPER WAS EATEN.—Considering what all the writers say, Jesus must have eaten this passover supper before the regular time. Matthew says, "Now on the first day of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus;" and Mark says: "And on the first day of unleavened bread," etc. From this it would seem that they ate it at the same time with the Jews. But the day after slaying the lamb and eating it was a Sabbath (Ex. 12: 16; Num. 28: 18); and if the Jews had eaten the passover on the same night with Jesus, they could not have transacted any business the next day, it being a legal Sabbath; Simon of Cyrene could not have borne the cross of Jesus; and Joseph of Arimathea could not have performed the work he did in burying him. John (19: 14) says the day on which Jesus was crucified was "the preparation of the passover," and (18: 28) that they had not eaten the passover at that time; also, in 13: 29, that the disciples understood Jesus to tell Judas to buy some things needed for the feast, which he could not have done had the feast already begun. On that day there was no buying or selling. Luke (22: 15) says: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." Putting all the facts together, it seems that Jesus ate this supper in advance of the regular time for the passover and died as "our passover" (1 Cor. 5: 7) on the same evening that the paschal lamb, a type of himself, was slain. It was slain between three and six o'clock, and he died at three o'clock.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jesus' Love for His Disciples.

1. "Now before the feast of the passover" shows also that Jesus and his disciples must have eaten this supper a little in advance of the regular time.

This verse shows us how Jesus "loved his own." He loved them through all his struggles and trials; and now, in the deep shadow of the cross and gloom of death, he loves them still, even "unto the end." The next day he was crucified; and his tender, loving exhortations all through this night up to the time he was betrayed show how he regarded the welfare of his disciples.

Here he calls them "friends." (John 15: 14-16.) In his suffering and greatest agony he never forgot them; but they all "left him, and fled." (Matt. 26: 56.) He showed his love on this occasion by washing their feet and teaching needful lessons on humility and love for one another. "That were in the world"—that is, should remain in the world while he should "depart out of this world unto the Father."

2. "And during supper." This could not have been the supper in Simon's house, which was at Bethany and "six days before the passover." (John 12: 1.)

The devil put it into the heart of Judas some time before this (John 6: 70); but it grew and developed into full purpose, as will be seen by reading Matt. 26: 14-16. His covetous heart was a fit place for the devil to plant such seeds of treachery.

God will not allow the devil to tempt us beyond our ability to bear it. (1 Cor. 10: 13.)

We see here the great love and condescension of Jesus in stooping to wash this traitor's feet. You who think you cannot pray for your enemies and do them good, remember this.

II. The Old Contention of Who is Greatest.

3. Jesus did this conscious of his divinity and knowing that he could do all things, "that his hour was come," and that he would soon go back to God.

Jesus wished to leave with his disciples an example of humility against self-seeking.

For the third time, it seems from Luke 22: 24-27, "there arose also a contention among them" concerning which should be "accounted to be greatest." For the first time, see Matt. 18: 1-4; Mark 9: 33-37; Luke 9: 46-48; for the second time, see Matt. 20: 20-28; Mark 10: 32-45.

This last contention probably arose while they were taking their seats at the table. This shows, too, that even yet they did not understand the nature of Christ's kingdom.

Men yet seek the honor and the eclat of the world. There is much strife yet in one way and another over who shall be accounted the greatest in the kingdom of Christ. Men are ashamed to own it, and attribute it to some good motive; but, divested of all Satan's disguise, it is a contention for places of honor and positions of greatness in the church. Jesus rebuked this by washing the disciples' feet, and taught

that the true principle of greatness is service—menial service. "For which is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." (Luke 22: 27.)

This desire to be greatest in the church to-day is shown in wearing religious titles, seeking the chief seats and places of preferment. It makes no difference what the title is, whether "D.D.," "Rev.," "the pastor," or "the minister," it springs from the same root. "Master," "Rabbi," "Father," etc., as titles, are forbidden by the Lord. Read Matt. 23: 1-12, and seek to be great by serving in humility.

III. Washing Feet Not a "Church Ordinance"—An Act of Humility and Hospitality.

4, 5. So he "riseth from supper" before they had eaten—"during supper." Why did Jesus wash the disciples' feet? Washing the feet was a necessary act of hospitality in the East, owing to the dry and dusty climate, the sandals people wore, and their way of traveling. (See Gen. 18: 4; 19: 2; 24: 32; 43: 24; 1 Sam. 25: 41; Luke 7: 38-44; 1 Tim. 5: 10.) Washing the feet was considered, too, a very humble service, the duty of servants. When David sent to Carmel for Abigail to become his wife, she said: "Behold, thy handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." (1 Sam. 25: 41.) Jesus and his disciples had walked in from Bethany; they were in that guest chamber as a family to themselves; none had offered to perform the hospitable act of washing feet; instead, the disciples were envious and contending for places of honor. They all sat down to the table with dry, dusty feet. The Lord quietly arose without any explanation, "and layeth aside his garments [his outer robe]; and he took a towel, and girded himself [like a servant]. Then he poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." This was a severe and powerful rebuke to their ambitious strife as to who should be the greatest. It was a rebuke more solemn and impressive than language. Then it was an example of humility and service which he earnestly exhorted them to follow. (Verse 15.) It demonstrated that the servant of all is greatest of all. (Verse 16.) It is an answer to the question: "Who is the greatest?"

Let all who are ambitious to be considered the greatest in the church to-day look at this example and remember that he who performs the most humble, menial service for others is greatest before God.

It is not a "church ordinance;" it is never referred to in the New Testament or practiced by any church there as such; it is mentioned but once after this, where it is classed with the good works of a poor widow as an act of hospitality. (1 Tim. 5: 10.) The apostles were to teach all Christians to observe whatsoever Jesus had commanded them (Matt. 28: 19, 20), and they taught this as a home duty and as an act of hospitality. The Lord's Supper they taught to be observed when the church came together on the first day of the week. (Acts 20: 7; 1 Cor. 11: 17-35.) We must not change God's order, but must do what he has ordained humbly, without show and display, in the way and in the spirit he has ordained it should be done.

IV. Peter's Protest and Submission.

6. Jesus began at one of the others; and when he came to Peter, he, in wonder and astonishment that his Lord, as a servant, should wash his feet, said: "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?"

7. Jesus explained that Peter—and, of course, the others—did not then understand the import of what he was doing, but they would understand it hereafter. In verses 13-16 he explains the meaning of his action; and later, when the apostles understood the nature of his kingdom, they felt the full force of this beautiful example. Never again did they raise the question of who should be greatest.

8. "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Peter realized that this was a duty he should have performed for Jesus, and he could not submit to the idea that Jesus, as a servant, should wash his feet. Jesus replied: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." He did not mean that if he did not wash simply the dust from Peter's feet, but if Peter did not submit to him. "Wash" is used in a figurative sense, and means cleansing from sin. Paul says the Corinthians were "washed," "sanctified," and "justified" (1 Cor. 6: 11), meaning they had been cleansed or pardoned of their "old sins" (2 Pet. 1: 9).

9. Peter understood that Jesus meant more than washing his feet with water, but seemed yet confused, and said: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." If this meant submission to Jesus and was symbolic of having part with him, then Peter offered his whole body. All this is characteristic of Peter.

10. The Lord first referred to the literal fact that their bodies were clean, except their feet. They had bathed after the custom of preparing for the feast; but, in walking into the city, their feet had become dusty and needed cleansing. Hence, "he that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet." Then he refers to the spiritual meaning of being pure, upright, sincere, true, and cleansed from sin. The apostles were all this, except Judas.

11. Jesus shows that he uses "wash" in this sense by this remark, "Ye are not all clean," referring to Judas. He was not true, pure, and good, but a thief and traitor.

V. The Lesson.

12. Having performed this service, Jesus laid aside the towel, his badge of a servant, put on his robe, and sat "down again" to the table. This shows that he arose "during supper," and before they had eaten, to do this. What an impression this made upon them all! Even down to old age John remembered it most vividly. Then Jesus said, "Know ye what I have done to you?"—that is, consider it well and profit by it.

13, 14. He draws the conclusion himself. Instead of seeking to be the greatest in the kingdom, they should, in self-sacrifice, self-abasement, humility, and love, serve one another. To wash one another's feet is the way to be great in God's kingdom. "Doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself." (See Phil. 2: 16.) "Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits." (Rom. 12: 16.)

15. Christ's disciples should do as he did. In kindness and humility they should bathe one another's feet to-day as a home duty when necessary; but the great lesson in this service is that "a servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him." Christ's servants cannot do better than he did or become greater than he is, and he is what he is because of his service on earth to men. "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them." This is the royal road to happiness and true greatness. (Verses 16, 17.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Memory Verses.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Whom did Jesus send into Jerusalem, and for what purpose?
How were they to find the place?
Who was this "goodman of the house?"
Tell what is said about the time Jesus ate this supper.
- 1 What does "before the feast of the passover" show?
How do we know this supper was not the same as the one in Simon's house?
How well did Jesus love his disciples?
Does he love them yet?
Where was he going, and where would they remain?
 - 2 When did the facts in this lesson occur?
When did the devil put it into the heart of Judas to betray Jesus?
How was Judas' heart prepared for this?
What is said about the Lord allowing Satan to tempt us?
 - 3 Of what was Jesus conscious all the while?
What can one do who is Christlike?
For what were the apostles contending?
How long had they kept this up?
- What does this show?
To what do men attribute their desire to be greatest?
How did Jesus rebuke this?
4, 5 What did Jesus do? (Give all the facts.)
Why did he wash their feet?
Why is it not a "church ordinance?" (Go over this carefully.)
Give the examples of washing feet in the Bible.
At what should those who are ambitious now to be greatest look?
- 6 What effect did this have on Peter, and what did he say?
 - 7 What reply did Jesus make to Peter?
 - 8 What did Peter say next?
What was Christ's reply to this?
What did he mean by this reply?
 - 9 What did Peter say to this?
What did he mean by this?
 - 10, 11 What did Jesus mean by this answer?
 - 12, 13 Then what did Jesus do?
What did he say?
What did he mean by this?
 - 14 What conclusion did he draw from his own example?
What does Paul exhort all Christians to do?
 - 15 When is it right to wash feet?
What is the great lesson of this example?
What is the road to true greatness?

"Go break to the needy sweet charity's bread,
For giving is living," the angel said.
"And must I be giving again and again?"
"O, no," said the angel, piercing me through;
"Just give till the Master stops giving to you."

Lowliness is the base of every virtue,
And he who goes the lowest builds the safest.

(Bailey.)

LESSON XI.—MARCH 14.

LAST WORDS OF JESUS WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

John 14: 1-17. Read John 14-17.

- 1 ¶Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.
 2 In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.
 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.
 4 And whither I go, ye know the way.
 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?
 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.
 7 If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.
 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.
 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?
 10 Believeest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.
 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.
 12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.
 13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
 14 If ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do.
 15 If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.
 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever,
 17 *Even* the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*I am the way, and the truth, and the life.*” (John 14: 6.)

TIME.—Probably A.D. 30.

PLACE.—The upper room in Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus and his disciples.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 1.

HOME READING.—

- March 8. M. Jesus the Way to God. (John 14: 1-15.)
 March 9. T. The Comforter Promised. (John 14: 16-24.)
 March 10. W. Jesus the True Vine. (John 15: 1-10.)
 March 11. T. The Spirit of Truth. (John 16: 1-14.)
 March 12. F. Christ's Prayer for His Disciples. (John 17: 9-19.)
 March 13. S. Christ's Prayer for All Believers. (John 17: 20-26.)
 March 14. S. Comforting Promises. (Isa. 40: 1-8.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

This lesson, the rest of John 14, and chapters 15, 16, contain the most interesting and profoundly important conversation Jesus had with his apostles after instituting the Lord's Supper and before his prayer recorded in chapter 17.

In this conversation Jesus very tenderly told his apostles why he was leaving them and of the many mansions in his Father's house; encouraged them to continue to believe on him, although he would be taken away from them; promised them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth; and told what the Spirit would do for them and also for the world.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled."

1. The announcement made by Jesus that one would betray him, all would forsake him, Peter would deny him, and he would depart from them, caused great sorrow to the apostles. With the betrayal, the arrest, the mock trial, the cruel scourging, and the cross before him, Jesus here speaks, not of his own sorrow, but seeks to console his apostles. Frequently in this conversation Jesus spoke of the trouble and sorrow of the apostles. He said to them that while they were then sorrowful, would weep and lament, and those who killed them would think such persecution was God's service, yet their sorrow should be turned into joy which none could take away. (John 16: 2, 6, 20-22.)

"Believe in God, believe also in me." Jesus knew on account of his death the apostles would lose hope. The following expression shows they did: "But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel." (Luke 24: 21.) This hope began to fail on the night of this lesson; hence the encouragement given here.

Since the apostles would still believe in God when Jesus had been taken from them and killed, they should still believe also in him; they should walk by faith. This was from God and for their good and the salvation of the race. He was in the Father and the Father in him; and, believing in God, they should believe in him. Leaving them, he would go to the Father.

Jesus foretold these things that when they should come to pass the faith of the apostles might not be shaken. (Verse 29.)

II. The Many Mansions.

2. "In my Father's house are many mansions." God's house is heaven. There is "the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11: 10.) This is "the new Jerusalem." John saw this city coming down out of heaven, "made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." When this takes place, the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will be their God, and they will be his people.

This city needs no sun or moon or stars to give it light. The sun, moon, and stars will all pass away with the present heaven and earth. The light of this city is the glory of God and the Lamb. There is no night there, because God and the Lamb are always there, and they are its light.

The gates stand always open to receive the redeemed, but nothing unclean or abominable or that loves and makes a lie can enter. (Rev. 21: 9-27.) The redeemed of all nations will inhabit it.

Paul (2 Cor. 5: 1) says: "For we know that if the earthly house

of our tabernacle [body] be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens."

"Mansions" means "dwelling places." (See margin.)

"If it were not so, I would have told you." Jesus had told the apostles the truth—that he must suffer, die, and rise from the dead; that he must go away. Had it been otherwise, he would have told them. But his going away was for their good.

"For I go to prepare a place for you." The sacrifice of Jesus provided the way of salvation; he is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (verse 6); but he also prepares the place. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. There will be "new heavens and a new earth," wherein the righteous will dwell. (2 Pet. 3: 13.)

III. Christ Will Come Again.

3. "I come again." The separation was not forever. "That where I am, there ye may be also."

This return was not the resurrection of Jesus, but his second coming.

Christians joyfully expect Christ to come from heaven. (Phil. 3: 20, 21; 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.)

To this end Jesus prayed for his disciples: "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." (John 17: 24.)

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will the Father honor." (John 12: 26.)

All preachers of the gospel whom I have heard and all who have taught the word of God by pen have preached and taught the second coming of Christ. All who have preached and taught the gospel since Christ ascended from the earth have preached and taught the same. If preachers do not preach and teach that, they do not preach and teach the gospel.

But preachers who preach and teach the particular time when Christ is coming, preach and teach more than the gospel and more than that which Jesus says he and the angels know. (Matt. 24: 26; Mark 13: 32; Acts 1: 7; 1 Thess. 5: 2; 1 Pet. 3: 10.)

Not only does no one know the day or the hour when Christ will come, but his coming will be sudden. (Mark 13: 33; Luke 12: 37-40; and many other passages.)

IV. Only One Way of Salvation.

4, 5. "And whither I go, ye know the way." Jesus had told the apostles plainly about his departure and where he was going, but Thomas said: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way?" These declarations were not clear to Thomas, but he sought to understand them.

6. In reply to Thomas, Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Jesus was going to the Father (verses 12, 28), and to all men he is the only way to the Father. Although soon to be killed and buried, he is the only way to God. Strange as it seemed then to the apostles, the death of Jesus was the only way to destroy Satan (Heb. 2: 14, 15)

abolish death, and bring "life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1: 10).

He is "the truth"—the revelation of God to men, the fulfillment of the law and prophets; he is "full of grace and truth;" "grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1: 14, 17.) Christ's teaching is the only true teaching, for his teaching is God's teaching. (John 7: 16; 12: 49, 50.) "The words" which God gave him he gave to the apostles (John 17: 8), and sent them into the world to teach the same to all nations. The world can receive the truth, the word of God (John 17: 17), only through Jesus Christ.

He is "the life." Through him were all things made. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1: 1-4.) Jesus states this as follows: "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself." (John 5: 26.) God is the source of all life, and Jesus is the Son of God. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1: 1.) "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1: 14.) Again, Jesus says: "I am the resurrection, and the life." (John 11: 25.) There is no spiritual life out of Christ. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." (John 17: 3.) Not to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, "the only begotten from the Father" (John 1: 14), as no other one in heaven and on earth is the Son of God, is to reject eternal life. He "only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable." (1 Tim. 6: 16.)

Hence, Jesus says in this verse of the lesson: "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." There is no other way to reach God. "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." (Acts 4: 12.)

V. Christ and the Father Are One.

7. "If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also." If the apostles had fully comprehended the divinity of Jesus, the full import of his Sonship and mission, they would have seen God through him. He states frequently in this conversation that he is in the Father and the Father in him. The way to study and know God now is to study and know Christ, for he came from God.

"From henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." Knowing Christ better, understanding after his resurrection and ascension the nature of his kingdom and his nature and work, they would see God in him.

"From henceforth" means from his trial and crucifixion. All this would be a new revelation to the apostles, and they would soon be enabled to understand it.

8. Philip said: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." He did not understand that God is seen in Christ, and asked Christ to show the Father, that the apostles might behold him with the natural eye.

9. Read the verse. To know Jesus was to know God, to see him was to see God. He was God "manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. 3: 16.) He came to earth to do God's will, and was a manifestation of God's mercy, grace, love, and power. He had been with the apostles for

more than three years; hence, he asked: "Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip?"

10. Jesus further asked Philip: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" Before this Jesus had said: "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me." (John 12: 44.) He "is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation." (Col. 1: 15.) "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2: 9.) Just as one sees the sun when he sees the radiance of the sun, so those who saw Jesus saw "the effulgence" of God's glory "and the very image of his substance." (Heb. 1: 3.) So complete was the union between Jesus and God that God was in him teaching and performing the work he did. "The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me doeth his works."

11. Jesus exhorted the apostles to believe his statement that he was in the Father and the Father in him; but if they would not believe his statement, they should believe him for his works' sake. What he did—his miracles and mighty works—showed that he was in the Father and the Father in him.

12. The works that Jesus did not only convinced the apostles of the fact under consideration and of the claims of Jesus, but faith in him would enable them to do the works which he did, and more: "And greater works than these shall he do." The reason Jesus gives for making this declaration is: "Because I go unto the Father." This reason helps us to understand what works he meant by "greater works." He did not mean greater and more wonderful miracles, but greater work in extending the kingdom of God, preaching the gospel unto "the whole creation," and leading thousands into Christ. Christ was going to the Father, and they must continue the work on earth.

VI. Christ's Work in Heaven.

13. Christ was not through with his work because he went to the Father; he went there to make intercession. "Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7: 25.) He is High Priest, Mediator, and Advocate. To help them to accomplish these "greater works," Jesus promised that whatsoever they should ask in his name, that he would do. He would do this for the same purpose for which he had come to the earth and had done God's will here—namely, "that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

All Christians to-day and all work done by the church in obedience to God are the glory of God in the Son, because they are the result of Christ's work.

14. All petitions must be offered in faith and in Christ's name—that is, in submission to him and depending upon him. No prayer is acceptable to God unless offered in the name of Christ. No institution which omits the name of Christ can be Christian.

VII. The World Cannot Receive the Holy Spirit.

15. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." This is the only way to show love for Jesus or for God. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." (1 John 5: 3.) "He that

saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected." (1 John 2: 4, 5.)

16, 17. Although Jesus would leave the apostles, he would pray the Father, and the Father would send them another "Comforter," who would abide with them forever. This was "the Spirit of truth." Other verses tell what the Holy Spirit would do for the apostles and for the world—for the apostles, see verse 26, chapter 16: 12, 14; for the world, see chapter 16: 8-11.

But, in addition to all this, Jesus declares that the world cannot receive this "Comforter," this "Spirit of truth," "the Holy Spirit." Jesus does not mean simply that a man who is not a Christian cannot receive the Holy Spirit. He means that, and more than that; he means that which is called in the Bible "the world," of which Satan is the prince (John 12: 31; 14: 30; 16: 11; 2 Cor. 4: 4); that which hated Christ and hates the church to-day (John 15: 19); and that of which Christ is not and of which his disciples are not (John 17: 16). Christ's kingdom is not of this world; it has not the spirit of the world, it reflects not the character of the world, and it is not dominated by the world. If Christ's kingdom were of this world, it would have the spirit of the world, and then would his servants fight—fight with carnal weapons, fight to kill; but this is not the spirit of his kingdom. Neither can a man remain in the world and receive the Holy Spirit. God does not put his Spirit in the world or into institutions of the world.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What do this lesson and chapters 15 and 16 contain?
- 1 What had caused the apostles trouble?
What shows Jesus' unselfishness and consideration for the apostles?
What further would they suffer?
Into what would their sorrow be turned?
What did Jesus exhort them to do?
Can one believe in God and not believe in Christ?
Why did Jesus give the exhortation?
Why should they still believe in him?
Why did Jesus foretell these things?
 - 2 What is his Father's house?
Who will enter this city?
Who will be shut out?
Who will give it light?
What does "Paul say Christians have?"
What does "mansions" mean?
Why did Jesus go away?
 - 3 What did Jesus say he would do after preparing the place?
When?
- Where will all his faithful followers be?
4, 5 What did Jesus say the apostles knew?
What did Thomas say?
6 What reply did Jesus make to Thomas?
How could Jesus, killed and buried, be the way, the truth, and the life?
How is Jesus the way?
How the truth?
How the life?
What does one reject in rejecting the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the only begotten Son of God?
How alone can one come to God?
Repeat Acts 4: 12.
- 7 What is necessary in order to know God?
Why, then, did the apostles not know him more fully?
When would they see God in Christ?
 - 8 What request did Philip make?
What did he not understand?
 - 9 Why did one know God and see God by knowing and seeing Jesus?
 - 10 What did Jesus further ask Philip?
When had Jesus said this before?
Give the passages stating the close union between Christ and the Father.

- 11 What did Jesus exhort the apostles to believe?
If they would not believe his statement, then why should they believe?
- 12 What were the "greater works" the apostles did?
Why could they do these works?
- 13 What does Jesus do while with the Father?
What did he promise to do for the apostles?
- 14 How must they pray?
- 15 What is it to love God and Jesus?
- What is it to profess to know God and yet not obey him?
- 16, 17 What did Jesus promise to send to his disciples?
What was this Comforter?
What would he do for the apostles?
What would he do for the world?
What cannot receive the Holy Spirit?
Why cannot the world receive the Holy Spirit?
Show the difference between the church and the world, between the spirit of the world and the Holy Spirit.

I saw a smile; to a poor man 'twas given,
And he was old.
The sun broke forth; I saw that smile in heaven
Wrought into gold.
Gold of such luster never was vouchsafed to us;
It made the very light of day more luminous.

I saw a toiling woman sinking down,
Footsore and cold.
A soft hand covered her—the humble gown,
Wrought into gold,
Grew straight imperishable, and will be shown
To smiling angels gathered round the judgment throne.

Wrought into gold! We that pass down life's hours
So carelessly
Might make the dusty way a path of flowers,
If we would try.
Then every gentle deed we've done, or kind word given,
Wrought into gold, would make us wondrous rich in heaven.
(Selected.)

"I know not where His hand shall lead—
Through desert wastes, o'er flowery mead,
'Mid tangled thicket, set with thorn;
But still I know my Father's hand
Will bring me to this goodly land."

LESSON XII.—MARCH 21.

JESUS DIES AND RISES FROM THE DEAD.

John 19: 23-30; 20: 19, 20. Read John 18: 1 to 20: 23.

23 ¶The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also the coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore one to another, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith,

They parted my garments among them,
And upon my vesture did they cast lots.

25 These things therefore the soldiers did. But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold, thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.

28 ¶After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, saith, I thirst.

29 There was set there a vessel full of vinegar: so they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit.

19 ¶When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had said this, he showed unto them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.” (John 10: 17.)

TIME.—From nine to three o'clock, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—“Golgotha,” at Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—Jesus, Simon of Cyrene, soldiers, priests, scribes, faithful women and other acquaintances, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and the multitude.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 16: 5-11.

HOME READING.—

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| March 15. | M. | Behold the Man. (John 19: 1-9.) |
| March 16. | T. | Jesus Crucified. (John 19: 23-30.) |
| March 17. | W. | The Body Entombed. (John 19: 38-42.) |
| March 18. | T. | The Empty Tomb. (John 20: 1-10.) |
| March 19. | F. | Jesus Appears to Mary. (John 20: 11-18.) |
| March 20. | S. | The Ever-Living Lord. (Heb. 1: 8-12.) |
| March 21. | S. | God Delivers from Death. (Ps. 16: 1-11.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The place of the crucifixion was called in Hebrew “Golgotha”—“the place of a skull.” (Matt. 27: 33; John 19: 17.) Our word “Calvary” means “skull,” and the version which we use in preparing these lessons so puts it. Why it was called the “skull” we do not know. Some suppose it was so called because it was a common place of execution, or a place for throwing bones; others, that it was a

knoll resembling a skull. We have no evidence that it was a mount. No one knows, either, just where it was; but it was near the city (John 19: 20), outside the gate, for Jesus suffered "without the gate" (Heb. 13: 12, 13); it contained a garden (John 19: 41); and, it seems, it was on a public road (Matt. 27: 39; Luke 23: 26).

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The last lesson was on the "Last Words of Jesus With His Disciples" before his agony in Gethsemane, his betrayal, his arrest, and his trial before the Jews during that most eventful and most awful night in the history of the world.

Teachers and pupils should familiarize themselves with all the events of this wonderful night, and, therefore, with all the facts of the crucifixion of our Lord.

Study his conversation with his apostles in John 14, 15, 16.

Emphasize Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17: First, his declaration that the most eventful hour of all time in the history of the world had come—the hour of betrayal and crucifixion—and his prayer to be glorified with the Father with the glory which he had "before the world was." He based this petition on the fact that he had glorified the Father on earth, having accomplished the work which the Father had given him to do. Second, the five petitions he next offered for his disciples, including all for all time. That all his disciples for all time to come may be one, even as he and God are one, is one of these petitions.

Note next the departure of Jesus with the eleven apostles from that sacred upper room across the brook Kidron into the garden of Gethsemane (John 18: 1, 2); the three who accompanied him into the garden and the eight who were left at the gate; his agony in the garden and his words to the three; his betrayal with the kiss; his desertion by the apostles, Peter's denial, and John's faithfulness.

Jesus had spent other nights in prayer. Before choosing his twelve apostles he prayed all night; he went out of a night of prayer into the transfiguration; from another night of prayer he went, walking upon the turbulent sea, to his weary apostles rowing against the waves; but no night was like this one.

The greatest event of all was the victory Jesus gained when he said: "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." This changed the cross into the crown, Gethsemane into Paradise, and the grave into the golden gateway which opens into the city of God.

JESUS WENT THROUGH A THREEFOLD TRIAL BEFORE THE JEWS:

(1) Before Annas, father-in-law to Caiaphas, who carried him through an informal, or preliminary, examination. (John 18: 12-23).

(2) Before Caiaphas and a number, or committee, of the Sanhedrin, who were hurriedly collected for this purpose. (Matt. 26: 57-68; Mark 14: 55-63; John 18: 24.)

(3) Before the Sanhedrin proper, early in the morning, but in daylight, because they could not condemn a man to death in the night. (Matt. 27: 1; Mark 15: 1; Luke 22: 66-71.)

The trials during the night before Annas and Caiaphas were in the palace of the high priest, and the trial before the Sanhedrin was in their council chamber. (Luke 22: 66.) The Sanhedrin was the high-

est court among the Jews. They could try cases and condemn criminals, but, under the Romans, could not inflict capital punishment. (John 18: 31.) This was a hurried and informal gathering—a “packed jury” of those determined on the death of Jesus. They had determined to kill him, and sought false witnesses by which to convict him, that they might bring the case before Pilate and secure his approval. The whole affair was a travesty of justice, a farce, and a conspiracy. Jesus was condemned for blasphemy and upon his own testimony that he was the Christ, the Son of God.

During the trials in the night Peter denied Jesus. (Matt. 26: 58, 69-75; Mark 14: 54, 67-72; Luke 22: 54-62; John 18: 25-27.)

After the trial before Caiaphas just before daylight, when he was condemned to death, and before the formal meeting of the Sanhedrin after daylight, Jesus was turned over to the lowest and vilest characters to be reviled and abused. They spit in his face, smote him with their open palms, struck him with their fists, beat him with rods, and blindfolded him and struck him again, saying in derision: “Prophecy unto us, thou Christ: who is he that smote thee?”

In the morning, some time after Jesus was condemned, Judas, filled with remorse, brought the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, threw them down in the temple, and went out and hanged himself. (Matt. 27: 3-10.)

JESUS WENT THROUGH A THREEFOLD TRIAL BEFORE PILATE:

- (1) Before Pilate.
- (2) Before Herod.
- (3) Back before Pilate.

Every time at the conclusion of these trials Jesus was formally acquitted.

All these trials before the Jews and Pilate were hurried through within less than twelve hours.

Notwithstanding all the false charges against Jesus, he was crucified upon his confession that he was the Son of God.

MUST JESUS BEAR THE CROSS ALONE?

In Jesus' humiliation, his judgment, or Pilate's decision of “not guilty,” was taken away, and the sentence of death was extorted from Pilate (see Isa. 53: 8; Acts 8: 32, 33), and he was delivered to the Jews and soldiers to be executed.

He bore his own cross (John 19: 17); but he could not bear it long, being exhausted, no doubt, by the trials of the sleepless night and the pains of the scourging. Then they compelled “one passing by, Simon of Cyrene [a town in North Africa], coming from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to go with them, that he might bear his cross.” (Mark 15: 21.) Luke (23: 26) says, “to bear it after Jesus.” He either bore one end, while Jesus carried the other end, or, bearing it all, he followed after Jesus.

A great multitude of people, including women who bewailed and lamented Jesus, followed him. Call attention to what he said to them. (Luke 23: 27-31.)

HE WAS NUMBERED WITH TRANSGRESSORS.

To heap shame and disgrace upon Jesus, two thieves were "led with him to be put to death" (Luke 23: 32), and between these he was crucified. This was a fulfillment of the prophecy: "And was numbered with the transgressors." (Isa. 53: 12.)

Call attention to Jesus' refusal to drink "wine mingled with myrrh." (Mark 15: 23; Matt. 27: 34.) This was a stupefying drink, offered in kindness to deaden pain; but Jesus preferred to die conscious of all pain and suffering. He drank the cup voluntarily.

Note the superscription which Pilate wrote in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and why he said Jesus of Nazareth is the King of the Jews.

Jesus on the cross is King.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.**I. Prophecies Fulfilled.**

23, 24. The soldiers, according to the orders of officers, nailed Jesus to the cross. They were both ignorant and brutal. From his suffering on the cross Jesus looked down in sublime self-forgetfulness and divine compassion upon them and prayed: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

"The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part." The victim crucified was stripped of his clothes; these were the perquisites of the soldiers who executed him. In this case there were four soldiers. Jesus wore five different pieces of clothing—one for each of the four soldiers; and the fifth, "the coat . . . without seam, woven from the top throughout." Rather than tear this garment into four pieces, they said: "Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be." This was a fulfillment of Ps. 22: 18: "They part my garments among them, and upon my vesture do they cast lots."

The wicked Jews, the cowardly Pilate, and these ignorant and brutal soldiers—all fulfilled various prophecies concerning Jesus, proving by his very trial, crucifixion, and death that he is the Son of God.

It is interesting to note how many prophecies are thus fulfilled.

II. The Time Jesus Was on the Cross.

"And they sat and watched him there." (Matt. 27: 36.) It was the duty of these soldiers to watch the victim, that no one should snatch him from the cross and rescue him.

Mark (15: 25) adds here: "And it was the third hour [nine o'clock A.M.], and they crucified him." John (19: 14) says: "It was about the sixth hour" when Pilate delivered Jesus over to the Jews to be crucified. According to the usual method of counting time, that was about twelve o'clock. The intention was not to give the exact minute or hour that all the acts in this awful tragedy were performed, but that division of the day in which they occurred. The crucifixion, with its preliminaries, lasted from nine o'clock A.M. until three o'clock P.M.

III. The Women at the Cross.

25. "These things therefore the soldiers did"—the things mentioned above. But while the soldiers were doing these things and watching Jesus, "there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." Matthew (27: 55, 56) says: "And many women were there beholding from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee." All these—a silent, tearful crowd—were there in sympathy for Jesus, demonstrating woman's trueness and devotion. Luke (23: 49) says, "and all his acquaintance."

26, 27. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple [John] standing by whom he loved," he said unto his mother, "Woman, behold thy son!" and unto John, "Behold, thy mother!" "And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home." John understood what Jesus meant; was true, brave, and devoted, and tenderly cared for Mary as a son in his own home.

On the cross, Jesus, thoughtful of his own mother and providing for her future comfort, impresses upon all children the duty to honor their parents.

Luke (23: 44, 45) says: "And it was now about the sixth hour, and a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, the sun's light failing: and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst." From twelve o'clock to three o'clock supernatural darkness spread over the land (Matt. 27: 45), silencing raging human passion and expressing the horror with which God looked upon the enormity of the crime. What occurred during these hours is not recorded.

"At the ninth hour" Jesus cried with a loud voice: "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus could bear the betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, the desertion of the apostles, and the wickedness of the Jews; but why should God forsake him? Some thought Jesus called for Elijah. (Mark 15: 35, 36.)

IV. "It is Finished."

28-30. "After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture [Ps. 69: 21] might be accomplished," said, "I thirst." "There was set there a vessel full of vinegar: so they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth." This was a sour wine, and was offered as refreshment. When Jesus had received this drink, he said, "It is finished." The work God had sent him into the world to do had been accomplished. (John 17: 4.) Just after this Jesus uttered his last word on the cross, crying, "with a loud voice, . . . Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23: 46)—"gave up his spirit"—he was dead.

The veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. Not only was the veil of the temple rent, but the earth quaked and the rocks were rent; the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints were raised; "and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection

they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many." (Matt. 27: 51-53; see also Heb, 9: 6-12; 10: 19-22; 2 Cor. 3: 12-18.) The trembling earth, the quaking rocks, and the darkened sun expressed the sympathy of all nature with the suffering Son of God. All this made a profound impression upon the centurion who had charge of the execution, for "he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23: 47), and, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27: 54). Also the soldiers and the multitude were deeply impressed. (Luke 23: 48.)

It was the custom of the Romans to leave the bodies on the cross to die of exhaustion, and to putrefy and to fall off piece by piece, or to be eaten by beasts and fowls; but this was forbidden by the law of the Jews. (Deut. 21: 23.) For the bodies to hang on the cross overnight would be a profanation of the Sabbath. Sometimes the legs of the poor victims were broken to hasten death, sometimes fires were kindled under them to stifle them with smoke, and sometimes wild beasts were turned upon them; for frequently they lingered several days on the cross before they died. Therefore the Jews asked of Pilate that the legs of these victims might be broken, that death might take place at once, so that they could be removed. (John 19: 31.) The soldiers broke the legs of the thieves; but when they came to Jesus, they found him already dead, and did not, in fulfillment of prophecy, break his legs; but, in fulfillment of prophecy again (Zech. 12: 10), one of the soldiers pierced his side, out of which flowed blood and water (John 19: 32-37). This was proof that he was dead.

V. The Body Buried.

Arimathea was "a city of the Jews." Joseph of Arimathea was a secret disciple of Jesus through "fear of the Jews" (John 19: 38), and did not join the council in condemning Jesus. He "was looking for the kingdom of God." He begged the body of Jesus from Pilate, who was convinced by the centurion that Jesus was really dead. (Mark 15: 44, 45.)

Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night (John 3: 1-21), brought a hundredweight of myrrh and aloes and assisted Joseph in burying Jesus.

They wrapped the body in "linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury" (John 19: 40), "and laid it in his [Joseph's] own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulcher" (Matt. 27: 60, 61). They "beheld where he was laid." (Mark 15: 47.)

The tomb was near by in a garden, and no one had ever been placed in it. (John 19: 41, 42.) It was cut out horizontally in the rock. (John 20: 3-8.)

VI. Jesus Rises from the Dead.

19, 20. The first appearance of Jesus after his resurrection was to Mary Magdalene on the morning of the first day of the week after his crucifixion. John 20: 1-18 gives the account of Mary's early visit to his tomb, of finding it empty, of running to relate this fact to the dis-

ciples, of Peter and John's hastening there, of their great surprise at finding it as Mary had said, and of Jesus' appearance to Mary. Other writers relate that Jesus appeared on the same morning to the other women; later, on the same day, to Peter; and then to two disciples on their way to Emmaus. As these verses state, in the evening of the same day he appeared to the apostles, Thomas being absent, in the room mentioned, the doors being shut through fear of the Jews. He said to them: "Peace be unto you." These were gracious words, quieting their disturbed spirits and filling them with joy. This was a repetition of John 14: 27, spoken in the night of his betrayal and crucifixion. He gives peace now—"not as the world giveth," but "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," and which guards the hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus of all his true disciples. Such abiding peace—sweet peace, which knows no ending—the world cannot give; it cannot come from the pleasures, wealth, and honors of the world or anything of the world; and the world cannot take it away. It abides with Christ's faithful followers through poverty, sickness, afflictions, amidst fiercest enemies, bitterest persecution, imprisonments, and death.

Jesus then "showed unto them his hands and his side" in order to convince them that indeed he had risen from the dead.

"Did he rise? Hear it, O ye nations; hear it, O ye dead!
 He rose, he rose, and burst the bar of death.
 In his blest life we see the path,
 And in his death the price,
 And in his great ascent the proof supreme of immortality."

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What was the place of crucifixion called?

Why was it so called?

Relate what is known about where it was and what it contained.

Relate what occurred on this night up to this lesson.

How would you describe this night, considering all that occurred during it?

With what should all be familiar?

What does John 14, 15, 16 contain?

What prayer did Jesus offer in John 17?

Where did Jesus and his apostles go after this prayer?

Relate what occurred in the garden.

Give the different occasions of Jesus' spending whole nights in prayer.

What was the greatest event of all?

Give Jesus' threefold trial before the Jews.

Give his threefold trial before Pilate.

For what was Jesus condemned by the Jews, and upon whose testimony?

During the trial before the Jews, what did Peter do?

How did John show his faithfulness?

What was Pilate and Herod's verdict?

Who bore Jesus' cross at first?

Who next was compelled to bear it?

Who followed Jesus to the place of crucifixion?

How was Jesus numbered with transgressors?

Why did Jesus refuse to drink the wine mingled with myrrh?

Give the superscription which Pilate wrote.

What was Jesus on the cross?

23, 24 Whose business was it to nail the victims to the cross?

What prayer did Jesus offer for them?

What prophecy did the soldiers fulfill?

Why did the soldiers watch the body?

How long did the crucifixion last?

25 Who stood by the cross beholding Jesus?

26, 27 What did Jesus say to his mother and to John concerning her?

What did John do for Mary?

What lesson does this teach children?

What covered the whole land for three hours?

What did Jesus say at the ninth hour?

28-30 What was given Jesus as a drink, and why?
 What was finished?
 What was the last thing Jesus said?
 What occurred in the temple, to the earth and graves?
 What impression did all this make upon the centurion, and what did he say?
 Why order the legs of the victims broken? (Tell how other victims were treated on the cross.)
 What prophecy was fulfilled in not breaking the legs of Jesus?

What proof was made to see if Jesus was dead?
 What prophecy did this fulfill?
 Who buried the body of Jesus?
 Who was Joseph?
 Who was Nicodemus?
 What was done to the body before burial?
 Where was it buried?
 19, 20 On what day did Jesus rise from the dead?
 Who first visited the tomb and first saw Jesus after his resurrection?
 To whom did he appear on that day, and when?
 Why show his hands and side?

"WHAT THINK YE OF THE CHRIST?"

Having studied during the past quarter the life of Christ from the time the Word became flesh and dwelt among us until the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, we very naturally turn to the question he asked his bitter enemies:

"What Think Ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He?"

To leave off the last part of this question destroys its force. Jesus did not ask what they thought of himself in comparison with other persons of earth and time, or of himself at all at that time, as is meant by the question as to what is thought of some great teacher, historian, philosopher, writer, inventor, statesman, ruler, warrior, etc., but of what family the Scriptures teach he was to come. They answered this question correctly: "The son of David." (Matt. 22: 42.) In comparison with others, "never man so spake."

In order to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," it is necessary first to establish the fact that he was of "the seed of David." (Consult Matt. 1: 1-17; Luke 3: 23, 32; Acts 2: 22-36.) If he were not of "the seed of David," he could not be the Christ, however wise and good he was.

The Christ must not only come from the family of David, but must fulfill every other promise which God had made in this respect concerning the kingdom of David.

Also he must fulfill all other prophecies concerning the Christ. In the synagogue in Thessalonica, Paul for three Sabbath days reasoned with the Jews "from the scriptures, opening and alleging [affirming and proving] that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ." (Acts 17: 2, 3.)

Paul showed by the scriptures that the Christ must be the son of David, and also that he must suffer death and rise from the dead. Jesus of Nazareth, having fulfilled all these prophecies, is proclaimed the Christ. (See Matt. 5: 17, 18; Luke 24: 44-47; Acts 13: 34-36; 15: 18.)

The chief priests and scribes knew these prophecies from the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Judea (Matt. 2: 3-6) to his coronation on David's throne; but, not understanding the spiritual nature of the

kingdom he would establish, and thinking and hoping he would rebuild the temporal and political kingdom of David, they rejected Jesus. Not understanding these prophecies and their fulfillment, they fulfilled them in abusing and crucifying Jesus. Hence, they could not answer Jesus' second question:

“If David Then Called Him Lord, How is He David's Son?”

They could not understand how the Christ could be both the son and Lord of David.

As we proceed, let us stop to learn this lesson: The Jews rejected Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ because the prophecies concerning him were not fulfilled according to their conceptions of what he and his kingdom would be. Just so it may be that some reject much of the truth, and therefore teach error, because of their misconceptions of the nature of Christ's kingdom, both here and hereafter, and of how prophecies may yet be fulfilled.

To show the nature of Christ's kingdom, attention is called to the fact that Jesus teaches that in order to enter it now one must be “born anew,” or “from above,” or “born of water and the Spirit.” (John 3: 3-8.) This is one birth. One is not born of water at one time and of the Spirit later on, or of the Spirit at one time and of the water at a later time. By this birth one becomes a child of God, whether Jew or Gentile, and in this way is “delivered . . . out of the power of darkness” and “translated . . . into the kingdom of the Son” of God's love. (Col. 1: 13.) Then by suffering tribulation and proving steadfast in this kingdom (Rev. 1-9), or by diligently cultivating and developing all the Christian graces and becoming a partaker of the divine nature, there will be richly supplied unto one “the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1: 1-11). Then, as the earth now stands corrupted and cursed by sin, it cannot be true that Christ will return to it in order to establish some temporal and political kingdom, or any other kind, with his throne in any given place, since he is already King in his spiritual kingdom, which is already here. “The Israel of God” (Gal. 6: 15, 16) is already here, and has been here since Christ ascended to heaven and his church became “a habitation of God in the Spirit.” (Eph. 2: 19-22.) All now, Jews or Gentiles, who are “of faith,” “stand fast in the faith,” “walk by faith,” are “sons of Abraham,” “Abraham's seed,” and “heirs according to promise.” (Gal. 3: 7, 26-29.) These are “the Israel of God.” The prophecies and promises concerning this spiritual kingdom cannot embrace Israelites in the flesh or exclude Gentiles who are the children of God by faith.

Not considering these statements concerning “the Israel of God” and how Jews and Gentiles alike become children of God and one people in Christ, one may miss the meaning and fulfillment of some prophecies as far as did the scribes and Pharisees in rejecting Christ.

What Some Thought of Jesus.

Nicodemus, “a ruler of the Jews,” “the teacher of Israel,” said: “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God.”

“The common people [“the great multitude”—margin, Mark 12: 37]

heard him gladly," and "the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." The chief priests and scribes, having delivered up Jesus through envy, had to electioneer among the people and stir them up in order to persuade them to call for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus.

Herod Antipas, although he mocked Jesus, confessed that he found no fault in him.

Pilate, having heard the charges brought against Jesus by the Jews and having examined Jesus himself, said: "I find no crime in him."

Pilate's wife said he was a "righteous man."

Demons acknowledged him to be the Son of God, and asked: "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" "The demons also believe, and shudder."

We know something of what Moses and Elijah thought of him, because they came to him in glory on the mount of transfiguration and talked with him "of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."

The apostles and disciples of Jesus confessed him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God."

An angel announced to Mary that she would be the mother of the Son of God; later an angel proclaimed his birth; while a host of angels sang his natal song, saying that his birth would redound to the glory of God in the highest and peace and good will to men on earth. He himself said that Nathanael would see "the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." After his temptation "an angel came and ministered unto him." In the dark and trying hours of Gethsemane "there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him." Angels watched round the tomb, rolled back the stone, and announced his resurrection. Angels conducted him to his place at the right hand of God in heaven, when he was crowned "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and angels will accompany him when he comes again, "a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation."

When he was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down from heaven in the form of a dove and abode with him. At the Jordan, when he was baptized, God confessed him as his "beloved Son, in whom" he was "well pleased." On the mount of transfiguration God again acknowledged him as his Son, and added: "Hear ye him." When "he bringeth in the first-born into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Having raised him from the dead, God "made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

What Shall We Do with Jesus?

In his attempts to release Jesus and yet to satisfy the Jews, Pilate asked: "What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ?" He had already declared that Jesus was innocent of any charges brought

"WHAT THINK YE OF THE CHRIST?"

against him. He meant by this question whether he should release Jesus or crucify him. Jesus' envious accusers replied, "Let him be crucified," and "release unto us Barabbas." Pilate knew *what should be done* and had the power to do it, but he did not have the courage to do it. Of all despicable characters, it is the poor, trembling, cowardly soul who lacks the courage of conviction to do the right thing regardless of consequences.

Not only did Pilate and the rulers of the Jews have to answer this question, but every responsible person now has to answer it for himself.

Christ is the mightiest power in the world to-day, and must be dealt with. Some treat him with indifference; some, with cold unbelief; some deny his divinity—the promises and prophecies of God concerning him from his "virgin birth" to his coronation in heaven—yet would like to think that he was a righteous Jew and great moral teacher; while very many others gladly accept him as the Son of God and Savior of the world.

There can be no middle ground between the Jews' position that Jesus was an impostor and blasphemer and the one that he is "the Christ, the Son of God." He was announced by John the Baptist as the Christ; he claimed for himself that he was *that* prophet to come, the seed of David to rule as King upon David's throne, and the Son of God. The Holy Spirit testifies that this claim is true. God at different times confessed him before the world to be his only begotten and dearly beloved Son. If he is not all this, he is a falsifier, an impostor, and a blasphemer, and John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit, and God himself have borne false testimony. Jesus cannot be only a moral teacher and righteous and good man and yet not be the Son of God and Savior of the world; because, if not the Son of God, he is a falsifier and blasphemer, and, therefore, not a moral and righteous man.

Think of a poor and humble carpenter, of the despised town of Nazareth, rejected by his race, with the mightiest political powers on earth against him and which signed the sentence of his crucifixion, whose crucifixion was executed in the most shameful way which Satan could invent, and without money and worldly prestige, doing as a falsifier and impostor that which Jesus did! After nineteen hundred years have passed and in the blaze of the greatest enlightenment of history, Jesus is still the greatest and the increasing power of the world. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, every prison reform, home of protection for the young, benevolent institution, hospital for the variously afflicted in body and mind, home for orphans and other decrepit ones, the cry of almost all nations against the butchery and other horrors of war and for universal peace, and every other advancement of civilization, is the reflection of "the Sun of righteousness"—the gospel of Christ. Every letter of friendship and love, every recorded business transaction, every legal document of every legislative body in the world, the crowning of every king and the inauguration of every President—every one—proclaims the date of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, "the Christ, the Son of the living God."

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end,

upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever." (Isa. 9: 6, 7.)

This must be believed, or the name of Jesus must be cast out as evil. Now people can examine his claims, heartily believe them, and gladly confess him as Savior and King; and if not now, then the time is coming when every knee shall "bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and . . . every tongue" shall "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

What Does Jesus Think of Me?

Jesus, as Prophet, Priest, and King, "the Christ, the Son of the living God," does not stand or fall according to the judgment of men who are called "scientists" and "philosophers" and who are worldly-wise and great; but he is what God declares him to be.

"For what if some were without faith? shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but [though] every man a liar." (Rom. 3: 3, 4.)

But God has given men his word, exhorts all to search it, and calls upon all to believe it. Of the Scriptures Jesus says: "And these are they which bear witness of me." All this, in the long-suffering and goodness of God, men must do while they have the opportunity. But there are no questions of greater importance and which are more searchingly personal than: What does Christ think of me, and what will he do with me? What does he think of the way I treat his witnesses; the way I treat his teaching, his suffering and sorrow; the way I treat his love and life, his death and shed blood on the cross for my sins and the sins of the whole world; the way I treat his intercession for me in heaven, his glorious reign, and promise to come again? What does he think of my carelessness, indifference, ingratitude, and disobedience? What will he say to me in "that day?" These are questions which most seriously concern me. I do not doubt one single utterance of God; therefore, I cannot doubt one promise and statement he has made concerning Jesus—not one. This does not trouble me. But what does he think of me, and what will he do with me?—these are questions about which I am now most deeply and prayerfully concerned and shall be until death.

"King Jesus, reign for evermore,
 Unrival'd in thy courts above,
 While we, with all thy saints, adore
 The wonders of redeeming love.
 No other Lord but thee we'll know,
 No other power but thine confess;
 We'll spread thine honors while below,
 And heaven shall hear us shout thy grace."

LESSON XIII.—MARCH 28.

REVIEW—THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name.”* (John 20: 30, 31.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 17: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- March 22. M. The Word Became Flesh. (John 1: 1-18.)
 March 23. T. Jesus and Nicodemus. (John 3: 1-17.)
 March 24. W. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman. (John 4: 13-26.)
 March 25. T. Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead. (John 11: 32-44.)
 March 26. F. Jesus Crucified. (John 19: 23-30.)
 March 27. S. The Reason for the Writing. (John 20: 26-31.)
 March 28. S. The Prayer of the Glorified One. (John 17: 1-8.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Instead of giving half of the sentence, as the Golden Text does, the whole sentence (verses 30, 31) is given. In order to learn the truth it is necessary to study whole sentences and sometimes the entire context.

Emphasize the purpose of miracles. While in his great goodness Jesus performed many miracles upon variously afflicted ones, the supreme purpose of his miracles was to convince people that he is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” While the apostles likewise performed miracles of mercy, the main purpose of their miracles was to confirm the truth which God preached through them. “God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.” (Heb. 2: 4.)

In order to study further the purpose of miracles, see Ex. 4: 1-9, 31; John 3: 2; 5: 36; 14: 11; Acts 2: 22; 5: 12-16; 9: 11-22.

Miracles serve the same purpose now as they did when first performed. Then people beheld them and believed the truth; now they read them and believe the truth. For this purpose they have been recorded.

When the whole counsel, or complete will, of God had been revealed and confirmed by miracles, as stated above, miracles ceased. (See 1 Cor. 13: 8-13; 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.)

Emphasize that which must be believed in order to be saved—that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” This embraces his miraculous conception (or “the virgin birth,” as it is called), his miracles, his wonderful life, his death and shed blood for the remission of sins, his resurrection, his ascension, his intercession as priest, his reign as King, and his promise to come again. To believe some theory about Jesus without believing the facts, commandments, and promises of the gospel, is to disbelieve in Christ and to reject him; and to truly believe in Christ is to obey him—to follow him.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What is the Gospel of John?
Who wrote it?
When was it written?
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Why give the whole sentence as the Golden Text?
How did Jesus show compassion and mercy in working miracles?
What was the supreme purpose of miracles?
What benefit do people now derive from the miracles of Christ and the apostles?
When and why did miracles cease?
What must be believed concerning Jesus in order to be saved?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
How did "the Word" become flesh and dwell among us?
What and where was "the Word," and what did "the Word" do before this?
What was given by Moses?
What came through Jesus Christ?

LESSON II.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Name the five men who first became disciples of Jesus.
Whom did Andrew bring to Jesus?
What name did Jesus give Simon?
Whom did Philip lead to Jesus?
What convinced Nathanael?
What did Jesus say Nathanael should see?

LESSON III.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who was Nicodemus?
What did Jesus tell him was necessary in order to enter into the kingdom of God?
What kind of birth did Nicodemus think was meant?
What explanation did Jesus give?
How, then, is one born again?

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Where did Jesus meet this woman?
What astonished her?
How did Jesus convince her that he was a prophet and the Christ?
Whom did this woman lead to Christ?
How must God be worshiped?

LESSON V.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who records this miracle of feeding the five thousand?
Where were the people when thus fed?
How came them there?
Why had Jesus gone there?
In the evening who wanted to send the multitude away?
What did Jesus say do?
Upon how many loaves and fishes did he feed so many?
What was left?
What lesson do we learn from this miracle?

LESSON VI

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
How came this man blind?
How did Jesus open his eyes?
On what day was this done?
What controversy arose between this man and the Pharisees?
What shows this beggar's courage and the cowardice of his parents?
When did he become a believer in Christ?
What lesson does this miracle teach?

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Describe an Eastern sheepfold.
Through what does the shepherd enter into the fold?
Who is a thief and robber?
Whom do the sheep follow?
In explaining the parable, who does Jesus say is the door?
Then who is the good shepherd?
What shows the great difference between the true shepherd and a hireling?
Whose voice will the sheep not hear?
What is meant by one shepherd and one fold?

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Where did Lazarus live?
Who were his sisters?
Where was Jesus when sent for to go to Bethany?
How long had Lazarus been dead?
What did Jesus say to Martha he was?
Who were there with Mary and Martha?
How did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead?
Why speak with a loud voice?
What was the effect of this miracle?

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Who were the Pharisees?

For what purpose did they take counsel?
 Who were the Herodians?
 What question did they ask Jesus?
 What point did they hope to gain by this question?
 How did Jesus answer it?
 What are Christians due civil governments?
 What are they due God?

LESSON X.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 Where and when did Jesus wash his disciples' feet?
 Why did he do this?
 Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?
 With what work is washing feet classed in both the Old and New Testaments?
 When and where should this be done?

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 After washing his disciples' feet and finishing the supper of the passover feast, what did Jesus institute?

What followed the Lord's Supper before Jesus and his disciples left that upper room?
 Why would his disciples be greatly troubled?
 Why should they not be troubled?
 Why was it necessary for him to go away from them?
 Why should they continue to believe in him?
 Why would he return to them?

LESSON XII.

Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 What motive prompted the Jews to crucify Jesus?
 Why did Pilate consent?
 Who followed him to the place of crucifixion?
 Who actually nailed him to the cross?
 What prayer did Jesus offer for them?
 What different things occurred during the crucifixion?
 What did Jesus say to his mother and to John concerning her?
 To whom did he first appear after his resurrection?

Though I a thousand times may fall,
 I will arise again;
 Though I ten thousand failures meet,
 I will success attain.

Though lack and wrong and sorrow seem
 To win the victory,
 There is a trust, there is a faith,
 That will not die in me.

Made in the image of my God,
 In the likeness of my King,
 I stand undaunted, unafraid,
 Serene in everything.

If through the night I cannot see,
 It matters not; faith can.
 There shines within my soul that light
 That lighteth every man.

(Selected.)

SECOND QUARTER.

LESSON I.—APRIL 4.

JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES.

John 20: 24-29; 21: 15-17. Read John 20: 24 to 21: 25.

24 ¶But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 ¶And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

15 ¶So when they had broken their fast, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Tend my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*” (John 20: 29.)

TIME.—Jesus' appearance to the apostles, Thomas being present, was about the middle of April, A.D. 30; his appearance to the seven at the Sea of Galilee was late in April or the first of May.

PLACES.—Jerusalem, the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

PERSONS.—Jesus, at one appearance, and the eleven apostles; next, seven—Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, John, and two others.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Rev. 1: 9-18.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| March 29. | M. | The Morning of Christ's Resurrection. (Mark 16: 1-10.) |
| March 30. | T. | Jesus Appears to Two Disciples. (Luke 24: 13-17, 26-31.) |
| March 31. | W. | Jesus Appears to the Eleven. (John 20: 24-29.) |
| April 1. | T. | Christ the First Fruits. (1 Cor. 15: 12-23.) |
| April 2. | F. | Our Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 50-58.) |
| April 3. | S. | The Spiritual Resurrection. (Rom. 6: 1-11.) |
| April 4. | S. | John's Vision of Christ. (Rev. 1: 9-18.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Tiberias” is another name for the Sea of Galilee, so called from the city of Tiberias, which stood on its western shore. This city was built by Herod Antipas and named by him in honor of Tiberius Cæsar.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

In Lesson XII of the last quarter the different appearances of Jesus, from the morning of his resurrection until his ascension, are given.

Let the teacher call upon the class to name, in order, these appearances.

This lesson brings us to the sixth and seventh appearances.

These different appearances all serve their different purposes in convincing all that Jesus did rise from the dead.

On the night of the first day of the week on which Jesus arose from the dead and after his appearance to Mary Magdalene, the other women, Peter, and the two on the way to Emmaus, he stood in the midst of the apostles, Thomas being absent. The place of assembly was most probably the upper room, which Luke mentions in Acts 1: 13 and in which they ate the passover.

"The doors were shut . . . for fear of the Jews." (John 20: 19.)

Jesus suddenly—and, it seems to us, miraculously—stood in their midst. He had a body of "flesh and bones" (Luke 24: 39); and he who could walk on the sea or instantly vanish out of sight of people could thus appear. Luke (24: 37-43) states that they were "terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit;" but to convince them that he was not "a spirit" he showed them his wounded hands and feet and asked if they had there anything to eat. Whereupon they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, which he ate before them. Peter refers to this in Acts 10: 39-41. Thus he allayed their fears, removed their doubts, and filled them with joy and peace.

In John 20: 21-23, Jesus announces for the first time the great commission—not in the words of Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16; Luke 24: 46, 47, but in language which embraces all that which these writers say.

Jesus said to them: "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit: whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." This is a renewal of the promise of the Holy Spirit in its fullest measure, or baptismal power, to bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said to them, to guide them into all the truth, and to glorify him by declaring unto them the things of himself. (John 14: 25, 26; 16: 7-14.)

While in Matt. 16: 19 Jesus designated Peter as leader among the apostles, saying, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," yet he promised here to all what he promised to Peter, and gave to all the power to remit and to retain sins. In the light of the great commission and the subsequent preaching of the apostles, it is easy to see how they remitted and retained sins. They could not pass the act of pardon or absolve one from sin. No mortal or angel can do this; God alone can do this. But the apostles were to make known the conditions of pardon and salvation in the name of Jesus Christ to all nations. All who heard and obeyed what they said under the direction of Christ were pardoned, and all who refused to obey what

they taught were not pardoned. The sins of all such were retained. (See Acts 2: 36-38.) The apostles never claimed to remit and retain sin in any other way. This whole work was committed to them, and God promised to sustain them in it. He never took this work out of their hands. He sent Peter to Cornelius (Acts 10: 5, 6; 11: 14), Philip to the eunuch (Acts 8: 26-40), and Ananias to Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9: 6; 22: 10-16)—all to tell the ones to whom they were sent the conditions of pardon and salvation. All who did what they were told to do enjoyed the remission of sins. This order prevails yet, and will prevail until the end of time.

The same truth is taught in Matt. 18: 15-20. When church members follow God's directions on earth, their sins are remitted in heaven; when they refuse to obey God on earth, there can be no hope of forgiveness in heaven.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Thomas Convinced.

24. "Thomas" is Hebrew, and means "twin;" "Didymus" is Greek, and means the same.

Thomas was one of the twelve apostles. He was absent from this first meeting of Jesus with the apostles together. Why he was absent, we do not know. His doubt may have been the cause. He missed much, however, by being absent.

Not much is said about him in the New Testament. He ardently loved the Lord, and at one time expressed a willingness to die with him. (John 11: 16.) He was incredulous, yet honest and true. He saw the dark side and all the difficulties in the way.

25. Sometime after Jesus had departed, Thomas either joined the company of disciples or they sought him and told him of the appearance of Jesus. Here he expressed his great doubt and unwillingness to accept their testimony. He had seen Jesus on the cross, the nails through his hands, and the rent made by the spear in his side; he had seen Jesus die, and with him all hope had died. He now declares he could not believe unless he could not only see with his eyes, but also feel the prints of the nails in his hands and the rent in his side. To see these should be sufficient, but he must also feel them that he may not be deceived.

26. "And after eight days" means, according to the Jewish way of counting, the second Sunday after Jesus' resurrection.

On the Lord's day, or first day of the week, Jesus arose and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim. 1: 10) and met with his disciples. On the next Sunday he met with them again, probably according to his own appointment. On the first day of the week, the day of Pentecost, they were again together, and the Spirit fell upon them. After this the disciples met on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20: 7) and otherwise to worship God (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). When we assemble now on the first day of the week to worship God, we should do that which the early disciples did.

Again, "the doors being shut," no doubt for the same reason, Jesus suddenly entered as before and again said: "Peace be unto you."

27. Then he turned to Thomas and invited him to do what he had

declared he must do before he would believe. Jesus knew Thomas' heart and what he had said. He dealt kindly with Thomas.

28. It took less to convince Thomas than he had declared was necessary. His confession is open, frank, and full. None made a clearer or stronger one. Jesus was God manifest in the flesh. (1 Tim. 3: 16.) Thus the strongest doubts of the greatest doubter were removed. All this shows us, too, how the disciples, not disposed to believe in the resurrection, were convinced by "many proofs." (Acts 1: 3.)

Honesty of purpose, sincerity, and a desire to do God's will are essential to faith. (John 7: 17.)

29. Thomas saw, and, therefore, believed; but Jesus pronounces a special blessing on us who "have not seen, and yet have believed."

II. The Third Appearance of Jesus to His Disciples Together.

It seems difficult for some to understand the different appearances of Jesus to different persons at different times, because they do not study these appearances in their connection and as they were made. The first appearance of Jesus to his disciples together, Thomas being absent, as has been stated, was on Sunday night after he arose on the morning of that day. But, let it be remembered, he appeared to others at four different times on that day before he appeared to his disciples together. This appearance to his disciples was his fifth appearance, but the first to his disciples together. His second appearance to his disciples together, Thomas being present, on the next Sunday night, was his sixth appearance. The remainder of this lesson gives his third appearance to his disciples together, but it was his seventh to any one since he arose. This time he appeared to them on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Just before his death (Matt. 26: 32) and just after his resurrection (Matt. 28: 7; Mark 16: 7), Jesus appointed a mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28: 16) where he would meet with his disciples; but meeting his disciples on this mountain in Galilee was not his first appearance, as we have seen. John 21: 1 says "after these things"—the wonderful things which cluster around his resurrection and former appearances—the eleven disciples went, as directed, into Galilee (Matt. 28: 16) to await further orders.

Peter, as we know, was a leader, and at his suggestion seven of them who were together engaged in their former occupation. They did this not because they had abandoned hope or were indifferent to what Jesus had directed them to do, but as a matter of useful employment until he should again appear. Probably they needed something for their own support. The apostles were practical men. In no sense is idleness the way to wait for Jesus. Jesus uses active, industrious, busy people to accomplish his work. Some of these disciples were doubtless at their own homes, and very likely used their own fishing boats which they had left to follow Jesus.

They toiled all night without catching anything. At the suggestion of Jesus, who was standing on the shore and whom they had not yet recognized, they cast the empty net on the right side of the boat and soon inclosed one hundred and fifty-three "great fishes;" "and for all there were so many, the net was not rent." John, with his quick perception, said to Peter, "It is the Lord;" and the still impulsive Pe-

ter "girt his coat about him, . . . and cast himself into the sea" to hasten to Jesus. They were about one hundred yards from land. The others dragged the net to the shore, when Peter sprang back, took hold, and drew it to land. "So when they got out upon the land, they see a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." Jesus had done this; but while there were fish broiling, he directed them to bring of the ones they had caught. He practiced no deception. He then invited them all to take breakfast. "And none of the disciples durst inquire of him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord."

III. Jesus and Peter.

15. While all present were benefited by this appearance, it seems to have been especially for Peter's benefit. "So when they had broken their fast," Jesus turned his attention directly to Peter.

Since Peter's fall, although Jesus had met him at least three times before this, the matter had not been mentioned. Although Peter sinned, he could repent and be restored as an apostle. He did repent; he "turned again." (Luke 22: 31, 32.) Immediately after he had denied his Lord and Jesus had given him such a reproving look (Luke 22: 61, 62) he went out and wept bitterly.

When Jesus foretold Peter's fall, he also predicted his restoration and laid upon him the obligation to strengthen his brethren. This obligation is renewed here in these words: "Feed my lambs."

Peter was suited to be a leader. But few men are. Most people must be led. Hence, the importance of wise, safe, and God-fearing leaders. Peter was bold and courageous, the first to speak and act. He was also impulsive and rash; but, tempered in the furnace of experience and discipline, he became wiser and was better prepared for his life work. He needed, too, to be assured by his Lord that he had been restored to his former position. Jesus was as kind to Peter as he was to Thomas, only he dealt with Peter in a different way. It may be significant that Jesus here addressed Peter as "Simon, son of John," the name by which he was first called (John 1: 42), and not as "Peter"—"a stone." He had shown himself too weak to be called "a stone." When Jesus first called Peter to be an apostle, it was just after a miraculous draught of fishes (Luke 5: 1-11); he now calls him the second time under similar circumstances. Three times Peter had denied his Lord, and three times he here avowed his love.

What does Jesus mean by the question, "Lovest thou me more than these?" Scholars differ as to what "these" refers to. Some say it refers to the fishes and bread; if so, then Jesus meant to ask Peter if he would forsake all things and suffer hunger and want for his sake. Others think it refers to the other disciples; if so, Jesus meant to ask if Peter loved him more than the other disciples loved him. If the latter is the meaning, then it was a reproof to Peter's boasted love heretofore. While now he could not know the depth of the love others had for Jesus, neither did he know it before, when he declared that, although all should forsake Jesus, he would not, but would die first. (Matt. 26: 33; Mark 14: 29; John 13: 37.) He once declared that he loved the Master "more than these" other disciples; now, since he had thrice denied the Lord, what does he think about it? He no longer boasts of his love or compares it with that of others, but

appeals to the Lord's own divine knowledge of the condition of his heart: "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Indeed, the Lord knew Peter's heart and assigned him work to do. This is the test of love. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." (John 14: 15.)

"Feed my lambs." "Lambs" are the young and tender in Christ, whether they be old in years or not. It is more difficult to give suitable spiritual food, to strengthen and edify the "lambs" of Jesus, than it is to find fault, to scold, or to rule. Carping criticism is not edification, comfort, or consolation.

16. This question was asked by the Lord the second time, and Peter answered in the same way. This time Jesus replied: "Tend my sheep."

There is a difference between "feed" and "tend." "Tend" means to shepherd. It includes feeding, but means more; it means to watch, to guard, and to guide. Peter, who so well understood this, exhorted the elders to "tend the flock of God, . . . exercising the oversight." (1 Pet. 5: 2.) At first Jesus said Peter should become a fisher of men; here he makes him a shepherd. Later on Peter spoke of himself as an "elder." (1 Pet. 5: 1.) It is one thing to induce people to enter the kingdom; it is another thing to lead them as godly shepherds into the green pastures of truth and beside the still waters of peace. Many "hold meetings," as it is called, and induce people to come into the church, or to become babes, but few will remain with weak congregations and build them up.

17. For the third time Jesus asked Peter this question. The Lord, it seems, intended that Peter should avow his love as openly and as repeatedly as he had denied him.

Two different Greek words are used for "love" in these verses. The first one, "agapaō," which was used by Jesus, is the stronger, and means to love, founded on admiration, veneration, esteem, unselfish love given of choice, devotion. Such love God manifested for the world in the gift of his Son; such love Jesus manifested in his life of toil and in his death on the cross; such is commanded toward our neighbors and our enemies. It means action, duty, service; to regard the welfare of all; to wish well; to exhibit freely good will toward all. Love as an animal passion is a different thing. As an animal instinct, passion, or impulse, it cannot be commanded. God's command concerning it is to control it and use it in the right way. The second word, "phileō," which was used by Peter, means to love, prompted by sense and emotion, such as friends feel for friends; to be friendly; to be attached to; to long for, etc. Consult Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament on these words. In his question Jesus twice used the stronger word, but Peter modestly replied with the latter. Then Jesus in the third question dropped the stronger word and adopted the one used by Peter, as much as to say: "Peter, are you sure that you have for me even the love which you declare?" "Peter was grieved" because Jesus, in asking this question the third time, seemed to doubt his love. Again, Peter, enlarging upon Christ's knowledge, said the third time, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee;" and again Jesus applies the test: "Feed my sheep."

This grief was good for Peter. He, doubtless, felt the shame of his denial. He is no longer boastful, and his rashness is gone. He is

wiser and stronger by discipline. Simon has become indeed "a stone" ("Peter"), and he goes on bravely to duty and finally to death.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
From what did the Sea of Tiberias get its name?
Why was this city so named?
To what appearances of Jesus does this lesson bring us?
Name, in order, these different appearances?
Why were these appearances given?
Where and to whom was the fifth appearance?
Why were the doors shut?
How could Jesus in "flesh and bones" suddenly appear?
What effect did this have upon the apostles?
How did Jesus allay their fears and fill them with joy?
In what language did Jesus first announce the great commission?
What did Jesus promise the Holy Spirit would do for the apostles?
In Matt. 16: 19, what did Jesus say he would give to Peter, and what did he say Peter should do?
In John 20: 22, 23, what did Jesus likewise say all the apostles could do?
How alone can the apostles remit and retain sin?
What shows that this work was committed to the apostles and was never taken out of their hands? (Give the examples.)
What shows that church members can remit and retain sins, and when are their sins remitted or retained?
- 24 What does "Didymus" mean?
Why was Thomas absent?
What did he miss by being absent?
What was his character?
- 25 What did the others say to him?
What was his reply?
Why was he so hard to convince?
- 26 When did Jesus appear again?
Relate what took place after that on the first day of the week.
What should we now do on that day?
- 27 What did Jesus say to Thomas?
How did he treat Thomas?
- 28 Why did not Thomas do all he declared he must do before he would believe?
- What did he exclaim?
29 What reply did Jesus make?
To how many disciples did Jesus appear on the shore of the Sea of Galilee?
How is this his third appearance to his disciples, and yet his seventh appearance of all?
Why were the apostles in Galilee?
Why were these fishing?
What kind of people does Jesus use in his service?
Who led in this?
What suggestion did the stranger on the shore make?
What was the result?
Who first saw that it was Jesus?
What did Peter do?
What did the rest do?
What had Jesus made ready?
Why did he invite them to bring their fish?
What did he invite them to do?
How did they all know him?
- 15 Why did he give his attention directly to Peter?
How was Peter suited to be a leader?
Does Jesus mean anything by addressing Peter as "Simon" and not as "Peter?"
What does Jesus mean by the question, "Lovest thou me more than these?"
What did Jesus tell Peter to do?
What is the test of love?
Who are the lambs?
What should be done with babes in Christ?
What is the difference between feeding and faultfinding?
- 16 What did Jesus ask Peter the second time, and what did he say?
What does "tend my sheep" mean?
What is one duty of elders? (1 Pet. 5: 1-5.)
- 17 Why did Jesus ask this question three times?
What is the difference between the word Jesus used for "love" and the word Peter used?
Why, then, did Jesus, when asking the question the third time, adopt the word used by Peter?
What answer did Peter give this time?
What effect did Peter's experience and discipline have upon him?

MESSAGES FROM GENESIS

LESSON II.—APRIL 11.

THE STORY OF CREATION.

Gen. 1: 1-3, 26-31. Read Gen. 1: 1 to 2: 25.

1 ¶In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

26¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food:

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so.

31 And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*” (Gen. 1: 1.)

TIME.—According to approved chronology, B.C. 4004.

PLACE.—“The heavens and the earth.”

PERSONS.—God, the Word, the Holy Spirit, and man.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 33: 1-9.

HOME READING.—

April 5. M. The Story of Creation. (Gen. 1: 13, 26-31.)

April 6. T. Christ in Creation. (John 1: 1-10.)

April 7. W. Nature Shows the Handiwork of the Creator. (Ps. 19: 1-6.)

April 8. T. The Renewed Earth. (Rev. 21: 1-8.)

April 9. F. A New Creature in Christ. (Eph. 4: 17-24.)

April 10. S. A New Social Order. (Matt. 5: 33-48.)

April 11. S. Praise to the Creator. (Ps. 33: 1-9.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

“Genesis,” the name of the book in which all except one of the lessons of this quarter are found, is from a word which means to beget, be born; hence, the source, origin, or foundation of anything. “These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven.” (Gen. 2: 4.) “This is the book of the generations of Adam.” (Gen. 5: 1.)

“Genesis” is the Greek from the Septuagint. The Septuagint is a Greek version of the Old Testament, a translation from the Hebrew, and is said to be the work of seventy or seventy-two men, done by the

order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, about B.C. 270 or B.C. 280. This is a fact all young students of the Bible should know. Moses and the Hebrew prophets did not write in Greek; Jesus and the apostles did not speak English.

Genesis gives the only authentic history and the only wise solution of the origin of man and the universe. It was written by inspiration. There are numerous references in the New Testament to this book as scripture—that is, as inspired utterances of God. "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed." (Gal. 3: 8.) This refers to Gen. 12: 3. The history of Abraham, so often referred to by Jesus and the apostles, is written in Genesis; also the histories of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Isaac, and Jacob and his twelve sons. To reject Genesis as inspired history is to reject Christ, and, therefore, the New Testament.

The first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, are called the "books of Moses," because he wrote them. The "holy prophets," as Joshua and Ezra, may have added certain things, as the death of Moses (Deut. 34), which he himself could not have written; but he is the recognized author of the Pentateuch. Paul quotes from Genesis as a part of the general division of the Old Testament called "the law." "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman," etc. (Gal. 4: 21-31.) This is in Gen. 16: 15 and 21: 9, 10; but it is quoted by Paul as part of "the law." It is said that the Hebrew Pentateuch was written on one roll, and the ordinary Hebrew title of it is "The Law."

Then, since Moses wrote the law, he wrote Genesis. "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." (Ex. 34: 27.) "And Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah." (Ex. 24: 4.) "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, . . . and unto all the elders of Israel." (Deut. 31: 9.) The Levites were commanded to put the law in the ark of the covenant. (Deut. 31: 25, 26.) Moses was commanded to write also the journeys of the children of Israel (Num. 33: 2) and the defeat of the Amalekites (Ex. 17: 13, 14). There are numerous references to "the book of Moses" and "the law of Moses." Examples: Josh. 1: 7, 8; 8: 31, 34; 23: 6; 24: 26; 1 Kings 2: 3; 2 Chron. 25: 4; 33: 8; 35: 12; Ezra 3: 2; 7: 6.

Frequent reference is made by Jesus and the apostles to the writing of Moses. Jesus says Moses wrote of him. (John 5: 44-47.) Some of the most direct promises God made concerning Jesus are in Genesis. Moses recorded various prophecies concerning Jesus, and all types and shadows of the law pointed to him. These references to Moses show that Jesus and the apostles regarded him as the author of the Pentateuch.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. In the Beginning.

1. "In the beginning" stands for no definite period, but is sometimes used to express that eternity which was before the creation of "the heavens and the earth." "In the beginning was the Word, and the

Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1: 1.) "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the beginning of the dust of the world," etc. (Prov. 8: 22-36.) The Bible speaks also of "the beginning of the creation." (Mark 10: 6; 13: 19.) "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth." (Heb. 1: 10.) God does not count time as men count it. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Pet. 3: 8.) Time began when God created the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars, which mark time. In the indefinite period expressed by "in the beginning" "God created the heavens and the earth."

II. Who God Is.

The next word in this verse is "God." "As to the word itself, it is pure Anglo-Saxon, and among our ancestors signified not only the divine Being now commonly designated by the word, but also good, as in their apprehension it appeared that 'God' and 'good' were correlative terms; and when they thought or spoke of him, they were doubtless led from the word itself to consider him as the good Being, a fountain of infinite benevolence and beneficence toward his creatures." (Clarke's "Commentary.")

This commentary says also that the Hebrew word "'Elohim' is the term by which the divine Being is most generally expressed in the Old Testament," and that this is the plural form. We know that "the Word" was in the beginning with God, and "the Word was God," and that the second verse in the Bible speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit. There were God, the Word, and the Holy Spirit.

"And God said unto Moses, I Am that I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." (Ex. 3: 14, 15.) God is the eternal, self-existing One; "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever;" the first Cause; and the supreme Ruler of all things. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. . . . For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." (Ps. 90: 2-4.)

III. "Created."

"Created" means caused to exist. God made the heavens and earth out of nothing. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." (Heb. 11: 3.) God did not form anew the heavens and earth or make or evolve them out of something else. "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was

done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Ps. 33: 6-9.) We understand this by faith; we believe God's testimony in regard to it. "For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God." (Heb. 3: 4.)

This is a self-evident proposition. Everybody knows that every building on earth, from the pig pen to the palace, from the rude Indian hut to the most splendid mansion and most magnificent temple, was erected by some one. We could more easily believe that unsawed logs, unmixed and unmolded clay, rough and unhewn stones, and unsmelted iron in the bosom of the earth, without intelligence and design, would form themselves into the most beautiful buildings of earth than to believe that without intelligence of the Creator and by blind force the earth and the heavens in all their order and glory came to exist. The former is the so-called theory of evolution; the latter is the wisdom and power and love of God.

IV. God is the Creator.

This verse, then, the first sentence in the Bible, states a stupendous and sublime fact. It at once sets forth God as the first Cause, the Creator, and the supreme Ruler of all things.

This verse does not state through whom and by what means God created all things; but we learn from other passages that through Jesus Christ, when he existed as "the Word," God created all things. "Through whom also he made the worlds." (Heb. 1: 2.) "All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made." (John 1: 3; see also Col. 1: 16, 17.) This was done by the word of God, as stated above. Jesus Christ upholds "all things by the word of his power." (Heb. 1: 3.)

It is stated in this verse that God created two things—namely, "the heavens and the earth." The heavens embrace the atmosphere which surrounds the earth (verses 8, 20) and all the heavenly bodies—"all the host of them," to the remotest star.

V. The Earth.

2. "The earth was waste and void." The "earth" here does not mean "dry land" (verse 10), but all that pertains to the globe. Water, earth, and all primary elements of creation were mixed together in disorder, confusion, and darkness—a chaotic, disorganized, and unproductive mass. "And darkness was upon the face of the deep." This chaos is called "the deep," and was enveloped in darkness. How long this state continued we do not know. This chaos is also called "the waters," for there was much more fluid than solid matter. About three-fourths of the earth's surface now is covered with water.

VI. The Work of the Holy Spirit.

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The word "moved," as is stated in the margin, means "was brooding upon," as a hen covers her chickens with her wings or hatches her eggs, or as a bird flutters over its young. (Deut. 32: 11; Isa. 31: 5.) What work the Spirit did in the creation of the universe we may not be able to learn from this word "moved;" but it was, doubtless, to give life

and organization, motion and energy, to it. Other passages give us some idea of the work of the Holy Spirit in creation. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they [the animals and things mentioned in the preceding verses] are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground." (Ps. 104: 30.) "By his Spirit the heavens are garnished." (Job 26: 13.) "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life." (Job 33: 4.) The Holy Spirit, then, was present in the creation of all things, and, it seems, is in the very laws of nature, giving life to them.

VII. The Work of the Word.

God, through "the Word" [Jesus Christ, when "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us"—John 1: 14], by means of his word spoken by the Holy Spirit, created, organized, and set in motion the worlds. Hence the expressions: "Let us make man in our image," "Let there be light," "Let there be a firmament," etc.

VIII. Light Created.

3. "God said, Let there be light: and there was light." God created light as he did other things. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." He willed it, spoke it; it was done.

Note the power of the word of God. Where God's word is, there is spiritual light now; where it is not, there is error, superstition, and darkness. "The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Ps. 119: 130; see also Ps. 119: 105; 2 Cor. 4: 3, 4.) "God is light" (1 John 1: 5) and "the Father of lights" (James 1: 17). As God created the primary elements of the earth before he separated "the dry land" from the waters, and the waters above from the waters on the earth, and organized the whole into component parts, so it seems he created light before he made the sun, moon, and stars, and organized them. (Verse 16.)

For the entire work of the six days' creation, see verses 4-31.

IX. Man Created in the Image of God.

26. We should read the different accounts of man's creation. First, his creation is stated as a fact with other facts of creation; second, the historian returns to it and enlarges upon it. Gen. 2: 7 states the fact that "Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"—not only a being with animal life, but with intelligence and a spirit, or soul; third, with Gen. 5: 1 begins "the generations of Adam"—not all his descendants, but the one in each generation which links him with Abraham, from whom sprang, first, the Israelites, and then Jesus.

"Let us" and "our" must refer to God, "the Word," and the Holy Spirit. In holy consultation they decided to make man, the crowning piece of their divine workmanship. "Adam" is the Hebrew word for man, a human. "Male and female created he them; . . . and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." (Gen. 5: 2.) "Adam" means "red," or "of the ground."

"In our image, after our likeness." This is repeated in order to express the thought more clearly and strongly. What is meant by the "likeness" or "image" of God? Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." (Gen. 5: 3.) In the first place, God is pure, holy, righteous, excellent, and good. God is spirit, light, and love. (John 4: 24; 1 John 1: 5; 4: 8.) Man was all this before he sinned. Through Jesus Christ man is brought back to this divine similitude. "And that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." (Eph. 4: 23, 24.) "And have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Col. 3: 10.) "That through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2 Pet. 1: 4.) In the second place, aside from the above quotations, much is said in the Bible about man's having been made in the image of God. After the fall of man, after the destruction of the wicked antediluvians, God said: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. 9: 6.) "Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God." (James 3: 9.) "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1: 18.) "And he that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me." (John 12: 45.) "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14: 9.) Paul says of Christ: "Who is the image of God" (2 Cor. 4: 4); "Who is the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1: 15); "The effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance" (Heb. 1: 3). Christ has now a glorified body. "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (Phil. 3: 21.) "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15: 49.) "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is." (1 John 3: 2.) From these quotations we learn that Jesus will be seen when he comes; that he has a body—a glorified one; and that he is "the image of the invisible God." Before he came to this earth he was "in the form of God," "on an equality with God" (Phil. 2: 6), and "was God" (John 1: 1). "For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." (1 Cor. 11: 7.)

In this holy council mentioned above the creation of man was not only decided upon, but also that he should "have dominion" over the earth, the air, and the sea, and all they contain. Everything necessary for man's subsistence, comfort, pleasure, and delight was first carefully and perfectly arranged in the wisdom and goodness of God, and then man was created.

27. This verse states the fact that God did create man in his own image, as was determined. "Male and female created he them." A detailed account of woman's creation is given in Gen. 2: 21-25.

The creation of the heavens and the earth is not only a manifestation of God's wisdom and power, but also of his goodness. The welfare and happiness of man was the object of God's care before he cre-

ated him. Man was not created until God had created the earth a fit abode for him. God created first the home and the family. These cannot be destroyed without destroying God's order and man's happiness. It is still not good for man to be alone. The marriage relationship is the first God ordained on earth, and it is the dearest, closest, and most sacred. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2: 24.)

X. Man's Intelligence and Speech.

28. "And God blessed them"—spoke well of them and pronounced good upon them. The earth, with all its resources—all that was around, beneath, and above Adam and Eve—were blessings of God. He gave them power to produce beings like themselves. They were still under his divine guidance.

"God said unto them." He created them intelligent beings, endowed them with the use of language. Through language he addressed himself to them. "And Jehovah God commanded the man." (Gen. 2: 16.) God expresses his will to the race in language addressed to man's understanding. One cannot conceive of a moral or spiritual law of God, or of one single commandment he has ever given to man, that is not framed in words addressed to man's understanding. God speaks through the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles. (See Heb. 1: 1-3; 2: 1-4.)

XI. Man's Dominion Over All.

"Subdue it," "have dominion"—these expressions show that God never intended for man to be idle. The earth yields its increase to man only as he subdues it. The numerous products of forests and fields, mines and rivers, lakes and seas—results of man's labor—are demonstrations now of this fact. Still greater results of man's industry and genius are to follow. Time alone can reveal what man's dominion has in store for the race. He has dominion over the earth, air, and sea, the beasts, fowls, and fish, as he subdues them. He should do all to the glory of the Creator. He holds all this in trust. "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." (Ps. 24: 1, 2.) Man's first duty is to God—to love and obey him, to honor and worship him. Like the Creator and Father, he should manage the earth and the lower animals in wisdom and goodness. His highest aim and greatest effort should be to become Godlike.

29, 30. Whether beasts preyed upon one another and man ate flesh before his fall is a question raised by some; but since God gave man dominion over beasts, fowls, and fish, it is difficult to see why he should not have eaten them; yet from God's language to Noah after the flood it would seem that he then granted the privilege of eating flesh. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. 9: 3, 4.) Man was forbidden to eat blood, "for the blood is the life." (Deut. 12: 23.) Eating blood is forbidden in the New Testament. (Acts 15: 29.)

XII. Everything Was Very Good.

31. "Everything" God had made he saw "was very good." As he finished every part, he pronounced it "good." God, perfect in wisdom, power, and love, in his own infinite judgment, pronounced every particular part of creation "good." Every part was perfectly adapted to that for which it was created. Then as "one stupendous whole" it was good, absolutely perfect, because it was the creation of God. We do not wonder, then, that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job 38: 7.) For the entire work of the six days' creation, see verses 24-31.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What does "Genesis" mean?
Why is this book called "Genesis?"
What is the Septuagint translation?
In what language was the Old Testament first written?
In what language was the New Testament first written?
Who wrote Genesis?
What indorsement does the New Testament give to Genesis as an inspired book?
What is the Pentateuch?
Who wrote these books?
What is the ordinary title of the Pentateuch?
Give some passages which show that Moses wrote these books.
Where were the people commanded to put this law?
- 1 Were the heavens and earth created, or did they come by evolution out of, we may say, nothing?
Repeat Heb. 3: 4.
What does this statement show?
Who created the heavens and the earth?
When?
What period of time is embraced in the expression, "In the beginning?"
When did time begin?
What is said of the word "God?"
Who were present in the creation?
Who is God?
Out of what did God create all things?
By what do we understand this?
Through whom and by what means did God create all things?
- What is meant by the "heavens?"
2 In what state was the earth when first created?
What was this chaos called?
What work did the Spirit of God perform when he "moved upon the face of the waters?"
What part did the Holy Spirit perform in creation?
What part did the Word perform?
3 What gives the full account of the six days' creation?
26 Give the different accounts of creation.
Who are meant by "us" and "our" of this verse?
What does "Adam" mean?
In what particulars was man made in the likeness, or image, of God?
27 Give the account of woman's creation.
What shows that man's welfare was an object of God's care before man was created?
What was the first human relationship ordained by Jehovah?
28 What does blessing Adam and Eve mean?
How did God communicate intelligence to them?
How does he communicate intelligence to us?
Where did he place Adam and Eve, and what did he instruct them to do?
Give reasons by which we know God intended for man to work.
29, 30 What was given to man and beast for food?
What is said about eating flesh?
Is eating blood forbidden now?
31 On what day did God finish all his work?
What did he say of all he had made?

LESSON III.—APRIL 18.

THE BEGINNING OF SIN.

Gen. 3: 1-12. Read Gen. 3: 1-24.

1 ¶Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 ¶And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.*” (1 Cor. 15: 22.)

TIME.—B.C. 4004.

PLACE.—The garden of Eden.

PERSONS.—Satan, Eve, Adam, and God.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 1.

HOME READING.—

- April 12. M. A Definition of Sin. (1 John 3: 4-10.)
- April 13. T. The Beginning of Sin. (Gen. 3: 1-12.)
- April 14. W. Consequences of Sin. (Rom. 2: 1-11.)
- April 15. T. Christ an Offering for Sin. (Isa. 53: 1-12.)
- April 16. F. Acknowledging Sin. (Ez. 9: 5-15.)
- April 17. S. Deliverance from Sin. (1 John 1: 1-10.)
- April 18. S. The Righteous and the Ungodly. (Ps. 1.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

It is neither necessary nor possible to locate exactly the place of the garden of Eden. The facts, not the locality, concern us most. “And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2: 8, 9)—everything beautiful and good. “Eden” means “pleasure” or “delight.” The plain

of Jordan, which Lot chose, was "like the garden of Jehovah." (Gen. 13: 10.) Following are references to a place or places called "Eden:" Gen. 4: 16; 2 Kings 19: 12; Isa. 37: 12; Ezek. 27: 23; Amos 1: 5.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Let us note first the origin of sin. "And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2: 16, 17.) Sin on earth with the human race began here when man first disobeyed God; but sin as such was already in existence, for Satan was in existence, and he is a great sinner. "He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof." (John 8: 44.) Some angels sinned. "God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." (2 Pet. 2: 4.) "And angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6.) John says: "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3: 4), or "is the transgression of the law" (Authorized Version), and "all unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5: 17). Paul says: "Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7: 7); "But where there is no law, neither is there transgression" (Rom. 4: 15); and, "Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3: 20). Adam and Eve sinned because they disobeyed God; they rebelled against his will. His will, whatever it is, is right and just, holy and good.

Sin begins in yielding to temptation. Man was tempted to sin by Satan, not by the Lord. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death." (James 1: 13-15.) Thus we see how man sins. Adam and Eve never sinned until they disobeyed God; but in their state of innocence and spotless purity they were subject to temptation, and were tempted when they were drawn away by their own lust and enticed. Through this avenue Satan approached them. Under the most favorable circumstances they sinned under the first temptation.

The fearful consequences of sin should most seriously impress all. Disobedience brought its consequent troubles—toil and pain, sorrow and death. Man was at first, and is yet, left free to choose between good and evil and to act for himself.

"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." (Rom. 5: 12.) "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous." (Rom. 5: 19.) "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in

Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 21, 22.) All die in Adam, whether they will do so or not, the good and the bad; all will be raised from the dead, or made alive, in Christ; but "they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5: 29.)

On the proposition, "Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly," read carefully Rom. 5: 12-21. God's grace saves not only from the consequences of Adam's sin, but also from all personal sin.

The purpose of the tree of life is thus stated: "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. 3: 22-24.)

Separated from the tree of life, man had to die. Through Jesus man again has access to the tree of life. "And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Rev. 22: 2.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Subtlety of Satan.

1. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made." Jesus commends the wisdom of serpents. (Matt. 10: 16.) Satan used the cunning and shrewdness of the serpent to beguile Eve. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ." (2 Cor. 11: 3.) The devil is called "the old serpent" and "the deceiver of the whole world." "And there was war in heaven. . . . And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him." (Rev. 12: 7-9.) "And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time." (Rev. 20: 2, 3.) Then when it serves his wicked purpose, "Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light," and his "deceitful workers . . . into apostles of Christ" and "ministers of righteousness." (2 Cor. 11: 13-15.) Lies and murder and all sin originated with Satan. "There is no truth in him;" he speaks "of his own" when he lies; he is the father of lies, and is a "murderer from the beginning"—a murderer of both body and soul. Satan approached Eve with the greatest subtlety. He clothed his lie in the most attractive and seductive dress, but it was still a lie. He slyly asked: "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" He knew what God had said.

2, 3. Instead of driving him away, Eve parleyed with him. She stated the declaration God had made. It seemed sufficiently good that God would allow Adam and Eve to eat of all the trees except one, and especially when eating of that one would lead to death.

4, 5. Having now progressed sufficiently well, Satan boldly asserted: "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." The devil not only lied, but impugned the motive of God in forbidding Adam and Eve to eat this fruit—that it was not because God did not want them to die, for he knew they would not die; but because he knew they would become as himself, knowing good and evil. True, their eyes were opened—opened to sin and shame; but death ensued.

A lie mixed with truth is the worst and most destructive kind of lie.

This tree was not "the tree of knowledge," but "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Adam possessed knowledge and wisdom before he ate of this fruit. By this he and Eve knew good from evil.

II. The Threefold Temptation.

6. The temptation was threefold. See 1 John 2: 16 on "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life." (1) "Good for food"—"the lust of the flesh;" (2) "a delight to the eyes"—"the lust of the eyes;" (3) "to be desired to make one wise"—"the vainglory of life." Eve saw these three things; but she did not see the shame, sorrow, and death of sin. No doubt Satan led Eve to think this wisdom would make her a self-sufficient guide, independent of the will of God. This is flattering to humanity yet. Many turn away from God's wisdom to follow the wisdom of men. This course can bring nothing but ruin. This temptation reminds us of the temptation of Jesus, when Satan employed the same tactics and used the same power, but with quite the opposite result. Eve yielded, ate of the fruit, gave to her husband, and "he did eat." She was deceived, and was first in the transgression. God gives this as the reason for assigning to woman the position which he does in the Scriptures.

Simply bearing children was not the curse. Before the transgression God had said: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." (Gen. 1: 28.) But after the transgression, "unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Gen. 3: 16.) "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression: but she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." (1 Tim. 2: 11-15.) "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." (1 Cor. 11: 3.) "Let the women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak [make public addresses to promiscuous audiences]; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is

shameful for a woman to speak in the church." (1 Cor. 14: 34, 35.) There is no mistaking the meaning of these passages and woman's true position and work. Woman out of her proper place and work to-day is the greatest menace to the welfare and progress of the race.

The curse upon Adam was as follows: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3: 17-19.)

III. Rebellion the Greatest Sin.

7, 8. In the purity and innocence of Adam and Eve their nakedness did not appear. "To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled." (Tit. 1: 15.) The eyes of Adam and Eve were now open to sin by experience. They recognized their shame. "And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen. 3: 22.) There was temptation in the garden of Eden. This tree so used by Satan was not placed there to induce man to sin; it was for his strength and a test of his obedience to God. Why should eating of this fruit bring death? It was disobedience to God which brought sin and death. Rebellion against God is the greatest sin. Instead of living on in obedience to God and in happiness under his rule, man turned from God to follow Satan.

Through Jesus Christ, God is leading man back into implicit obedience to him. Submission to God's will is man's only peace and salvation. In many ways and through numerous examples God is seeking patiently to teach the race this most necessary lesson. To God's rule man must submit. Man changed rulers—God for Satan—when he transgressed in the garden. This brought a curse upon the earth and sin and death to man. The way back to God is obedience to his will through faith in Jesus Christ. "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. 7: 21.)

IV. Sin Makes Ashamed and Afraid.

9-11. Adam and Eve "hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God," because they were ashamed. Sin made them ashamed. "Men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil." (John 3: 19.) "Hope putteth not to shame." (Rom. 5: 5.) "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear." (1 John 4: 18.) There is no place where one can hide from God. Sin makes people foolish, because it makes them think they can hide from God. The question, "Where art thou?" will bring every sinner from his hiding place. "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Num. 32: 23.) Reader, "where art thou?" On the road to heaven or hell? "Where art thou" in the course of spiritual development? Sin makes afraid. "I was afraid." Adam made no confession of his sin, but said he was afraid because he was naked. The Lord probed him with another question: "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" This was an unconscious confession that he had done wrong.

Adam blamed his "environment" for his sin—first, his wife; and, indirectly, God. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

We should learn not to blame others for our sins.

V. The Curse upon Satan.

Eve blamed the serpent. (Verse 13.) These are facts—the serpent beguiled Eve, and she gave of the fruit to Adam, and he ate; but they did not escape punishment. They should not have sinned. Sin is yet deceitful (Heb. 3: 12, 13), and it deceives in every way possible; but being deceived or blinded by sin does not free one from its awful consequences. "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6: 23.)

While we cannot say for certain how the serpent traveled before this, it seems he went upright, and through him Satan talked. Now he is cursed "above all cattle" and "every beast of the field." Instead of "above," the margin in the version used in preparing these lessons says "from among" all cattle and every beast. "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." (Verse 14.) "And dust shall be the serpent's food." (Isa. 65: 25.)

There is a natural antipathy between a serpent and a man. The serpent is a synonym of the sly, mean, and vile. There is everlasting conflict between right and wrong. "He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This, no doubt, refers to the conflict between Satan and Christ, and is a promise that Christ would gain the victory for man's salvation. "The seed of the woman" must mean Christ. (Verse 15.) "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. 16: 20.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Where was the garden of Eden?

What grew in it?

What does "Eden" mean?

What was man's employment in this garden?

Of what was he allowed to eat?

What was he forbidden to eat?

When did sin on earth begin?

Who besides man sinned?

What is sin?

What gives knowledge of sin?

In what did Adam and Eve's sin consist?

Through what are men tempted to sin?

Under what circumstances did Adam and Eve sin?

How did sin enter the world?

What does the race without its volition suffer from Adam's sin?

What has the race without its volition gained through Christ?

Who will enter heaven?

What was the purpose of the tree of life?

1 What is said here of the serpent?

What is Satan called?

Into what does he sometimes transform himself?

What was he from the beginning?

How did Satan approach Eve?

2, 3 What reply did she make?

What should she have done?

4, 5 What did Satan then boldly assert?

What reflection did he cast upon God?

How much of what the devil said was true?

6 What was the nature of this temptation?

Through what avenues was Christ tempted?

What great and common sin began with this sin in Eden?

How was Eve deceived?

What curse did God pronounce upon her?

To what place does he assign woman?

What is a menace now to the good of the race?

What curse was pronounced upon man?

7-8 To what were the eyes of Adam and Eve opened?

- Why was the forbidden fruit placed
in the garden of Eden?
What is the greatest sin?
To what would God bring man
through Jesus?
9-11 Why were Adam and Eve ashamed?
What makes people now afraid and
ashamed?
What makes not ashamed and casts
out fear?
How were Adam and Eve clothed?
12 What and whom did Adam blame?

- Whom did Eve blame?
Did these excuses free Adam and Eve
from the consequences of their sin?
What is yet one characteristic of sin?
What curse did God pronounce upon
the serpent?
What was his condition before this?
What would exist between the serpent
and the woman?
What is meant by the serpent bruising
man's heel and he bruising the
serpent's head?

For a lie which is half the truth is ever the greatest of lies,
Since a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright;
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.
(Tennyson.)

Workman of God! O, lose not heart,
But learn what God is like,
And in the darkest battlefield
Thou shalt know where to strike.

Thrice blest is he to whom is given
The instinct that can tell
That God is on the field when he
Is most invisible.

Blest, too, is he who can divine
Where real right doth lie,
And dares to take the side that seems
Wrong to man's blindfold eye.

For right is right, since God is God;
And right the day must win.
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin.

(Faber.)

LESSON IV.—APRIL 25.

THE STORY OF CAIN AND ABEL.

Gen. 4: 1-12. Read Gen. 4: 1-26.

1 ¶And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man with *the help of Jehovah*.

2 And again she bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And Jehovah said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door; and unto thee shall be its desire; but do thou rule over it.

8 And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 ¶And Jehovah said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Am I my brother's keeper?*” (Gen. 4: 9.)

TIME.—Uncertain, but not later than B.C. 3875.

PLACE.—The place where the offerings were made is unknown.

PERSONS.—Cain and Abel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 John 4: 16-21.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| April 19. | M. | Cain's and Abel's Offerings. (Gen. 4: 1-12.) |
| April 20. | T. | Abel's Faith. (Heb. 11: 1-6.) |
| April 21. | W. | Cain's Failure. (1 John 3: 10-17.) |
| April 22. | T. | Acceptable Sacrifices. (Ps. 51: 12-19.) |
| April 23. | F. | Unacceptable Sacrifices. (Isa. 1: 10-17.) |
| April 24. | S. | Christ the Perfect Sacrifice. (Heb. 10: 1-18.) |
| April 25. | S. | Love Expels Fear and Hate. (1 John 4: 16-21.) |

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

This is a very important lesson, because it involves the very essential principle of acceptable worship to God—namely, faith.

While this lesson gives an account of the first murder, it also gives an account of the first division over matters of religion and its cause.

In Cain's day it was as impossible to please God without faith as it is now impossible to please him without it. At all times “he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.” (Heb. 11: 6.)

Murder is a terrible sin. But Cain's first and greatest sin was not murder; it was the rejection of God's will through lack of faith in God. This begat envy and led to murder. A substitution of man's wisdom

and ways for God's will in the worship of God always leads to envy and the persecution of those who worship "in spirit and truth."

Those who worship God according to "the flesh" have always persecuted those who worship "after the Spirit." (See Gal. 4: 29.)

Cain walked in the footsteps of his parents, who transgressed God's law in Eden and were led to believe the wisdom proposed by Satan would make them self-sufficient guides and independent of the will of God. To worship God after the wisdom of men is rejection of him and must ever be an abomination in his sight. He stamped his condemnation upon it in his total rejection of the first offering of the kind ever made.

To his accusers, who complained that Jesus and his disciples did not worship God "according to the tradition of the elders," he replied that they did not worship God according to his will, saying: "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men. Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men. And he said unto them, Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition." (Mark 7: 6-9.)

Jesus states not only that worshipping God according to "the doctrines and precepts of men" is vain, but he lays down two propositions. (1) One cannot worship God according to the traditions, or wisdom, of men without rejecting God's commandments; (2) one cannot worship God according to his will without rejecting "the doctrines and precepts of men." Which shall we do?

From the creation there have been not only two beings—God and Satan—contending for the rule of the race, but also two dominant and contrary principles controlling men in the worship of God—namely, the wisdom of men and the will of God. As long as some, like Abel, through faith, do the will of God, and others, like Cain, worship God "according to the doctrines and precepts of men," there will be religious parties, strife, and division.

"The doctrines and precepts of men" have divided those governed in religion by the wisdom of men into clashing and warring religious parties; while all of all ages who, like Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, have walked by faith have been one in doing only the will of God.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. God Worshipped from the Beginning.

1. How soon Cain and Abel were born after Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, the record does not state. They seem to have been the oldest children of many sons and daughters. (Gen. 5: 4.) Eve rejoiced over the birth of Cain, probably because he was her first-born, and said she had obtained a son "with the help of Jehovah."

2. "And again she bore his brother Abel." It does not seem clear by any means from this statement that Cain and Abel, as Adam Clarke and others suppose, were twins. Cain was older than Abel. Abel was a shepherd; Cain, a farmer; and their father in Eden, a gardener, but was sent out to "till the ground from whence he was taken."

3. "In process of time" Cain brought an offering unto Jehovah.

We do not know exactly at what time the facts of this lesson occurred; but they occurred before Seth was born, and Adam was one hundred and thirty years of age when Seth was born. (Gen. 4: 25, 26; 5: 3.)

Adam Clarke says "in process of time" means "at the end of days," but we do not know by that on what occasion Cain or Abel brought his offering.

We know by this that God was worshiped; hence, he has been worshiped from the beginning. There was an altar, an offering, and the head of the family was the priest. "Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah." (Gen. 4: 26.) "Enoch walked with God" (Gen. 5: 21), and was "well pleasing unto God" (Heb. 11: 5). Noah "walked with God," was "righteous" and "perfect in his generations" (Gen. 6: 9), was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2: 5), and made offerings unto Jehovah (Gen. 8: 20). Abraham "builded an altar unto Jehovah, and called upon the name of Jehovah." (Gen. 12: 8; 13: 4, 18.) Then, as we shall see below, God revealed his will to men, led them to worship him, and taught them the elements of acceptable worship.

"Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah."

II. Why God Accepted Abel's and Rejected Cain's Offering.

4, 5. "And Abel . . . brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof."

Note these facts: (1) Both these men believed in the existence of God, (2) both believed God should be worshiped, (3) both worshiped God, (4) "unto Abel and to his offering" God "had respect," (5) "but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."

Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's? He states in verse 7 that he rejected Cain's offering because Cain did not well and sin lay at his door—that is, Cain's offering was prompted by sin. John (1 John 3: 12) says: "Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherfore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous." Jude (11) says the wicked and rebellious ones denounced by the Lord through him "went in the way of Cain." Then, in making his offering to God, Cain's works were evil; he was unrighteous, and was of Satan. Does Satan lead one to offer unacceptable sacrifices to God? He so led Cain. Can one be unrighteous and evil while making an offering to God? Cain was. What, then, was the difference between Cain and Abel and their offerings? The difference was not in the intrinsic worth of the sacrifices. Cain's offering may have cost more pain and labor and may have been in dollars and cents more valuable than Abel's. Faith in God was the difference. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. 11: 4.) Cain believed God existed, believed God should be worshiped, and worshiped God; yet he was without faith. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10: 17), and without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11: 6). One cannot do by faith that which God has not commanded and concerning which God has no revealed will; he cannot know that such is pleasing to God. No one can know the mind, or will, of God except as God reveals it. (See 1 Cor. 2: 10-16.)

In the New Testament, for example, God revealed his will through the apostles by the Holy Spirit, which will the apostles spoke, "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but [in words] which the Spirit teacheth." God revealed his will to Cain and Abel; if not, Abel could not have offered a sacrifice by faith. One cannot offer by faith a sacrifice God has not commanded to be offered.

Again, even in the mercy and goodness of God, according to his righteousness and justice, "apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9: 22.) Hence, "the blood of Jesus his [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 7.) God required in his worship before Jesus died the shedding of the blood of animals as a type of the blood of "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1: 29.) How much of this Abel saw by faith is not stated; but "faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." (Heb. 11: 1.) Abel believed God, offered the bloody sacrifice which God required, and implicitly relied on God's promises. Cain did not do his, but rejected the bloody sacrifice, turned away from God's will, and brought an offering of his own choosing and according to his own will. If this is not sin, then Satan himself cannot sin. By studying Matt. 23: 29-36, especially verse 35, it will be seen that Cain, in rejecting the sacrifice of blood, rejected the only remedy for sin, hence rejected Christ; and in killing Abel he set the measure of persecution which was filled in the death of Christ. Cain began this work of crucifying Jesus.

There is a very great difference, then, between believing God exists, that he should be worshiped, and worshiping him according to human wisdom, and in believing in God and worshiping him by faith. Abel did the latter; Cain, the former. Cain's offering was without faith; Cain did not believe in God, and had not faith. One believes Satan exists, but has no faith in him and cannot rely on his promises. He is a liar and murderer from the beginning. At "the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin," Moses still believed God existed and should be worshiped; but he and Aaron "rebelled against" God's word (Num. 27: 12-14), sanctified not God in the eyes of the people, and "believed not in God." God told Moses to take his rod, assemble the congregation and Aaron, and speak to the rock; but Moses struck the rock twice and spoke unadvisedly with his lips. (Ps. 106: 33.) He said: "Hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring you forth water out of this rock?" (Num. 20: 10.) Moses seemed to think speaking to the rock not sufficient, and he did more, and that which God did not command. In this he lacked faith in God, hence did not believe in God. He who does not believe what God says does not believe in God.

All the worship of God after the wisdom and according to the doctrines and commandments of men springs from an evil heart of unbelief. (Heb. 3: 12.) Samuel told Saul that to obey God "is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. 15: 22.) Over the rejection of his offering Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell.

III. God Remonstrated with Cain.

6, 7. God talked with Cain, and asked why he was in this sad condition, and said: "If thou doest well, shall it [his countenance] not be

lifted up?" Or, as the Authorized Version puts it: "Shalt thou not be accepted?" Then Cain had not done well; but he had made an offering unto Jehovah. Can one make an offering to Jehovah, or worship God, and not do well? Cain did. Then the same may be done now. When one obeys God, and, therefore, does well, he has a clear conscience, a good countenance, and is not afraid to look the world in the face or ashamed to meet the Lord. God further said: "If thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door." Sin was not dormant, but crouching at the door, ready to pounce upon its victim. Its desire was unto Cain, but he was commanded to "rule over it." "But do thou rule over it." Cain's sacrifice was of sin, and prompted, as John (1 John 3: 14) says, by Satan.

Satan has no objection to people's worshiping God if they will allow Satan to dictate the way of worship. In mercy and love God remonstrated with Cain and showed him how his own course had led to his rejection. Cain did not say in penitence: "Lord, what sacrifice wilt thou have me to make? That only will I offer." Or, "Teach me thy will, and I will do it." For he knew God's will and had rejected it. Should one say to-day, "Lord, teach me thy will and how to worship thee, and I will gladly do it," there is but one way to learn this, and that is to go to the Bible; for God does not speak directly to men now. "God is no respecter of persons;" and if in faith Cain had obeyed God, he would have been accepted.

IV. The First Division.

This marks the beginning of strife, bitterness, and division over matters of religion, and they have not ceased yet.

8. And Cain told Abel his brother"—"said unto" him (margin). Adam Clarke says: "In the most correct Hebrew editions there is a small space left here in the text, and a circular mark which refers to a note in the margin, intimating there is a hiatus or deficiency in the text." This supposed deficiency as supplied "in the principal ancient versions," says Clarke, is, "Let us walk out;" or, "Let us walk out into the field." However this is, Cain doubtless talked this matter over with Abel. We may well imagine that the righteous Abel remonstrated with Cain that the only right and safe way to worship God is to do as he directs, that this alone is worshiping in faith, and that he besought Cain to repent and do this. Had Cain replied as the wisdom of the world does now to such appeals, he would have called Abel "narrow" and "bigoted," and would have said he had as much right to his opinions and ways as Abel had to his, and that so one was sincere and honest in what he did, it did not matter what offering was brought. One may have as much right to his way in the worship of God as another has to his way; but the ways of both are an abomination in God's sight. No man has as much right to his way as God has to his. The vast difference between man's ways and God's ways is set forth in Isa. 55: 8, 9. The wisdom of the world says Cain brought an offering of what he had, and Abel of what he had; and why was not one as acceptable as the other? As we have seen, one was of the wisdom of men, and, hence, of Satan; the other was of faith, and, hence, of God. This was the first division over matters of religion in the world, and it was in the first family. What caused it? One

brother did by faith the will of God; the other, by human wisdom, his own will. Abel could have gone with Cain in departing from the will of God and had peace, but both would have been lost. They could have been one in doing by faith the will of God, and both would have been saved. Who was to blame for this division?

There are differences and divisions over matters of religion now. Who are to blame for them? Are those who do only the will of God to blame? Or are those who digress and depart from the will of God to blame? It is a curious and spurious logic and trick of Satan which tries to place the sin of division on those who walk by faith, and, hence, do only the will of God. Cain was the one, then, who became angry and showed a "bitter spirit," and those who turn from the will of God now manifest the same spirit.

V. Why Cain Killed Abel.

This first division over matters of religion led to murder; for "Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." For this Abel was not to blame, unless one is to blame for not adding to or taking from the will of God or turning from it altogether. Murder was a terrible sin, but Cain's still more terrible sin of rebellion against God led to it. Envious and most bitter indeed is the one who turns away from God's order of worship to his own and in consequence slays his brother. Much has been said and should be said about Cain's sin in slaying Abel. God says now: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." (1 John 3: 15.) When children are taught that Cain was the first murderer, they should be taught also what led Cain to do this.

VI. "Am I My Brother's Keeper?"

9. One sin leads to another. Changing God's order of worship led Cain to bitterness and murder, and to these sins he added that of lying. So to-day departing from God's way of work and worship or from his will in any particular, or adding to it, leads to strife, bitterness, hatred, and division.

When God asked, "Where is Abel thy brother?" he said: "I know not: am I my brother's keeper?" Some think that Cain also cast reflections upon God by intimating that God exercised special care over Abel and should keep up with and protect him.

Every one now is his brother's keeper to the extent of his ability to influence others to do good or evil. Paul said he was "pure from the blood of all men" because he had done all he could to bring them to salvation. (Acts 20: 26.) No one can live and die unto himself. (Rom. 14: 7.) No one can live without responsibility to God and men.

10. God at once showed that he knew of Cain's foul deed by declaring that the voice of Abel's blood cried unto him from the ground. Some suppose that Cain had buried Abel's body to prevent any one's finding out what he had done. Abel's blood cried unto God for vengeance. Those who have been "slain for the word of God" cry unto God to avenge their blood. (Rev. 6: 10.)

VII. The Curse of Cain.

11, 12. Cain was cursed from the ground and made a fugitive and wanderer. When he tilled the ground, it no longer yielded its strength,

and he was driven from the presence of God and all family connections. Clarke says: "No state out of endless perdition can be considered more awful than this."

The margin puts it that Cain said: "Mine iniquity is greater than can be forgiven." He was left without hope, and said that whosoever should find him as he wandered and fled would slay him. This and other statements show that there were many people on earth then. Thousands could have descended from Adam and Eve by that time. (Verses 13-15.)

God promised that he would avenge sevenfold whoever slew Cain, and marked Cain so that no one finding him would smite him. What this mark was we do not know. Cain was married, and after this children were born unto him. (Verses 16-18.)

Through faith Abel "had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it [his faith] he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11: 4.) With these and similar examples in the Bible, all now should learn the inestimable importance of worshipping God by faith.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Why is this lesson such an important one?
What two persons contend for control over men?
What two spirits or desires dominate men in the worship of God?
What is vain worship?
What is acceptable worship?
1-3 Who seem to have been Adam and Eve's oldest children?
Which was the older?
Over whose birth did Eve rejoice?
What were the pursuits of Adam, Cain, and Abel?
What is said about the time when Cain and Abel made these offerings?
In what did the worship of God then consist?
Give examples of true worshipers.
How did men learn the true worship of God?
What was Cain's offering?
4, 5 What was Abel's?
What five facts should be noted?
Why did God accept Abel's offering and reject Cain's? (Give all the reasons why Cain's was rejected.)
Why were his works evil when he offered a sacrifice to God?
Since Cain believed God existed, should be worshiped, and did worship him, how was his offering without faith?
What only can one do by faith?
What cannot be done by faith?
What is the difference between believing God exists and should be worshiped, and believing in God?
Why was it said at one time Moses did not believe in God?
What is better than sacrifice and burnt offerings?
What effect did this rejection have upon Cain?
6, 7 What did God say to Cain?
What gives a good conscience and countenance and makes one not ashamed?
How can one make an offering to God and at the same time do evil, be unrighteous, and, therefore, not do well?
What should Cain have done when the Lord remonstrated with him?
From what alone now can one learn the will of God?
8 What did Cain tell Abel?
What is the first religious division mentioned in the Bible?
In what two ways could Cain and Abel have been one?
Who was to blame for this division?
Who are to blame for divisions now?
Why did Cain slay Abel?
What greater sin did Cain than slaying Abel?
9 What other sins did Cain commit?
In what ways is every one his brother's keeper?
10 How did God show that he knew Cain had slain Abel?
11, 12 In what way did God curse Cain?
What did Cain say of his punishment?
What shows there were many people then on earth?
What promise did God make to Cain about being slain?
How were all to distinguish Cain so as not to smite him?
How does Abel yet speak?

NOAH AND THE ARK.

Most worthy mention is made of Noah in the New Testament by Jesus and the apostles. If we understand these references and learn from Noah's character the lessons God would teach us, we must study his life here. We must study chapters 6-9 and all references to Noah and his salvation in the ark.

Between Lesson IV and this one the historian briefly passes over a period of about sixteen hundred years. More than fifteen hundred years are covered by one chapter (Gen. 5), which read.

By a simple calculation on the lives of the patriarchs it will be seen that Adam lived to see the ninth generation, living fifty-six years with Lamech, Noah's father, and died only one hundred and twenty-six years before Noah was born. Adam and Noah were contemporary with six of the patriarchs—Adam, the first part, and Noah, the last part, of their lives. They were Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Methuselah, and Lamech. Methuselah died the very year of the flood. Noah was contemporary with his father five hundred and ninety-five years; with Methuselah, his grandfather, six hundred years; with Jared, his great-grandfather, three hundred and sixty-six years; with Mahalalel, two hundred and thirty-four years; with Kenan, one hundred and seventy-nine years; and with Enosh, eighty-four years. Again, Shem, Noah's son, was contemporary with Lamech ninety-three years; with Methuselah, ninety-eight years; with his father, four hundred and forty-eight years—ninety-eight years before the flood and three hundred and fifty years after it; after the flood, with Abraham, one hundred and fifty years, and with Isaac, fifty years. Jacob, Isaac's son, was contemporary with Abraham fifteen years, and with his own son, Joseph; and Joseph died only forty or fifty years before Moses was born.

Thus we can easily see how Methuselah could have learned all the account of the creation and the fall of man from Adam; Noah, from Methuselah. Then there were but few links between Noah and Moses. How easily the wonderful story of the creation, also the flood and the beginning of new life on the earth after the flood, could have been handed down to Moses! Still, he wrote by inspiration.

Jesus and the apostles bear testimony to the flood. (Matt. 24: 37-39; Luke 17: 26, 27; Heb. 11: 7; 1 Pet. 3: 20, 21; 2 Pet. 2: 5; 3: 5, 6.) Various nations have traditions or preserved records of a flood.

It stands as evidence of God's justice, and is held up as a warning against sin. Like a lighthouse in the darkest night, Noah stood above the flood of depravity which swept over the race at that time. That generation out of which only eight were saved must have been very wicked indeed. The Bible account of this great wickedness is brief, but comprehensive. (Gen. 6: 1-8.) The earth was filled with violence.

On account of this wickedness God determined to destroy man and beast. "And it repented Jehovah that he had made man."

"But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah." He "was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations," and "walked with God," as Enoch had done.

Jehovah commanded Noah to build an ark of gopher wood. This

wood is mentioned in no other place in the Bible. Some suppose it to have been a cypress; others, cedar or pine. We cannot tell. The length of the ark was three hundred cubits (about five hundred and twenty-five feet); the width, fifty cubits (about eighty-five feet); and the height, thirty cubits (about fifty feet). It had lower, second, and third stories, with "rooms" (or "nests"); it was pitched both within and without; it had a door in the side, and a window.

Into this ark Noah was commanded to take his family and a male and female of all unclean animals, and "seven and seven, the male and his female," of clean animals—fowls after their kind, cattle after their kind, and of "every creeping thing of the ground after its kind," "to keep them alive," and food for himself and the animals.

God is long-forbearing toward the wicked. His long-suffering "waited in the days of Noah." He extended the time one hundred and twenty years, and exhorted the people to repent. (Gen. 6: 3.) His long-suffering now with the wicked world is to be accounted salvation—"not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3: 1-15.)

But the flood did come, and so will "the day of the Lord." When Noah had done according to all that God commanded him," and he and his family had gone into the ark, with all the animals, "Jehovah shut him in." Then the door of mercy was shut against the world. So at last the Lord will shut all his children in and shut all sinners out.

"When science from creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold, material laws!

"And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,
But words of the Most High,
Have told why first thy robe of beams
Was woven in the sky."

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing;
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work our woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal."

LESSON V.—MAY 2.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH.

Gen. 9: 8-17. Read Gen. 5: 28 to 9: 29.

8 ¶And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud,

15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.”* (Gen. 9: 13.)**TIME.**—B.C. 2347.**PLACE.**—Near Mount Ararat.**PERSONS.**—Jehovah and Noah.**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Ps. 89: 3-18.**HOME READING.**—

April 26. M. Conditions Before Judgment. (Isa. 1: 2-9.)

April 27. T. God's Covenant with Noah. (Gen. 9: 8-17.)

April 28. W. Ignoring God's Judgments. (Luke 17: 22-37.)

April 29. T. Acknowledging God's Judgments. (Ps. 90: 1-11.)

April 30. F. New Testament Warnings. (Heb. 10: 26-31.)

May 1. S. The New Covenant. (Heb. 8: 7-13.)

May 2. S. Jehovah's Covenant with David. (Ps. 89: 3-18.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

In order to learn all the facts of the generations of Noah, the sins which brought the flood, the preparation of the ark, the length of the flood, and the salvation of Noah and his family, study Gen. 6-8, referred to in the article preceding this lesson.

A Lesson on Faith.

Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet. 2: 5), and was not popular, for that reason, with the people. He was a man of great faith. It required strong faith and great courage to resist the corruption of his time. “By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the

saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." (Heb. 11: 7.)

This action of Noah is given as an illustration of the principle: "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." (Heb. 11: 1.) Noah feared God, and in reverence obeyed him. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10: 17.) Noah had never seen a flood; there had never been one; the experience and wisdom of the world were against it; it seemed to all impossible. Unbelievers and wicked scoffers may have ridiculed the idea, but Noah believed God. He knew by faith that it would be even as God had said. He showed his faith by making just such preparation as God directed. He built the ark according to God's plan and specification. Thus by faith he "prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

God saved Noah (2 Pet. 2: 4, 5), the ark saved Noah (Heb. 11: 7), the water saved Noah (1 Pet. 3: 20), faith saved Noah (Heb. 11: 7), and Noah saved himself in preparing the ark.

So God saves men to-day from sin; he saves them by his grace through faith, which, like Noah's faith, obeys him. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16: 15, 16.) "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 38.) "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save us, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 3: 20, 21.)

By faith Noah did something to be saved, and that was just what God directed; he built the ark by divine direction and according to the divine pattern. By faith now people must submit to God, must do just what he commands. Jesus is "unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." (Heb. 5: 9.)

From Noah we learn that the exceeding wickedness of others is no excuse for our being wicked. Men can obey God in the midst of great wickedness. There were eight good people even in the worst time of the world, and in Elijah's time there were seven thousand. The wickedness of the world makes us stronger, if through faith in God we stand against it. God's people are preachers of righteousness and seek the salvation of all. Noah went into the ark in obedience to God and went out in obedience to him. (Gen. 8: 15.)

It must have been a great satisfaction to Noah to have all his family saved with himself. So may it be with us all.

Noah and his family were grateful. They worshiped God first. "And he builded an altar unto Jehovah; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." (Verse 20.)

Like Abel's offering, Noah's offering, to be acceptable to God, must be such as God directed him to make. There was a distinction at that time made between "clean beasts" and fowls and those "unclean." (See Lev. 11.)

Noah's offering went up as a "sweet savor" to God, and he said he would "not again curse the ground any more for man's sake," or "smite any more everything living," as he had done.

While God does not promise never to destroy the earth (for this he plainly says he will do), yet he promises that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." These were suspended during the year of the flood; all was chaos and confusion. But now God says they shall never cease. The earth over, these blessings will never fail. (Gen. 8: 20-22.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. God Blessed Noah and Family.

8, 9. "God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." (Gen. 9: 1.) God put the fear of Noah and of his sons "upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens" (verse 2), upon all creeping things, and upon all fish. All animals were given to them for food.

Eating blood was forbidden, because it is the life. Eating blood was forbidden by the law of Moses. (Read carefully Lev. 17: 10-16; Deut. 12: 16, 23.) Eating blood is forbidden by the gospel of Christ. (Acts 15: 29.)

At this time God established the law that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. 8: 1-7.)

God promised that he would "not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." (Gen. 8: 21.) This is the reason given for bringing the flood (Gen. 6: 5); but although God knew man would thus sin again, he promised never again to bring a flood upon the earth. Shortening the period of human life was one way of lessening the wickedness of the race. The like cause might lead again to the like result, and Noah and his family probably feared that as the race increased, violence would increase and God would again destroy the earth with a flood. To quiet all fear, God made this promise, or covenant.

II. The Covenant.

10. This covenant was established also with "every living creature" that was with Noah—"the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth"—all that went out of the ark.

11. The covenant was that "neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."

12. God gave them a "token" of this covenant—something to remind Noah and his descendants of God's solemn promise. Circumcision was the token of the covenant between God and Abraham. (Gen. 17: 11.) This token was "for perpetual generations." There will never be another flood; and while earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease.

13. This token is the rainbow. "I do ["have"—margin] set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." The bow was not then created, but then appointed, or

made, the token of this covenant. This is a beautiful token of God's mercy and forbearance.

14. The bow is seen in the cloud, the place whence the waters of the flood poured. It can be seen on all parts of the earth. The appearance of the bow is proof that the rain is partial, for the sun must shine upon the rain to make it.

15. Whenever and wherever the bow appears, all who behold it may know that God is remembering his covenant that there shall be no more flood.

16. In this verse the covenant is called "the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." In Isa. 54: 9, God says he swore that "the waters of Noah" should "no more go over the earth."

17. God repeated the statement to Noah: "This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth." God will again destroy the earth and the wicked, with all their sinful works; but the element of destruction next time will be fire. He uses the flood as a warning, and says mockers, "walking after their own lusts," have willfully forgotten it. This the faithful cannot forget, for the day of the Lord and this destruction will come. (Read carefully 2 Pet. 3.) Jesus says: "And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man." (Matt. 24: 37.) The world is very wicked now, and most people are very indifferent to and forgetful of these solemn warnings.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
In what way did Noah show his faith?
Repeat Heb. 11: 7.
What principle does this illustrate?
To what things and to what persons is Noah's salvation ascribed?
To what things and persons is our salvation ascribed?
What does God tell people now to do to be saved?
Of what does Peter say the flood is a figure?
What different lessons should we learn from these facts?
What must have been a satisfaction to Noah?
At this time what did God command Noah to do?
What was the first thing Noah did after going out of the ark?
Of what did he make this offering?
What did God promise should never fail?
8, 9 What then did God do for Noah and his sons?
Upon what did he put the fear of Noah and of man in general?
What was given him for food?
- What was he, and what are all, forbidden to eat?
What law in regard to shedding blood did God here establish?
What reason was given for this?
What would still be the conditions of man's heart?
What shows God's mercy?
10. With what was this covenant established?
11 Repeat it.
12 What did God give as a reminder of this covenant?
Why do we know there will never be another flood?
Why do we know Christ will come?
13 What was this token?
Was the rainbow at that time created?
14 In what does the bow appear?
15 What may all who behold the bow know?
16 How long is this covenant to last?
17 What does God here repeat?
What use does the New Testament make of the flood?
To what are most people now indifferent?

CONNECTING LINKS BETWEEN LESSONS.

The following facts will serve as connecting links between the last lesson and the following one, in which in this series we first meet with Abram, whose name was changed later to "Abraham."

This demonstrates, too, that these lessons give a connected study of the Bible. One serious trouble is, many who think this system of lessons is not so good do not examine them sufficiently to see the connection and to appreciate the study of the entire Bible which they require. Some who use them do not study the connections or the lessons even, but complain that the lessons are too long.

Time Between the Last Lesson and This One.

Making a simple calculation from the ages of the ancestors of Abraham in Gen. 10, it will be seen that over four hundred years elapsed between the last lesson and this one. "Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years" (Gen. 9: 28), and died two years before Abraham was born. Terah was Abraham's father, and was one hundred and thirty years old when Abraham was born, because he was two hundred and five years old when he died (Gen. 11: 32), and Abraham was then seventy-five years old (Gen. 12: 4; Acts 7: 4).

After the flood the world was populated by the three sons of Noah (Gen. 10), Abraham being a descendant of Shem. Gen. 11: 1-9 gives an account of the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel and the dispersion of the people "upon the face of all the earth." The remainder of Gen. 11 gives the genealogy of Abraham. He was the tenth generation from Noah.

Abraham's Dwelling Places and Age.

He was born in "Ur of the Chaldees." Ur was a city of the land of Chaldea, about six miles west of the river Euphrates and about one hundred and twenty-five miles from its entrance into the Persian Gulf. (See the map.) "Clearer knowledge has been obtained as to the position of Ur of the Chaldees, now represented by the mound of Mukeyyer, in Southern Babylonia, about six miles from the Euphrates, on the western bank. Indubitable evidence has been afforded of the advanced state of literature and commerce in the old 'Chaldee' or Babylonian Empire in the time of Abraham, including writing on bricks and tablets in the conventional cuneiform characters." (Oxford Teachers' Bible "Notes.")

Haran was a city of Mesopotamia, and was several hundred miles north of Ur. (See the map.) Here Terah died. This was the city of Nahor (Gen. 24: 10), whence Rebekah went to be the wife of Isaac. There Laban lived when Jacob went to him. (Gen. 27: 43; 28: 10; 29: 4.)

Abraham had two brothers, Nahor and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot, and died in Ur of the Chaldees. (Gen. 11: 28.) Abraham married Sarah, his half sister, before he left Ur. (Gen. 11: 29; 12: 11-13; 20: 12.) Abraham was seventy years old when he left Ur of the Chaldees and went to Haran.

From the call of Abraham to the exodus, or giving of the law, was four hundred and thirty years (Gal. 3: 17; Ex. 12: 40, 41); from the birth of Isaac to the exodus was four hundred years, supposing Gen. 15: 13, 14 to refer to the birth of Isaac; hence, it was thirty years from the call of Abraham to the birth of Isaac. Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born (Gen. 21: 5); therefore, he was seventy years old when he was called and left Ur and went to Haran. But he was seventy-five years old when he left Haran for the land of Canaan (Gen. 12: 4); hence, he was five years at Haran. He was one hundred and seventy-five years old when he died (Gen. 25: 7); hence, he sojourned in Canaan one hundred years. From Haran into Canaan was another distance of several hundred miles.

The Call of Abraham the Greatest Event Since the Flood.

Since the flood the call of Abraham is the greatest event in the religious history of the world. His father and kindred were idolatrous. (See Josh. 24: 2, 14, 15; Gen. 31: 19.) God separated Abraham from his father's house, that the worship of the one true and living God might be kept pure. "Your fathers dwelt of old time beyond the River, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac." (Josh. 24: 2, 3.)

Abraham's Character.

Abraham was one of the grandest men, and his character one of the very noblest, of all history. "He was called the friend of God" (James 2: 23) and God's "friend forever" (2 Chron. 20: 7), of whom God said, "Abraham my friend" (Isa. 41: 8). Jesus calls his disciples "friends." (John 15: 14.) "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. 12: 50.) Abraham is called "the father of us all." (Rom. 4: 16.) "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3: 29.) His name was changed by the Lord from "Abram" to "Abraham" because "Abraham" means "father of a great multitude." (See Gen. 17: 4-6.) "Abraham's bosom" was used to designate the place of rest of the faithful after death. (Luke 16: 22.)

In obedience to God, Abraham gave up his fertile country, home, and kindred. God promised to bless him as follows: (1) To make him a great nation; (2) to bless him; (3) to make his name great; (4) to make him a blessing to others; (5) to bless those who blessed him; (6) to curse his enemies; and (7), the greatest of all, to bless the families of the earth through him. God blessed him personally "in all things." (Gen. 24: 1.) His name is greater than that of any earthly king, emperor, ruler, or warrior. God blessed Abraham's friends. It is a great thing to be a friend to a friend of God.

God did not arbitrarily bless Abraham or curse his enemies. His enemies, by their wickedness, brought God's displeasure upon themselves. God is neither partial nor a "respector of persons." "For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do

righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Gen. 18: 19.) If Abraham had not obeyed God and had not trained his children to do the same, God could not have blessed him. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. 22: 18; see also Gen. 26: 4, 5.)

Christ is the promised "seed," through whom all nations are blessed. (Gal. 3: 16.) Abraham and his descendants were blessings to the world in other ways. Through them the knowledge of the true God was preserved and the Scriptures have come to us. A good man is a blessing to any community. Abraham was the father of multitudes—(1) in the flesh, (2) in the spirit. (Gal. 3: 29.)

Abraham Made Mistakes, But Learned Obedience.

Abraham was all this because of his great faith in God and his obedience to God's will; yet he was a human being and made mistakes. He did not at first separate himself from his kindred and his father's house as completely as God directed; for while he left Ur of the Chaldees in obedience to God, he took his father and brother and Lot, his nephew, with him. He was detained, it seems, five years at Haran, until the death of Terah, when God again called him to go into Canaan; and yet he took Lot on with him. Finally, however, he separated from Lot, and God then more fully renewed his promise. "And Jehovah said unto Abraham, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it." (Gen. 13: 14-17.)

Twice Abraham lied about Sarah. She was, as he explained, his half sister; but she was also his wife, which fact he concealed, and in concealing this fact he made the wrong impression, and, therefore, lied; also, by his course in this matter, but for the intervention of God, he would have brought upon himself and wife the very trouble he desired to avert. (See Gen. 12: 14-20; 20: 1-18.) From this we learn that to tell only a part of the truth and to withhold the rest in order to make a false impression is to lie, and that to speak the truth is always right and best. God was patient with Abraham, gentle and kind toward him, and led him on into full and implicit obedience. So God is merciful toward all and patient with all who are striving to serve him, although they may make mistakes.

Not long before the facts of the following lesson Abraham and Lot separated, in which separation the generosity of Abraham and the selfishness of Lot were manifested.

"Rich in experience that angels might covet,
Rich in a faith that has grown with the years."

LESSON VI.—MAY 9.

ABRAM AND THE KINGS.

Gen. 14: 13-24. Read Gen. 14: 1-24.

13 ¶And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew: now he dwelt by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; and these were confederate with Abram.

14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan.

15 And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

17 ¶And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, at the vale of Shaveh (the same is the King's Vale).

18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of God Most High.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand unto Jehovah, God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth,

23 That I will not take a thread nor a shoe-latchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."* (Rom. 8: 37.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1913.

PLACES.—The oaks of Mamre, Sodom and the cities associated with it, Dan, Hobah, and the places of the four invading kings.

PERSONS.—Abram, Melchizedek, the five kings, the four kings, and the ones confederate with Abram.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Isa. 61: 1-3.

HOME READING.—

- May 3. M. Abram and Lot's Choice. (Gen. 13: 7-18.)
- May 4. T. Abram and the Kings. (Gen. 14: 13-24.)
- May 5. W. Conquering Through Christ. (Rom. 8: 31-39.)
- May 6. T. Melchizedek a Type of Christ. (Heb. 5: 1-10.)
- May 7. F. The Greatness of Melchizedek. (Heb. 7: 1-17.)
- May 8. S. The Perfect High Priest. (Heb. 7: 18-28.)
- May 9. S. Jesus the Liberator. (Isa. 61: 1-6.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

"The oaks of Mamre" received the name from an Amorite, whose name was "Mamre," who owned the land, and who was confederate with Abraham. A large oak there now, twenty-three feet in circumference, is said to be the oak of Abraham. This was Hebron. (Gen. 13: 18.) Its ancient name was "Kiriath-arba." This means "the city of Arba." Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. (Gen.

22: 2.) Hebron was an ancient city, having been built "seven years before Zoan in Egypt." (Josh. 14: 13-15.) It was a priestly city (Josh. 21: 11, 12), and was probably the home of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. There David was made king and ruled seven years and six months. (2 Sam. 2: 11.) It was about twenty miles south from Jerusalem. There, in the cave of Machpelah, Abram and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah were buried. (Gen. 23: 19; 25: 9; 49: 30.) Other important events occurred there.

Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and the little city, Zoar, were the five cities of the plain, or "vale of Siddim (the same is the Salt Sea)." Many scholars think this plain was at the southern end of the Dead Sea, while some think it was at the northern end. This plain once resembled "the garden of Jehovah." (Gen. 13: 10.) Four of these cities (Zoar having been spared), the plain itself, and all the inhabitants were destroyed by Jehovah, who rained upon them "brimstone and fire" out of heaven. (Gen. 19: 23-29; Deut. 29: 22, 23.)

Damascus, the capital of Syria, is said to be the oldest city in the world. It is about one hundred and forty-five miles northeast from Jerusalem. Much is said in the Old Testament and something in the New Testament of important events which occurred there.

Gen. 10: 10 shows what Shinar embraced.

Elam was a country south of Assyria and west of Persia proper.

This country and the other countries of the four kings can be located by consulting a Bible dictionary and map.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

1. Study the "connecting links" between the last lesson and this one.
2. Study the previous part of the chapter, verses 1-12.
3. Amraphel, king of Shinar; Arioch, king of Ellasar; Chedorlaomer, king of Elam; and Tidal, king of Goiim ("nations"—margin), made war with Bera, king of Sodom; Birsha, king of Gomorrah; Shinar, king of Admah; Shemeber, king of Zeboiim; and the king of Bela ("which was Zoar"). Four kings fought against five kings.
4. Three of the four kings were vassals of Chedorlaomer. He was a man of power.
5. The five kings, having been conquered by the four, became subjects of Chedorlaomer for twelve years.
6. In the thirteenth year the five kings rebelled against Chedorlaomer, and in the fourteenth year he and the kings with him made an extensive plundering expedition into the countries north, south, and west of the five kings. This served also to cut off all sources of help to the five kings.
7. The five kings joined battle with the four in "the vale of Siddim" and lost, the vale being full of slime pits (or "bitumen pits"), through which it was difficult to run in defeat. Many fell there, the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah being in the number. The ones who escaped death fled to the mountains.
8. These marauding kings pillaged the country, taking all the goods and provisions of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot and his goods, together with the women and other captives, and departed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Abraham Pursued the Captors.

13. "Abram" means "father of height" or "exalted father." His name had not yet been changed to "Abraham," "a father of a multitude."

Abram is here called "the Hebrew." This is the first occurrence of this name in the Bible. After this it occurs several times in Genesis, many times in Exodus and other books in the Old Testament, and a few times in the New Testament. (See Acts 6: 1; 2 Cor. 11: 22; Phil. 3: 5.)

"Heberites" means "belonging to Heber," or descendants of Heber. Num. 26: 45 says: "Of Heber, the family of the Heberites." Heber, or Eber, was the son of Shelah, who was the son of Arpachshad, who was the son of Shem, from whom, as we know, sprang the Hebrew race. Shem was "the father of the children of Eber." (Gen. 10: 21, 24; 11: 14-26.) "Hebrew" seems to be "used as a patronymic, denoting the descendants of Eber, but it may also be understood as referring to those 'beyond the river'" (Young's "Analytical Concordance"); also "a patronymic of Abraham and his offspring." Adam Clarke thinks "it is very likely that Abram had this appellation from his coming from beyond the river Euphrates to enter Canaan," because the word of which "Hebrew" is a translation comes from another word whose meaning is "to pass over, or come from beyond." But it seems far more significant to trace the origin of "Hebrew" to Eber, or Heber, from whom Abraham descended, even if Eber did precede Abraham several generations.

Abram dwelt at this time "by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite." This place we considered under "Geographical Notes," which see.

These three brothers—Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner—were confederate with Abram.

One who in this battle had escaped capture told Abram the result of the battle, and, therefore, that Lot, all his goods, and his family had been taken captive by the plundering kings.

II. Abraham and Lot Contrasted.

14. In this verse Lot is called Abram's "brother." He was the son of Abram's brother. At that time relations were not so accurately counted, and a nephew was sometimes called a "brother."

"Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold," and continued to increase in riches. He also had servants, camels, and asses. (See Gen. 24: 35.) He had three hundred well-trained men, besides other servants. Where Abram camped must have looked like a town of tents.

Lot was not poor. He also had "flocks, and herds, and tents," and great substance, and herdsmen.

This is the first mention of riches in the Bible; and, as in Lot's case, we see demonstrated their danger. Prosperity as often tests one's faith and character as poverty. "Give me neither poverty nor riches:

. . . lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is Jehovah? or lest I be poor, and steal, and use profanely the name of my God." (Prov. 30: 8, 9.) Riches honestly gained are not wrong within themselves;

poverty itself is not a virtue. All depends upon the use one makes of riches or poverty. Riches were a blessing to Abraham and a curse to Lot. Riches furnished Abraham an opportunity to show his generosity and lofty spirit; Lot, his low and selfish spirit. Abraham's faith triumphed and Lot's selfishness triumphed. Abraham's victory led him to still greater achievements and fuller blessings, while Lot's selfishness led him into greater sins and deeper troubles. "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12: 15.) "But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Tim. 6: 9.) Abraham's course from beginning to end demonstrates the principle that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20: 28-35), and that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong (1 Cor. 1-8). "One thing thou lackest" (Luke 18: 18-30) was true in Lot's case. How is it, reader, with you?

III. Lot Begins to Reap from His Sad Sowing.

This within itself should teach a most profitable lesson to all. The well-watered plain of the Jordan, "like the garden of Jehovah, like the land of Egypt," and, later, the wealth, luxury, and prosperous ease of Sodom, appealed to Lot. He pitched his tent as far as Sodom, and made his home in that wicked city.

The wickedness of Sodom distressed him; "for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing [their "lascivious life"], vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds." (2 Pet. 2: 8.) He had religious life enough to be distressed over the sins of Sodom. Some have not that much now. Still, no one was converted by him, none saved. He did not go to Sodom for that purpose. The salvation of others was not the concern of his life.

Contrast Abraham's course all along with that of Lot. Abraham rescued Lot; Lot rescued no one. Contrast Abraham's prayer in Gen. 18: 23-33 with that of Lot in Gen. 19: 18-20. Abraham prayed for Lot and the salvation of Sodom, and Lot prayed for himself. One's disposition and heart's desire are shown in his prayer. Lot not only failed to convert any of Sodom, but he failed in influence over his own children. (Gen. 19: 13, 14.) When children see their parents wholly absorbed in worldly affairs, they soon learn to think that there is nothing so important as "business." Lot, doubtless, did not intend at first for his daughters to marry men of Sodom.

Lot went to Sodom seeking wealth and worldly greatness; he separated himself from God's people and associated with the wicked in order to gain these things. He lost all for which he went to Sodom—his flocks and herds, his earnings and home, his wife and children (except two daughters). He lost first by war and then by the destruction of Sodom. He escaped with his life only—a poor, forlorn old man, broken down, homeless, and friendless. Even then the angel had to snatch him from the doomed city. He did not plunge into this great loss and into all this trouble and misery at one mighty bound, but went into it gradually. He first "looked" that way. Attracted by the pleasant view, he started in that direction. He dwelt in "the cities of the Plain" a while, and then "moved his tent as far as

Sodom." People now move gradually toward great sins or gradually toward destruction.

IV. Abraham's Pursuit.

Taking his own trained men and accompanied by Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre and their men (verse 24), Abram pursued the four kings to Dan, a town in the northern end of Palestine. (Locate this place on the map and see the direction of this pursuit.)

15. At Dan, Abram judiciously divided his forces and attacked the enemy by night. The men were divided, in all probability, to make the attack on different sides of the enemy at the same time and at night that the small number of Abram's men might not be discovered. From Abram's trust in God and the fact of Melchizedek's meeting him we would conclude that God was with him. But Melchizedek declares that God delivered him from his enemies. (Verse 20.) Having smitten these kings at Dan, Abram pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand, or north, of Damascus. There the slaughter was complete.

16. Abram "brought back all the goods" of all that country, Lot and all his goods, also the women and the people. In such wars women were taken, not only as captives, but as slaves and concubines. Besides stating the rescue of all the goods and the people, special mention is made of the women. This was a great rescue as well as a great victory.

V. Melchizedek.

17. The former king of Sodom having fallen, he was succeeded by another. This one went out to meet Abram on "his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him." This meeting was "at the vale of Shaveh (the same is the King's Vale)." "The king's dale" is a place where Absalom erected a pillar, or monument (2 Sam. 18: 18), said to be "the Valley of Kedron, at the foot of Mount Olivet, near Jerusalem." (International Bible Dictionary.)

18-20. Melchizedek also went to meet Abram, and refreshed him with bread and wine, and also blessed him, saying: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth." Then Melchizedek blessed God also, saying: "And blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." In commenting upon this, Paul says that "without any dispute the less" (Abram) was "blessed of the better" (Melchizedek). Who was Melchizedek? Our lesson states that he was "king of Salem" and "priest of God Most High." Further reference to him is made in the following passages: Ps. 110: 4; Heb. 5: 6, 10; 6: 20; 7: 1-17. Studying these passages, we can learn all that is to be learned about Melchizedek. Besides being "king of Salem," "priest of God Most High," he was "King of righteousness," "King of peace," "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God" and abiding "a priest continually." He received tithes of Abraham and was greater than Abraham. In this way (through Abraham) the Levites, who received tithes of the Israelites, paid tithes to Melchizedek. Thus one who did not descend from Aaron received tithes of Aaron's descendants. "Here men that die"—the priests after the order of and descendants from Aaron—are

placed in contrast with Melchizedek, "of whom it is witnessed that he liveth." Their "genealogy" and their having father and mother are placed in contrast with his being "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God," and "abideth a priest continually." We are called upon to "consider how great this man was, unto whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth out of the chief spoils." (Read Heb. 7: 1-10.) Abraham, a patriarch, living in the patriarchal age, was a priest and king over his own household, as was every other patriarch. Then why would Melchizedek for this reason be greater than Abraham? All these facts show Melchizedek to be more than an ordinary man, patriarch, and priest. He was a most remarkable personage. He suddenly met Abraham and blessed him, disappeared, and nothing more was said of him in the Bible for a thousand years, when he is then declared to be a type of another king and priest to come. (Ps. 110: 1-7), especially verse 4.) Next, after the passing of another thousand years in round numbers, it is declared that Christ is a Priest in the presence of God, not after the order of Aaron, but "after the order of Melchizedek"—"after the power of an endless life." Melchizedek, to say the least of him, was a very superior person, being designated, as no other one was then, as "priest of God Most High," "King of righteousness," "King of peace," and type of Christ.

"Salem" is recognized in Ps. 76: 2 as Jerusalem:

"In Salem also is his tabernacle,
And his dwelling place in Zion."

This is the first mention of paying tithes.

VI. Abraham's Generous Spirit.

21-24. The king of Sodom said to Abram: "Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself." Abram sought not the spoils. His was a higher motive. He sought the rescue of Lot and his family. We are reminded of Paul's declaration to the Corinthians that, in preaching, he sought not their possessions, but their salvation (2 Cor. 12: 14); he sought not his own profit, but the profit, or good, of the many (1 Cor. 10: 33). Many preachers in the spirit of Christ have done the same. In this spirit the gospel was preached throughout the world in a few years after the ascension of Christ, and in this spirit the thousands of churches of God now in existence were established. The ardor of these churches begins to cool, their zeal begins to lag, they cease to grow, and the gospel no longer runs and is glorified when preachers become place seekers and begin to commercialize their preaching.

Let us note particularly that in his magnanimity and lofty spirit Abram prospered in business. So such men can prosper now and, as Abram did, accomplish in unselfishness great good.

Abram replied to the king of Sodom that he had lifted up his hand to "God Most High" that he would not take "a thread" or "shoe latchet" or aught that belongs to him, lest he should say he had made Abram rich. He would have nothing except that which his men had eaten; but Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, who went with him in this pursuit, could take their portion.

In different ways God made Abraham a blessing to others; and this independent, generous, and lofty spirit is one of the ways. Such a man now is a benediction to any community in which he lives.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What were the "oaks of Mamre?"
Who was Mamre?
By what other names was this place called?
Who was Arba?
Relate what you know about Hebron.
Where were Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar situated?
Describe the beauty of this plain.
How were this plain, its inhabitants, and these cities, except Zoar, destroyed?
Where was Damascus, and what do you know about it?
What is said of Shinar?
What and where was Elam?
Did you locate these other countries?
Did you read the connecting links between the last lesson and this one?
Name the four kings who fought on the one side and the five kings who fought on the other.
Who was leader of the four kings?
How long had the five kings served Chedorlaomer?
When did they rebel against him?
What incursion did the four kings make?
In what year was the battle with the five kings?
Where was the battle?
What was the result of the battle?
13 What does "Abram" mean?
What does "Abraham" mean?
Why was Abram called "the Hebrew," and why are his descendants called "Hebrews?"
Where did Abram dwell at this time?
How did he learn of the result of the battle?
Who were confederate with Abram?
14 Who was Lot?
State all the contrasts between Abram and Lot.
How are riches and poverty tests of character?
What appealed to Lot?
What bad seed did he sow?
When and how did he begin to reap?
Contrast his course and prayer with Abraham's course and prayer.
Give Lot's successive steps to destruction.
Upon hearing of this battle, what did Abram do?
How many men of his own did he have?
Who went with him in this pursuit?
15 Where did he overtake the enemy?
Where was Dan?
How and when did Abram attack the enemy?
What was the result?
Where was the slaughter completed?
16 What and whom did Abram bring back from this pursuit?
Why make special mention of the women?
17 What two kings went out to meet Abram upon his return?
Where did they meet him?
18-20 What did Melchizedek do for him?
What did Melchizedek say God had done for Abram?
Give all the different places in the Bible where Melchizedek is mentioned.
How can we learn all the Bible teaches about him? (See that all this is told.)
In what different ways was he greater than Abraham?
In what was he such a remarkable personage?
In what respects was he a type of Christ?
What was Salem?
Where is the first mention in the Bible of paying tithes?
21-24 What proposition did the king of Sodom make to Abram?
What reply did Abram make?
What did Abram not seek?
What did he seek?
In what respect was Paul in preaching the gospel like Abram?
When will churches begin to lose interest and zeal and to die?
Did Abram lose anything by being generous and self-sacrificing?
How is such a man a benediction to a community now?

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

LESSON VII.—MAY 16.

ABRAHAM AND THE STRANGERS.

Gen. 18: 1-8, 16-19.

1 ¶And Jehovah appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood over against him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the earth,

3 And said, My lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

4 Let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and strengthen ye your heart; after that ye shall pass on: forasmuch as ye are come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes.

7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant; and he hastened to dress it.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

16 ¶And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

17 And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do;

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

19 For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.*” (Gen. 18: 18.)

TIME.—B.C. 1892.

PLACES.—Hebron and Sodom.

PERSONS.—Abraham and Jehovah.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 133.

HOME READING.—

May 10. M. Abraham and the Strangers. (Gen. 18: 1-8.)

May 11. T. Rebekah Receives Abraham's Servant.* (Gen. 24: 17-32.)

May 12. W. Jethro Receives Moses. (Ex. 2: 16-21.)

May 13. T. Rahab Shelters the Spies. (Josh. 2: 1-11.)

May 14. F. Entertaining the Poor. (Luke 14: 12-15.)

May 15. S. Two Disciples Entertain Jesus. (Luke 24: 13-16, 28-32.)

May 16. S. The Blessedness of Fellowship. (Ps. 133.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The places of this lesson—“the oaks of Mamre,” Hebron, Sodom—and also other places of the plain of Siddim, were noticed in the previous lesson.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

After Abram's return from rescuing Lot and while he feared the return of the enemy, God gave to him one of the best and greatest

promises ever made to men: "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. 15: 1.) This is a double promise. God would protect him from his enemies and reward him exceedingly. God could overrule the nations of the earth and protect Abraham from all evil and shield him from all harm. "To them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose"—who, like Abraham, live and work according to God's plan and purpose. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good?" And "if God is for us, who is against us?"

"The Lord has promised good to me;
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

The greatest reward of all is God's love, God himself, and finally the "heavenly" country of joy and peace.

As yet Abraham had no child of his own, he asked Jehovah: "What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" etc. Jehovah then said that one begotten by Abraham himself should be his heir. (Gen. 15: 4.) Jehovah promised to make Abraham "a great nation" (Gen. 12: 2), and to give that land to him and to his "seed forever" (Gen. 13: 15); but how could that be, when Abraham was childless?

Jehovah then brought Abraham out of his tent and under the shining stars, and said that his descendants should be as innumerable as the stars.

Abraham believed in Jehovah, and, therefore, believed that all this would come to pass. The faith that Jehovah would do that which he had promised in the face of seeming impossibilities was counted unto Abraham "for righteousness." It was right to believe this, and this faith led Abraham to do all that which Jehovah commanded him to do, even later on to offer up Isaac upon the altar, when this scripture was fulfilled. (James 2: 22, 23.)

Abraham asked whereby he might know he would inherit that land, and Jehovah gave him the sign described in Gen. 15: 6-21, which read. Gen. 16 tells of Sarai, Hagar, and the birth of Ishmael.

Gen. 17 tells of the change of the name "Abram" ("exalted father") to that of "Abraham" ("father of a multitude"), the covenant of circumcision, the promise of the birth of Isaac, and the promises concerning Ishmael.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Abraham Entertained Angels Unawares.

1. As the destruction of Sodom approached, the Lord appeared to Abraham "by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day." From this circumstance and others we learn that God appeared to men through the angel of his presence. At different times he appeared to Abraham and spoke to him.

2-8. Abraham entertained hospitably these three persons, whom he supposed at first to be men, as Lot also entertained the two. (Gen. 19: 1-3.) "Forget not to show love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13: 2.) It is right to

treat all courteously and kindly. If they turn out to be angels, we will have nothing to regret in our treatment of them; if they prove to be unworthy of our treatment, we have lost nothing, but have preserved our hospitality and kindness. Christians are kind, courteous, and hospitable toward all.

These verses present to us the generous manner of hospitality practiced in Abraham's time. In saying, "My lord," Abraham did not address this person as Jehovah, for he knew not yet who he was. This was a most respectful way of addressing one.

We know something of the use of sandals at that time and the custom and necessity of washing feet. On this custom and act of hospitality, see Gen. 19: 2; 24: 32; 43: 24. It was a humble service and that of a servant when performed for one by another. When David sent for Abigail to become his wife, she said: "Behold, thy handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." (1 Sam. 25: 41.) John the Baptist said of Christ: "The latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." (Mark 1: 7.) This act of hospitality and service as a home duty is taught in the New Testament under similar circumstances. In humility and as the servant of all, Jesus washed his disciples' feet and said: "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him." (See John 13: 1-17.) This is a great and beautiful lesson on humility. But it is not what is called a "church ordinance"—that is, something to be done in the congregation and in public. It is classed by Paul with home duties and acts of hospitality, as is seen in 1 Tim. 5: 9, 10. Since there is no general necessity now as there was then for washing feet as one comes in from a journey, humility and hospitality should be shown in ways now calling for them, and, when necessity requires, in washing or bathing the feet of others. This is the first act of hospitality offered to the strangers by Abraham.

The second act of hospitality was to offer rest under the shade of the tree.

The third act was a bountiful meal, that they might be refreshed and strengthened for their further journey. Abraham requested Sarah to hasten to prepare the bread, while he himself ran to his herd "and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant," who hastened to dress it. This bread and well-prepared, tender calf, with butter and milk, were spread before these men under the tree, and Abraham stood by them while they ate. This is a most beautiful picture of hospitality.

II. Isaac Promised.

The intervening verses (9-15) repeat the promise already made to Abraham in Gen. 17: 15-17—that Sarah should become in her old age the mother of a son. Here, too, God changed her name from "Sarai" to "Sarah," which means "princess." At this promise in Gen. 17: 15-17, "Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" At the time of this lesson, when Sarah within the tent heard the promise repeated to Abraham

that she should bear a son, she "laughed within herself" over the good news, and said: "Shall I of a surety bear a child, who am old?" For this question the Lord reproved her, saying: "Is anything too hard for Jehovah?" Also, Sarah denied laughing, because she was afraid. But the Lord said: "Nay; but thou didst laugh." When Isaac was born, Sarah said virtually: "Who would have thought it?" She said: "God hath made me to laugh; every one that heareth will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should give children suck? for I have borne him a son in his old age." (Gen. 21: 6, 7.) "Isaac" means "laughter." So the child's name was "laughter." When Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast for him. (Gen. 21: 8.) Read Gal. 4: 27.

III. The Sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Jehovah said the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah was great. People are very wicked indeed when God in mercy, for the good of mankind, must destroy the cities or countries in which they live. So it was with Sodom and Gomorrah. Some of the sins of these cities were the most depraved crimes which ever disgraced criminals. "Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly." (Gen. 13: 13.) Peter speaks of them as "lawless," "lascivious," "wicked," and "ungodly." (2 Pet. 2: 6-8.) Warning Jerusalem, God says: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom: pride, fullness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good." (Ezek. 16: 49, 50.) These things are warnings to us. We should put far from us all haughtiness, pride, and worldly ambition. By these many fall to-day. Idleness and "prosperous ease" are quite dangerous yet; covetousness is still the curse of thousands. "For ye have the poor always with you, and whosoever ye will ye can do them good." Lasciviousness is a crime before God, which he most strongly condemns and of which the men of Sodom were guilty in the most unnatural way. "Sodom" is a synonym of sin and shame.

IV. Why God Did Not Keep This from Abraham.

16. These "men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom." They were going to this city. "Abraham went with them to bring them on the way." Thus he showed further his kindness.

17-19. Jehovah said, since Abraham was to become a great nation and would command his children and household after him that all these promises might be fulfilled, he would not hide from him his intention to destroy Sodom. This shows that God did not arbitrarily bless Abraham and curse his enemies. Abraham believed God, obeyed God, and taught his children and household after him to obey God. Had Abraham not done this, God could not have blessed him; and had his children not obeyed God, he could not have blessed them.

God does not arbitrarily bless or curse people to-day. "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth

unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." In due season all will reap what they sow. (Gal. 6: 6-10.) When people love God—that is, obey him and work according to his directions for the accomplishment of his purposes—he overrules all things for their good in time and eternity. If they do not do this, they bring upon themselves the fearful consequences of disobedience.

(End of lesson.)

AFTER LESSONS.

While the lesson given ends with verse 19, let us learn something from the remainder of the chapter.

While "the men" went on to Sodom, Abraham "stood yet before Jehovah." He not only "stood," but he "drew near." He was greatly concerned. He loved Lot still, and he loved righteousness. He approached Jehovah in a most humble and reverential manner. Jehovah was in person before him, but he also drew near in heart.

We should draw near to God. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." (James 4: 8.) "Let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water." (Heb. 10: 22.) Jehovah did not hide these things from Abraham because of Abraham's life and character, and because of his life and character he enjoyed this privilege of thus approaching Jehovah.

Abraham asked: "Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked?" Abraham was pleading for Lot, who, Peter says, was righteous (2 Pet. 2: 7), and for all the righteous in Sodom. By this question he means that the Lord will not destroy the righteous with the wicked; and since that is true, he has some foundation upon which to base his petition. "Do men gather grapes of thorns?" means they do not gather grapes of thorns. So the question in verse 25, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" means that he will do right. Abraham, understanding that fact, could pray in faith and hope. God will not slay the righteous with the wicked. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18: 20.) God's judgments are righteous. "Who will render to every man according to his works." (See Rom. 2: 4-11.) "He will judge the world in righteousness" through Jesus Christ. (Acts 17: 31.) But God is the Judge, and not man. We do not see men as he sees them, and we do not judge according to his standard. The destruction of Sodom and the flood, from which righteous Noah and his family were saved, are used in the Scriptures to typify the final destruction of the wicked (2 Pet. 2: 5-9; 1 Pet. 3: 20, 21), and not such calamities as cyclones, epidemics, or misfortunes.

God soon answered Abraham's prayer. (Verse 24.) He was more anxious than Abraham to save Sodom. God never destroys a city or a nation so long as there is hope of its recovery. When there is no hope and it becomes necessary for the good of mankind, in mercy he destroys it. A city falls because it is not fit to stand; a nation is overthrown because it is not fit to live. God would not destroy the city for fifty righteous persons, because, if so many were found, there would be some hope of saving others. The righteous are the salt of the earth. God "is long-suffering, . . . not wishing that any

should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3: 9.)

God knew the condition of Sodom; but he led Abraham on, step by step, in humility, earnestness, and importunity. Abraham felt more and more his unworthiness as he drew nearer to Jehovah, and for this Jehovah was willing to hear him. "But dust and ashes" is a figure to illustrate Abraham's sense of unworthiness and complete prostration in humility. Everything in the Scriptures goes to show that when men are in earnest and seeking great favors of God, they humble and prostrate themselves before him. Abraham was encouraged in every petition by the grace of God to proceed further.

If God found forty-five, even forty, righteous persons there, he would not destroy the city.

As Abraham arose higher in faith and hope, he saw more of God's mercy and goodness; yet he would not offend Jehovah by presumption. If Jehovah would permit, he would speak further. Even for thirty righteous persons God would spare Sodom, or for twenty.

Then if Jehovah would permit him to make another request, he would speak but once more. Even for ten Jehovah would spare the city. How wicked that city in which only three can be found worthy to be called "righteous"! Even then the three were not destroyed with the wicked. It seems, too, that Abraham did not see how God could destroy the city and save the righteous, although there be so few. Peter explains that God knows how to do that. (2 Pet. 2: 9.) God answered Abraham's prayer and did more than he dared to ask. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever. Amen." (Eph. 3: 20, 21.)

We are impressed with the great contrast between Abraham's prayer and Lot's prayer. (Gen. 19: 17-22.) Abraham prayed for others; Lot, for himself.

Gen. 19 gives an account of Lot's entertaining the angels, the destruction of Sodom, and Lot's escape. In a former lesson we have noted the most serious troubles into which Lot's selfish choice led him. That which he thought, in blinding selfishness, would enhance his fortune only served to destroy it. The unselfish, generous uncle still flourished in peace; while Lot, with the loss of flocks, herds, green pastures, home, wife, and all, save two daughters, was dragged out of Sodom by the angel. "Remember Lot's wife."

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

After Abraham's return from rescuing

Lot, what great promise did God make to him?

What does God overrule to bless his people and to serve his purpose?

What is the greatest reward of all?

What did Abraham ask of Jehovah?

What promise did Jehovah make?

How numerous did Jehovah say Abraham's offspring would be?

What was counted to Abraham for righteousness?

When was this fulfilled?

What sign did Jehovah give Abraham?

What child was first born unto Abraham, and of whom?

To what did God change Abram's name?

- 1 Who appeared to Abraham "by the oaks of Mamre?"
How did Jehovah appear then to some men?
- 2-8 How did Abraham entertain angels unawares?
Whom are Christians commanded to entertain?
Suppose some are unworthy of entertainment, then what?
What was meant by the expression, "my lord?"
What was the first act of hospitality shown by Abraham?
Why was this customary and necessary?
Give examples of this in the Old Testament.
What shows that this act was performed by servants?
What did John the Baptist say he was unworthy to do for Jesus?
Why did Jesus wash his disciples' feet?
With what duties did Paul class this?
What was the second act of Abraham's hospitality?
What was the third act?
What did Sarah, the servant, and Abraham do?
What promise is repeated in the intervening verses (9-15)?
Where was this promise before made to Abraham?
- Upon hearing this promise, what did Abraham do and say?
At the time of this lesson, when Sarah heard this promise, what did she do and say?
For what did the Lord reprove her?
When Isaac was born, what did Sarah say?
Why was this boy named "Isaac?"
What was done for Isaac when he was weaned?
From what was Sarah's name changed?
What does "Sarah" mean?
When is the destruction of a wicked city or nation by Jehovah an act of mercy?
Relate the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.
What are prevalent sins to-day?
Of what is Sodom a synonym?
- 16 What did Abraham do next for these men?
- 17-19 Why did Jehovah not keep his purpose to destroy Sodom from Abraham?
Why did God bless Abraham?
Does God arbitrarily bless or curse any one?
What does every one reap?
To whom do all things work together for good?
(Teachers should ask whatever questions they see proper to ask on "After Lessons.")

"May every soul that touches mine,
Be it the slightest contact, get therefrom some good,
Some little grace, one kindly thought,
One aspiration yet unfelt, one bit of courage
For the darkening sky, one gleam of faith
To brave the thickening ills of life—
One glimpse of brighter skies beyond the gathering mists,
To make this life worth while,
And heaven a surer heritage."

LESSON VIII.—MAY 23.

ISAAC AND HIS WELLS.

Gen. 26: 12-25.

12 ¶And Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundredfold: and Jehovah blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great:

14 And he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and a great household: and the Philistines envied him.

15 Now all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped, and filled with earth.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

20 And the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him.

21 And they digged another well, and they strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

24 And Jehovah appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of Jehovah, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*A soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger.*” (Prov. 15: 1.)

TIME.—B.C. 1804.

PLACES.—Gerar and Beersheba.

PERSONS.—Isaac and Abimelech.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 5: 1-12.

HOME READING.—

May 17. M. Isaac and His Wells. (Gen. 26: 12-25.)

May 18. T. Peace with Enemies. (Prov. 16: 1-8.)

May 19. W. Peace with Nature. (Job 5: 19-27.)

May 20. T. Peace with God. (Job 22: 21-30.)

May 21. F. Peace with All Men. (Rom. 12: 9-21.)

May 22. S. The Secret of Peace. (Phil. 4: 1-9.)

May 23. S. The Beatitudes. (Matt. 5: 1-12.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Beersheba was a town in the southern part of Palestine, forty or fifty miles south of Jerusalem and twenty-five or thirty miles southeast of Hebron. “Beersheba” means “the well of the oath,” because there Abraham and Abimelech formed a covenant (Gen. 21: 23-32), or took each the oath of friendship.

"The land of the Philistines" is the same as Philistia in Ps. 60: 8; 87: 4; 108: 9. It was a very fertile plain on the southwestern border of Palestine and on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, extending from the desert of Shur north to the plain of Sharon, a distance of forty or fifty miles. Its width at the northern end was about ten miles and at the southern end about twenty miles.

Gerar is mentioned in Gen. 10: 19 with some other ancient cities. It was a city of the Philistines, south of Gaza. Abraham sojourned there (Gen. 20: 1); there Isaac dwelt (Gen. 26: 2, 6, 17); and there Asa, by the help of Jehovah, gained a great victory over the Ethiopians (2 Chron. 14: 9-15).

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Soon after the events of the last lesson Abraham moved from Hebron to Beersheba.

Abimelech was a Philistine and king of Gerar. "Abimelech" was the name of several Philistine kings and was probably the title of these kings.

Isaac was born at Beersheba about a year after the destruction of Sodom, when Abraham was a hundred years old and Sarah ninety, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. (Gen. 21: 2.) Other facts concerning Isaac's birth and the joy which his birth produced were commented upon in the last lesson.

Ishmael, "the son of Hagar the Egyptian," Isaac's half brother, was fourteen years old when Isaac was born. (Gen. 17: 25.) Ishmael was "born after the flesh;" Isaac, "through promise." (Gal. 4: 23.) At the feast Abraham made when Isaac was weaned, Ishmael mocked; and Sarah said to Abraham: "Cast out this handmaid and her son: for the son of this handmaid shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." This Abraham disliked very much to do, but God told him to "hearken unto her voice," saying: "For in Isaac shall thy seed be called." (Gen. 21: 8-12.)

This circumstance was an allegory, and represented the two great covenants of the Bible. (Gal. 4: 21-31.)

The most important event in Isaac's life, as well as the greatest test of his father's faith, was when he was offered on Mount Moriah as a sacrifice to God. He was a young man, and must have been a willing sacrifice. From Beersheba he went with his father to the place of sacrifice. (Gen. 21: 31, 34; 22: 19.) God had led Abraham along in faith and service before this and up to this sublime height. God had tested him in different ways and at different times, but this was the severest test to which he had ever been put. This was the supreme moment of his life, the supreme act of his faith, and the supreme manifestation of his great character. The points of likeness between the sacrifice of Isaac and of Jesus are as follows: On the third day Abraham and Isaac reached the place of sacrifice; on the third day Jesus arose from the dead. Isaac was Abraham's only son, the seed in whom all were to be blessed; Jesus was the "only begotten of the Father." Isaac was a willing offering; so was Jesus. Isaac submitted virtually to death; Jesus submitted literally to death. Abraham received Isaac, in a figure, from the dead; Jesus arose from the dead. By this deed Abraham's faith was made perfect. (James 2: 21-23.)

The next important event in Isaac's life was his marriage to Rebekah, his cousin, when he was forty years of age. (Gen. 25: 20.) Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel and sister to Laban. She was beautiful, and possessed a strong and influential character. It is not stated when she died.

Isaac's mother died at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years; hence, she had been dead three years when Isaac was married. (Gen. 23.)

Isaac honored his father, cherished the memory of his mother, loved his wife, and in faith maintained the worship of God. Like Sarah, Rebekah was barren; but in answer to Isaac's prayer God gave them Jacob and Esau, who were born when Isaac was sixty years of age. (Gen. 25: 21-28.)

Abraham was yet alive. He was one hundred and seventy-five years old when he died, and Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah with Sarah. (Gen. 25: 7-10.) Abraham was contemporary with Jacob and Esau fifteen years.

After the death of Abraham there was another famine in the land, "and Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar," and, it seems, intended to go into Egypt; but God instructed him to remain in that country, and renewed unto him the promise he had made to Abraham. (Gen. 26: 1-5.)

Through fear of losing his life, like his father, Isaac denied his wife. (Gen. 26: 6-11.) It is a little remarkable that in the same place and under the same circumstances Isaac should commit the same wrong committed by his father years before that.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Isaac Envied.

12. Having been assured by Abimelech that none should harm him, "Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundredfold." Jesus says that in his day some reaped a hundredfold. (Matt. 13: 8.) "And Jehovah blessed him."

13, 14. As a result of God's blessings he "waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great: and he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and a great household [many servants]."

Isaac was reflective, religious, pious, and a man of great faith; yet he was energetic and active. If he had not been energetic and wise, his business could not have flourished as it did.

"The Philistines envied him" because of his prosperity. They did not like to see Isaac, a foreigner, prosper in their midst. For this reason Pharaoh hated the Jews. (Ex. 1: 9, 10.) Through envy Cain killed Abel (1 John 3: 12), through envy Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt (Gen. 37: 11; Acts 7: 9), and through envy the Jews crucified Jesus (Matt. 27: 18). "Wrath is cruel, and anger is overwhelming; but who is able to stand before jealousy?" (Prov. 27: 4.) Envy is classed with hatred, strife, and murder. (1 Cor. 3: 3; Gal. 5: 19-26.) Prosperity in one arouses envy in another. No doubt much strife has arisen through envy in the name of religion, and has been manifested in the pretense of "contending for the faith." It is

a most diabolical passion, and is more injurious to spiritual life than poison is to the body. One should be more afraid of it than the bite of a deadly reptile. There can be no peace and happiness in the heart where envy is allowed to dwell. Bacon says: "Public envy is an ostracism that eclipses men when they grow too great."

II. Isaac's Wells Were Stopped.

15. In that country, where water was scarce, wells were more highly valued than where water is abundant. The hate and envy of the Philistines were manifested to a most shameful degree in stopping up these wells. They had bound themselves with an oath not to take these wells from Abraham or to injure them in any way. (Gen. 21: 22-34.) Stopping them was similar to the work of an incendiary.

16. Abimelech requested Isaac to leave the country. "For thou art much mightier than we" is the reason he gave for saying to Isaac: "Go from us." Isaac understood, however, that hate was the cause of Abimelech's sending him away. (Gen. 26: 27.) Abimelech said: "We saw plainly that Jehovah was with thee: and we said, Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of Jehovah." (Verses 28, 29.) It seems that Abimelech would desire Isaac to remain at Gerar because he was "the blessed of Jehovah." A good man is a blessing to any community.

This Abimelech was probably the son of the one who made the covenant with Abraham, but he failed to protect the rights of this covenant.

III. Isaac Did Not Contend for His Right—A Lesson for Christians.

17. Isaac might have contended for his rights under the covenant made unto his father and renewed unto himself; but for the sake of peace he very wisely surrendered these, and, without contention, removed farther away and "encamped in the valley of Gerar."

Paul and Barnabas waived their rights to marry and to expect support at times while preaching the gospel in order to accomplish the greater good. (1 Cor. 9: 1-23, which read with care.)

18. Isaac opened the wells his father had dug, because that was easier than to dig new ones; and they were, doubtless, in the best place to find water. It was customary to give names to wells, and Isaac called them by the names his father had given them.

19. Isaac dug here a new well, and found a stream of "springing water," called so in contrast with cisterns. On "living" or "springing" water, see Lev. 14: 5, 50; Num. 19: 17.

20. Over this well there was strife, and for this reason Isaac called it "Esek"—that is, "contention." The Philistines claimed it because it was in their country; Isaac's herdsmen claimed it because they dug it. But Isaac relinquished all rights to it for peace.

21. "And they digged another well." The hateful Philistines strove for this one also; and Isaac let them have it, calling it "Sitnah"—"hateful" or "spiteful."

It has been suggested that some places now, with propriety, could be called "Esek" and "Sitnah," and some places, "Marah," "Massah," and "Meribah."

IV. God Makes Room.

22. "And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not." This is called "Rehoboth"—"room"—giving the reason: "For now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

There are two important points here: "Jehovah . . . made room" in that Isaac complied with his will and avoided strife. Better let the Lord make room for us in his own way than by contention to try to make room for ourselves. Isaac manifested the spirit of his father in yielding his preferences and surrendering his rights in order to avoid strife. Abraham gave Lot his choice of land. Isaac went from place to place. He overcame the envy of the Philistines by his forbearance and patience. He overcame evil with good. This is the teaching of the New Testament and the spirit of Christ. To fight the devil with fire is not according to God's will. (See Matt. 5: 39-42; Rom. 12: 20, 21.) When we act as did Abraham and Isaac, we may rest assured that God will bless us. He will bestow upon us spiritual blessings which will far surpass in fullness and richness all temporal blessings.

Contention begets contention. Contention cannot live where there is only one to contend. To attempt to overcome evil with evil is to make two evils where there was at first only one.

In overcoming evil with good, one party is always blessed, and both may be. The one who does the good is always blessed, and his course frequently brings blessings to the contending party.

Good also begets good. God's law is: "Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded?" (1 Cor. 6: 1-8.)

Isaac was not weak and cowardly, not lacking in physical courage; but he exercised great moral courage in refusing to quarrel with the Philistines and in yielding his rights for the sake of peace—a thing which many seem unwilling to do now.

V. Isaac Blessed of God.

23. He removed to Beersheba, not far from where he was. Blessed memories clustered around this place. "There are at present on the spot two principal wells and five smaller ones." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.)

24. On "the same night" on which Isaac reached Beersheba, "Jehovah appeared unto him" as "the God of Abraham," his father.

To the Jews God was called later "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3: 14, 15; Mark 12: 26, 27), and "the God of our fathers" (Acts 5: 30). To us he is "the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" and "our Father who art in heaven."

Having done so much to avoid strife, it must have been consoling when God said, "Fear not," and gave as the reason that God was with him to bless him and to multiply his seed. "For . . . Abraham's sake"—carrying out the covenant with Abraham and because of Abra-

ham's obedience. Also because of Isaac's faithfulness God renewed this covenant with him.

25. Isaac built at Beersheba an altar upon which to worship God. He was faithful and pious, and maintained the worship of God. His servants dug another well there. To this place Abimelech followed him to make a covenant with him, which was done and sealed with an oath. Hence, the name of the place was renewed—"Shibah," "an oath," and "Beersheba," "well of the oath." (Gen. 26: 26-33.)

Isaac died at Hebron at the age of one hundred and eighty years, "and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him." (Gen. 35: 27-29.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Places, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Beersheba?
What does "Beersheba" mean?
What and where was "the land of the Philistines?"
What and where was Gerar?
What events mentioned in the Bible occurred there?
After the events of the last lesson, where did Abraham make his home?
Who was Abimelech?
Where was Isaac born?
How old were his parents when he was born?
Why was he named "Isaac?"
What were his mother's faith and character?
Who are called her daughters?
Who was Ishmael?
What is the difference between his and Isaac's birth?
Why were Hagar and Ishmael cast out?
What did this represent?
What was the greatest test of Abraham's faith?
Why did not Isaac resist?
What are the points of likeness between the sacrifice of Isaac and that of Jesus?
What perfected Abraham's faith?
When was Isaac married?
What was Rebekah's character?
What was Isaac's character?
How long had Isaac been married before he became the father of children?
How old was Abraham when he died?
Who buried him, and where?
What promise did God here renew unto Isaac?
What wrong did Isaac commit at Gerar?
12 Of what did Abimelech assure him?
13, 14 In what ways did Jehovah bless Isaac?
What was necessary on Isaac's part to the reception of these blessings?
Who envied Isaac?
15 What did envy lead the Philistines to do?
What did they violate?
16 What reason did Abimelech give for requesting Isaac to leave?
Why should this have been a reason for his remaining?
17 What did Isaac do?
What would you have done?
18 Why did people then contend over wells?
What wells did Isaac open?
After what names did he call these wells?
19 What is "living water?"
20 What name did Isaac give this well?
Why did the Philistines claim it?
What did Isaac do?
21 Why did Isaac let the Philistines have the well of this verse also?
What name did he give this one?
22 What next did Isaac do?
What name did he give this well, and why?
In what way did Jehovah make room for him?
How did Isaac overcome the envy and evil of the Philistines?
What is the teaching of the New Testament on this subject?
What does contention beget?
What does good for evil beget?
Was Isaac a coward?
Then why did he not contend for his "rights?"
23 To what place did he go?
What important events occurred here?
24 What promises did Jehovah here renew to Isaac?
Of whom is Jehovah said to be the God?
What is he to us?
25 What did Isaac here erect?
What did he maintain?
Who followed him to Beersheba, and why?
What other well did Isaac dig?
What was it named?
Where did Isaac die?
At what age?

LESSON IX.—MAY 30.

JACOB AT BETHEL.

Gen. 28: 10-22. Read Gen. 27, 28.

10 ¶And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed; and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely Jehovah is in this place; and I knew it not.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

18 ¶And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on.

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God,

22 Then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest."* (Gen. 28: 15.)**TIME.**—B.C. 1760.**PLACE.**—Bethel, twelve miles north of Jerusalem.**PERSONS.**—Jacob and Jehovah.**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—Ps. 121.**HOME READING.**—

May 24. M. Jacob at Bethel. (Gen. 28: 10-22.)

May 25. T. Isaiah's Vision. (Isa. 6: 1-8.)

May 26. W. Ezekiel's Vision. (Ezek. 37: 1-10.)

May 27. T. Peter's Vision. (Acts 10: 9-20.)

May 28. F. The Transfiguration. (Luke 9: 28-36.)

May 29. S. John's Vision of Christ. (Rev. 1: 10-20.)

May 30. S. Help from on High. (Ps. 121.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Beersheba was spoken of in "Geographical Notes" of the last lesson.

Haran was a city of Paddan-aram (Gen. 25: 20), a cultivated district in Mesopotamia (Gen. 24: 10; Acts 7: 2), and to which Abraham went with his father; Nahor, his brother; Lot, his nephew; Sarah, his wife; and all his substance and household, when he left Ur of the

Chaldees. It was called "the city of Nahor" because Nahor and his family remained there after Abraham and Lot went on to Canaan.

"Bethel" and "Luz" were the same. The ancient name was "Luz." (Judg. 1: 23.) The man who betrayed Luz into the hands of the Israelites went into the land of the Hittites and built a city and called it by the same name. (Judg. 1: 24-26.) "Bethel" means "house of God," so named by Jacob. (Gen. 28: 17.) It occupies a prominent place in the history of the Israelites. Look up the places where it is mentioned in the Old Testament. It was about twelve miles north of Jerusalem.

Interesting Facts and Lessons.

Instead of giving "Hints and Helps for Teachers," it is necessary in this case to more fully consider some facts which intervene between the last lesson and the present one.

The Birth of Jacob and Esau.

They were twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Isaac was forty years old when he was married and sixty years old when Esau and Jacob were born. They were born in answer to prayer, for Rebekah was barren. Before they were born they "struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, wherefore do I live? And she went to inquire of Jehovah. And Jehovah said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them." (See Gen. 25: 20-26.)

"Jacob" means "supplanter." Having Esau by the heel suggested Jacob's name. "Esau" means "hairy."

The struggling together in the womb prefigured the struggles between the nations which sprang from these boys.

The Difference Between Jacob and Esau.

"And the boys grew: and Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents." (Gen. 25: 27.) There could hardly exist a greater difference between twins. Esau was sensual and profane (Heb. 12: 16), throwing aside domestic cares, roving in the fields, and despising the covenant promises of God; Jacob loved home and mother, tended his flocks and herds, and was one of the greatest and most successful shepherds who has ever lived. Isaac loved his vagrant boy, and his keen relish for Esau's venison made him appreciate the skill of the cunning huntsman the more. Rebekah loved the quiet home boy, Jacob. This partiality and this division between father and mother over their sons was wrong, and caused no little trouble later on.

The next important event is the sale of his birthright by Esau to Jacob. The birthright was a double portion of the inheritance (Deut.

21: 17) and the peculiar blessings of the father. In this case, if not always, it included the covenant promises made to Abraham and Isaac that in their seed all nations should be blessed. Jacob was sufficiently religious and had sufficient faith to desire this blessing, but the way he obtained it was selfish and wrong. He took advantage of Esau's hunger and weariness and bought it for "bread and pottage of lentils," and made Esau "swear" to it; whereas he should have been sufficiently generous to feed his brother without cost of any kind. Through sensuality Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and thus despised it, or threw it away.

Because he did this for "red pottage" he was called "Edom"—"red." (Gen. 25: 29-34.) Many profligate boys and men have sold their birthright—their right to become Christians and be saved—for a drink of whisky or momentary gratification of the flesh. While it was selfish and mean in Jacob to obtain the birthright as he did, Esau still sought to receive the blessing after he had sold it.

Partiality, Deception, Lying, and the Consequences.

In Gen. 27 is an account of these sins. When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim, he thought his end was near, desired to make proper arrangement of his affairs before his death, and sought to bestow the blessing on his favorite son. He did not die, however, for at least forty-four years afterwards (Gen. 35: 27-29); and, hence, at this time he may have suffered an affliction from which he recovered. If Isaac knew Jacob had bought the birthright, he ignored the transaction. He must have known God's prediction before the children were born—that the one people should be stronger than the other people and the elder should serve the younger. (Gen. 25: 23.) "Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison." (Gen. 25: 28.)

While Esau was hunting, Rebekah suggested to Jacob the practice of this deception upon his father and of obtaining in this way the blessing intended for Esau; not only so, but she directed Jacob in it and assumed all responsibility for it.

In obtaining this blessing, Jacob told several falsehoods—(1) by saying he was Esau, (2) by declaring he had done as his father had directed and his kid's meat was venison, (3) by declaring that God had brought the venison to him so quickly, (4) by his clothing and by the skins on his hands and neck. All his actions were falsehoods.

The deception practiced by Rebekah and Jacob was wrong.

The partiality of the father for one son and that of the mother for another widened into the alienation of the two brothers and the separation of the mother from her favorite son.

God did not approve of all these sins, although in justice he recorded them. God gives one's true character.

Rebekah knew what God had said in Gen. 25: 23 concerning her sons, but she did not use the proper means in bringing these things about. She should have relied upon God to bring this about in his own way.

The blessing bestowed upon Jacob by his father is recorded in Gen. 27: 28, 29, and is confirmed voluntarily in Gen. 28: 1-4.

The far-reaching spiritual side of this promise of the Messiah through Abraham's seed and all the spiritual blessings it contained,

Esau despised. He was "profane" in that he cared nothing for God's purposes and plans and considered a meal to gratify his flesh worth more to him than the birthright and the blessing of others through him.

"Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father had blessed him," and threatened to kill him as soon as the days of mourning for their father had passed.

Hearing of these threats, Rebekah advised Jacob to leave the country—that is, to go to her brother, Laban, until Esau's wrath had subsided. Then, she said, she would fetch him back. If Rebekah ever saw him again, the record is silent as to the fact.

Rebekah and Jacob suffered because of their sins.

Jacob's Age When He Left Home.

Jacob was one hundred and forty-seven years old when he died, and he had lived then in Egypt seventeen years (Gen. 47: 28); hence, he was one hundred and thirty years old when he went into Egypt (Gen. 47: 9). At that time Joseph was thirty-nine years old. He was thirty when he appeared before Pharaoh. (Gen. 41: 46.) Seven years of plenty and two years of famine had passed before Jacob went into Egypt (Gen. 45: 5, 6); hence, Joseph was thirty-nine when Jacob was one hundred and thirty. Then Jacob was ninety-one when Joseph was born. Jacob served Laban, his father-in-law, fourteen years for his two daughters and six years for his cattle. (Gen. 31: 38-40.) He served seven years before he received his wives. Laban first gave him Leah, the weak-eyed, instead of Rachel, the beautiful, his beloved, practicing on him such deception as he had practiced on his father in obtaining the blessing. But after one week Jacob received Rachel, for whom he served seven years longer. (Gen. 29: 16-30.) He had been with Laban only a month when he began this service. (Gen. 29: 14.) Soon after Joseph was born, Jacob proposed to return to Canaan; but Laban struck another bargain with him, and he remained six years longer. (Gen. 30: 25-36.) Joseph was seventeen years old when sold into Egypt. (Gen. 37: 1, 2.) Joseph was a little past six years of age when Jacob left Paddan-aram. How long Jacob was in Paddan-aram before Joseph was born determines his age when he left home. From Gen. 31: 38-41 it seems he was there twenty years, but there are some difficulties. Some of his sons were old enough while there to tend his flock (Gen. 30: 35, 36); and Dinah, Leah's seventh and youngest child, was old enough to marry when he left. Some of his sons, therefore, were grown men and able to avenge the wrong done their sister. (Gen. 34.) Some think, therefore, that in Gen. 31: 38-41 the twenty years mentioned must have been two different periods, making, in all, forty years. If so, Jacob was fifty-seven or fifty-eight years old when he left home. If he was in Paddan-aram twenty years, then he was seventy-eight years old when he left home.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Pure Marriages.

Let us consider the facts of the nine previous verses of this chapter.

Rebekah persuaded Isaac to send Jacob to Paddan-aram to seek a wife of the daughters of Laban, saying: "I am weary of my life be-

cause of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" (Gen. 27: 46.) Heth was a son of Canaan. (Gen. 10: 15.)

At the age of forty Esau married "daughters of Canaan," who "were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." (Gen. 26: 34, 35.)

God would keep his people pure by pure marriages.

The decrease of righteous and faithful people before the flood is attributable to no small extent to the marriage of good men—"the sons of God"—to ungodly and wicked women. (Gen. 6: 2.) The Canaanites had been doomed to slavery, as later they were doomed to destruction. (Gen. 9: 25.) Abraham feared that should Isaac marry among the Canaanites, his piety would become corrupted and the promulgation of the worship of the true God be prevented. That Abraham sought this in the marriage of his son, instead of worldly position and wealth, is most worthy and greatly in contrast with many marriages of professed children of God now.

Abraham sent his servant back to his people for a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24: 1-9); and now Jacob, through whom the Messiah must come, is sent back to his mother's people for a wife.

Rebekah had this in mind when she requested Isaac to send Jacob to take a wife of her people in Paddan-aram, because the wives of Esau "were a grief of mind" to them both. (Gen. 26: 34, 35; 27: 46 to 28: 5.)

Isaac said to Jacob: "Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan." The blessing which Jacob had obtained by deception—"the blessing of Abraham" (see Gen. 12: 1-3; 17: 1-8; 22: 11-18)—Isaac now voluntarily bestows upon him. With this blessing Isaac sent Jacob away to Laban, his mother's brother. Esau, seeing that his wives did not please Isaac and that Jacob had gone in obedience to Isaac to seek a wife in Paddan-aram, took a wife of the daughters of Ishmael, his father's half brother. He did it, it seems, desiring to please Isaac.

With Abraham's kindred was as much of the true religion as could be found on earth, but they were not free from idolatry. (See Gen. 3: 19; Josh. 24: 15.) After the children of Israel were delivered from Egyptian bondage, God forbade their marriage with the nations of Canaan, because such marriages would lead them into idolatry and otherwise corrupt them. (See Ex. 34: 15, 16; Deut. 7: 3; Josh. 23: 12, 13.) The sad and woeful effects of such marriages are seen in Solomon and in others in the following passages: Judg. 3: 6-8; 14: 1-16; 1 Kings 3: 1; 11: 1-4; 16: 31; Ezra 9: 1-12; Mal. 2: 11-13. Thus it is seen from the beginning to the end of the Old Testament the people of God became corrupt through such marriages. With all this before us, very little attention now in many places is paid to the teaching of God in the New Testament in regard to marriage. With many, marriage is not treated as a divine institution, although God ordained it, as all should know.

II. Conscientious Marriages.

Abraham sent his old and wise servant to select a wife for Isaac, although Isaac was then forty years of age. The parents then exer-

cised great authority in choosing companions for their children. Yet Rebekah was allowed to decide for herself whether or not she would go with Abraham's servant to become the wife of a man she had never seen. Children now are too much left to their own foolish impulses in getting married—I will not say "in choosing companions," because some do not go into this sacred and lasting relationship with sufficient deliberation and forethought to call it a "choice." Parents should teach their children the dignity, solemnity, and happiness of proper and conscientious marriages; that this is God's rule for the welfare of the race; and that hasty and foolish marriages bring trouble and sorrow. So far as possible, all things considered, parents should at least assist their children in selecting companions for life.

III. Jacob Started on His Journey.

10. "And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran." Haran was about five hundred miles from Beersheba. Laban lived there. Jacob, doubtless, slipped away from Esau. There is quite a contrast between this departure of Jacob, with nothing but his staff, and the departure of Abraham's faithful servant, with ten camels, jewels of silver and gold, and raiment, almost a hundred years before that, for the same place to seek a wife for Isaac.

IV. The Dream and Ladder.

11. He was near Luz. (Verse 19.) He did not enter this place, but remained in the field, because, it may be, he did not reach there in time, before the gates were closed, or he may have suspected the inhabitants. He "tarried there all night, because the sun was set." He placed a stone under his head for a pillow and lay down to sleep. There was a great contrast, too, between this and the comfortable home he had left.

12. "And he dreamed." This was not an ordinary dream. God spoke to men then through dreams and their interpretations—for instance, Pharaoh's dream and the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. (Gen. 41; Dan. 2 and 4.) "Jehovah appeared to Solomon in a dream by night." (1 Kings 3: 5-15.) This ladder, or stairway, based on the earth and reaching up to heaven, with "the angels of God ascending and descending on it," is a beautiful vision, showing the interest Heaven feels in earthly things, and that the way from earth to heaven is up the stairway God has erected. The steps up this way through Jesus (John 14: 6) are given in 2 Pet. 1: 5-11. To Nathanael, Jesus said: "Ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (John 1: 51.) Notwithstanding Jacob's sins, this vision shows that he was religious and had reverence for God and divine things. As a florist trains a tender vine day by day to run where he wishes it, so in patience and mercy God forbears with the weaknesses and faults of those who are inclined and who desire to go the way he leads. Although fleeing from Esau, Jacob did the right thing to seek a wife of the daughters of his own people. It pleases God to develop men in his service for usefulness and good, if they will receive the development. In this Jacob was superior to Esau.

13. "And, behold, Jehovah stood above it"—or, as in the margin, "beside him." Jehovah appeared to him as "the God of Abraham" and "the God of Isaac." "Wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. 11: 16.) Although at that time Jacob had only the ground for a bed and a stone for a pillow, God promised that the land should be his and his descendants' after him.

V. The Covenant Renewed.

14. To Jacob, God renewed the covenant made to Abraham (Gen. 12: 1-13; 17: 1-8) and to Isaac (Gen. 26: 2-5). From the river of Egypt unto the Euphrates, Jacob's descendants were to inherit the land, which was fulfilled in the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon.

15. Here is a fourfold promise: (1) "I am with thee," although he was alone; (2) "will keep thee whithersoever thou goest;" (3) "will bring thee again unto this land;" (4) "for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Years afterwards it was said: "Who can count the dust of Jacob, or number the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (Num. 23: 10.) Through his trials and struggles God was with Jacob; in God's school of discipline he was developed into a man of strong faith and great service, and died, at an advanced age, the death of the righteous.

16. The God of heaven and earth and the "possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14: 22) is everywhere. In this place, years before, Abraham built an altar and called upon God. (Gen. 12: 8; 13: 1-4.) "And I knew it not." Jacob did not know God was there in the person of angels and in a way different from that in which he is in every place.

17. "He was afraid"—was awe-stricken. "How dreadful is this place!" Others were afraid in the presence of God—as Peter, James, and John on the mount of transfiguration. This is "the house of God, . . . the gate of heaven." We must approach God with reverence and awe, and should so live that every place to us "is none other than the house of God, and . . . the gate of heaven"—the gate through which blessings of God may come to us, or through which, at any time, from any place, we may enter when called upon to depart this life.

18. In appreciation of God's promises, Jacob was up early. The stone which was under his head he set "up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it," to dedicate or consecrate it. Stones were thus set up as witnesses or monuments. (Gen. 31: 45; 35: 14; Josh. 4.)

19. Jacob "called the name of that place Bethel," because "Bethel" means "house of God."

20-22. Jacob vowed if God would go with him and do all that he had promised, he would make Jehovah his God, that that stone which he had set up should be the house of God, and that of all that God should give him he would give a tenth to God. This was not so much bargaining with the Lord as it was a vow on Jacob's part to do what he had said, since God had promised to do so much for him. We should not wait until we are rich before we begin to honor God with our substance and the first fruits of all our increase. It is accepted

not according to what we have not, but according to that which we have. (2 Cor. 8: 12.) God loves a cheerful giver and blesses all such.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Tell what you know about Beersheba.
Where was Haran?
Whom did Abraham take there with him from Ur?
What was Bethel anciently called?
What does "Bethel" mean?
What did you learn about Bethel by looking up the references?
How old was Isaac when he was married?
How old when his twins were born?
Why was Jacob so named?
Why was Esau so named?
What did Jehovah say the two boys who would be born of Rebekah represented?
Which should serve the other?
Give the difference between these two boys as they grew up to be men.
To which one was Isaac partial, and why?
Why was Rebekah partial to Jacob?
Was this partiality in the parents right?
What was the birthright?
What wrong did Jacob do in regard to this?
Why did Esau sell his birthright?
Why was Esau called "Edom"?
What do many sell to-day for the gratification of the flesh?
What was the next grievous wrong that Jacob did?
Why could this deception be practiced on Isaac?
How long did Isaac live after this?
Who suggested or directed this deception?
How many lies did Jacob tell?
Did God approve of these sins?
Upon whom should Rebekah have relied for the fulfillment of God's promise to her?
Why is Esau called "profane"?
Why did Esau hate and threaten to kill Jacob?
What was Jacob's age when he left Beersheba for Haran?
How do we arrive at this fact?
What women had troubled Isaac and Rebekah?
What had caused this trouble?
Whom then did Esau marry, and why?
What was one cause of the decrease of righteousness before the flood?
- Whom did God forbid the Israelites to marry?
Why did Abraham send to Haran for a wife for Isaac?
What did Rebekah fear for Jacob?
Where did Isaac send Jacob for a wife?
What blessing did Isaac now voluntarily pronounce upon Jacob?
Among whom could pure worship of God be more nearly found than any others?
Give the sinful effects of unholy marriages upon Solomon and others.
- 10 To what place did Jacob start?
How far was it from Beersheba to Haran?
State the difference between Jacob's departure and that of Abraham's servant when he went to seek a wife for Isaac.
 - 11 Near what place did Jacob stop?
Why?
What were his bed and pillow?
 - 12 Describe Jacob's vision.
What use did God make of some dreams then?
What does this vision show?
What did Jesus say to Nathanael about angels?
Repeat 2 Pet. 1: 5-11.
What shows Jacob's reverence for God, and that he was righteous?
What is God pleased to do with all who are inclined to serve him?
In what was Jacob superior to Esau?
 - 13 What position did Jehovah occupy?
What did he say to Jacob?
 - 14 What covenant did God renew with Jacob?
When did Jacob's seed inherit this to the full?
 - 15 What fourfold promise did God make?
To what end did Jacob come?
 - 16 Whom did Jacob say was in that place?
What does God possess?
Who had worshiped there before?
In what appearance did Jacob not know God was there?
 - 17 Why was he afraid?
What did he say of the place?
What should all places be to us?
 - 18 How did Jacob show his appreciation of God's promises?
What did he name the place?
 - 19-22 What vow did he make?
Why did he make this vow?
How should we use our means?
When should we begin?

LESSON X.—JUNE 6.

JACOB AND ESAU.

Gen. 33: 1-11. Read Gen. 25: 19-34; 26: 34 to 28: 9; 32: 3 to 33: 17.

1 ¶And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau was coming, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3 And he himself passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are these with thee? And he said, The children whom God hath graciously given thy servant.

6 Then the handmaids came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

7 And Leah also and her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

8 And he said, What meanest thou by all this company which I met? And he said, To find favor in the sight of my lord.

9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; let that which thou hast be thine.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found favor in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; forasmuch as I have seen thy face, as one seeth the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, my gift that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.”* (Eph. 4: 32.)

TIME.—B.C. 1739.

PLACE.—Near Penuel.

PERSONS.—Jacob and Esau.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Matt. 6: 9-15.

HOME READING.—

May 31. **M.** Jacob and Esau. (Gen. 33: 1-11.)

June 1. **T.** Reconciliation with God. (2 Cor. 5: 14-21.)

June 2. **W.** Reconciliation with Others. (Matt. 5: 21-26.)

June 3. **T.** Joseph Forgives His Brothers. (Gen. 45: 1-15.)

June 4. **F.** Proper Treatment of Enemies. (Matt. 5: 38-48.)

June 5. **S.** Christ Forgives His Enemies. (Luke 23: 33-38.)

June 6. **S.** Forgiveness and Prayer. (Matt. 6: 9-15.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

It is well to learn the extent and location of “the land of Gilead” (Num. 32: 1), sometimes called “mountain of Gilead” (Gen. 31: 25), and sometimes “Gilead” (Ps. 60: 7). It included several mountains. “Gilead” means “rocky region;” but it contained much fertile and beautiful country, and was noted for its production of balm, spicery, and myrrh. (Gen. 37: 25; Jer. 8: 22.) It extended from Bashan, on the north, to Ammon, on the south; from the Jordan, on the west, to Arabia, on the east. (See Deut. 3: 12-17.)

The Jabbok was a stream which flowed out of the mountains of Gilead and emptied into the Jordan about twenty-five miles above the Dead Sea.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Read carefully the chapters designated.

The time of this lesson is at least twenty, if not forty, years since that of the last lesson.

Many events happened in the meantime.

Greatly encouraged by the vision at Bethel, Jacob hastened on his journey to Haran. He halted at a well in a field where the shepherds met to water their flocks. On account of the scarcity of water in that country, necessary precaution must be taken to see that all received justice.

Jacob inquired of Laban and his welfare.

Rachel, Laban's daughter, kept her father's flock; and when she came to the watering place, Jacob rolled the stone away from the well's mouth and watered her flock. He informed her who he was, kissed her, and wept for joy. Laban received his nephew most cordially, and after one month proposed to pay him for his services.

It was then Jacob offered to work the seven years for Rachel; "and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." But Laban, according to the marriage customs of that country, easily deceived Jacob and gave him Leah instead of Rachel. Leah was weak-eyed, but Rachel "was beautiful and well favored."

Jacob was a "supplanter" and naturally selfish, but he met "his match" somewhat in his father-in-law; yet, in the end, he triumphed over Laban, ascribing his success to the help of God. In no way, however, did God approve of Jacob's "tricks" and deception. Laban did Jacob a great wrong in this affair; it was also an injustice to Leah and Rachel. When departing from Laban, Jacob made the statement of Gen. 31: 38-42. Thus all the while Laban was seeking the advantage of Jacob. Jacob made to his wives the statement of Gen. 31: 4-16.

The Lord said to Jacob: "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee." To avoid any trouble with Laban, Jacob gathered his family and flocks and quietly departed "unawares" to Laban.

Laban followed him to the mountain of Gilead, but God had warned him not to speak "to Jacob either good or bad."

There they made a friendly agreement and set up a stone for a witness. Laban called it "Jegar-sahadutha" ("the heap of witness"—Aramaic, margin), and Jacob called it "Galeed" ("the heap of witness"—Hebrew, margin) and "Mizpeh" ("the watchtower"—margin); "for he said, Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another."

Jacob made an offering to God, and all ate bread together; and Jacob swore that he would not pass that pillar to harm Laban, and Laban was not to pass it to harm Jacob. Laban tarried all night, and the next morning kissed his daughters and their children and returned. Jacob then went on his way.

To assure Jacob that those who were for him were more than those who were against him, a host of angels met him, and he called the place "Mahanaim" ("two hosts").

But fear of Esau arose before Jacob. He had not forgotten his treatment of Esau. He sent messengers in advance to report to Esau

his prosperity and to ask that he might find grace in his brother's sight. The messengers returned to say only that Esau was coming to meet Jacob with four hundred men.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jacob Wrestles with the Angel.

1. Jacob had reached the river Jabbok, which means "pouring forth" or "turbulent stream." The report of the messengers, already noticed, filled Jacob with fear and distress; "and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two companies; and he said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the company which is left shall escape." (Gen. 32: 7, 8.)

Having done this, Jacob offered the following prayer: "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O Jehovah, who saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good: I am not worthy of the least of all the loving-kindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two companies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." (Verses 9-12.)

This is a noble prayer. Jacob is called a man of prayer. He was in great distress, and his only hope of escape was God's deliverance. He had reached the point in humility and utter dependence upon God where God always meets one to bless him. Jacob lodged by the river the night after he had offered this prayer.

To appease Esau, Jacob sent over the river before him a generous present of five droves of animals, each drove of a different kind. There were five hundred and eighty head in all. (Verses 13-21.)

Having sent this present to Esau, Jacob then sent over before him the two companies mentioned, and in the night he sent over his wives and children and all that he had. It required that length of time to make all the arrangements given above. (Verses 22, 23.)

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." (Verse 24.) This "man" was an angel—"the angel of the Lord" or "the angel of the covenant." The angels whom Abraham and Lot entertained appeared as men. This was an actual struggle which Jacob had. Whoever Jacob may have thought this was at first, he soon discovered he was an angel. This struggle is not given to teach that we must agonize and wrestle with God in prayer, for God is more ready and willing to bless than we are to receive and properly use his blessings. It showed to Jacob the power of God—that he must depend wholly upon God, that he could prevail only through God and by God's help.

This was a turning point or great victory in Jacob's character. Toward this he had been developing. His character had lacked stability, honesty, and definiteness of aim; it had been mixed with much evil; he had depended too much on his own ways. Here self was more

completely laid aside than ever before, and entire dependence upon God was manifested. We may struggle against God and never prevail, but fail; but when we yield to him and rely upon him for victory, through his strength we are sure to prevail. Importunity in prayer is taught throughout the New Testament. Jacob's struggle teaches us to struggle against our doubts and fears, our self-confidence and self-dependence, and in trust and humility to rely wholly upon God.

When the angel had wrestled with Jacob until daybreak and had not prevailed, he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and it "was strained." This shows that the angel prevailed not at first because he would not, and not because he could not. He wrestled with Jacob all night for Jacob's benefit. Jacob's flocks and family were over the river, and would be traveling, since it was day; hence, the angel said: "Let me go, for the day breaketh." But, helpless and crippled, Jacob clung to the angel, and said: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." He no longer wrestled, but pleaded. He could not prevail by physical strength, but he did prevail in his own weakness and humility. "In the womb he took his brother by the heel; and in his manhood he had power with God: yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him at Bethel, and there he spake with us." (Hos. 12: 3, 4.) He prevailed through his tears and supplications; in his weakness he was made strong. In answer to the question, "What is thy name?" Jacob replied, "Jacob" ("supplanter"). But here his name was changed to "Israel" ("a prince of God" or "power with God"). This was, indeed, a great change. In forbearance God had dealt with Jacob until he had so developed in God's service and so developed in character that he was now no longer "a supplanter," but "a prince of God." Ever afterwards the descendants of Jacob have been called "Israelites," and Christians are spiritual Israel. Jacob heretofore had prevailed with men more by cunning than otherwise, but now he will prevail by goodness and the strength of God.

The angel declined to tell Jacob his name, but he blessed Jacob.

Jacob called the place "Peniel," which means "the face of God," because he said he had seen God "face to face." This place is also called "Penuel," and a city by this name was afterwards built there. The sun rose upon Jacob at Penuel, and he went limping on his thigh. Because the angel touched Jacob's thigh the children of Israel do not eat "the sinew of the hip which is upon the hollow of the thigh." (Gen. 32: 25-32.)

At Penuel, Jacob discovered that "Esau was coming, and with him four hundred men," to meet him. Jacob was still fearful, and began to make preparations to meet Esau in the most advantageous manner.

Esau's deportment shows that he was entirely friendly toward his brother, and desired to meet him in a most generous and magnanimous spirit. Esau, as well as Jacob, had prospered, and the men with Esau were evidence of his prosperity and power; they may not have been all warriors.

II. Jacob Meets Esau.

2, 3. The preparation Jacob made to meet Esau was to divide his family into companies, according to his wives and their handmaids, placing the handmaids and their children foremost, Leah and her chil-

dren next, and Rachel and Joseph hindmost. Verse 6 of chapter 32 shows that Jacob was "greatly afraid," and he thus divided his family and possessions in order to save as many as possible should Esau attack him. He showed that he loved Rachel and Joseph the most by placing them behind, giving them the safest place. Placing himself in front of all, he went on to meet Esau, and "bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother."

4. Esau showed his friendly disposition, his good intentions toward Jacob, and his forgiveness by his actions. He "ran to meet" Jacob, "and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

While years before he had threatened to kill Jacob, this shows that he had laid aside all resentment and in sincere affection was ready to receive him.

This action is worthy the emulation of many to-day who profess to be Christians. Jacob did what he could to appease the wrath of Esau. It is the duty to-day of one who has wronged another to repent, repair the injury so far as possible, and ask forgiveness. It is the duty, and must be the pleasure, of the one wronged then to forgive. The duty of the one who has wronged another is given in Matt. 5: 23, 24; the duty of the one who has been wronged by another is given in Matt. 18: 15-20. The gospel of Jesus teaches much on gentleness, forbearance, love, and forgiveness. Both Jacob and Esau wept.

5-7. Jacob had met Esau before his family came up. Esau then saw them approaching, and asked: "Who are these with thee?" Jacob replied: "The children whom God hath graciously given thy servant." Jacob gave to God the glory of his prosperity; so he did in parting from Laban. (Gen. 31: 22.) Jacob here called himself Esau's servant.

According to the order in which Jacob divided them, the handmaids came first and bowed themselves to Esau; next, Leah and her children came and bowed themselves; and, last, Rachel and Joseph did the same.

8-11. Esau then asked the meaning of the company of animals he met, and which Jacob had sent to him for a present. Jacob replied: "To find favor in the sight of my lord." Esau declined the present, giving as the reason that he had enough; but Jacob urged him, and he accepted it. As Jacob said, for Esau to accept the present was to show that Jacob had found favor in his sight and that he was pleased with Jacob. Jacob had wronged and displeased Esau; and now that he could see Esau's face, "as one seeth the face of God," without harm, was a cause of great joy.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Locate and describe the land of Gilead.

What was the Jabbok?

Tell what you know about it.

What did Jacob do after the vision of the last lesson?

Where did he halt?

Whom did he meet?

After whom did he inquire?

Who came with Laban's flocks?

What did Jacob do for her?

How did Rachel and her father receive Jacob?

What proposition did Laban make to Jacob?

What proposition did Jacob then make to Laban?

How did Laban deceive Jacob?

How did Jacob obtain Rachel?

How did Jacob prosper?

What speech did he make to Laban on parting from him?

What did the Lord command Jacob to do?

- In what manner did he leave?
 To what place did Laban follow him?
 What did God warn Laban not to do?
 What agreement did they make?
 Why did Jacob return to Canaan?
 Whom did he fear after leaving Laban?
 Whom did he send, and with what message, to meet Esau?
 What report did the messengers bring to him?
 1 At what place was Jacob when the messengers returned?
 What is the meaning of "Jabbok"?
 What effect did this report have on Jacob?
 What did he do?
 What prayer did he offer?
 What was his hope of escape?
 How did he attempt to appease Esau?
 What and whom did Jacob send over the Jabbok?
 In what order did he send them over, and why?
 How long were all in crossing?
 Who wrestled with Jacob?
 Why did the angel wrestle with him?
 What lesson may we get from this?
 What does the Bible teach in regard to importunity in prayer?
 How did the angel wrestle with Jacob?
 When he did not prevail, what did the angel do?
 For this reason, what did the children of Israel not eat?
 What reason did the angel give for telling Jacob to let him go?
 What did Jacob do?
 How did Jacob prevail?
 To what was his name changed?
- What does "Israel" mean?
 What does this show?
 How long did the name "Israel" last?
 How had Jacob prevailed over men before?
 How was he now to prevail?
 What did the angel do for Jacob?
 What did Jacob call that place?
 Why?
 What was built there?
 In what spirit did Esau go to meet Jacob?
 What shows that he had prospered?
 2, 3 What preparation did Jacob make to meet Esau?
 What place did he himself take?
 4 What did Esau do?
 What did these actions show?
 Who should emulate Esau in this?
 What is the duty now of one who has wronged another?
 What is the duty of the one who has been wronged?
 5-7 Who and what came up just after the meeting of Jacob and Esau?
 What question did Esau ask?
 What reply did Jacob make?
 To whom did Jacob ascribe his success?
 What did Jacob call himself as regards Esau?
 In what order was his family presented to Esau?
 8-11 Of what did Esau ask the meaning?
 What reply did Jacob make?
 Why did Esau decline the present?
 Then why did he accept it?
 What did his acceptance of it show?
 What filled Jacob with joy?

Thou hast been with me in the dark and cold,
 And all the night I thought I was alone;
 The chariots of thy glory round me rolled,
 On me attending, yet by me unknown.

The darkness of thy night has been thy day;
 My stony pillow was thy ladder's rest;
 And all thine angels watched my couch of clay
 To bless the soul, unconscious it was blest.

(George Matheson.)

Come, O thou traveler unknown,
 Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
 My company before is gone,
 And I am left alone with thee;
 With thee all night I mean to stay,
 And wrestle till the break of day.

(Charles Wesley.)

LESSON XI.—JUNE 13.

JOSEPH'S FIDELITY.

Gen. 39: 1-6, 19-23. Read Gen. 39: 1-33.

1 ¶And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hand of the Ishmaelites, that had brought him down thither.

2 And Jehovah was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

3 And his master saw that Jehovah was with him, and that Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

4 And Joseph found favor in his sight, and he ministered unto him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

5 And it came to pass from the time that he made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was upon all that he had, in the house and in the field.

6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught *that was* with him, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was comely, and well-favored.

19 ¶And it came to pass, when his-master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.

20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

21 But Jehovah was with Joseph, and showed kindness unto him, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

23 The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand, because Jehovah was with him; and that which he did, Jehovah made it to prosper.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.*” (Prov. 22: 29.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1718.

PLACE.—Egypt.

PERSONS.—Joseph, Potiphar, and Potiphar's wife.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 4: 10-18.

HOME READING.—

June 7. M. Joseph's Fidelity. (Gen. 39: 1-6, 19-23.)

June 8. T. Job's Testing. (Job 2: 1-10.)

June 9. W. Tempted by Prosperity. (Ps. 73: 11-18.)

June 10. T. Tempted by Wine. (Jer. 35: 1-10.)

June 11. F. The Temptation of Jesus. (Matt. 4: 1-11.)

June 12. S. Prepared Against Temptation. (Eph. 6: 10-20.)

June 13. S. Avoiding Temptation. (Prov. 4: 10-18.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

EGYPT.—The history of Egypt is most interesting for many reasons, one of which is its connection with the history of God's people.

“Although Asia was the cradle of the human race, the cradle of civilization was in the Nile Valley, which, from the island of Elephantine, in the Nile, northward to the Mediterranean Sea, a distance of five hundred and twenty-six miles, was the seat of ancient Egypt, the mother of the arts and sciences. In Egypt we first find a civil gov-

ernment and political institutions established; and although Egypt may not be the oldest nation, Egyptian history is the oldest history. The monuments, records, and literature of Egypt are far more ancient than those of Chaldea and India, the next oldest nations. While the progress of other nations from ignorance and rudeness to art and civilization may be easily traced, Egypt appears in the earliest twilight of history a great, powerful, and highly civilized nation; and her gigantic architectural works are the most wonderful as well as the most ancient in the world, showing a skill in the quarrying, transporting, carving, and joining of stones which modern architects may admire, but are unable to surpass." (Library of Universal History.)

The most influential caste in Egypt were the priests. They were "the power behind the throne." Next to them was the military caste.

It was beneficial to Joseph and the children of Israel to come in contact with the civilization of Egypt—its culture, arts, and sciences.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Note the important events which occurred in the life of Jacob since his meeting with Esau to this story of the fidelity of Joseph, his son; the events at Shechem (Gen. 33: 18 to 34: 31); the appearance of God again to him at Bethel (Gen. 35: 1-15); the birth of Benjamin and death of Rachel at Bethlehem (Gen. 35: 16-20); and his return to his father at Hebron, and the death and burial of his father (Gen. 35: 27-29). We do not know how long Jacob remained at these different places.

The Story of Joseph.

The story of Joseph is a most beautiful and pathetic one, interesting and instructive alike to both old and young. Who can read it without tears?

In giving it, some things not in this lesson are anticipated.

It is most valuable in that it shows us how God's providence rules over all, even the envy and wickedness of people, famine, and plenty, for the good of those who serve him. The envy and wickedness of his brethren and the apparent misfortunes of Joseph were stepping-stones to his goodness and greatness. His environments were not always favorable to piety and purity. His older brethren in many things set him a bad example. The partiality of his father was not good for his disposition, and yet his character approached perfection as nearly as any in the Old Testament.

If, like Joseph, we will so serve God that he can work out his plan and purpose through us; if we truly love him, then he will be with us as truly as he was with Joseph in the pit and the prison, and will cause all things to work together for our good.

Joseph's dreams with most apparent signification aroused the hatred and excited the envy of his brethren against him. Their cool and deliberate conspiracy, their unprincipled and ferocious determination to shed innocent blood, stirs our hearts.

Joseph was seventeen years old when he was sold into Egypt (Gen. 37: 2), and thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh (Gen. 41: 46) and interpreted his dreams. Hence, he was for thirteen years either a slave or a prisoner, and none the less a slave while a prisoner.

These were thirteen years of hard schooling for Joseph, but a thorough preparation for the great work God had for him to do. Learning obedience as a slave fitted Joseph the better to govern others. Discipline developed him, and from every different temptation his character came out shining like gold tried in the fire.

We may all learn from this how faithfulness, trueness, pureness, and patient service of God under severe tests is the only sure way of deliverance from evil and the only right way of elevation. It is the same old and true story of faithfulness in little things and the discharge of present duties which fit one for greater usefulness.

It is not where we are or what we are, whether master or slave, but what we do and the way we do it, that makes our character and shapes our destiny.

Thus Joseph was not only elevated and many saved from the famine through him, but thus God fulfilled his own prediction to Abraham: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterwards shall they come out with great substance." (Gen. 15: 13, 14.)

Others were imprisoned for right's sake. Jeremiah was imprisoned (Jer. 38: 5-13); the Hebrew children were cast into the fiery furnace (Dan. 3); Daniel was cast into the lions' den (Dan. 6); John the Baptist, Peter, Paul at different times, and others were imprisoned. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3: 12.)

Joseph's advice to Pharaoh; his being made ruler over Egypt, second only to Pharaoh on the throne; his meekness and God-fearing faithfulness as ruler; the reaping on the part of his brethren the harvest of trouble from their sad sowing; Judah's sublime speech in behalf of Benjamin; his forgiveness of his brothers; and his love for his father and the removal of the whole family into Egypt, are all most instructive and helpful.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Conspiracy of Joseph's Brothers.

1. Chapter 37 relates the conspiracy of Joseph's envious brothers to destroy him; the plan of Reuben to save him from death and to restore him to his father; and the proposition of Judah to sell him, and in this way get rid of him without killing him, and yet make something for themselves. Judah's proposition was acted upon, and the helpless boy was drawn from the waterless cistern and sold to Ishmaelites or Midianites, or both, for twenty pieces of silver.

Ishmael, Medan, and Midian were sons of Abraham—Ishmael, by Hagar (Gen. 16: 15, 16); Medan and Midian, by Keturah (Gen. 25: 1-3, 12). Judg. 8: 1, 3, 22, 24, 26 speaks of Ishmaelites and Midianites as the same people. Either both tribes were represented in this transaction or one included the other and their names are used interchangeably.

The horribly wicked deed of nine strong, grown men (Reuben had planned to restore Joseph safe to his father) conspiring to bury alive a helpless and defenseless lad by casting him into a gloomy pit to die

of starvation and anguish, while in distress of soul he pleaded for his life, presents one of the saddest and most cruel pictures which the imagination can draw. All this came vividly to his brothers in Egypt when they stood before Joseph and confessed to themselves: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear." (Gen. 42: 21.) Joseph pleaded for his life, and he besought his brothers, but this deterred them not. His brothers were never able to rid themselves of the frightful picture of his distress and "anguish of soul" indelibly stamped upon their guilty consciences as they dropped him into the pit or as he longingly looked toward home when he was sold and led away as a slave into Egypt.

Regardless of the tears and distress of their young brother, these cruel and brutal men "sat down to eat bread," as though they had done no wrong. According to their agreement, Joseph was sold to these merchantmen. What were his thoughts and what was his hope of escape on the way from Dothan to Egypt have not been revealed. The Midianites sold him to Potiphar, "an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard," or "chief of the executioners" (Gen. 37: 36—margin). Clarke's "Commentary" says: "He was captain of those guards whose business it was to take care of the royal persons, and to execute his sovereign will on all the subjects of his displeasure."

II. Jehovah Made Joseph to Prosper.

2. As this verse states, whether a helpless lad in the pit, a slave in Potiphar's house, a prisoner, or a ruler, Jehovah was with Joseph. Hundreds of years after this, Paul, who had suffered so much for Christ's sake, said: "If God is for us, who is against us?" Peter also asks: "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good?"

3-6. "And his master saw that Jehovah was with him, and that Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found favor in his sight, and he ministered unto him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was upon all that he had, in the house and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught that was with him, save the bread which he did eat."

III. The Cause of Joseph's Imprisonment.

It is a part of this lesson to learn why Joseph was cast into prison.

In perfect trust, Potiphar placed Joseph over all he possessed. A good man is a blessing in any household.

A still greater trial awaited Joseph. He "was comely, and well favored"—a handsome and attractive man. "His master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph" and tempted him, but he yielded not. He gave two noble reasons for not yielding to her persuasions—(1) his duty and gratitude to his master, and (2) it would be a sin also against God,

whom he served. He carried out this principle of the Golden Rule, and demonstrated his high and conscientious regard for right. When further tempted, he simply fled. This purity, goodness, and faithfulness to men and God made Joseph the great man that he was. When his mistress failed in her evil purpose, she affectedly blamed her husband for bringing this Hebrew into his house, and wickedly accused Joseph of the very crime she tempted him to commit. (Verses 7-18.)

IV. Joseph in Prison.

19, 20. This complaint of his wife so incensed Potiphar that he cast Joseph into prison—"the place where the king's prisoners were bound," or confined. Joseph was placed in a dungeon. (Gen. 40: 15.) At some time Joseph must have been literally bound. "And he called for a famine upon the land; he brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them; Joseph was sold for a servant: his feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in chains of iron, until the time that his word came to pass, the word of Jehovah tried him." (Ps. 105: 16-19; read also verses 20-45.) This was the sorest trial of Joseph's life—cast into prison and bound in chains upon a false charge. In addition to slavery, he was imprisoned as a criminal.

21. The reason given for Joseph's influence over men and his success is, "Jehovah was with" him; and the reason Jehovah was with him was that he was ever dutiful and faithful to Jehovah. All young men should serve God. They should not wait until they are old to begin this service. "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth." (Eccles. 12: 1.) God gave Joseph "favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison" through his deportment and character, just as Jesus advanced "in favor with God and men." (Luke 2: 52.)

22, 23. Joseph was soon set free from the chains and dungeon, for all the prisoners were soon committed to his management, and the keeper of the prison took no account of what Joseph did. If a man himself is always honest and true, people will have confidence in him. People cannot have confidence in dishonest men. The only way to gain and retain the confidence of men is to do right. God was with Joseph in the pit, as a slave, and in the prison. God never sleeps. His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Relate what you know of the early civilization, government, and learning of Egypt.
Which was its most powerful caste?
Which next?
What is one of the most interesting features of its history?
What benefit was Egypt to Joseph and the children of Israel?
Give the important events in Jacob's life from the last lesson to this one in Joseph's life.

What is said of the story of Joseph?
In what is this story most valuable?
What things were unfavorable to Joseph's piety and purity?
Upon what conditions will God be with us?
What excited the envy of Joseph's brothers?
How old was Joseph when sold into Egypt?
How old when he stood before Pharaoh?
How long was he a slave and in prison?
What is the only sure way of deliverance and elevation?

- What makes character and shapes destiny?
 What purposes of God were served through Joseph's being sold into Egypt?
 What others were imprisoned at different times?
 Name some of the most instructive and helpful facts in Joseph's history.
- 1 State three important facts concerning Joseph in chapter 37.
 Who bought Joseph and sold him into Egypt?
 What horrible picture could his wicked brothers never erase from their guilty consciences?
 How can you account for their reaching the point where they could place their brother in the pit, see his distress, eat their meal, and sell him into Egypt?
 To whom did the Ishmaelites sell Joseph?
- Who was Potiphar?
 2 Who was with Joseph, and where?
 3-6 What did Potiphar discover concerning Joseph?
 To what position did he advance him?
 What is said of Joseph's personal appearance?
 Who tried to induce him to do wrong?
 What two great reasons did he give for not yielding?
 When further tempted, what did he do?
 Of what did his mistress accuse him?
 19, 20 In what did this result?
 How do we know Joseph was bound?
 21 Why was Joseph so successful?
 How may we all grow in favor with God and men?
 When should all boys and girls begin to serve God?
 22, 23 What did the keeper of the prison soon do with Joseph?
 In whom do people have confidence now, and in whom none?

Lead me, and then my feet
 Shall never, never stray;
 But safely I shall reach the seat
 Of happiness and day.
 And—O!—from that bright throne
 I shall look back and see
 The path I went, and that alone,
 Was the right path for me.

(James Edmeston.)

We sometimes wonder why our Lord doth place us
 Within a sphere so narrow, so obscure;
 That nothing we call work can find an entrance—
 There's only room to suffer, to endure.
 Well, God loves patience; souls that dwell in stillness,
 Doing the little things or resting quite,
 May just as perfectly fulfill their mission—
 Be just as pleasing in the Father's sight.

This to me is life:
 That if life be a burden, I will join
 To make it but the burden of a song.

(Bailey.)

LESSON XII.—JUNE 20.

JUDAH'S PLEA.

Gen. 44: 18-34. Read Gen. 44: 18 to 45: 15.

18 ¶Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh.

19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother: and his father loveth him.

21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

24 And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

25 And our father said, Go again, buy us a little food.

26 And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.

27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

28 And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since:

29 And if ye take this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol.

30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

31 It will come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to Sheol.

32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now therefore, let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? lest I see the evil that shall come on my father.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*” (Ps. 51: 17.)

TIME.—B.C. 1706.

PLACE.—Egypt.

PERSONS.—Joseph and his brethren.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 51: 9-14.

HOME READING.—

- June 14. M. Selling Joseph. (Gen. 37: 18-28.)
- June 15. T. Joseph's Promotion. (Gen. 41: 37-45.)
- June 16. W. The Brothers' Distress. (Gen. 42: 14-25.)
- June 17. T. Jacob's Care for Benjamin. (Gen. 42: 35-38.)
- June 18. F. Joseph Recognizes Benjamin. (Gen. 43: 26-34.)
- June 19. S. Judah's Plea. (Gen. 44: 18-34.)
- June 20. S. Prayer for Cleansing. (Ps. 51: 9-14.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

In order to understand this lesson, which is Judah's speech, it is necessary to know some preceding facts.

Read chapters 40 to 44.

The last lesson left Joseph bound in prison. He may have been in chains at night and loosed in the day, since all the prisoners were committed to his hand.

Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker, for some cause not stated, were cast into prison after Joseph.

Each one had a dream on the same night, and Joseph interpreted to each one his dream. The interpretation of the butler's dream was that in three days he would be liberated; the interpretation of the baker's dream was that in three days he would be hanged.

Joseph told the chief butler that he had been stolen away from the land of the Hebrews and in Egypt he had done nothing for which to be put in prison, and he asked the chief butler to do him the favor when liberated to make mention of him to Pharaoh and have him set free. The chief butler, elated with his own freedom, forgot his obligations and promises to Joseph. Joseph remained yet in prison for "two full years." What transpired in Joseph's history during these two years, if anything, has not been recorded.

At the end of these two years Pharaoh had two dreams which served to exalt Joseph—first, the seven fat and well-favored cattle devoured by the seven lean and ill-favored ones; then the seven rank and good ears of corn upon one stalk swallowed up by the seven thin and blasted ears. Read these dreams. When Pharaoh awoke in the morning, "his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh." The chief butler then remembered his neglect of Joseph and the promise he had not fulfilled. He spoke to Pharaoh of Joseph, related his and the baker's experience, and said that all came to pass as Joseph had said.

Joseph was at once sent for and brought "out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh."

Pharaoh stated why he had sent for him. Joseph said: "It is not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Thus Joseph gave glory to God and led Pharaoh to expect help from God. Pharaoh then stated his dreams. Joseph said: "The dream of Pharaoh is one: what God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh." The dream was repeated to impress upon Pharaoh the fact that "the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass." "The seven good kine" and "the seven good ears" both represent seven years of plenty; "the seven lean and ill-favored kine" and "the seven empty ears blasted by the east wind" both represent seven years of famine. First there were to come "seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt." After them there were to follow "seven years of famine," and "all the plenty" would "be forgotten" and the famine would "consume the land." That the "ill-favored and lean-fleshed" kine devoured the "well-favored and fat-fleshed" ones, and were still as lean as before, is a strong figure, which shows how sore the famine was.

Then Joseph said "all the plenty" would be forgotten because of the distress of the famine.

To whatever natural causes all this abundance and famine may be attributed, like the yearly and unusual overflow of the Nile during the seven plenteous years and the absence of this usual overflow causing the famine, God overruled it all and did it all. The famine was general, and not due to local causes.

God is yet the author of all good, and whom he loves he chastens. To him we should ascribe all praise for the abundance of the land today and thank him for his chastisement in time of drought.

In this, as in all things, Joseph showed his sagacity, his statesmanship, his practical ability, and, above all, his trust in God, by the advice he offered Pharaoh.

Joseph then advised as follows: "Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint overseers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up grain under the hand of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. And the food shall be for a store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants."

Not a man questioned a word Joseph said in regard to this whole affair. Acting upon Joseph's suggestion, Pharaoh asked his servants if there could be found for that very purpose "such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is."

Since Joseph was a prisoner, we may safely infer that his past history was examined and he was found blameless, or that he was at once adjudged guiltless because of his wisdom and power to declare the future.

Little did Joseph think of receiving this appointment; but the day was now breaking upon him, and his prison gloom was dawning into light. His patience and faithfulness had led to their sure reward. His faithfulness in little things from a child until that day had prepared him for this stupendous work.

What would have become of Joseph had he yielded to the desires of Potiphar's wife, or had he failed otherwise to do his duty?

Pharaoh reasoned well: "Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou." He recognized the superiority of God over the gods of Egypt and the superiority of Joseph over the magicians of Egypt.

Pharaoh exalted Joseph, placing him over all his house—that is, over the palace, the ministers, the officers, and the kingdom—and "over all the land of Egypt." "Only in the throne" was Pharaoh greater than Joseph. Pharaoh put his signet ring upon Joseph's hand, arrayed him "in vestures of fine linen," "put a gold chain about his neck," and "made him to ride in the second chariot." All this expressed Joseph's authority.

Joseph went about this great work in a methodical way, giving it his personal attention.

Pharaoh gave to Joseph an Egyptian name and an Egyptian wife. This marriage was blessed with the two sons, Manasseh and Eph-

raim. Joseph had been thirteen years a prisoner before his exaltation; so he named his first-born "Forgetfulness," the meaning of "Manasseh," for God had caused him to forget his toil and sorrow. God had made him fruitful in the land of his affliction; so he named his second son "Fruitfulness," the meaning of "Ephraim." Forgetfulness of toil and sorrow came first, and fruitfulness followed.

During the seven years of plenty Joseph was busy preparing for the famine.

The famine extended "over all the face of the earth." "All countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy grain." "And the sons of Israel came to buy among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. . . . And Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves to him with their faces to the earth." Several times it is stated that his brethren did this.

Joseph's dreams, the fulfillment of which his envious brethren took every precaution to prevent, were being literally fulfilled more than twenty-one years after he related them.

Although Joseph's brethren did not know him, he recognized them instantly; he also remembered his dreams. He spoke "roughly with them," asked whence they came, and accused them of being spies.

They truly denied being spies, and frankly stated that they were twelve sons of one man in the land of Canaan, the youngest was at home and "one was not," and they had come to buy again.

That they might prove their story to be true, Joseph said he would keep them in prison until one could return and bring their youngest brother. But after keeping them three days in prison he said he feared God, and, if they were true men, he would keep only one in prison and allow the rest to return with the grain for their families, but that they must bring their youngest brother and verify their words or be put to death.

With guilty consciences, they confessed among themselves their sin in selling their brother, not knowing that Joseph understood them, for he used an interpreter.

Reuben said: "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore also, behold, his blood is required."

Joseph "turned himself about from them" to some convenient place "and wept."

Simeon was bound before their eyes and kept in prison as a pledge of their return with their youngest brother.

Joseph kindly provided food for their journey, and ordered their money returned to them by having it placed in the mouth of every man's sack. They were greatly surprised when they saw their money thus returned, and wondered what it could mean.

Upon reaching home, they related to their father the strange and sad occurrences with them in Egypt, much to his distress. He said they had bereaved him of his children—first, Joseph; next, Simeon; and now they would take Benjamin. Reuben assured his father that his own two sons might be slain if he did not return with Benjamin safe from the second trip to Egypt. Jacob refused to allow Benjamin to go, saying: "If harm befall him by the way in which ye go, then will ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol."

But when the grain brought from Egypt had been consumed and

the famine had become sore in the land, Jacob requested his sons to go again and buy "a little food." Again it was told him—by Judah this time—that "the man" in Egypt had solemnly protested, saying that they should not see his face unless their youngest brother be with them. Still contending that they had dealt ill with him to want to take Benjamin or even to let "the man" know there was such a son, Jacob, urged by hunger and persuaded by his sons, consented to Benjamin's going. Judah became surety for Benjamin's return, and promised, as Reuben had done, that if he returned not with Benjamin he would bear the blame. Jacob exhorted his sons to take a present of "choice fruits" to "the man," also to return the money, and prayed God to have mercy upon them, saying: "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

When they arrived, Joseph had dinner and lodging prepared for them, had Simeon released from prison, treated them hospitably, and inquired particularly concerning their father. Upon seeing and meeting Benjamin, "his mother's son," "his heart yearned over his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there."

Note throughout this entire story the different times Joseph wept.

Having gained control of his emotions, Joseph ordered dinner served.

Joseph's brethren were surprised that he observed the Jewish custom in arranging and serving them at the table.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Benjamin Arrested.

According to the command of Joseph, his steward filled his brothers' sacks to the full with grain, putting again each man's money in the mouth of his sack, and in Benjamin's sack Joseph's silver drinking cup with his money. Early on the next morning they were started on their return home. When they had not gone very far, Joseph commanded his steward to follow them and ask why they had rewarded evil for good, and to accuse them of stealing his cup, in which he drank, "and whereby he indeed divineth."

Joseph was inspired of God to interpret dreams and to foretell events, and resorted not to the superstition of using the cup for that purpose, but doubtless accommodated his language to the custom of the country.

His brethren were very much disturbed over this serious charge, and said that they had not only returned the money which they had found in their sacks' mouths, but that it was far from them to steal, and he in whose possession the cup might be found should die and the rest should become Joseph's bondmen. The steward replied that he would make a bondman of the one only who might have the cup, and the rest should be blameless. When the search was made for the cup, to their profound astonishment and great distress, it was found in Benjamin's sack. They then in grief rent their clothes, returned to Joseph, and pleaded for Benjamin in that earnest and unselfish manner which convinced him that they did not hate Benjamin as they had hated him. Then followed Judah's speech.

II. The Speech.

18. In his deep earnestness, Judah drew near to this ruler. He acknowledged himself a servant. He begged that his lord would not become angry with him because of his fervor, stating that his lord had the authority and power of Pharaoh.

19-23. He stated that in response to his lord's earnest inquiry concerning his father and youngest brother he had frankly stated the facts concerning them. He spoke of his father as an "old man;" of Benjamin, as "a child of his old age, a little one;" of Joseph, as a brother who is dead; and of Benjamin, as the only one left of his mother. We know that Rachel was the mother of only two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. Since Joseph was considered dead, Jacob had loved Benjamin the more. He reminded his lord that he had demanded that Benjamin be brought into Egypt; if not, then he could see his face no more.

24-30. Judah then rehearsed the conversation which had taken place between his sons and Jacob in regard to taking Benjamin into Egypt, stating that Jacob had referred to Joseph as having been torn in pieces by wild beasts, and that if Benjamin should be taken from him and harm should befall him, they would bring down his gray hairs in sorrow to Sheol.

31, 32. If Judah should return to Jacob without the lad, it would surely kill him. He had become surety to his father for the safe return of the lad, and, therefore, could not return without him and become the occasion of his father's deeper sorrow and death.

33, 34. In this plea for his brother and for the safety of his father's life Judah reached the climax when he earnestly requested to be held as a bondman instead of Benjamin.

This speech was recorded by inspiration long after it was delivered.

With other eloquent comments on this tender, most touching, most unselfish, and most noble plea of Judah for his brother Benjamin before me, I shall quote that of Adam Clarke:

"No paraphrase can heighten the effect of Judah's address to Joseph. To *add* would be to diminish its excellence; to attempt to *explain* would be to obscure its beauties; to clothe the ideas in other language than that of Judah, and his translators in our Bible, would ruin its energy and destroy its influence. It is perhaps one of the most tender, affecting pieces of natural oratory ever spoken or penned, and we need not wonder to find that when Joseph heard it he could not refrain himself, but wept aloud. His soul must have been insensible beyond what is common to human nature had he not immediately yielded to a speech so delicately tender and so powerfully impressive."

So touched was Joseph at this tender reference to his aged father and departed mother, this noble plea for Benjamin, and Judah's unselfish proposition to be bound in Benjamin's stead, that he "could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him." In his deep emotion he had all the Egyptians to leave the room, "wept aloud," and made himself known to his brethren.

Read the rest of the story. One of the most instructive and impressive things in Joseph's love for his brethren and forgiveness of their sin against him and in this entire story is his trust in God and his declaration to his brethren that "ye meant evil against me; but God meant

it for good." (Gen. 50: 20.) The whole story, as has been stated, shows how God overruled envy, hatred, lies, fleshly lusts, intended evil, imprisonment, cruel treatment, plenty, and famine to the good of those who serve him, to the punishment of evildoers, and to his own glory.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
 Repeat the Golden Text.
 Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
 Did you read the Devotional Reading?
 Did you read the Home Reading?
 In what condition did the last lesson leave Joseph?
 Whose dreams did he interpret?
 What request did the chief butler forget?
 What reminded him of this?
 What were Pharaoh's dreams?
 What was the interpretation of these dreams?
 To whom did Joseph ascribe his power to interpret dreams?
 What does God overrule for chastisement and other good to all who love him?
 What did Joseph advise Pharaoh to do?
 How did Pharaoh reason about appointing Joseph to this position?
 Why do you suppose the cause of Joseph's imprisonment was investigated?
 What led to Joseph's exaltation?
 Had he yielded to temptation, would this have ever come?
 In what position was Joseph placed?
 How did Joseph go about this work?
 What did Pharaoh give to Joseph?
 Why were his two sons so named?
 What was the extent of the famine?
 How were Joseph's dreams concerning his brethren fulfilled?
 Of what did he accuse his brethren of being?
 How did Joseph's brethren go about proving that they were true men and not spies?
 What did they confess to one another?
 What effect did this have upon Joseph?
 Why did Joseph keep only one in prison and send the rest back with grain?
 What was done with their money?
 Upon reaching home, what did they relate to their father?
 Why did Jacob refuse to allow Benjamin to go?
- How did Reuben assure Jacob of Benjamin's safe return?
 If any harm should befall Benjamin, what would happen to Jacob?
 What convinced Jacob that he should allow Benjamin to go?
 What did he advise his sons to do?
 What prayer did he offer for them?
 What did he say?
 In what hospitable manner did Joseph receive them?
 What effect did this have upon Joseph?
 In the service at the table, what so astonished Joseph's brethren?
 In sending them away, what orders did Joseph give to his steward?
 Why was Benjamin arrested?
 What effect did this have upon his brethren?
 Who made the plea for Benjamin?
- 18 How did Judah show his earnestness, fervor, and humility?
 What did he acknowledge Joseph and himself to be?
 19-23 Why had he stated the facts concerning Jacob and Benjamin?
 To what four persons did he refer, and in what ways?
 24-30 What did Judah rehearse in a touching manner?
- 31, 32 What would befall Jacob should Judah return without Benjamin?
 What did Judah then say he could not do?
- 33, 34 Give the climax of Judah's plea.
 How could this speech be so well recorded many years after it was delivered?
 Tell of its tender, touching, unselfish, and noble parts.
 Give the substance of Adam Clarke's comment on this speech.
 What effect did this plea have upon Joseph?
 In this entire story, which is one of Joseph's most significant declarations?
 What evil things had God overruled, and to what end?

LESSON XIII.—JUNE 27.

REVIEW—WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.*” (Rom. 8: 28.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Heb. 11: 4-22.

HOME READING.—

- June 21. M. The Creation. (Gen. 1: 1-3, 26-31.)
- June 22. T. The Beginning of Sin. (Gen. 3: 1-12.)
- June 23. W. God's Covenant with Noah. (Gen. 9: 8-17.)
- June 24. T. Abraham and the Angels. (Gen. 18: 1-8.)
- June 25. F. Isaac and His Wells. (Gen. 26: 12-25.)
- June 26. S. Jacob at Bethel. (Gen. 28: 10-22.)
- June 27. S. Examples of Faith. (Heb. 11: 4-22.)

With the experience of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph of this quarter's lessons and that of all other godly men before us, we should know the truth of the Golden Text. We should know, too, that it does not teach that all things work together for good to all persons, but only to those who love God, “even to them that are called according to his purpose.”

Then the “good” for which all things work together is not limited to man's ideas of good or to one's financial, physical, or temporal good only, but to one's spiritual and greatest good in the broadest, deepest, and highest sense, both in time and eternity, and whatever will enable one to bring the greatest good to others.

Through the rebellion of Cain against God and his envy of Abel, Abel lost his life; but through faith, Abel, though dead, yet speaks.

Through his faith, Noah was saved from physical destruction; but the greatest good was his spiritual blessings and his example of faith.

Abraham, though a homeless wanderer, was temporarily blessed; but his greatest good was being by faith a friend of God, the father of the faithful, a blessing to others—in whose seed all the families of the earth are blessed.

Isaac was a man of peace, loved and maintained peace, and his example has been a blessing to all succeeding generations.

Joseph said to his brethren: “Ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good.” Joseph knew the envy and hatred of his brethren; that their motives were the very worst and their crime enormous; but all this God had overruled for good. The good, as stated by Joseph, was “to save much people alive.”

Joseph was a great blessing to Egypt, to other countries, and to his own people; but the fact that God overruled the wickedness of his brethren to this great good did not lessen their crime.

God did not need the sin of Joseph's brethren to carry out his purpose; he could have used other ways and means; but he overruled this crime and made the wrath of men to praise him. (Ps. 76: 10.)

God leaves men free to choose and to act for themselves; yet he overrules their wickedness to his glory and the good of his people.

Joseph said to his brethren: "God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance." God sent Joseph in that he overruled the crime of his brethren to bring about this result. In this way the seed of Abraham became strangers in a strange land. Thus we see the working out of God's purposes through hundreds of years. In Canaan the "iniquity of the Amorites" was not yet full. Through Joseph, God separated the Israelites from the corrupting influence of the wicked nations of Canaan, brought them in contact with Egyptian civilization, and gave them the discipline that was needed to make them indeed his peculiar people. There was nothing miraculous in Joseph's case except the interpretation of dreams as God revealed them; yet God's hand was in every seemingly common circumstance.

What is it to love God? To love God is to obey him. (See John 14: 15, 23; 15: 10; 1 John 5: 3.) He who does not keep God's commandments does not love him. (John 14: 24.)

What is it to be called according to God's purpose? People are called through the gospel (2 Thess. 2: 14), and they are called through the gospel by the Lord "into his own kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2: 12) to serve his own purpose in teaching the truth, in building up his church, and in saving souls through Christ. Note the purpose God served through Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. All these, in obedience to God, worked in self-sacrifice for the accomplishment of his purpose. Their own personal ends and aims were set aside, and God's work was their one aim.

So it is to-day. All things—prosperity or adversity, friends or foes, health or sickness, life or death—work together for good to all who obey God in serving his purpose.

QUESTIONS.

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| <p>Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
By whose lives should we know the truth of the Golden Text?
To whom do all things work together for good?
What good is meant?
What good came out of the faith and death of Abel?
What good came to Noah, and through him to others?
How was Abraham blessed, and others through him?
How was Isaac blessed?
What did Joseph's brethren intend against him by selling him?
To what great good did God overrule this?
Did God need the sin of Joseph's brethren in order to carry out his purpose?
But the sin existing, what did God do with it?
What does God leave men free to choose?
How did God send Joseph into Egypt?
How did God overrule this sin to accomplish his purpose?</p> | <p>What is it to love God?
What is it to be "called according to his purpose?"
What purpose did God serve through the obedience of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph?
What to-day are used and overruled for the good of all who obey him—that is, work in faith to serve his purpose?
Give the order of creation day by day for the six days of creation.
How did sin enter into the world?
How will it be driven out?
State the great difference between Cain and Abel.
What was God's covenant with Noah?
Give the facts concerning Abraham and the kings.
When did Abraham entertain angels unaware?
What then did Jehovah make known to Abraham?
Whose son was Isaac?
Why was he so named?
How old were his parents when he was born?
Give the character of Isaac?</p> |
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How old was he when he died?
 Who was Jacob?
 Why was he given that name?
 Give the difference between the characters of Jacob and Esau.
 Why was Jacob at Bethel?
 Who appeared to him there?

Relate the circumstances of Jacob and Esau's meeting.
 State how Joseph in different things showed his fidelity.
 Why did Judah make his plea before Joseph?

“Is father's eyesight growing dim,
 His form a little lower?
 Is mother's hair a little gray,
 Her step a little slower?
 Is life's hill growing hard to climb?
 Make not their pathway steeper;
 Smooth out the furrows on their brows;
 O, do not make them deeper!

“There's nothing makes a face so young
 As joy, youth's fairest token,
 And nothing makes a face grow old
 Like hearts that have been broken.
 Take heed lest deeds of thine should make
 Thy mother be a weeper;
 Stamp peace upon a father's brow;
 Don't make the wrinkles deeper.

“In doubtful pathways do not go,
 Be tempted not to wander;
 Grieve not the hearts that love you so,
 But make their love grow fonder.
 Much have thy parents borne for thee;
 Be now their tender keeper,
 And let them lean upon thy love;
 Don't make the wrinkles deeper.

“Be lavish with the kindly deeds;
 Be patient, true, and tender,
 And make the path that ageward leads
 Aglow with earthly splendor.
 Some day the dear ones, stricken low,
 Must yield to death, the reaper,
 And you will then be glad to know
 You made no wrinkles deeper.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Some say they regret when the lessons are in the Old Testament. This is a serious mistake. The writer indulges the hope that, having studied the lessons of these Notes, all will realize with him that it is a great mistake not to study the Old Testament.

The following reasons for studying the Old Testament are briefly given:

1. God would not have preserved it and so connected it with the New Testament if he had not intended for us to study it now. He exhorts us to study it. (See 2 Pet. 3: 1, 2.)

2. "The sacred writings" which Timothy knew from childhood were the Old Testament Scriptures, which make "wise unto salvation," in that they lead to faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God. (2 Tim. 3: 15-17.)

3. Paul and Apollos reasoned from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. (See Acts 17: 1-3; 18: 27, 28.) These Scriptures testify of Jesus. (John 5: 39-46.)

4. We cannot understand various references in the New Testament to passages, principles, and facts of the Old Testament without studying the Old Testament.

5. Occasionally some will say that they have not time to study the Old Testament; if so, they have not time to obey God. Some others say they cannot become interested in it. That is because they are not interested in the works of God—his dealings with the nations of the earth; the history of his people; his purposes, promises, and prophecies concerning the redemption of the race; and his evidences that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ; and it is because they do not read it enough to understand its characters and history.

6. The Bible is a unit, or one historic whole. Genesis opens with the beginning—the creation of all things—and states the cause of all that which follows; while Revelation gives the conclusion—the grand and glorious consummation of all—"a new heaven and a new earth," wherein the righteous will dwell forever.

7. One cannot understand the New Testament without the Old Testament.

The best way and the best time to study the Old Testament are other considerations, but it must be studied.

To become interested in its study, one should read it regularly and sufficiently to become familiar with its places, characters, histories, facts, and purposes. Consult the maps; learn what prophets, kings, and other prominent persons were contemporary; read both the Old Testament and the New Testament through consecutively, reading some in each every day; when reading the New Testament, look up all the references made to the Old Testament, for in this way the study of the Old Testament will soon become both interesting and profitable.

Above all, as David says, one should lay up the word of God in one's heart, that one may not sin against him (Ps. 119: 11); and, as Paul exhorts: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3: 16).

THIRD QUARTER.

EARLY LEADERS OF ISRAEL: FROM
MOSES TO SAMUEL.*(First Half of a Six-Months' Course.)*

LESSON I.—JULY 4.

ISRAEL ENSLAVED IN EGYPT.

Ex. 1: 8-14. Read Ex. 1: 1-14.

8 ¶Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph.

9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:

10 Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and get them up out of the land.

11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raamses.

12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor:

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigor.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Jehovah will not cast off his people.*” (Ps. 94: 14.)

TIME.—B.C. 1604.

PLACE.—Goshen, in Egypt.

PERSONS.—The children of Israel and the Egyptians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 94: 10-17.

HOME READING.—

June 28. M. Israel Journeys to Egypt. (Gen. 46: 1-7.)

June 29. T. The Long Sojourn in Egypt. (Gen. 47: 1-12.)

June 30. W. Israel Enslaved in Egypt. (Ex. 1: 8-14.)

July 1. T. The Assyrian Exile of Israel. (2 Kings 17: 6-12.)

July 2. F. Judah's Sorrow in Exile. (Ps. 137: 1-9.)

July 3. S. A Prayer for Deliverance. (Ps. 80: 1-7.)

July 4. S. The Faithfulness of Jehovah. (Ps. 94: 10-17.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Egypt is the northeast corner of Africa. It is divided into two parts—Upper and Lower Egypt. It is about six hundred and sixty miles from north to south and about two hundred and fifty miles wide at the widest part. It is bounded on the north by the Mediterranean Sea, on the east mostly by the Red Sea, on the south by Nubia, and on the west by the Great Desert. Memphis was its most ancient capital. It is called in the Bible “Mizraim.” The family of Mizraim, one of the sons of Ham, settled in this country. It is also called “the land of Ham” (Ps. 105: 23, 27) and “Rahab” (Isa. 30: 7). It is probably the oldest country in the world. History shows it to have been before and during the time of our lesson a most enlightened, prosperous, and advanced nation.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Exodus is the second book of the Pentateuch and of the Old Testament.

"Exodus" means "going out," or "departure;" and this book is so named because it gives the account of the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Jesus quotes from this book as written by Moses. (Mark 12: 26; Luke 20: 37.) "It contains a history of the transactions of one hundred and forty-five years, beginning at the death of Joseph, where the book of Genesis ends, and coming down to the erection of the tabernacle in the wilderness at the foot of Sinai." (Clarke.)

From the call of Abraham to the giving of the law, which was shortly after the exodus, was four hundred and thirty years (Gal. 3: 17; Ex. 12: 40, 41); and from the birth of Isaac, or about the time Ishmael mocked and was cast out with his mother (Gen. 21: 10; Gal. 4: 19), which was about thirty years after, was four hundred years (Gen. 15: 13; Acts 7: 6).

The children of Israel were not really in Egypt four hundred and thirty years, but were strangers and pilgrims so long, dwelling in tents, and even in the land of promise had no inheritance, not so much as to set foot on. (Acts 7: 5.)

From the covenant made with Abraham at Haran, when he was seventy-five years old (Gen. 12: 4), to the time Jacob went down into Egypt, was two hundred and fifteen years. We get this from the ages of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Hence, from the time Jacob went to Egypt to the exodus was two hundred and fifteen years; so the children of Israel were really in Egypt only that long. Jacob remained in Egypt seventeen years, and Joseph survived him fifty-six years; hence, the children of Israel were in Egypt about one hundred and thirty-two years after the death of Joseph.

Another period of interest mentioned in the Bible in this connection is that from the exodus to the building of the temple at Jerusalem, which was four hundred and eighty years. (1 Kings 6: 1.)

(Verses 1-7.)

Moses introduces this book with the names of the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, showing who went into Egypt, and that they were comparatively few, but that when they departed there was a great multitude.

"Every man and his household" means the head of each tribe, his wife, children, and servants. Abraham had many servants (Gen. 14: 14); so Isaac and Jacob had servants.

In this list only the names of the heads of the tribes are given. We should learn these names and which ones were the sons of the different wives of Jacob. A complete list is given in Gen. 46. "Joseph was in Egypt already" when Jacob and his family went there.

"Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation," which means not only Joseph and his brethren, but all the people of their time, Egyptians and Israelites.

Joseph, as we have learned, was seventeen years at home, thirteen years a slave and prisoner together (three years or more in prison),

and eighty years a ruler in Egypt, dying at the age of one hundred and ten years.

There are five expressions in verse 7 which show how the children of Israel increased in numbers and power—namely, “were fruitful,” “increased abundantly,” “multiplied,” “waxed exceeding mighty,” “the land was filled with them.” Like trees, they were fruitful, or brought forth abundantly. “They increased like fish, as the original word implies.” (Clarke.) They multiplied into a nation, became mighty, and filled the land of Goshen. This was a fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

God said to Jacob: “Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation.” (Gen. 46: 3.) “And thou shalt answer and say before Jehovah thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous.” (Deut. 26: 5.) “But as the time of the promise drew nigh which God vouchsafed unto Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till there arose another king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph.” (Acts 7: 17, 18.)

These scriptures show that this wonderful increase was made under the providence of God. The women were vigorous and healthy, and suffered but little in bearing children. (Verse 19.) They increased from a few to six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men, besides women and children (Num. 1: 45, 46), in the period of two hundred and fifteen years.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Another King Who Knew Not Joseph.

8. “Now there arose a new king”—not only another king, but another family of kings, or new dynasty. Many scholars take this king to be Rameses II, called “Sesostris” in Greek history.

“Who knew not Joseph”—who forgot and disregarded the obligations Egypt was under to Joseph and his people, and who did not acknowledge and approve of the way in which Joseph was treated and the way the Israelites were then prospering. This expression is thus frequently used in the Bible. “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel.” (Judg. 2: 10.) “And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you.” (Matt. 7: 23; see also Ps. 1: 6; Hos. 2: 8; Amos 3: 2.) People often forget their benefactors; and, therefore, so do nations.

II. Lest the Children of Israel Become Dangerous to Egypt.

9. This king thought the rapid increase and prosperity of the children of Israel should be checked, for the reason given: they “are more and mightier than we.” The Israelites did not outnumber the whole of the Egyptians, but because of their unity as a people, in contrast with the internal strife of the Egyptians, they were more and mightier. “Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And he increased his people greatly, and made them stronger

than their adversaries." (Ps. 105: 23, 24.) The king, doubtless, made this speech to a council of his lords and wise men called together to consider this matter.

10. He pointed out the dangers to which they subjected themselves in allowing the Israelites to continue as they were: (1) Lest in time of war they should ally themselves with the enemies of Egypt and fight against the Egyptians, and (2) "get them up out of the land." Many of the most dangerous enemies of Egypt came from the East, and would have to enter from the side which the Israelites occupied. It has been suggested that the shepherd kings having overrun Egypt in the past for a number of years, and the Israelites being shepherds, aroused the suspicion and jealousy of the new king.

III. Precautions to Prevent the Increase of the Israelites.

11. This verse states the conclusion to which the king came as the best way to check the progress of the Israelites. He had two objects in view—(1) to get the work done and (2) to destroy the Israelites through hard work. Hence, "taskmasters" were set over them "to afflict them with their burdens." The affliction was the principal thing sought. "The taskmasters were chiefs or princes of burdens, works, or tribute." (Clarke.) They were superintendents of public works. They appointed the work and exacted its performance. "And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage." (Ex. 2: 23.) "And Jehovah said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows." (Ex. 3: 7; see also Ex. 5: 4-19; 6: 7.)

"And they built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses." In these cities were stored grain and (some have suggested) arms. Egypt produced an abundance of grain, and it was stored away in these cities, as in our elevators. Doubtless this very idea of storing away grain came from the work of Joseph. These cities were in or near the land of Goshen. Raamses was, no doubt, the same as Rameses, in Goshen, the starting point of the exodus. (Ex. 12: 37; Num. 33: 5.) The ruins of the city of Pithom have been discovered; and it has been discovered that while its buildings were of brick, the bricks of the lower courses were well made with straw and the ones of the top courses have no straw. The pyramids were erected long before this time; hence, they were not the works in which the children of Israel engaged.

It has already been stated that "Pharaoh" was the title, and not the name, of the kings of Egypt.

12. "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied." Their increase was in proportion to their affliction. In their affliction the Lord was with them. As with Saul of Tarsus, so with all; it is hard to fight against the Almighty. None can withstand God or thwart his purposes. The Egyptians were grieved because of the children of Israel. This wonderful increase under such burdens alarmed them and caused them to loathe the children of Israel.

IV. Hard and Vigorous Work.

13. "The Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor." The severity was increased; but, as in Joseph's case, that which was intended for evil, God overruled for good. The Egyptians did this to

keep the children of Israel in Egypt, and in God's purpose it served to keep them from ever returning. Some one has said this, too, was an industrial and training school for the children of Israel. It solidified them as a nation and kept them separate from the Egyptians; it brought them into the use of the mechanical arts of Egypt; it made them feel their dependence upon God and cry unto him for help; it made them long for the promised land as they had never done before. It was hard enough, after all, for them to be weaned from Egypt.

14. The children of Israel kept flocks and herds and followed agricultural pursuits; but now they were put not only to making brick, but to "all manner of service in the field;" and their service was rigorous, hard, and bitter. Yet all this did not check their increase.

Egyptian bondage represents the bondage of sin. "Every one that committeth sin is the bond servant of sin." (John 8: 34.) There is no taskmaster so hard and bitter, no tyrant so cruel and abusive, no burdens so heavy to bear, as one's own passions and sins. A sinner is a veritable slave, while a Christian is, indeed, God's freeman.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Give the situation, dimensions, boundaries, prosperity, etc., of Egypt.

What does "exodus" mean?

Why is this book called "Exodus"?

Who wrote this book?

What does it contain?

How long were the children of Israel pilgrims and strangers?

How long were they really in Egypt?

How long, then, was it from the call of Abraham at Haran until Jacob went into Egypt?

How long were the Israelites in Egypt after the death of Joseph?

What other important period is mentioned?

Why does Moses give here the names of the ten tribes of Israel?

What is meant by "every man and his household"?

Give the names of the twelve sons of Jacob, the sons and daughter of Leah, the sons of Rachel, the sons of Zilpah, the sons of Bilhah.

By this time who had died?

Give the different important periods in Joseph's life.

What expressions show the rapid increase of the children of Israel in Egypt?

Show the different meanings of these expressions.

Of what was this a fulfillment?

Repeat Deut. 26: 5.

How did the Israelites grow numerous so rapidly?

How many were they when they left Egypt?

8 Who arose that knew not Joseph?

What is meant by not knowing Joseph?

Whom do people frequently forget?

9 Why did the king think the rapid increase of the Israelites should be checked?

How were they more and mightier than the Egyptians?

To whom did the king say this?

Repeat Ps. 105: 23, 24.

10 What dangers did he point out?

Why did he think it easy for the Israelites to ally themselves with the enemies of Egypt?

11 To what conclusion did the king come?

What two objects did he have in this? Who were the taskmasters?

What shows the rigor and sorrow of the burdens of the children of Israel?

What were they made to build?

What were stored in these cities?

The site of which one of these cities has been discovered?

Where were these cities?

From what place did the Israelites start when they left Egypt?

What was "Pharaoh"?

12 What is said about the increase of the children of Israel?

What effect did this have upon the Egyptians?

Whose purpose cannot be thwarted?

What is the most cruel taskmaster and the greatest tyrant?

13 What was increased?

What different good things did this work out for the Israelites?

14 How further were the tasks and the burdens of the Israelites increased?

LESSON II.—JULY 11.

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION OF MOSES.

Ex. 2: 1-10; Acts 7: 22.

1 ¶And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.

2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and she put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink.

4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river; and her maidens walked along by the riverside; and she saw the ark among the flags, and sent her handmaid to fetch it.

6 And she opened it, and saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children.

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maiden went and called the child's mother.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water.

22 ¶And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it.”* (Prov. 22: 6.)

TIME.—B.C. 1571.

PLACE.—Egypt.

PERSONS.—Moses, his parents, Miriam, and Pharaoh's daughter.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 3: 11-18.

HOME READING.—

- July 5. M. Childhood and Education of Moses. (Ex. 2: 1-10.)
- July 6. T. The Early Life of Moses. (Acts 7: 20-28.)
- July 7. W. Moses Identifies Himself with Israel. (Heb. 11: 23-28.)
- July 8. T. Moses a Fugitive in Midian. (Ex. 2: 15-22.)
- July 9. F. Israel's Home Training. (Deut. 6: 4-15.)
- July 10. S. An Example of Home Training. (2 Tim. 1: 3-14.)
- July 11. S. The Rewards of Wisdom. (Prov. 3: 1-12.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The river Nile is so much connected with the history of the Israelites that attention is called to it. The word “Nile” does not occur at all in the King James Version of the Bible, but it occurs frequently in the Revised Version. In Gen. 15: 18 it is called “the river of Egypt;” in Josh. 13: 3; 1 Chron. 13: 5; Isa. 23: 3; and Jer. 2: 18 it is called “Shihor;” but in the Revised Version the word “Nile” occurs in Isa. 19: 7; 23: 10; Jer. 46: 7, 8; Zech. 10: 11. Above Khartum, the capital of Nubia, there are two great branches of the Nile, “the White Nile” and “the Blue Nile,” so called from the dirt which tinges the water. The Blue Nile rises in Abyssinia, and is the main branch

which brings soil deposits into Egypt. The White Nile is the larger branch. It rises almost two hundred miles south of the equator. The length of the Nile is about four thousand miles. Its annual overflow is that which so greatly enriches Egypt. Egypt is said to be "the gift of the Nile." On this account the Nile was an object of worship. In olden times the Nile was bordered by flags and reeds, and its waters were covered with the varicolored lotus. These plants are scarcely found now except in marshy places. (See International Bible Dictionary.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The life of Moses is filled with romance, beauty, truth, and sublimity. His character is one of the grandest which shines forth from the pages of Holy Writ.

He is in more respects than one the type of Jesus.

To become familiar with the Bible statements concerning his life is the best thing both young and old can do in studying his history.

Our lesson is based upon the fact that when hard work and oppression did not repress the rapid increase of the children of Israel, the cruel Pharaoh issued an edict to the Hebrew midwives to kill all the male children born unto the Hebrew women; but these "midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive." They would not commit murder. They did not lie to Pharaoh, but stated the truth, when they said: "Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively [vigorous, active, and strong], and are delivered ere the midwife come in unto them."

For this God "dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty."

Then in another way Pharaoh sought to destroy the male children: "And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Amram, Jochebed, and Moses.

1. Read the verse. Some time before this, this man and woman were married. This man was Amram, and this woman was Jochebed.

Levi had three sons—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Amram was one of the sons of Kohath. (Ex. 6: 16-18.)

"And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram were a hundred and thirty and seven years." (Ex. 6: 20.)

Miriam, a daughter, was born before Aaron and Moses. (Verse 4; Num. 26: 59.) Aaron was three years older than Moses. (Ex. 7: 7.) Miriam was a musician and a prophetess. (Ex. 15: 20, 21.)

"Amram" means "people of the Highest," and "Jochebed" means "Jehovah is glorious." "Mary" is the Greek form of "Miriam."

2. This verse states the fact of Moses' birth, but we have just seen that Miriam and Aaron were born before this. Aaron was born probably before this edict of the king to destroy all the male children was made.

If his parents gave Moses a name, it has not been stated. "And when she saw him that he was a goodly child." Stephen says "exceeding fair" (Acts 7: 20), the margin says "fair unto God," and Heb. 11: 23 says "he was a goodly child." He was perfect and well formed physically, and beautiful, which to his parents was a sign of divine favor. He was nourished three months in his father's house. In some way his parents saved him this long from the cruel command of the king.

II. The Faith of Moses' Parents.

The key to all this is stated in Heb. 11: 23: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a goodly child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

Amid the idolatry of Egypt and the idolatry into which many of the Israelites had then fallen, this faith shone out like a beacon light. "And put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River [Euphrates], and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah." (Josh. 24: 14.) "In that day I swear unto them, to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands: and I said unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am Jehovah your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me; they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt." (Ezek. 20: 6-8.)

The faith of Amram and Jochebed in God made them "not afraid of the king's commandment." They bent in admiration and love over their new-born child, with an assurance born of faith in God that his life would be preserved. His comeliness must have been a prophecy of his future. They were, no doubt, familiar with God's promises concerning his people. "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterwards shall they come out with great substance." (Gen. 15: 13, 14.) This and the promises repeated to Isaac and to Jacob must have been handed down from one to another and cherished especially at this time. They must have counted up the time and found that the four hundred years had almost expired, and that they would soon realize the promise: "And afterwards shall . . . come out with great substance."

III. The Ark of Bulrushes.

3. As the child grew into notice, and since perhaps the officers searched for the male children, Jochebed "could not longer hide him." "She took for him an ark of bulrushes."

This was a small box or basket made of the papyrus plant. This plant "has a triangular stem, eight or ten feet high, ending in a bushy top of slender leaves, among which the seeds are produced." Our word "paper" is derived from this word "papyrus." "The art of making

paper of papyrus, or paper plant, is as ancient as the pyramids." It was also used for making boats. "Even in vessels of papyrus upon the waters." (Isa. 18: 2.) It grew in marshy places. "Can the rush [papyrus] grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?" (Job 8: 11.) "The famous papyrus, which formerly grew abundantly on the banks of the Nile, is now extinct in Egypt, though still found in Nubia." (See Isa. 19: 4-10.)

"Slime" is bitumen. It is first mentioned in Gen. 11: 3, where it was used for mortar by the builders in the plain of Shinar. There were slime, or bitumen, pits in the vale of Siddim. (Gen. 14: 10.) These pits were where it oozed out of the ground. It hardens by exposure to the air. Slime seems here to be bitumen in its solid state. It melts when exposed to heat. "Pitch" is bitumen or asphalt in a liquid state. It was probably mixed with the slime, and, thus applied to the ark, made it impervious to water. Noah "pitched" his ark within and without with pitch. (Gen. 6: 14.)

Having thus prepared this little boat for its precious human freight, Jochebed placed her babe in it, trusting Him to preserve its life who sees the sparrow fall and hears the raven's cry. She did not push this little boat out into the water, but "laid it in the flags by the river's brink."

IV. Miriam's Love and Wisdom.

4. "And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him." Doubtless this was Miriam. She was old enough to appreciate the situation and feel a deep interest in the destiny of her baby-brother. She manifested thus early in life remarkable tact. She "stood afar off" the better to conceal the reason why she was there. She watched with a sister's love that little boat with cargo so valuable to see what disturbed it or who found it.

5. Different ones have undertaken to give the name of this daughter of Pharaoh who went "to bathe at the river." Some suppose one name; some, another. This was the river Nile. It is not stated whether she bathed for pleasure, health, or as a religious rite. This may have been an act of worship, since the Nile was an object of worship. She discovered the little ark among the flags "and sent her handmaid to fetch it."

6. When this ark was opened in that group of women, to their surprise it was found to contain a baby boy; "and, behold, the babe wept." Pharaoh's daughter knew at once the whole secret. She recognized it as "one of the Hebrews' children," probably by its complexion and the surrounding circumstances. She knew the edict of the king, and that the Hebrews would likely hide their children. In the tears of this babe was the salvation of a race of slaves, because for that reason she "had compassion on" it.

7. Little Miriam saw at once that it was well with her brother, and with elastic step she bounded to the side of Pharaoh's daughter, and, in tact and love, asked: "Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?" A Hebrew would be more acceptable to Pharaoh's daughter than an Egyptian, because the Hebrews were slaves and the child was a Hebrew.

V. God Overrules Small and Great to Serve His Purpose.

8. Pharaoh's daughter readily acted upon the suggestion of this maiden, and said: "Go." And "the maiden went and called the child's mother." We can easily imagine the joy with which she ran to carry the glad news to her mother that her baby brother was safe and then in the protecting arms of the king's daughter.

It was more than tact and shrewdness which secured the child's mother as a nurse for him; it was the providence of God. Here we see how human means and divine providence work together. The mother must do her best to protect her child by concealing it so long as possible; she must do this trusting in God; she must prepare an ark of papyrus and make it waterproof and place the precious treasure therein; the sister must do her part in watching him; yet God is in the whole plan overruling all.

There are no common things with God. He uses a religious home, a babe and its tears, a little girl, an ark of bulrushes, the incidental going of the king's daughter to the river, to redeem a race of oppressed and groaning people. Every seemingly common thing of life may be God's means of doing us good if we will only allow it to be. We are commanded to do all we do, in word or deed, in the name of Christ; even every servant is to perform his daily duties "heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men." (Col. 3: 23, 24.)

9. The mother went at once and offered her services as a nurse for her own child. "Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." Did Pharaoh's daughter discover this was the child's mother? It seems to us she might have seen this truth glowing in Jochebed's countenance or heard it throbbing in her heart, yet from the circumstances we conclude that she did not detect it; and if she did, the record is silent as to the fact. This mother was more than doubly paid. Little did she care for the wages. Her child's life was safe, and she was permitted, in God's care, to nurse and to train him in his most impressionable years. God says to all mothers: "Take this child and nurse it for me." Thus may all mothers be rewarded.

10. "And the child grew" under his mother's care and training. We can well suppose that she lost no time in instilling into his young heart the principles of that faith in God which had so blessed the family. He was trained in the religion of the true God. His mother repeated to him over and over the rich promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the story of their oppression; and the cherished hope of their deliverance. This good seed, planted early in his heart, grew with his growth and ripened into fruit with his years.

As an oak is in the acorn, great possibilities are wrapped up in one child. From a hut, a slave's family, an ark of bulrushes, came forth one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. Here we are reminded of the childhood and training of Timothy. (2 Tim. 1: 1-5; 3: 14-17.) There is no home so poor but that its children should be, and can be, trained for God and usefulness.

We do not know just how old Moses was when his mother returned him to Pharaoh's daughter. "And he became her son." She doubtless adopted him, for later he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." (Heb. 11: 24.) She it was who named him "Moses," "because," said she, "I drew him out of the water." "Moses" means "drawn out."

VI. Moses' Faith.

22. "Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works." He was a man of wisdom, and the Egyptians sought his counsel. "Philo says Moses was taught arithmetic, geometry, poetry, music, medicine, and the knowledge of hieroglyphics." (Clarke.) "Library of Universal History" says: "Egypt, renowned for its discoveries in arts and sciences, was the ancient world's university, where Moses, Lycurgus and Solon, Pythagoras and Plato, Herodotus and Diodorus—lawyers, philosophers, and historians—were students. The ancient Egyptians had made considerable progress in science, particularly astronomy, geometry, medicine, and astronomy." Wealth, luxury, ease, learning, culture, refinement—in all these Moses could revel; but he did not spend his time as a royal student in idleness and cultured ease, for "he was mighty in his words and works." His deeds are not recorded in the Bible. Josephus says he led Egypt's army against invaders and drove them out of the country. In the school of God's providence he was thus instructed and trained for forty years. Then the seed which his mother had planted in his heart began to bear fruit.

Ex. 2: 11 says, "When Moses was grown up;" and Acts 7: 23 says: "When he was well-nigh forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." His life up to this time had been spent as "the son of Pharaoh's daughter"—spent in school, in the king's court, and in performing deeds of interest and wisdom.

His faith led him to visit his brethren. "He went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens." He saw their condition and knew God's promises concerning them; he knew he could not help them and deliver them unless he should give up his position as "the son of Pharaoh's daughter" and ally himself with them. In mature years, when he was able to weigh results in the balance and look consequences in the face, he deliberately made this brave decision. He did this by faith. "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." (Heb. 11: 24-27.) He did six things by faith—(1) "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;" (2) chose "rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;" (3) accounted "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt;" (4) "looked unto the recompense of reward;" (5) "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king;" (6) "endured, as seeing him who is invisible." Later he ate the passover and crossed the Red Sea by faith. He cherished the word and promises of God until they produced this faith. (Rom. 10: 17.) "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen." (Heb. 11: 1.)

When we contrast what Egypt was then with the cruel condition of God's people, we see more clearly the magnanimity of his famous choice and feel more forcibly the power of his illustrious example. As we have seen, Egypt, with its arts, sciences, culture, architecture, and

civil government, was the mightiest and most magnificent country on the face of the earth. There were its fertile fields, rich treasures, avenues of obelisks, grand temples, proud palaces, and towering pyramids. Its ease, comfort, sensual pleasures, pomp, splendor, glory, and rich treasures were at the command of Moses; yet with this were immorality, idolatry, and a loss of the promises of God. What he gained by faith he would have lost had he clung to Egypt. On the other hand, God's people were in cruel, hard, rigorous, and bitter bondage. Moses knew he was not an Egyptian, and that his people were a set of serfs; he knew he was exchanging the palace for the hut, riches for poverty, worldly honor and glory for contempt and hatred, the society of the earth's most refined and cultured for that of slaves; but he had heard of the promises of God, and looked to Him who is invisible.

He made this decision in the face of two of the mightiest influences Satan can bring to bear on the human heart—namely, the pleasures of sin and the rich treasures of Egypt. The love of sensual, earthly pleasure and the love of money have wrecked many lives and sent many souls to perdition.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Relate all you know about the Nile.
With what was Moses' life filled?
Of whom was he in different respects a type?
To what different measures did Pharaoh resort in order to repress the rapid increase of the children of Israel?
Why did God bless the midwives?
1 Who were Moses' mother and father?
Of what tribe were they?
What relation was Amram's wife to him?
What children were born unto them?
What do "Amram" and "Jochebed" mean?
What to his parents was a prophecy of Moses' future usefulness?
What was first done to preserve his life?
How long was he concealed?
What scriptures give the key to these actions?
Why were Moses' parents not afraid of the king's commandment?
3 Why could he not be concealed longer?
What then did his mother do with him?
What was "papyrus"?
To what uses was it put?
What is the origin of our word "paper"?
How was the ark made waterproof?
What are "slime" and "pitch"?
What did Jochebed do with this ark?
4 Who was the child's sister?
How did she show her interest in and love for her brother?
5 How did Pharaoh's daughter discover the ark?
What did Pharaoh's daughter do upon discovering the ark?
6 How did she recognize the child?
Why did she have compassion upon it?
7 What did Miriam do and suggest?
8 Who was secured as nurse?
What means did God use in saving both this child and this race of slaves?
9 What proposition did Pharaoh's daughter make to the child's mother?
In what way was the mother paid?
10 How did the child prosper under his mother's care?
What may we well imagine she taught him?
What did these lessons prove to be to Moses?
What duty do all parents owe to their children?
What next was done with the child?
Whose son did he become?
Who named him?
Why was he so named?
22 In what was Moses instructed?
Name some of the studies in which the Egyptians had made great advancement.
In what was Moses mighty while the son of Pharaoh's daughter?
How long was he the son of Pharaoh's daughter and considered an Egyptian?
What effect did the burdens of the Israelites have upon him?
Give, in order, the different things Moses did by faith.
What is faith?
What enables us to see more clearly and feel with greater force Moses' example?
In the face of what did Moses make this distinction?

LESSON III.—JULY 18.

THE CALL OF MOSES.

Ex. 3: 10-15; 4: 10-12. Read Ex. 2: 11 to 4: 18.

10 ¶Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 ¶And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

10 ¶And Moses said unto Jehovah, Oh, Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And Jehovah said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? is it not I, Jehovah?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Certainly I will be with thee.*” (Ex. 3: 12.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Near Mount Horeb or Sinai.

PERSONS.—God and Moses.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 37: 1-7.

HOME READING—

- July 12. M. The Call of Moses. (Ex. 3: 10-15.)
- July 13. T. Aaron Helping Moses. (Ex. 4: 10-17.)
- July 14. W. Moses Returns to Egypt. (Ex. 4: 18-23.)
- July 15. T. Aaron Meets Moses. (Ex. 4: 27-31.)
- July 16. F. Moses Before Pharaoh. (Ex. 5: 1-9.)
- July 17. S. Israel's Burden Increased. (Ex. 5: 10-19.)
- July 18. S. Wisdom Through Affliction. (Ps. 90: 12-17.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“The land of Midian” was the country in which the Midianites then dwelt. They were the descendants of Midian, one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah. (Gen. 25: 1.) They were a wandering people, dwelling in no one place long at a time. In Moses' day they dwelt somewhere near Mount Horeb, for “he led the flock to the back of the wilderness and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb.” This, then, was “the land of Midian.” (Acts 7: 29.)

“Horeb” was probably the name of the group of mountain peaks, or the district; “Sinai,” that of the particular one on which God met with Moses and from which the law was given. (Ex. 19: 20-24; Heb. 12: 18-29; Gal. 4: 25.) It is also said that the people stood before Jeho-

vah "in Horeb." (Deut. 4: 10; 5: 2; 18: 16; 1 Kings 8: 9; Mal. 4: 4.) Moses was on this mount twice, forty days each time. (Ex. 24: 18; 34: 28; Deut. 9: 9.) Elijah was there forty days. (1 Kings 19: 8.) For these reasons it is called the "mountain of God."

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

In order to understand God's appearance to Moses in the wilderness and Moses' commission to the elders of Israel and to Pharaoh, it is necessary to study

The Connecting Links

between the last lesson and this one.

After his famous choice of the last lesson, Moses went at once to work; but he went at it in the wrong way. When "he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren, . . . he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he smote the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand" (Ex. 2: 11, 12); for "he supposed that his brethren understood that God by his hand was giving them deliverance; but they understood not" (Acts 7: 25).

On the next day, when Moses saw two Hebrews striving together and undertook to settle the difficulty between them, the one who did the wrong, as is usually the case, became angry and said: "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? thinkest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?" (See also Acts 7: 26-28.)

Thus Moses, like Jesus, was rejected by his brethren—by those he sought to deliver.

When it reached the ears of Pharaoh that Moses had slain the Egyptian, he sought to kill Moses. It was then Moses "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king" (Heb. 11: 27), "and dwelt in the land of Midian" and "sat by a well." It was there Moses in gallantry took the part of the daughters of the priest of Midian against the shepherds in watering their flocks, was invited to the priest's home, and finally became the husband of Zipporah, a daughter of the priest. This priest was called "Reuel" (Ex. 2: 18), "the Kenite" (Judg. 1: 16), and "Jethro."

Unto this marriage were born two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. "Gershom" means "a stranger," or "expulsion," because, as he said, he was "a sojourner in a foreign land." "Eliezer" means "my God is a help," because God had helped him. (Ex. 2: 16-23; 16: 22; 18: 1-6.)

For forty years Moses was in the wilderness. (Acts 7: 30.) It looked as if the reward would not come, but "he endured as seeing him who is invisible." In the course of these forty years (Acts 37: 30; Ex. 7: 7) Moses was in the wilderness the king of Egypt died. But he was succeeded by another, who made the burdens of the Israelites heavier. They "sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage." The nature and cruelty of the bondage are given in Ex. 1: 11-22. "God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." (Ex. 2: 23, 24.)

At the beginning of this period of forty years, when Moses slew the Egyptian, he was not fully prepared to act as the deliverer and law-giver of his people. He must be trained yet forty years—this time

as a shepherd in the solitude of the desert. Besides, the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full (Gen. 15: 16), and the children of Israel were not yet ready for deliverance.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

(Verses 1-9.)

I. The Angel of God's Presence.

"The angel of Jehovah appeared unto" Moses. This was the angel of God's presence. "So he was their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." (Isa. 63: 8, 9.) When "the angel of Jehovah" appeared to Hagar, she called his name, "Thou art a God that seeth." (Gen. 16: 7-13.) In blessing Joseph's sons, Jacob says: "The angel who hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." (Gen. 48: 16.) This angel brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. (See Num. 20: 16.) "And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them." (Ex. 14: 19.) God promised that this angel should guide them through the wilderness, even into the land of promise, saying: "I send an angel before thee: . . . for my name is in him. . . . Mine angel shall go before thee." (Ex. 23: 20-23.) This angel is called God's "presence." "My presence shall go with thee." (Ex. 33: 14.) God also said this angel would drive out the inhabitants of Canaan. (Ex. 33: 2.) This angel stood before Joshua with drawn sword, saying: "As prince of the host of Jehovah am I now come." (Josh. 5: 13-15.) Verse 4 says God spoke to Moses, and verse 14 gives his name. God spoke through the angel of his presence, and God's "name" was "in him." Who was this angel of God's presence? Was it not Christ before he was made flesh and dwelt among us? Malachi (3: 1) says: "The Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger [angel] of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts." This "angel of the covenant" refers to Christ.

II. Why the Burning Bush?

This angel appeared to Moses "in a flame of fire in a bush." (Acts 7: 30.) God was a pillar of fire by night to the children of Israel. (Ex. 14: 24.) God spoke to the children of Israel "in Horeb out of the midst of the fire." (Deut. 4: 15.) We have no way of ascertaining what kind of bush this was. That it was not consumed by the flames was the wonder which attracted Moses' attention. We do not know that Jehovah intended to teach anything by this fact. Israel passed through fiery trials and was not consumed, and the church of Christ has done so at different times; but this bush only reminds one of these facts. Some make this fire a symbol of God and at the same time a symbol of fiery trials. The purpose of this burning bush was to attract the attention of Moses.

Moses turned aside to ascertain why the bush was not consumed.

III. "Here Am I."

Moses' attention having been gained, "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses." He was at once convinced of the presence of God, and in submission replied: "Here am I." He was at the post of duty. People who have something to do, know how to do it, and are busy, are the ones God calls to do greater work. God never calls idlers; there are no places for drones in his work. Those who perform faithfully their present duties are the ones who are prepared and called to broader fields and greater work. One who cannot lead and feed a flock of sheep cannot take care of God's people; one who does not rule well his own house is unfit to take the oversight of the church. (1 Tim. 3: 5.)

IV. Overawed by God's Presence.

Jehovah directed Moses to put off his shoes, because he was on holy ground. The Lord told Joshua at Jericho to put off his shoes for the same reason given to Moses. (Josh. 5: 13-15.) God's presence made the ground holy. Afterwards the mountain was called "holy" (Ex. 19: 23); so was the mount of transfiguration (2 Pet. 1: 18). Jerusalem is called "the holy city" (Matt. 27: 53) because God's presence was there. From the circumstance of Moses' putting off his shoes, it has been suggested, sprang the custom of the people of the East of taking off their shoes when entering their temples and sacred places. They take off their shoes as we take off our hats.

To assure Moses, to give him confidence, and to strengthen his faith, the Lord said: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He was the God who appeared to these men and delivered to them the promises. (Gen. 15: 1-21; 26: 2-5; 35: 1-12.) Jesus refers to this declaration in his discussion of the resurrection with the Sadducees. (Matt. 22: 32; Mark 12: 26; Luke 20: 37.) "Moses hid his face" and "was afraid to look upon God," because he was overawed by God's presence. In the transfigured presence of Jesus, Peter, James, and John "fell on their face, and were sore afraid." (Matt. 17: 6.) How will it be with sinners in judgment before God, who is "a consuming fire?" (Heb. 12: 29.)

V. Why God Appeared to Moses.

God declares that he had seen the affliction and oppression of the children of Israel and had heard their cry. (See Ex. 2: 23-25; 5: 13, 14; Neh. 9: 9; Ps. 106: 44.) He had now appeared to Moses to deliver them. Moses and all he did were means God used in delivering the Israelites. God also intended to bring them "unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." It was large compared to Goshen, in Egypt. "Flowing with milk and honey" is a frequent and proverbial expression of the Bible, descriptive of the abundance of the land. For a beautiful and poetic description of this country, see Deut. 8: 4-18. This is called "the land of Canaan" because the Canaanites lived there. The Canaanites were descendants of Canaan, a son of Ham; the Hittites descended from Heth (Gen. 23: 3, 5, 10; 25: 9), the second son of Canaan; the Amorites, Jebusites,

and Hivites also descended from Canaan; other tribes also descended from him (Gen. 10, 15, 20). The Jebusites were a mountain tribe and inhabited Jerusalem. (Josh. 10: 1, 5, 25; 12: 10; Judg. 19: 10.) It was taken by Judah. (Judg. 1: 8.) We read of the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite. (2 Sam. 24: 23; 1 Chron. 19: 23.) The origin of the Perizzites is not known. They are frequently mentioned among the inhabitants of the land of Canaan.

10. This verse states Moses' mission to Pharaoh—"that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." What a blessed thing to be God's people! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are." (1 John 3: 1.)

VI. Moses' Qualifications.

11. Humbly Moses thought this an impossible task for him now. His first effort forty years previous to this had failed. Indeed, this would have been an impossible undertaking but for God's help. Moses' humility and meekness were essential qualifications for this great work. There is a great difference between Moses now and Moses forty years previous to this.

Envy and jealousy of others are the very obstacles in the way of some men. Lack of humility and meekness and much self-esteem and self-conceit stand greatly in the way of some's accomplishing much in preaching the gospel.

VII. The Objection Removed.

12. God removed this difficulty by promising to go with Moses, as we have seen above. "And this [the burning of the bush and God's presence in it] shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee." As further encouragement, God promised that Moses should come out of Egypt with the children of Israel and worship him upon that mountain.

13. Moses asked God what he must say when the children of Israel should ask the name of him who sent him.

14. "And God said unto Moses, I Am that I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you." The margin puts it, "I am, because I am;" or, "I am who am;" or, "I will be that I will be." This means God is an eternal and self-existing Being. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Ps. 90: 2.)

15. "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

10-12. In answer to the objection that the Israelites would not believe him, since at first they did not understand he was to be their deliverer, Jehovah taught Moses to do the signs of the rod changed into a serpent and back again into the rod, and of the hand made leprous and made whole again, adding that if they would not believe

LESSON IV.—JULY 25.

THE PASSOVER.

Ex. 12: 1, 2, 21-28. Read Ex. 11: 1 to 12: 36.

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2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

21 ¶Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take you lambs according to your families, and kill the passover.

22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

23 For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, Jehovah will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.

25 And it shall come to pass, when ye are come to the land which Jehovah will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of Jehovah's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

28 And the children of Israel went and did so; and Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ.*” (1 Cor. 5: 7.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Goshen, in Egypt.

PERSONS.—The Israelites.

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Of all important facts connected with the passover, the most important one is: "By faith he [Moses] kept the passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, that the destroyer of the first-born should not touch them." (Heb. 11: 28.) Moses and the children of Israel believed God and obeyed him implicitly. Their obedience showed their faith. Obedience is the measure of faith.

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II. Preparation of the Passover.

21. Having given detailed directions as to how to observe the passover, Moses told the elders of Israel to proceed with it. "Draw out ["go forth"—margin], and take you lambs [from the flock] according to your families, and kill the passover." This instruction was begun in verse 1.

The people were instructed through the elders.

"Every man a lamb [or "kid"—margin], according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household: and if the household be too little for a lamb, then shall he and his neighbor next unto his house take one according to the number of the souls [persons]; according to every man's eating ye shall make your count for the lamb." (Verses 3, 4.) An estimate was to be made as to how many it would take to eat the lamb.

Here is the first mention of "the congregation of Israel," and it was reached through its elders.

This lamb was to be either of the sheep or the goats, "a male a year old," "without blemish" (verse 5)—without defect or deformity in any way (see Lev. 22: 19-21; Deut. 17: 1). This lamb was separated from the flock on the tenth day of the month (verse 3), and kept separate until the evening of the fourteenth day (verses 6, 18; see also Lev. 23: 5; Num. 9: 3; 28: 16; Josh. 5: 10; Ezek. 6: 19).

"The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel" killed it at the same time. All did not eat in the same house, but one or more families ate at their different houses at the same time. It was killed "at even" (verse 6)—"between the two evenings" (margin)—"at the going down of the sun" (Deut. 16: 6).

22. The blood was caught in a basin, and was put on the doorposts and lintel with a bunch of hyssop dipped in it, and no one was to go out of the door of his house until the morning. The "lintel" was the top part or beam of the door, and the "posts" were the sides of the frame.

"They shall eat the flesh in that night," not "the inwards." It must be roasted "with fire," not soddened or boiled with water. Not a bone of it was broken; it was not separated into parts, but roasted whole—"its head with its legs and with the inwards." It was eaten with "unleavened bread" and "bitter herbs." Leaven is a sign of corruption. "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. 5: 7, 8.) The "bitter herbs" must have been to remind the Israelites of their bitter and cruel bondage.

The lamb was not to be eaten raw. (Verses 8, 9, 46.) The Egyptians "ate raw flesh in honor to their god, Osiris. The Ethiopians are to this day remarkable for eating raw flesh, as is the case with most savage nations." (Clarke's "Commentary.") Nothing was to remain until morning. All that was left—the fat (Ex. 23: 18) and whatever was not eaten of the flesh or bread (Ex. 29: 34)—was burned (verses 10, 46). It must not be allowed to putrefy, and the

sacrifice to God must be complete, or whole. It became the law to burn all that remained of all sacrifices. (Lev. 7: 15-18.)

Christ's body saw no corruption. (Ps. 16: 10; Acts 2: 27.)

The Israelites were to eat this passover in haste, ready to start. When they left Egypt, they were to go in a hurry. The loose, flowing garment which they wore was tucked up under the girdle; the sandals, which were not worn in the house, were bound on their feet; and the staff was in their hands. (Verse 11.) "And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders." (Verse 34.)

III. How the Blood Saved Israel.

"The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are," for Jehovah promised to pass over the house which had blood upon it. This, too, was a sign of the faith of the Israelites. It showed both their obedience to God and confidence in him. "None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning." Had they not shed the blood, put it where God directed, and remained in the house, they would not have been saved. God saved them; the blood saved them; and in their obedience to God they saved themselves. Remaining in the blood-stained house as God directed, the blood saved them. They kept the passover "by faith," because they believed God. They did as he commanded by faith. Where God speaks, faith can do nothing except that which he commands. It is the lack of faith which does something else.

IV. How the Blood of Christ Saves.

We are saved by the blood of Jesus when we obey the covenant God has sealed to us by that blood. (Heb. 9: 11-28; 5: 8, 9; 1 John 1: 7.) He who rejects this blood-sealed covenant, or will, rejects the blood of Christ. The spiritual house which has the blood of Jesus on it is "the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20: 28.) None can reach the blood of Jesus in disobedience to him. The faith and hope of Israel rested upon God's word—his promise. They knew they would be saved (1) from the death angel and (2) from Egypt, because God had said it, and they "felt like" they would because they believed God. God's word was their assurance. To-day our faith in Jesus and hope of salvation rest upon God's promises. Having shed his blood for the remission of sins, Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16: 16.) To those who believe in Jesus, feel their guilt, and ask what to do to be saved, he says: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 38.) "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) Thus in obedience to God we comply with the conditions of salvation in this blood-sealed covenant; we thus reach the blood of Christ, enter into his blood-stained and blood-bought church, and are saved.

V. An Attack upon the Idolatry of Egypt.

23. "For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians." This is the reason why the above instruction was given to Israel. This was said first in warning to Pharaoh. (Ex. 11: 4-8.) The first-born of beasts as well as men were slain. "Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am Jehovah." (Verse 12.) The first-born of beasts were slain, it seems, because the Egyptians worshiped beasts. (See also Num. 33: 4; Isa. 19: 1; Jer. 43: 13.) God promised that the destroying angel should not slay the first-born in the houses whose lintels and posts had the blood upon them.

VI. The Lesson of the Passover.

24. The passover was to be a perpetual institution and memorial. (Verse 14.)

25-27. The passover was to be observed in the promised land, and the Israelites were to explain to their children its meaning. In the promised land it was eaten in the place where God wrote his name. There all the males were required to assemble. (Deut. 12: 1-9; 16: 1-8, 16.) Women were permitted to attend. (1 Sam. 1: 7; Luke 2: 41.) The first day of the feast, or fifteenth day of the month already given, was "a holy convocation," and the seventh day of the feast was "a holy convocation" (Lev. 23: 4-8), and additional sacrifices were offered throughout the seven days of the feast (Num. 28: 16-25). The feast continued seven days. Then the first fruits of the harvest were offered. (Lev. 23: 10-14.) The lamb was sacrificed at the going down of the sun (Deut. 16: 6), as stated. The fat and blood were turned over to the priest, and the fat was burned and the blood sprinkled on the altar. (2 Chron. 30: 15, 16; 35: 5-14.)

If any were unclean and could not eat the passover at the appointed time, they could do so on the second month; but whosoever refused to eat it should be cut off from the people. (Num. 9: 9-13; 2 Chron. 30: 2, 3, 13.)

Strangers—others besides Jews—could eat of the passover if their males would be circumcised. There was one law to the home-born and the stranger. (Ex. 12: 45-51; Num. 9: 14.) This and other passages show that the Gentiles could at that time be saved if they so desired.

This lamb was a type of Jesus. The lamb was "without blemish;" Jesus "offered himself without blemish unto God" (Heb. 9: 14), and as a "lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1: 19), and was innocent, undefiled, faultless, and separate from sinners. Not a bone of this lamb was broken, and not a bone of Jesus was broken. (See John 19: 31-37.) The blood of this lamb saved Israel from the destroying angel; Jesus is "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29), whose blood was shed for the remission of sins. Jesus is called "our passover" (1 Cor. 5: 7), and was slain at the time of killing the passover.

This is called "the sacrifice of Jehovah's passover."

From the fact that the angel passed over the blood-stained houses it was called "the passover." "Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses,"

In reverence and awe "the people bowed the head and worshiped" when Moses had finished instructing them, which meant that they would solemnly do as directed.

VII. The Effect upon the Egyptians.

28. This verse states that the Israelites did as God had commanded.

God did what he had threatened to do to Pharaoh and promised to do for the children of Israel. At midnight the destroying angel passed through and slew the first-born of man and beast in Egypt. (Verse 29.)

"There was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." Who can conceive the sorrow, deep grief, and sore lamentation this caused? "No people in the universe were more remarkable for their mournings than the Egyptians, especially in matters of religion. They whipped, beat, tore themselves, and howled in all the excess of grief. When a relative died, the people left the house, ran into the street, and howled in the most lamentable and frantic manner." (Clarke's "Commentary.") God said this should cause such a great cry throughout Egypt as had never before been heard nor would ever afterwards be heard. (Verse 30.)

Pharaoh "called for Moses and Aaron by night" and urged them to get the Israelites from among the Egyptians. He was now willing for the Israelites to depart and to take with them all their possessions. (Verse 31.) In Ex. 10: 28, 29, Pharaoh ordered Moses out of his presence, to see his face no more, saying that on the day Moses saw his face again Moses should be put to death. The message of verse 31 was probably delivered by Pharaoh's servants. The Egyptians urged the Israelites to leave the land in haste. So the Israelites left. According to Moses' directions, they asked of the Egyptians "jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment." They did not ask these things with the idea of returning them. God gave the Israelites favor in the eyes of the Egyptians, and the Egyptians let the Israelites have what they wanted. So they spoiled the Egyptians. (Verses 34-36.)

From the call of Abraham to the deliverance of the children of Israel was four hundred and thirty years. (Verse 40; see also Gal. 3: 17.) "It is a night to be much observed unto Jehovah for bringing them out from the land of Egypt." (Verse 42.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

How did Moses and Aaron approach Pharaoh?

What did he say?

Of what did he accuse Moses and Aaron?

For what did the Israelites blame Moses?

Name, in order, the ten plagues.

Why did God send these plagues?

Why did God permit the magicians to perform some miracles?

Why did he then make some distinction between the Israelites and the Egyptians?

1, 2 What did God make this month of the passover to the Israelites?

What has this day been called?

What has the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus been called?

What is the most vital principle connected with keeping the passover?

What always shows faith?

What always shows lack of faith?

21 What did Moses tell the elders of Israel to proceed to do?

Through whom did Moses speak to the Israelites?

- Give the kind, quality, age, and gender of the animal to be killed.
 How long was it kept up?
 What provision was made for consuming the lamb if a family was too small to do so?
 Was the passover eaten as a congregation or by families?
 At what time was the lamb slain?
 22 In what was the blood caught?
 Where was it sprinkled?
 With what?
 What were the doorposts and lintel?
 In killing and cooking the lamb, was a bone broken?
 How must it be cooked?
 What of it was eaten?
 What kind of flesh did the Egyptians eat?
 With what was it eaten?
 Why the bitter herbs?
 Why remove the leaven?
 What must be done with all that remained?
 Why?
 In what particular was Christ's body like this?
 In what manner were the Israelites to eat the passover?
 What was the blood on the door?
 In what were they to remain?
 What different persons and things saved them?
 When are people now saved by the blood of Christ?
 What does one reject when he rejects the new covenant in Christ's blood?
 How did the Israelites know they would be saved?
 What are people commanded to do to be saved?
- 23 Why should the passover be killed and the blood sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel?
 Why were the first-born of beasts slain?
 24 What was the passover to be?
 25-27 What were the Israelites to explain to their children in the land of promise?
 Where in the land of promise was it to be eaten?
 Who were commanded to go?
 Who were permitted to go?
 What was to be on the first and last days of the feast?
 How long was it to continue?
 What became then of the fat and the blood?
 What provision was made for the unclean who could not eat the passover at the proper time?
 Upon what conditions could strangers eat it?
 What provision was made for the salvation of all who were not Jews?
 Of what was the lamb a type?
 Mention the points of similarity between the lamb and Jesus.
 What is Jesus called?
 Why was this called the "passover?"
 What did the people do when Moses had finished these directions?
 28 Did the Israelites do as God had commanded?
 Did God do what he threatened to do to Pharaoh?
 What did Pharaoh do?
 What was he willing for the Israelites to do?

"Why should we make a brother's cross
 Harder for him to bear?
 Each has his load of toil or pain,
 His burden and his care.
 If we but knew the inner life
 Hid deep within each breast,
 We would not speak the bitter words
 When kindly words were best."

I count this thing to be grandly true:
 That a noble deed is a step toward God,
 Lifting the soul from the common sod
 To a purer air and a broader view. (J. G. Holland.)

LESSON V.—AUGUST 1.

THE DELIVERANCE AT THE RED SEA.

Ex. 13: 17-22; 14: 10-16.

17 ¶And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:

18 But God led the people about, by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt.

19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

20 And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.

21 And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go by day and by night:

22 The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, departed not from before the people.

10 ¶And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto Jehovah.

11 And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to bring us forth out of Egypt?

12 Is not this the word that we spake unto thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it were better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 Jehovah will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 ¶And Jehovah said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.

16 And lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Jehovah is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.*” (Ex. 15: 2.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Shores of the Red Sea.

PERSONS.—The Israelites and the Egyptians.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 37: 1-7.

HOME READING.—

July	26.	M.	Guided by Jehovah. (Ex. 13: 17-22.)
July	27.	T.	Israel's Fear and Moses' Faith. (Ex. 14: 10-14.)
July	28.	W.	The Deliverance at the Red Sea. (Ex. 14: 15-22.)
July	29.	T.	The Egyptians Destroyed. (Ex. 14: 28-31.)
July	30.	F.	The Song of Deliverance. (Ex. 15: 1-10.)
July	31.	S.	The Song of Triumph. (Ex. 15: 11-21.)
August	1.	S.	Security Through Faith. (Ps. 37: 1-7.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

By consulting the map it will be seen that the northern end of the Red Sea is split by the peninsula of Sinai into two gulfs—that of Suez, on the west, and that of Akabah, on the east. The length of this sea

is fourteen hundred and fifty miles, and its width in the widest place is about two hundred and five miles. The Gulf of Suez is about one hundred and eighty miles in length and has an average width of twenty miles, but is less than ten miles at the northern end. The Gulf of Akabah is about one hundred miles by fifteen miles. The depth of the Red Sea varies from twenty-five hundred feet to seventy-two hundred feet. The Israelites crossed at the northern end of the Gulf of Suez, where the water is not so deep, but so deep that God had to part it, as the Bible states, in order for the Israelites to pass through.

Pi-hahiroth and Migdol were places on the eastern edge of Egypt, west of the Red Sea, near which the Israelites camped, and Baal-zephon was a place on the eastern shore of the sea opposite where they camped. These places show about where they crossed the sea.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

"By Faith."

Faith in God was the mainspring of these great deeds. It led to this great deliverance. "By faith he [Moses] kept the passover, and the sprinkling of the blood, that the destroyer of the first-born should not touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians essaying to do were swallowed up." (Heb. 11: 28, 29.) Through faith in God they did what he commanded.

All who in faith obey God now are saved by faith.

For fifteen hundred years the passover commemorated this event, until Christ, "our passover," died on the cross. (See 1 Cor. 5: 7.)

For almost two thousand years the Lord's Supper has commemorated deliverance from sin and the grave through the body and blood of Christ.

None but God could have foreseen and prearranged all this so that one was the type of the other; none but God can erect monuments of events before they transpire. Human wisdom would not have selected the simple lamb and unleavened bread, and, in case of the Lord's Supper, the loaf and fruit of the vine. It would have selected more enduring, time-defying, and costly substances. But man's ways are not God's ways. (See Isa. 55: 8, 9.)

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle." (Ex. 12: 37, 38.)

God claimed the first-born of man and beast because he thus saved the first-born alive. (Ex. 13: 1-16.) Later he took the Levites in lieu of the first-born. (Num. 3: 1-51.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Waterless Way Not the Way of Faith.

17, 18. Since the Israelites went out of Egypt by faith, they went by God's directions. He "led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God

led the people about, by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt."

By consulting a map it will be seen readily how it was nearer to Canaan by the Philistine way, and that in that way there was no sea—no water—to cross; but that was not God's way. The Israelites could not have gone that way by faith.

19. According to Joseph's direction, which was also given by faith, his bones were carried out of Egypt by Moses.

20. From Succoth they journeyed to Etham, which was east or northeast from Succoth (consult the map), "in the edge of the wilderness."

21, 22. Here the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night first appeared and is first mentioned. This was given that the Israelites might know the way God wanted them to go and that they might travel by night as well as by day. Jehovah went before them in this pillar of cloud and fire. He did this by the angel of his presence. (Ex. 14: 19; see also the note in Lesson III on the angel of God's presence.) This pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night never departed from before the people.

To-day God is the light and protection of all who trust and obey him. His word is a lamp unto their feet and a light unto their path. (Ps. 119: 105.) Of Christ it is said: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1: 4.) He says of himself: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8: 12.) The only way to walk in the light is to follow Christ.

When this pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night first appeared, the children of Israel had started the wrong way out of Egypt; but they had started the way human wisdom suggested.

Just so men sometimes start to heaven the wrong way—the way human wisdom suggests; but such is not God's way and wisdom; such is not the way of faith.

II. God Turned the Israelites Back.

(Ex. 14: 1-9.)

God turned the Israelites back at Etham, and they traveled southward, in an opposite direction from Canaan, and encamped "before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-zephon." (Ex. 14: 1.) This was between the mountain and the sea, in a kind of pocket, or trap, from which there was seemingly no escape but to return the way they went into it. Read Ps. 77, 78; Num. 33.

III. How Did God Harden Pharaoh's Heart?

In verse 4 God said: "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he shall follow after them; and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; and the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah." (See Ex. 4: 21.) In verse 17 God says: "I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians." It is also stated that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. How was it done?

God saves men now. How does he do it? He saves them through Jesus—the life, death, blood, and resurrection of Jesus; he saves them

through the gospel. (Rom. 1: 16, 17.) Also, men save themselves. (Acts 2: 40; Phil. 2: 12.) How do they do it? By obedience in faith to God's will. (Acts 2: 38-41; Phil. 2: 12; 1 Pet. 1: 22.) So God hardens men and they harden themselves. All his threatenings and warnings, means of grace and salvation in which many rejoice, serve only to harden the hearts of all who reject them. "To the one a savor from death unto death; to the other a savor from life unto life." (2 Cor. 2: 16.)

The signs and means which increased and strengthened the Israelites' faith and saved them hardened Pharaoh's heart and the heart of the Egyptians. Thus God saved the Israelites and hardened the hearts of the Egyptians; thus, too, the Israelites saved themselves and the Egyptians hardened their hearts. The Egyptians were left to choose their own course, and their choice to resist God and God's means hardened their hearts.

IV. "Stand Still, and See the Salvation of Jehovah."

10. On the day after the passover the Egyptians were busy burying their dead (Num. 33: 3, 4); but when Pharaoh heard where the Israelites were, he thought they had lost their way and were "entangled in the land" and the "wilderness" had "shut them in." Repenting that he had let them go, he at once made ready "six hundred chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt," and pursued them. When the children of Israel saw that "the Egyptians were marching after them," "they were sore afraid," or greatly frightened, and "cried out unto Jehovah." Referring to this, Nehemiah says God saw their afflictions in Egypt and heard "their cry by the Red Sea." (Neh. 9: 15.)

11, 12. The children of Israel saw no way of escape. Their faith in God was not sufficiently strong. They lacked confidence in his wisdom and power to save them. After all that they had recently witnessed of God's wisdom and power manifested in the ten plagues, it occurs to us that their faith and courage should never have failed; yet many to-day, with all the wisdom and power of God manifested since then, lack faith and confidence in his ways and means of carrying out his own work through the church and otherwise.

Here the children of Israel began to murmur and complain. They asked Moses if he had brought them out there to have them slain and buried because there were not sufficient graves in Egypt in which to bury them, and said to him that they had requested to be allowed to continue to serve the Egyptians. This was very cruel to Moses, as well as a lack of faith in God. They should have known that God could deliver them.

But thousands to-day prefer to be left in sin and not disturbed by the marching orders and self-denial of the gospel.

13, 14. But Moses' faith was unshaken. He said: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever. Jehovah will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

Moses trusted in God, believed that God would save the Israelites, and spoke to them as above.

Their duty was to "stand still," or patiently wait in faith, until God

should give further directions. "Rest in ["be still before"—margin] Jehovah, and wait patiently for him." (Ps. 37: 7.) To "stand still" when God commands that is as much obedience to him as to go forward when he commands that.

15, 16. God said to Moses: "Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. And lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground."

One must obey God as well as pray. This is the way God saved the Israelites (verse 13) and the way he fought for them. He opened up the way, and they had to obey him.

V. How God Saved Israel.

It is very instructive and helpful to study the wisdom and power, means and ways by which God saved Israel.

Ex. 13: 21 says, as we have learned: "And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." (See verses 19, 20.) The angel of his presence saved them. (Isa. 63: 9.) "And sent an angel, and brought us forth out of Egypt." (Num. 20: 16.) This angel led them into Canaan. (Ex. 32: 34; 33: 2.) The angel of God's presence was in the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. Thus God went before them. His presence was clothed with this pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. This pillar removed when the angel removed. The angel removed from before the Israelites and went behind here to protect them from the Egyptians.

As God had commanded him, Moses stretched out his hand, with the rod in it, over the sea.

This rod had done wonders before when stretched out in obedience to God.

What God has placed in our hands he would have us use to his glory. "And Jehovah caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night." "And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were piled up, the floods stood upright as a heap; the deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea." (Ex. 15: 8.) God "clave the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as a heap" (Ps. 78: 13); so that, indeed, "the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left," and the Israelites "went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground."

This was a miracle. The waters "divided" when Moses stretched out his rod over the sea; and, again, when he stretched his hand over the sea, it "returned to its strength." So the inspired writers of the Bible ever speak of it.

The Egyptians thought where the Israelites went they could go, and so pursued in their folly.

"The morning watch," it is said, at that time was from two o'clock until sunrise. Jehovah saw the Egyptians at all times; but the expression, "looked forth upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud," must mean the destruction he visited upon them, for he "discomfited" them.

God caused the Egyptians' chariot wheels to run off, "and they drove them heavily." They dragged in the sand. The Egyptians

recognized the hand of God in this and confessed it was useless to pursue the Israelites further.

The Israelites safe on the other side, God commanded Moses to stretch forth his hand over the sea, which he did, and the waters at once returned and overflowed all the Egyptians. They "fled against it," but could not escape; "and Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea."

This was done when the "morning appeared." "And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, even all the host of Pharaoh that went in after them into the sea; there remained not so much as one of them." - Ps. 77: 16-20 describes a fearful storm of rain, whirlwind, lightning, and thunder which swept down upon the Egyptians. From all this the Israelites were protected. The cloud which covered them was not a rain cloud. "Thus Jehovah saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians. . . . And the people feared Jehovah: and they believed in Jehovah, and in his servant Moses."

It came to pass as God had said: "And the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have gotten me honor upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen." (Verse 18.)

Then followed the happy and triumphant song of deliverance. (Ex. 15: 1-19.) The victory was ascribed to Jehovah. Jehovah "triumphed gloriously;" he threw "the horse and his rider" "into the sea;" Jehovah was the strength and salvation of Moses; Jehovah was his God, his father's God. For these reasons Moses praised and exalted him.

VI. This Is a Type of Salvation from Sin.

This was God's salvation. He was the author of it. In this way he saved Israel. But he saved them only when they went forward in obedience to him. Paul says they "were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (1 Cor. 10: 1, 2.)

All this was a type of our deliverance from the bondage of sin through Christ. God sent Moses to deliver Israel; he sent Jesus to deliver us. Moses worked miracles to convince Israel that God had sent him (Ex. 4: 27-31); Jesus worked miracles to convince the world that God had sent him (John 3: 2; 5: 36; 14: 11; 20: 30, 31). The Israelites believed in and followed Moses; all must believe in and follow Jesus. The Israelites turned away from Egypt; all must repent of all sins and turn away from the world. The Israelites followed the way God led and were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" all must follow where God leads and be baptized "into Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) To those who believe in Christ the Holy Spirit says: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2: 26-38.) To the believing, penitent, praying Saul, God said: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22: 16.) "And he arose and was baptized; and he took food and was strengthend." (Acts 9: 18, 19.)

When the Israelites obeyed God in following his guidance and were

baptized "unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," it was said, "Thus Jehovah saved Israel that day;" and when people now believe in Jesus as the Christ of God, repent of all sins, turn away from the world, and are baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in obedience to God, he forgives their sins, or saves them. Thus God saves people from the bondage of sin. This, too, is God's salvation. Jesus Christ is "unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." (Heb. 5: 7-9.)

The shortest route to Canaan and the one which did not lead through baptism "unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" was not God's way; the promise of salvation from sin short of obedience to God in baptism through faith in Jesus Christ is not God's way, not God's salvation.

After obeying God as above came the song of deliverance; after obeying God now comes the song of deliverance. The eunuch "went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 39); and the jailer "rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God" (Acts 16: 24). After Paul was baptized "he took food and was strengthened." (Acts 9: 18, 19.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Name the two gulfs of the Red Sea, and give their length and width.
Give the size and varying depths of the Red Sea.
Where did the Israelites cross it?
Where were Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, and Baal-zaphon?
What was the mainspring of these acts of Moses and the children of Israel?
What two things done by faith are here specified?
Who today are saved by faith, or how are people now saved by faith?
How long did the observance of the passover continue?
Who is our Passover?
What commemorates Christ's suffering and death?
When is it to be observed?
In what ways do the passover and the Lord's Supper show the difference between God's wisdom and man's wisdom?
How many went out of Egypt?
What did they take, and who went with them?
Why did God claim the first-born?
What did he take in their stead?
- 17, 18 Why say the children of Israel went out of Israel by faith?
Why did God lead them the route here given and not through the land of the Philistines?
Why could the children of Israel not have gone the waterless way by faith?
- 19 Why were Joseph's bones carried along?
- 20 Toward what place and in what direction did the children of Israel start?
- 21, 22 Why did the pillar of cloud and of fire appear?
Who was in this pillar?
How is God our light to-day?
In what way only can we walk in the light?
What suggested the route the children of Israel first started to take?
What suggests to people now to start the wrong way to heaven?
What only is the right way?
Why did God turn the children of Israel back?
In what direction from Canaan was this?
Where did they first encamp?
How did God harden the heart of Pharaoh and of the Egyptians, and how did they harden their own hearts?
- 10 About what were the Egyptians busy on the day after the passover?
Seeing the situation of the children of Israel, what did Pharaoh do?
With what forces did he go?
What effect did this have upon the children of Israel?
Referring to this, what does Nehemiah say?
- 11, 12 Why were the children of Israel so frightened?
Does it not seem strange to us that they should lose faith and confidence in God after all they had witnessed so lately?
What, then, about church members to-day who do not think the gospel and the church and the specified way of work and worship are sufficient?
- 13, 14 What about Moses' faith?
What was he commanded to say to the disturbed Israelites?

- What cruel complaints did they make?
 What was their duty?
 What does "stand still" here mean?
 When should God's people "stand still?"
 Repeat Ps. 37: 7.
 When should they go forward?
 15, 16 What did God command Moses to do?
 Why is it so helpful to study *how* God saved the children of Israel?
 How did God go before the children of Israel?
 Why did he remove the cloud here and place it behind them?
 What, when used in obedience to God, had Moses' rod already done?
 What should we do with whatever we have in hand?
 How did God divide the waters and make a passage through the sea?
 Quote the different passages in regard to this.
 What did the Egyptians think they could do?
 What did God do to the chariots of the Egyptians?
- What did they confess?
 How were the Egyptians destroyed?
 State the difference between the storm which came upon the Egyptians and the cloud which protected the Israelites.
 How did God get honor upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians?
 What happy song followed?
 Of what is this salvation from Egypt a type?
 State in full what God did, the agencies and means used, and what they did, to save Israel.
 State in full all the Israelites had to do to be saved.
 State the points of likeness between Moses and Christ.
 State the points of likeness between what the Israelites had to do to be saved from Egypt and what people have to do now to be saved from sin.
 What is the way of "the salvation of Jehovah" now?
 What now corresponds to the song of salvation?

He comes, their leader comes! The man of God
 O'er the wide waters lifts his mighty rod,
 And onward treads. The circling waves retreat,
 In hoarse, deep murmurs, from his fearless feet;
 And the chased surges, outward roaring, show
 The hard, wet sand and coral hills below. (Heber.)

"They rush to destruction, unkept by thy word,
 The madmen who challenge thy power, O Lord;
 But unto thy servants the night storms will cease
 In mornings of glory, on hilltops of peace."

"Behind is the bondage, behind is the sea;
 Who dared to pass through, God hath made to be free;
 And the wilderness way, if in trustfulness trod,
 Shall prove a blest path to the garden of God."

LESSON VI.—AUGUST 8.

THE GIVING OF THE MANNA.

Ex. 16: 11-18, 35. Read Ex. 16: 1-36.

11 ¶And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God.

13 ¶And it came to pass at even, that the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the camp.

14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoar-frost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, What is it? for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat.

16 This is the thing which Jehovah hath commanded. Gather ye of it every man according to his eating; an omer a head, according to the number of your persons, shall ye take it, every man for them that are in his tent.

17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered some more, some less.

18 And when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.

35 ¶And the children of Israel did eat the manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat the manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life.”*
(John 6: 35.)**TIME.**—B.C. 1491.**PLACE.**—Wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai.**PERSONS.**—Jehovah, Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites.**DEVOTIONAL READING.**—John 6: 33-40.**HOME READING.**—

- August 2. M. Israel Murmuring. (Ex. 16: 1-3.)
- August 3. T. The Giving of the Manna. (Ex. 16: 11-18.)
- August 4. W. The Manna and the Sabbath. (Ex. 16: 21-30.)
- August 5. T. The Manna a Memorial. (Ex. 16: 31-36.)
- August 6. F. Bread for All. (John 6: 5-14.)
- August 7. S. The Living Bread. (John 6: 48-59.)
- August 8. S. The Bread of Life. (John 6: 33-40.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The wilderness of Shur is also called “the wilderness of Etham.” (Num. 33: 8.) It is a plain ten or twelve miles wide, extending along the eastern shore of the Red Sea.

The wilderness of Sin is southeast of that of Shur and lies between Elim and Sinai.

Marah (“bitterness”), in the wilderness of Shur, was the first halting place of the children of Israel after they left the Red Sea.

Elim was the second halting place.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The Importance of These Lessons.

The last lesson left the children of Israel just out of Egypt, on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, singing the song of deliverance, and "the Egyptians in the midst of the sea."

These lessons are important for several reasons. Besides furnishing the history of God's people and his dealings with them then, their deeper meaning and profounder significance are seen in the fact that these transactions furnished types of "good things to come" under Christ.

No one except God could have so arranged these types. This is proof of the unity and inspiration of the Bible. (See 1 Cor. 10: 1-13.) The rock from which they drank was a type of Christ (John 7: 37), and the manna which they ate was a type of him also; he is the "bread of life" (John 6: 35).

It is best to locate the places of the lesson on the map.

The first halting place of the children of Israel after they left the Red Sea, as we have learned, was Marah ("bitterness"), in the wilderness of Shur, where the waters were bitter and where the people murmured against Moses, saying: "What shall we drink?" When Moses cried unto Jehovah, he showed Moses a tree, which he cast into the waters, and they were sweetened.

There God "made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them." He promised to preserve their health if they would hear and obey him.

From Marah the Israelites journeyed "to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters." (Ex. 15: 22-27.)

God Proved Israel.

Read verses 1-4. The Israelites had been a month out of Egypt, and the supply of food which they had prepared for their journey was exhausted. Probably they had started with enough food to last them until they should reach the promised land, had they gone the nearest route and directly onward to Canaan.

Again they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and wished they had died by the hand of Jehovah in Egypt, and accused Moses and Aaron of bringing them into the wilderness "to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

God was very merciful to them in their blindness and weakness, and in his school was training them out of a race of slaves into a nation of freemen.

"Then said Jehovah unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you." To "rain bread from heaven" was to supply it abundantly, and it came from heaven in that it fell with the dew. (Num. 11: 9.) It was a miraculous gift of food. "He gave them bread out of heaven to eat." (John 6: 31.)

This was not the gum called "manna," which exuded from certain trees. (See Ps. 78: 23-29.) God spoke this to Moses, and did not simply prompt his thoughts. "The people shall go out and gather,"

because it "lay round about the camp." (Verse 13.) "A day's portion every day." If they gathered more than this, "it bred worms, and became foul." (Verse 20.)

"That I may prove them." The test was whether they would obey God's law concerning the gathering of manna and trust him for food and sustenance. At the end of the forty years' journey through the wilderness God said: "And thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or not. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so Jehovah thy God chasteneth thee. And thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him." (Deut. 8: 2-6.) This shows what God means by the declaration "to prove" the Israelites.

Jesus said to Satan: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4: 4.)

God would thus teach the children of Israel to trust him for their "daily bread," to rely upon him for guidance and protection, and that the purpose of life is not to obtain food and raiment. These are means of existence, but the purpose of life is to serve God.

The Sabbath.

Read verse 5. "On the sixth day" (Friday) they were to gather twice as much as on previous days and prepare it for the Sabbath, and "it did not become foul, neither was there any worm therein." (Verse 24.) God preserved it pure and sweet.

In this chapter we have the first mention of the Sabbath since Gen. 2: 3. There is no evidence that it was kept before this time. Had the Israelites been observing it all along, there would have been no necessity for this instruction.

The Israelites were slow to learn obedience. Some left the manna until morning, when God commanded them not to do so (verses 19, 20), and some went out to gather it on the seventh day, when God had commanded otherwise (verses 22-30).

Many are just as slow now to learn to obey God. They expect to find blessings where God has placed none, and neglect, if they do not refuse, to seek them where he has placed them.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. An Evil Heart of Unbelief.

11, 12. Study verses 6-12. These verses are grouped together because they are required to state and impress the lesson God would teach in them.

"Moses and Aaron said." Moses, doubtless, spoke through Aaron. (Verse 9.) "And he [Aaron] shall be thy [Moses'] spokesman unto the people; and it shall come to pass, that he shall be to thee a mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God." (Ex. 4: 16; see also verse 30; 7: 1, 2.)

The children of Israel held Moses and Aaron responsible for the exodus and this lack of food; but Moses and Aaron were only God's servants. Christ said to his apostles: "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (John 13: 20.) To the seventy he said: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me." (Luke 10: 16.) So the children of Israel murmured against God, and not against Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron said: "And what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against Jehovah."

The children of Israel distrusted God's wisdom, power, and goodness. This distrust and these repeated murmurings sprang from "an evil heart of unbelief. . . . And to whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were disobedient? And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief." (Heb. 3: 12-19.) Distrust and murmurings now against God's ways and means spring from the same "evil heart of unbelief."

God heard the complaints made by the children of Israel and rebuked them. He would have given the food, protection, and guidance as abundantly had they not murmured. In the morning they were to "see the glory of Jehovah;" and while Aaron spoke to the people, "they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of Jehovah appeared in the cloud." Also the miraculous appearance of the manna every morning was a manifestation of God's glory, as turning water into wine was a manifestation of Christ's glory. (John 2: 11.) God spoke to Moses out of the glowing cloud, and gave a sign to prove to them that it was he who led them out of Egypt. The sign was flesh in the evening and bread in the morning. "At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God."

13. "At even . . . the quails came up, and covered the camp," and the manna in the morning. It appears from Num. 11: 4, 5 that the quails were not a necessity and were not regular. (Read Num. 11: 4-34.) At Kibroth-hattaavah, "while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the people, and Jehovah smote the people with a very great plague." (Num. 11: 33.)

II. The Manna.

14. The manna fell with the dew (Num. 11: 9); "and when the dew . . . was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoarfrost on the ground."

15. "When the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, What is it? for they knew not what it was." Neither they nor their fathers had ever known any food like this. (Deut. 8: 3.)

"Manna" is from a Hebrew word which means "what is it?"

It was prepared as follows: "The people went about, and gathered

it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in mortars, and boiled it in pots, and made cakes of it." (Num. 11: 8.) God gave this, and it was a miracle; but still the people had to gather, prepare, and eat it. It ceased to fall as soon as the children of Israel reached the land of promise. (Josh. 5: 10-12.) God never does for people that which they can do for themselves.

When the people asked, "What is it?" Moses explained: "It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat."

16-18. God then gave directions about gathering it—"an omer a head." According to the number of persons in a family, one family gathered more and another less. "Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah" (verse 36), or about one-half gallon. "And when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating."

Paul uses this to teach a lesson of liberality. (2 Cor. 8: 13-15.)

The manna was gathered early in the morning, because "when the sun waxed hot, it melted." (Verse 21.)

Verse 31 says: "The house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey," and like "fresh oil." (Num. 11: 8.)

An omerful of the manna was put in a pot and laid up before Jehovah throughout the generations of the children of Israel, according to God's directions. "Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept." This did not become foul. This was "a golden pot," and it was placed in the ark of the covenant. (Heb. 9: 4.) The children of Israel ate the manna for forty years. (See verses 32-36.)

III. The True Bread.

35. We should not fail to study Christ's discourse on "the true bread out of heaven." Read John 6: 22-71. God, not Moses, gave the manna; and God gives "the true bread out of heaven," and this bread "giveth life unto the world." Jesus is "the bread of life" and "the living bread." Those who eat of this living bread will never die. To eat of this living bread is to accept and obey the words of Jesus. He explains to his disciples that to "eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood" is not to eat his literal flesh and drink his literal blood, for he will ascend to heaven, whence he came, and the literal flesh profiteth nothing; but the words which he spoke "are spirit [spiritual food] and life," or life-giving. The spiritual man is sustained by feeding upon these words indued with life. Natural food must be eaten and incorporated into the physical system in order to sustain physical life; so the word of Christ must be received into the heart and its life-giving principles incorporated into the spiritual man in order to feed upon Christ.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?

Where did the last lesson about the children of Israel leave them?
Of what was the rock from which the children of Israel drank a type?
What was the first stopping place of

- the children of Israel in the wilderness?
 What kind of water did they find?
 How were the waters sweetened?
 What statute and promise did God make there?
 In what wilderness was this?
 Where was this wilderness?
 What was the next stopping place?
 What was there?
 Where did they go from Elim?
 What gave out?
 Against whom did the Israelites complain?
 Of what did they accuse Moses and Aaron?
 What did God promise to rain from heaven?
 How did God make this known to Moses?
 How would the people get the manna after it fell?
 Where did it fall?
 How much were they to gather at a time?
 Did any ever gather more?
 What did it then become?
 How did God "prove" them?
 What great lesson would God here teach Israel?
 How much were they to gather on the sixth day?
 What evidence have we that the Jews had not kept the Sabbath before this?
 Give some evidence why the Jews were slow to learn obedience.
- 11, 12 Through whom did Moses speak to the people?
- Against whom really did the Israelites complain?
 From what did their distress spring?
 What were they to see in the morning?
 What did they see while Aaron spoke to them?
 How was the manna a manifestation of God's glory?
 Out of what did God speak to Moses?
 What signs did God give?
 13 Were the quails a necessity?
 What is said about them in Num. 11: 4-34?
 14 How did the manna fall?
 What lay on the ground when the dew was gone?
 15 Had any one ever seen anything like manna before?
 Why was it called "manna"?
 What was it like?
 How was it prepared?
 Why did not God give it ready gathered and prepared?
 16-18 How much was gathered for one person?
 How much was left?
 What lesson does Paul teach from this?
 When was it gathered?
 How did it taste?
 In what was some preserved?
 Why was it thus kept?
 How long did the children of Israel feed upon manna?
 35 Of whom was it a type?
 What is "the true bread"?
 Can we eat Christ's literal flesh and drink his literal blood?
 Then how can we feed upon him?

"March on, then, right boldly. The sea shall divide;
 The pathway made glorious,
 With shoutings victorious,
 We'll join in the chorus:
 'The Lord will provide.'"

"Traveling to the better land,
 O'er the desert's scorching sand,
 Father, let me grasp thy hand;
 Lead me on, lead me on.

"When at Marah, parched with heat,
 I the sparkling fountain greet,
 Make the bitter water sweet;
 Lead me on, lead me on."

LESSON VII.—AUGUST 15.

JETHRO'S WISE COUNSEL.

Ex. 18: 13-24. Read Ex. 18: 1-27.

13 ¶And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood about Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand about thee from morning unto even?

15 And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

17 And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for the thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God be with thee: be thou for the people to God-ward, and bring thou the causes unto God:

20 And thou shalt teach them the statutes and the laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge themselves: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people also shall go to their place in peace.

24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"To each one his work." (Mark 13: 34.)

TIME.—B.C. 1490.

PLACE.—In the wilderness, "at the mount of God."

PERSONS.—Moses and his father-in-law.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—John 6: 33-40.

HOME READING.—

- August 9. M. Jethro Visits Moses. (Ex. 18: 1-12.)
- August 10. T. Jethro's Wise Counsel. (Ex. 18: 13-24.)
- August 11. W. Diversities of Gifts. (1 Cor. 12: 1-11.)
- August 12. T. Working Together. (1 Cor. 12: 12-31.)
- August 13. F. The Parable of the Talents. (Matt. 25: 14-29.)
- August 14. S. Wise Master Builders. (1 Cor. 3: 10-15.)
- August 15. S. Jehovah Our Counselor. (Ps. 106: 1-5.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

We have already learned something of Horeb, Sinai, and the land of Midian.

The Time.

The time of this lesson has been placed a year later than the following lesson, because the facts of this lesson and the facts of Deut. 1: 6, 9-12 seem to have occurred at the same time. The facts of Deut. 1: 6, 9-12 occurred just before the Israelites left Horeb, and they left Horeb on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after they departed from Egypt. (Num. 10: 11.) They came to Ho-

reb in the third month of the first year of their departure from Egypt. (Ex. 19: 1.)

Moses' asking for assistance and Jethro's suggesting it, it seems, were at the same time. Moses accepted the will of God through Jethro and asked for assistance. Also the sacrifices Jethro offered seem to be according to the law, which, therefore, must have been given before Jethro offered the sacrifices and gave Moses the advice. Jethro visited Moses while the Israelites were encamped at Horeb.

Jethro and Zipporah.

Read verses 1-11. There are three names to be considered—Reuel, Jethro, and Hobab. Reuel and Jethro are given as the names of Moses' father-in-law; Hobab, as his brother-in-law. Reuel occurs in Ex. 2: 18 and Num. 10: 29; Jethro, in Ex. 3: 1 and Ex. 18; Hobab, in Num. 10: 29 and Judg. 4: 11. In Judg. 1: 16 Hobab is called "the Kenite." The word translated "father-in-law" is a general term, we are told, "for a relative by marriage, and the connection only in which it stands can determine its precise meaning." Some suppose that Jethro was the son of Reuel and the same person as Hobab, that Reuel was dead at the time Jethro is mentioned, and that Jethro continued Moses in the same employment of shepherd in which Reuel had placed him. But both the American Revised Version and the Authorized Version put Reuel and Jethro as Moses' father-in-law and Hobab as his brother-in-law. These versions consider Reuel and Jethro the same person, and Hobab is called the son of Reuel. Thus, then, we will let the matter stand.

Jethro was a priest.

Zipporah, as we have learned, Jethro's daughter, one of seven (Ex. 2: 16), was Moses' wife and the mother of two sons.

We have already learned the names of Moses' sons and why he so named them.

Jethro at this time took Zipporah and her sons back to Moses. Moses had left them with Jethro while he had gone to deliver the Israelites from Egypt.

It is hardly possible that the circumstance of circumcising her son recorded in Ex. 3: 20-26 and causing Zipporah to call Moses "a bridegroom of blood" had anything to do with her return to her father; it is more than probable that Moses, seeing the dangers to which his wife and children would be exposed in Egypt, left them with his father-in-law until he had accomplished his work of delivering his people.

Having heard of Moses' success and of all God had done for him and his people and that he had destroyed the Egyptians, Jethro saw it was a fit time for Zipporah and her sons to rejoin Moses.

Moses took no advantage of his position to bestow places of honor and distinction upon his sons; they occupied the simple rank of Levites, while their cousin, the son of Aaron, had the distinction of being in the office of high priest.

Zipporah, doubtless, remained a faithful wife and mother; but in the great work of Moses and in his disinterestedness she is not afterwards mentioned. This is a fine example to the preachers who are constantly referring in their sermons to their wives and children and homes.

Moses was a humble and meek man, free from self-importance and self-exaltation and exploitation of his family.

Jethro's Joy.

Since it is stated in verse 7 that "Moses went out to meet his father-in-law" after Jethro had said in verse 6 he had come with Moses' wife and children, it seems that this announcement was made by a messenger. Then Moses went out "and did obeisance"—that is, bowed himself down before Jethro. (See Gen. 43: 26, 28.) This was a general token of respect. Next, Moses kissed his father-in-law. Then "they asked each other of their welfare." After this salutation, Moses took Jethro into the tent.

Verse 8—one brief sentence—passes over all that God had done unto Pharaoh and the Egyptians and Israel—all they had suffered and how God had delivered them. It required no little time for Moses to relate all the facts.

Jethro rejoiced at all this, blessed Jehovah, and said he now knew that Jehovah was greater than all gods; he was greater than all gods in the very thing wherein he had showed himself mightier than all the idols of Egypt in the cruel and tyrannical and constantly increasing bondage heaped upon the Israelites.

Pharaoh and the Egyptians were haughty and had acted proudly in oppressing God's people, but now their pride had been abased and Jehovah had showed that he was above all their gods.

This was a battle between the true and living God and the false gods of Egypt.

Jethro Worshiped God.

After the above congratulations and expressions of joy and thanksgiving to God, Jethro offered "a burnt offering and sacrifices" to God. Jethro was a priest when Moses first met him. (Ex. 2: 16-18.) The facts show he was a priest of God and served God. His blessing Jehovah and declaring "that Jehovah is greater than all gods" in verses 10, 11 show this. He had the right, then, to offer sacrifices to God.

The burnt offering was wholly consumed—"an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto Jehovah." (Lev. 1: 9, 13, 17.) Every part of it was Jehovah's portion; and it was, therefore, wholly consumed on the altar. Only a part of the other sacrifices mentioned was consumed on the altar; the rest was eaten after the blood had been offered to God as he directed. (Num. 7.)

Aaron and "all the elders of Israel" came "to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God." Parts of the "sacrifices" here mentioned were, doubtless, eaten by Aaron and the elders with Jethro.

"Before God" is not without significance, and it may mean before the tabernacle (Ex. 20: 24; Deut. 12: 5-7), as we have supposed that the tabernacle had then been erected. Everything with us should be done "before God." All that we do in word or deed must be done in the name of Christ. (Col. 3: 17.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Jethro's Counsel.

13. "To judge the people" was to hear their complaints against one another, to adjust their differences, and to instruct them from the law of God. There were so many troubles and so many people that they "stood about Moses from the morning unto the evening." Being in servitude so long and very much untaught and untrained in the worship of God and so much inclined to murmur and complain, one is not astonished that the Israelites flocked to Moses to adjust the difficulties and to settle their troubles. With all the teaching and examples of the Old Testament and the teaching and examples of Christ and the apostles before them, many church members cannot keep from complaining and out of trouble.

14. Jethro observed Moses' course. He then asked by way of suggestion: "What is this thing that thou doest to the people?" He also asked why Moses did all this alone.

15. Moses' reply was: "Because the people come unto me to inquire of God." Supposing the law had already been given, we can readily see that the people would want to know it in order to live and to adjust their differences according to it. Moses was the mediator between them and God, and they wanted to know God's will in regard to their difficulties and all other matters.

16. With their matters they went to Moses. He decided their cases and taught them "the statutes of God, and his laws." This is another reason for supposing Jethro's visit was after the statutes and laws had been given.

17, 18. Having seen what Moses was doing and having heard Moses' explanation, his father-in-law said, "The thing that thou doest is not good"—that is, it is not the wisest and best course to pursue. The reason given is that it would "wear" Moses away—that is, exhaust him; it was "too heavy" for him, and he was "not able to perform it" all alone. Besides, the people would have to wait so long for a decision that they, too, would be worn out. Such a course was impracticable. To this conclusion Moses came, too; for in Deut. 1: 9-18 he reminded the people that he told them at the time God commanded them to leave Horeb (Deut. 1: 6) that he was not able to bear them himself alone—their "cumbrance, and burden, and strife"—because God had so increased them. He then advised them to select wise men of understanding, and known, according to their tribes, whom he would make heads over them. The people pronounced this a wise thing to do. So he took heads of tribes, known and wise men, and made them heads over the people—"captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, and captains of fifties, and captains of tens, and officers" (Deut. 1: 15), according to their tribes. He charged the judges at the time to judge righteously between a man and his brother and the sojourner; not to respect persons in judgment; to judge small and great; not to fear the face of man, for the judgment was God's. The cause which was too hard for the judges was carried to Moses. This was the advice Jethro gave Moses in the following verses.

19-22. Jethro asked Moses to hear him and to accept his counsel. "God be with thee" shows that Jethro trusted in God. It helps to show,

too, that this advice was from God. The preceding sacrifices offered by Jethro to God impresses the seriousness and importance of the advice. Verse 23 shows the counsel of Jethro was inspired, and that he would not have Moses do anything not commanded by Jehovah. Moses was the mediator of the people and was for them "to God-ward;" he carried their "causes unto God." He was to teach the people "the statutes and the laws"—all the religious ceremonies, or ordinances, and all moral laws, and "show them the way wherein they must walk"—the revealed will of God, "and the work that they must do." They must not only know the will of God, but must diligently perform it.

Even so now faith without works is dead, and not every one who says, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of God.

But Moses should provide out of all the people men "to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." These were to be "able men"—men of prudence, discernment, discretion, courage, and wisdom; men who feared God—pious men who honor God and stand in awe of him; "men of truth"—men who love truth and judge according to the truth and justice and without partiality; men who hate "unjust gain"—men without covetousness, never perverting judgment, never changing the will of God, never favoring the rich, never oppressing the poor, never taking a bribe. Suppose all officers of the civil law and all preachers and elders and other teachers in the church to-day were free from the love of money and partiality, what changes there would be!

II. God's Order of Work in the New Testament.

Just as Moses was instructed to appoint able, just, truth-loving, God-fearing men, free from partiality and the love of money, so the apostles instructed the brethren at Jerusalem to look out from among themselves seven men of good report and full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom they might appoint to look after the Grecian widows. (Acts 6: 1-3.) Just so Timothy was to commit the gospel to faithful men, who were able to teach others also. (2 Tim. 2: 2.) The same instruction is given in regard to the qualification of men to be appointed elders. (1 Tim. 3: 1-10; Tit. 1: 5-11.) When Paul found Timothy "well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium," he took him with him to preach. (Acts 16: 1-3.)

If churches would follow God's instruction here, there would be more God-fearing, earnest, true, faithful, wise, and scriptural elders and preachers of the gospel and less of the opposite kind, and far less envy, bitterness, strife, contention, and divisions. The churches, it seems, have abandoned God's way of making teachers, elders, and preachers, as they have abandoned his way of doing some other things. No man should be sent out to preach until he loves truth in his heart; is honest with God and the word of God, with himself, and with men; is just, generous, merciful, and hates iniquity; is free from the love of money; and is faithful and loyal to Christ—in other words, is scripturally qualified in character, as well as in the knowledge of the will of God, to preach the gospel—Christ crucified—and not something else. So long as the popular way of making preachers continues, there will

be strife and bitterness, error and division among the churches. Fearful responsibilities rest upon elders and preachers.

III. This Was God's Counsel Through Jethro.

23. "If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so." This shows that this step was taken by inspiration, and all this must be done by God's direction. If Moses was acting according to his own best judgment before this, he must now proceed according to God's commandments in this matter as well as in other matters. Following this order as God commands, Moses would "be able to endure" his work, and all the people would the sooner receive the adjustment of their differences and "go to their place in peace."

24. "Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law"—appointed rulers as directed and the character of men specified. These men "judged the people at all seasons," adjusting the smaller matters themselves and taking "the hard causes" to Moses.

After this, Moses' father-in-law departed and went to his own land.

But what about Hobab? He must have gone with his father to visit Moses and must have remained after his father returned. Moses said to Hobab: "We are journeying unto the place of which Jehovah said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for Jehovah hath spoken good concerning Israel." (Num. 10: 29.) Hobab at first declined the invitation. Moses became more urgent, stating in what ways Hobab could assist the Israelites and promising again that Hobab should enjoy whatever good God would do to Israel. From other references it seems that Hobab went. The Midianites were called also "Kenites," and some of the Kenites did go with the Israelites, and "the children of Hobab" are mentioned among them. (Num. 24: 21, 22; Judg. 1: 16; 4: 11.)

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

At what place did Jethro visit Moses?

Give the reasons for thinking the time of the lesson was a year later than the following and preceding lesson.

In the light of the facts, who were Reuel, Jethro, and Hobab?

What position did Jethro occupy?

Who was Zipporah?

How many sons were born to her and Moses?

Give their names and Moses' reasons for so naming them.

Where was Zipporah and her sons while Moses was delivering the Israelites from Egypt?

Why were they left with Jethro?

Why did Jethro return them at this time?

What in regard to his sons and wife shows his unselfishness and his great interest in his work?

What position did Aaron's sons fill?

Why do you think no further mention is made of Zipporah?

To whom in this respect is Moses a fine example?

How did Moses first learn of Jethro's visit?

What respect did Moses show Jethro, and how did he show it?

What did Moses relate to his father-in-law?

At what did Jethro rejoice?

What did Jethro declare that he knew?

How had God shown himself greater than all gods?

What did Jethro offer to God?

Why could Jethro offer these sacrifices?

What shows that he was a priest of God?

Why was the burnt offering all consumed on the altar?

How were the other sacrifices disposed of?

Who ate with Jethro?

What does "before God" signify?

What must all do to-day?

13 What was it to judge the people?

- What time was required to do this?
 Why would you suppose they had so many troubles?
 Why should church members not have so many as now exist, or any at all?
- 14 What question did Jethro ask Moses?
 Why ask this?
- 15 Give Moses' answer.
 Give another reason for supposing the law had already been given.
- 16 What did Moses do for the people?
 Give another reason for supposing Jethro's visit was after the giving of the law.
- 17, 18 What did Jethro say then to Moses?
 What reason did he give for saying this?
 To what conclusion did Moses come as stated in Deut. 1: 9-18?
 What did Moses advise the people to do?
 What character of men must be appointed?
 What must be the character of their decisions?
 What matters were they to judge, and what was Moses to judge?
- 19-22 What counsel did Jethro give Moses?
 To whom did Moses carry the cause of the people?
- What was Moses to teach the people?
 What were the people to do besides hearing the teaching of Moses?
 Who now will enter the kingdom of heaven?
 State again the character of men to be appointed.
 State what they were forbidden to do, or that which their characters would not allow them to do.
 Give examples in the New Testament where this instruction is repeated and followed.
 In what way does this apply to making preachers?
 What will be the result when churches follow the Bible way of making preachers?
 What qualifications of character must one have to preach?
 What is the result when the Bible way is not followed?
- 23 What shows that Jethro's advice to Moses was inspired?
 What would following this advice bring?
- 24 What did Moses do?
 What then did Jethro do?
 What did Moses say to Hobab?
 What does it seem that Hobab finally did?

The little sharp vexations,
 And the briers that catch and fret—
 Why not take all to the Helper
 Who has never failed us yet?

Tell Him about the heartache,
 And tell him the longings, too;
 Tell Him the baffled purpose
 When we scarce know what to do.

Then, leaving all our weakness
 With the One divinely strong,
 Forget that we bore the burden,
 And carry away the song. (Phillips Brooks.)

“Guard me for yet another day,
 For life is new with morning's ray,
 And foes are strange, untrod the way;
 Guard me through this an unknown day.”

LESSON VIII.—AUGUST 22.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS—DUTIES TO GOD.

Ex. 20: 1-11. Read Ex. 19: 1 to 20: 11.

- 1 ¶And God spake all these words, saying,
 2 ¶I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
 3 ¶Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 4 ¶Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of *any thing* that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me,
 6 And showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.
 7 ¶Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
 8 ¶Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;
 10 But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
 11 For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*” (Deut. 6: 5.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Mount Sinai.

PERSONS.—Jehovah and the children of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 19: 7-14.

HOME READING.—

- August 16. M. Israel Prepares to Meet Jehovah. (Ex. 19: 9-16.)
 August 17. T. Israel Meets Jehovah. (Ex. 19: 17-25.)
 August 18. W. The Ten Commandments—Duties to God. (Ex. 20: 1-11.)
 August 19. T. Moses Summarizes the Ten Commandments. (Deut. 5: 6-15.)
 August 20. F. The Law Exalted. (Ps. 119: 1-8.)
 August 21. S. Seeking God First. (Matt. 6: 24-34.)
 August 22. S. The Perfection of the Law. (Ps. 19: 7-14.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

It was stated in the last lesson that, all things considered, it seems that the facts of that lesson occurred after the giving of the law. Hence, the time of this lesson precedes the time of that lesson.

Mount Horeb.

“In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai” and “encamped before the mount.” (Ex. 19: 1, 2.)

The appearance of God to Moses in the burning bush at Horeb, God’s speaking “in Horeb out of the midst of the fire” (Deut. 4: 15) to the children of Israel, the giving of the law from Sinai, the encampment

of the children of Israel about the mountain for so long, God's appearance there to the loyal Elijah six centuries afterwards, when he fled from that furious woman, Jezebel (1 Kings 19), and the frequent allusions in the Scriptures to the glorious and awful occurrences and scenes there (Judg. 5: 5; Ps. 68: 8, 17; Heb. 3: 3; etc.) when God came down upon it, make this mountain one of the most memorable spots on the earth.

As we have learned, "Horeb" was probably the name of the group of mountain peaks and "Sinai" that of the particular peak on which God met with Moses and from which he spoke to the people and gave the law.

In the New Testament, Sinai is contrasted with Mount Zion and the law given from Sinai through Moses with the new covenant given through Jesus Christ. (Gal. 4: 21-31; Heb. 12: 18-29.)

God on the Mountain.

Study chapter 19. Israel encamped before this mountain. "Moses went up unto God," and "out of the mountain" God told him what to say to the people and how to sanctify them that they might be ready for the descent of Jehovah "upon mount Sinai" "in the sight of all the people." Moses did as God directed.

On the morning of the third day after God gave these directions to Moses "there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud." These announced both the descent and majesty of God.

It is no wonder that "all the people that were in the camp trembled" and that Moses said: "I exceedingly fear and quake." (Heb. 12: 21.)

Moses then "brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount."

"To meet God!" What will it be to meet him in the judgment, when Christ comes in his majesty and glory with "ten thousands of his holy ones!"

The whole of Mount Sinai "smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." The "thick cloud," the "thunders," the "lightnings," the long and loud and yet louder sound of the trumpet, the burning and smoking mountain encompassed in "thick darkness," the terrible earthquake, proclaimed God's majesty and power, holiness and greatness, and filled the people with deepest reverence and greatest awe.

"When the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice." The people heard this voice. Then Jehovah came down upon the top of the mountain and called Moses to him. It is clearly stated that the people saw all these majestic and awful appearances. (See Ex. 20: 18.)

Why all this? That the people might believe in Moses as their law-giver and mediator, and more especially that with such evidences of God's power and majesty they might be turned from all idolatry to the true and living God and to his pure and holy worship. Hence, they saw no form of God, but only heard "the voice of words." Therefore, they were to take heed not to make any image of any sort and not to corrupt themselves in any way. (See Deut. 4: 9-20.)

This led the people to see their need of a mediator and to ask for Moses as such; it also led to the Mediator of the new covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ. See the application of this in Heb. 12: 18-24. The people heard the voice of God when he spoke, and "entreated that no word more should be spoken unto them." (Heb. 12: 19.)

God spoke the Ten Commandments out of the cloud and thick darkness and out of the midst of the fire to the people. While they heard his voice, they did not see his form. (Deut. 4: 9-13.) It was then they said to Moses (after God had spoken the Ten Commandments): "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before you, that ye sin not." (Ex. 20: 19, 20.)

There is great need to-day of reverence and awe of God, and even of respect for God and his will. With all seriousness these should be impressed in all the worship of God and work of the church.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Tables of Stone.

1. "God spake all these words" to the people "face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire," Moses standing between God and the people, for they "were afraid because of the fire." (Deut. 5: 4, 5.) "All these words" are the Ten Commandments (see Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 4: 13; 10: 4)—more properly, "ten words." They were written on the two tables of stone "with the finger of God." (Ex. 31: 18.) "And Jehovah said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee the tables of stone, and the law and the commandment, which I have written, that thou mayest teach them." (Ex. 24: 12.) "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, with the two tables of testimony in his hand; tables that were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." (Ex. 32: 15, 16.) From these and other passages we learn that these commandments are called "the testimony" and "the words of the covenant," "the ten commandments." (Ex. 34: 27, 28.)

This covenant was made in Horeb. (Deut. 5: 2.) The stones are called "the two tables of the testimony" and "the tables of the covenant." These stones were placed in "the ark of the covenant" (Heb. 9: 4), or a chest made for that purpose (Ex. 25: 10-22). This is the covenant which God made with the children of Israel when he led them out of Egypt and which gave place to the new covenant which he made through Christ. (Heb. 8: 8-13.)

All the moral principles of the Ten Commandments and all the commandments themselves, except the one regarding the Sabbath, have been incorporated in the new covenant, and, hence, are binding to-day.

It has been supposed that the commandments setting forth duties to God were written on one table of stone and the commandments setting forth duties to man were written on the other table; but we do not know this, since we do not know how the commandments were divided.

The first and great commandment, says Jesus, is: "Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets." (Matt. 22: 37-40.) When one loves God and men, he discharges his duties to God and men; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law. You will find these two commandments in Deut. 6: 5 and Lev. 19: 18.

II. God's Authority to Make This Covenant.

2. This verse is an introduction to the commandments. God bases his authority to make this covenant on the fact that he is Jehovah, their God, as he said to Moses out of the burning bush (Ex. 3: 14, 15), and on what he had done for them. He had brought them out of Egypt and from the house of bondage; he made them a race of freemen, and was ready to make them "a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," for his own possession, above all peoples. They were familiar with all the wonders he had performed in delivering them, from the burning bush to the water which had lately gushed from the rock in Horeb. No idol or false god could have done these things.

III. The One True and Living God.

3. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me"—that is, "besides me." The Israelites were familiar with the idolatry of the Egyptians and were influenced by it; so God makes it the first of the decalogue that they shall have no other gods besides him. He is the Creator of all things, man's Maker, and the bountiful Giver of all good, and is the only true and living God.

Idolatry in any form is yet a great sin. Covetousness is idolatry. (Col. 3: 5.) "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6: 24.) "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim. 6: 10.) When one sets his heart on becoming rich, he should remember that, at the same time, he is becoming an idolater; not that every rich man or every one who makes money is an idolater, "but they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition." (1 Tim. 6: 9.) When one violates one principle of Christianity—does anything God forbids or leaves undone anything God commands—for the sake of money, he is covetous and, therefore, an idolater. Some are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3: 4.) The love of pleasure is another form of idolatry. This being true, the present generation is almost a generation of idolaters. Whatever one loves more than he loves God is virtually an idol to him.

God must have the whole heart. Idolatry is forbidden because there is only one God, and he must be loved supremely and worshiped truly. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4: 10.)

IV. No Graven Image or Likeness of Anything.

4-6. Read these verses; then read Deut. 4: 15-20. They "saw no manner of form" when God spoke to them "in Horeb out of the midst of the fire," and they must not corrupt themselves by making "a graven image in the form of any figure," "male or female," or "the likeness of any beast," bird, creeping thing, or fish; neither should they worship the sun, moon, and stars. The Egyptians worshiped all these. "In short, oxen, heifers, sheep, goats, lions, dogs, monkeys, and cats; the ibis, the crane, and the hawk; the crocodile, serpents, frogs, flies, and the scarabæus, or beetle; the Nile and its fish; the sun, moon, planets, and stars; fire, light, air, darkness, and night, were all objects of Egyptian idolatry, and all included in this very circumstantial prohibition as detailed in Deut. 4: 15-20 and very forcibly in the general terms of the text." (Adam Clarke.)

The reason given why man must not worship anything else is: God is "a jealous God." He visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate" him, because the children are influenced by their fathers to continue in idolatry and because they inherit evil tendencies from their fathers and because they suffer the consequences of their fathers' sins. It is a fearful thing to hate God. To live in disobedience to him is to hate him. He that gathers not with Jesus scatters abroad; he that is not actively engaged in the service of Jesus is against him. On the other hand, so great is God's mercy that he shows loving-kindness to a thousand generations of them that love him and keep his commandments. (See Deut. 7: 9, 10.) Parents cannot do a better part by their children than to obey God themselves and to train their children to do likewise.

V. God's Name Must Not Be Taken in Vain.

7. "In vain." The margin says, "for vanity," or "falsehood." Neither must God's name be used in a slight and flippant way. This forbids all profane swearing. Profanity is a wicked and senseless thing. The reason given is that God "will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

VI. The Sabbath Day.

8-11. The Sabbath day was the seventh day—our Saturday. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," means to "observe" it (Deut. 5: 12) as God commanded. The first mention of the Sabbath since Gen. 2: 3 is in Ex. 16: 23. This mention of the Sabbath in Ex. 16: 23 is the first law or regulation given concerning the Sabbath, so far as the record shows. The reason why they should keep the Sabbath holy is: "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." (Deut. 5: 15.) Also, as in the lesson: "For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." All—man and beast, master and servant, and stranger—must rest.

All should know just what Jesus teaches in regard to the Sabbath, or seventh day—namely, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,” and that he is Lord of the Sabbath day. (Mark 2: 27, 28.) This means that in his love and by his authority he can change or set it aside as the good of man requires. With the new covenant (Heb. 8: 7-13; 10: 8-10) he gave a new day to be observed, and new reasons for observing it, and the way to observe it. This is “the first day of the week,” called “the Lord’s day” (Rev. 1: 10)—the resurrection day of the Son of God. God’s children now are commanded to meet on that day to worship him—“to break bread” (Acts 20: 7), and to perform other acts of worship taught in the New Testament (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). They are exhorted not to forsake this assembly: “Not forsaking our own assembling together,” etc. (Heb. 10: 25.) This day, then, should be spent in the way God directs. It should be a day of rest for man and beast from daily labor, a day of quiet and worship, because that which God teaches to be done on this day requires sober thought, cessation from daily labor, and the assembling of his people for reflection and spiritual service, and not for the hasty, perfunctory, and heartless performance of a few acts. It is good in the wisdom of God, as we have seen, for man and beast to rest one day in seven. It is wrong for business men and corporations to require of their employees service on this day which prevents their worshipping God. A Christian will not do this. The first day of the week is never called the “Sabbath”—not even the “Christian Sabbath”—and we should speak of it always as the New Testament does.

The Sabbath was a type of that “Sabbath rest” which remains for the people of God. (Heb. 4: 1-11.)

It was as much disobedience to God not to work on the six days as it was not to observe the Sabbath. In the New Testament all are taught to have useful employment, to follow honest occupations for necessary wants, and to have something to give to the needy.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

At what time did the children of Israel reach Mount Sinai?

State the facts which made this mountain so memorable.

What is the difference between Horeb and Sinai?

In the New Testament, what mountain is contrasted with Sinai and what covenant with the law of Moses?

To whom did God first speak out of the mountain?

What directions did he give Moses for the people?

Describe the awe-inspiring scenes of the mountain and God’s descent upon it.

Why was all this?

Did the people hear God speak?

Did they see his form?

What did he speak to the people?

What request did they afterwards make of Moses?

1 What words did God speak to the people?

On what were these commandments written?

Who wrote them?

What are they called?

Under what covenant do we live?

How many of the Ten Commandments are incorporated in the new covenant?

Upon what two commandments do all the law and prophets hang?

Where were the tables of stone placed?

2 Upon what does God base his authority to give the Ten Commandments and otherwise to teach the children of Israel?

With what were they familiar?

3 Repeat the first commandment.

What is idolatry among us?

By what rule may we know when we

- make an idol of money or pleasure or anything else?
- 4-6 Repeat the second commandment.
 Why is idolatry forbidden?
 With what idolatry were the Israelites familiar?
 What various things did the Egyptians worship?
 How does God visit the iniquities of the fathers upon their children?
 To what generation is this done?
 Upon what condition does he show mercy?
 To what generation does he show it?
- 7 Repeat the third commandment.
 How many people take the name of God in vain?
 Why should it not be taken in vain?
- 8-11 Repeat the fourth commandment.
 What is meant by remembering the Sabbath day and keeping it holy?
 What reasons are given for keeping the Sabbath?
 Why do Christians not keep the Sabbath, or seventh day?
 How, then, are we to observe the first day of the week?
 Why should all rest one day in seven?
 What should business men and corporations not do?
 What is the first day of the week never called?
 Then, how should we speak of this day?
 Why should all work during the six days?

For a cap and bells our lives we pay;
 Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking.
 'Tis heaven alone that is given away;
 'Tis only God may be had for the asking. (Lowell.)

'Tis not for man to trifle; life is brief,
 And sin is here.
 Our age is but the falling of a leaf,
 A dropping tear.
 We have no time to sport away the hours;
 All must be earnest in a world like ours.

Not many lives, but only one have we—
 One, only one.
 How sacred should that one life ever be—
 Day after day filled up with blessed toil,
 Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil!
 (Horatius Bonar.)

LESSON IX.—AUGUST 29.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS—DUTIES TO MAN.

Ex. 20: 12-21.

12 ¶Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.

13 ¶Thou shalt not kill.

14 ¶Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15 ¶Thou shalt not steal.

16 ¶Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

17 ¶Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

18 ¶And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off.

19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before you, that ye sin not.

21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*” (Lev. 19: 18.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Mount Sinai.

PERSONS.—Jehovah and the children of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 3: 1-7.

HOME READING—

August 23. M. The Ten Commandments—Duties to Man. (Ex. 20: 12-21.)

August 24. T. Duties to Man. (Deut. 5: 16-21.)

August 25. W. Children's Duties to Parents. (Eph. 6: 1-9.)

August 26. T. Our Social Duties. (Col. 3: 18 to 4: 1.)

August 27. F. Duties to the State. (Rom. 13: 1-7.)

August 28. S. Who is My Neighbor? (Luke 10: 25-37.)

August 29. S. Blessings of Obedience. (Prov. 3: 1-7.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

“A New Covenant.”

“In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away.” (Heb. 8: 13.) “He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will [the second] we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Heb. 10: 9, 10; read also Rom. 7: 2-6; Eph. 2: 11-22; Col. 2: 13-15.) Yet all the commandments of this lesson have been incorporated in the new covenant under Christ, and are binding.

It is a mistake to say, as do some, that “the Ten Commandments are national, not churchly, laws.” God gave them to the Jewish nation; but Christ has embraced every one of them, except the one to observe the Sabbath, in the new covenant, and, therefore, in his laws governing his people, or church.

Christians now observe the first day of the week by doing on that day that which God commands.

As we have learned, the first four of the Ten Commandments pertain to duties to God; the last six, to duties to man.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother."

12. This commandment is repeated and emphasized in the New Testament, or "new covenant:" "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Eph. 6: 1-3.)

The promise attached to this command is: "That thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee." This is the first commandment that children are called upon to obey, and the first to which the promise is attached.

What is it to honor father and mother? It is to respect, love, and obey them; but it is more. We are commanded both to obey and to honor our parents. Jesus shows how the Pharisees and others, by disobedience to this commandment, had made void God's commandments by their traditions: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God said, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is given to God; he shall not honor his father. And ye have made void the word of God, because of your tradition." (Matt. 15: 3-6.) Mark (7: 12) says: "Ye no longer suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother."

Jesus shows first, then, that to speak evil of father or mother, or to curse them, is to dishonor them. (Ex. 21: 17; Lev. 20: 9.) "Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother." (Deut. 27: 16.)

Jesus next shows that to honor father and mother is to look after their temporal comfort, welfare, and happiness, and to support them in affliction, decrepitude, and old age. The Pharisees taught that children were released from all obligation to help and to support their parents if they should say what they had was given to God.

We also learn from this that we cannot serve God with our money or give it to him, except by using it as he directs. To withhold money, or help and support, due to parents, and then to offer that money to God in some other way, is dishonoring both God and parents. He who, in the name of Christ, opens his own home to his father and mother, or makes their home comfortable, and gives his time and money in making their last days pleasant, honors God with his time and money. He who tires of his parents and casts them off in old age or affliction cannot be a Christian. He should repent and show by the proper treatment of his parents that he has repented. When Paul says, "Honor widows that are widows indeed" (1 Tim. 5: 3), he means to support and care for these widows; so to honor parents is to do the same, when necessary. Therefore, Paul further says: "But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them [these children]

learn first to show piety toward their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God." (1 Tim. 5: 4.) To show piety at home, then, is to serve parents and grandparents.

God, both in this verse and in the New Testament, promises to bless children who obey him in honoring their parents. It will be well with them, and they have the promise of long life. It is well with them in many ways; it fits them for obedience to the civil law and to the law of God.

Disobedience at home leads to disobedience to our civil laws and to God; disobedience at home starts children on the downward road to perdition. A gluttonous, drunken, and rebellious son was to be stoned to death (Deut. 21: 18-27), and Paul says (2 Tim. 3: 1-5) disobedience to parents is one sign of "grievous times."

Among the grievous sins and widespread evils of the present generation, disobedience to parents and disregard for them in every way are some of the greatest. Parents themselves, in a large measure, next school-teachers in general, and almost all preachers are responsible for this sad and woeful condition. If these sins are ever checked and the hearts of the young again turned in the right direction, this great work will have to be emphasized with power in repeated sermons by every preacher in the land, taught their pupils by every teacher in every schoolroom in every place, and instilled daily into the hearts of their children by all parents in all homes in existence.

A most lamentable truth is, homes are passing out, and parents, teachers, and preachers have failed to teach the will of God in regard to home building and home duties as well as other vital things of life. Until parents, teachers, and preachers become aroused to this most solemn work, nothing more can be expected from the majority of children but to go from bad to worse.

It is farcical and pharisaical to claim to be preachers of the gospel and at the same time to neglect and to avoid teaching parents their duty to their children, children their duty to parents, and all teachers of all schools their duties to all their pupils in regard to these and all other duties of life. Without these duties, children are being taught and trained, as intellectual animals, to seek pleasure, to make money, to plunder, to engage in military service, to shed blood, to make widows and orphans, and to devastate the homes and countries of others.

II. "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

13. This law is not only repeated in the New Testament, but Jesus says: "But I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire." (Matt. 5: 22.) "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3: 15.) God goes beyond the overt act and judges the thought and motives which prompt the act. God applies the ax to the root of this evil tree. (Read also Rom. 12: 17-21.) Jesus further says: "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but whosoever smiteth thee on

thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (See the whole paragraph—Matt. 5: 38-42.)

In view of all this, Christians cannot engage in carnal warfare. They cannot render evil for evil. Christians, who, therefore, have the spirit of Christ, do not desire or even intend to do such deeds.

There are more ways than one to commit murder. The highwayman commits murder for money, and so does the man sometimes who adulterates food.

III. "Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery."

14. By this commandment, fornication and all uncleanness are forbidden. Where the civil law grants divorces and permits those divorced to marry again, except for the cause of fornication, it legalizes one form of adultery. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery." (Matt. 19: 9.) Again, Jesus says: "But I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matt. 5: 28.)

The secret of all purity and goodness is to keep the thoughts, imaginations, and purposes pure, "bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10: 5.) "Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 6: 9, 10.) "Peloubet's Select Notes" some years ago said: "Whoever would be pure in heart must keep his eyes pure from debasing pictures, statues, and books; his ears from hearing foul stories, and his mouth from telling them. Impure plays in our theaters are responsible for many a ruined life. Dancing, especially 'round' dances, leads directly to licentiousness." Teachers should emphasize the danger and sin of these dances.

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." (1 Cor. 6: 18.) This sin is most ruinous to body, mind, and soul.

There is nothing in the immodest dress and some other customs of modern society, in the conventional meaning of the term, which serves as a restraint to licentiousness. On the contrary, the tendency of prevailing fashions, the pushing of women to the leadership of men, and much of the teaching of the day are in the opposite direction.

As with the solemn duty of obedience to parents, the way to purity of thought and life, and, therefore, of restraint of unwholesome and unlawful freedom between men and women, must begin in the home, must be taught in all schools, and must be preached with power from all pulpits. Immodest dress must be exchanged for "modest apparel;" powders and paints and lipsticks, for "shamefastness and sobriety;" parading the streets, displaying physical attractions, and mixing with men in all public places, for "chaste behavior coupled with fear" and home keeping, with all the duties and charms, beauties and loveliness, grace and glory of the Christian home. Young men must be taught and trained to be "sober-minded" and to treat the "elder women as

mothers; the younger women, as sisters, in all purity." This is as much the duty and life of men as modesty, humility, "chaste manner of life," and home keeping are of women.

IV. "Thou Shalt Not Steal."

15. There are innumerable ways almost of stealing. The New Testament teaches us to "take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men." (Rom. 12: 17.) Adulteration of food is not only stealing, but, as we have seen, may result in murder. A man would better sell whisky or steal a horse than to adulterate food. "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need." (Eph. 4: 28.) People must work at something honest, or either steal or beg. They must work or beg or steal or starve. Many cheat, defraud, lie, and steal in order to keep from honest work. The love of money also leads many to steal. Honesty, uprightness, and integrity are the greatest capital one can have. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold." (Prov. 22: 1.) The worst sort of stealing is to steal the word of God from the people by teaching error. (Jer. 23: 28-32.) "Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law." (Rom. 13: 7, 8.)

V. "Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness Against Thy Neighbor."

16. To bear false witness against one's neighbor is not only to lie, but also to injure another. There are also many ways of bearing false witness. Of course he who perjures himself does this; so does he who slanders his neighbor. "A whisperer separateth chief friends" (Prov. 16: 28), "and he that uttereth a slander is a fool" (Prov. 10: 18). "Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." (Eph. 4: 25.) Many are too quick to take up and to circulate an evil report. A report is evil because it is not true and because it does much evil. Much mischief may be done in this way, and the mischief maker may think he has done no harm.

VI. "Thou Shalt Not Covet."

17-21. Covetousness is also a great sin, and is condemned by the New Testament. To desire anything that is one's neighbor's that one should not lawfully have, as his wife, or to desire without giving value received what is lawful to possess, is to be covetous. All this is forbidden. But covetousness is more than this. One may give value received for all one possesses and desire nothing one should not lawfully possess, and yet be covetous. Jesus says: "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness." Then he gives the parable of the rich fool, who is an example of covetousness. This man was not foolish because he owned

a farm, was industrious, economical, made honestly all he possessed; but his sin was in hoarding it up and in not being "rich toward God." (Luke 12: 13-21.) So, then, any man who does as this rich fool is covetous before God. The lesson here emphasized by Jesus is: "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The love of money is strongly condemned by the Bible, and covetousness is put down as idolatry. (Col. 3: 5.) A covetous person will be lost with thieves, murderers, whoremongers, and drunkards.

The church should do all in its power to save all members, as well as all others, from these and all sins; and if it cannot, then it should withdraw from all who walk disorderly. (2 Thess. 3: 6-15.) Love for one's neighbor embraces every duty to him. "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law." (Rom. 13: 9, 10.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
According to what will, or covenant, can men now be saved?
How does Paul illustrate this in Rom. 7: 2-6?
What was nailed to the cross when Jesus died?
Which of the Ten Commandments are embraced in the new covenant?
What duties do the commandments of this lesson embrace?
- 12 Give the fifth commandment.
Where in the New Testament is that repeated?
How does Jesus demonstrate that the Jews made void the commandments of God by their traditions?
Then state fully what it is to honor father and mother.
In what way only can we serve God with our time and money?
How can we honor widows?
What can children who cast off their parents not be?
What promise is attached to this commandment?
How is it the first commandment with promise?
What is a bad sign?
What different ones are responsible for widespread disobedience to parents?
How alone can this evil be corrected?
What has been lamentably neglected?
What is farcical and pharisaical in some preachers and teachers?
What has a tendency to make the young intellectual animals?
- 13 Repeat the sixth commandment.
What does Jesus say in regard to murder?
How does God apply the ax to the root of the tree?
In how many ways may murder be committed?
Why cannot Christians engage in carnal warfare?
- 14 Repeat the seventh commandment.
What sins are embraced in this?
What does Jesus say in regard to this?
How can we keep a pure heart and a clean life?
- 15 Repeat the eighth commandment.
What does the New Testament say in regard to this sin?
In how many ways may people break this commandment?
What is the greatest capital?
Repeat Prov. 22: 1.
What is the worst kind of stealing?
Repeat Rom. 13: 7, 8.
- 16 Repeat the ninth commandment.
What is bearing false witness?
What is said of a whisperer and a slanderer?
- 17-21 Repeat the tenth commandment.
What is "covetousness?"
In what respect was the rich fool covetous?
From what root do all kinds of evil spring?
What kinds of idolatry have we in this country?
What should the church do with respect to all who break these commandments?
How is love the fulfillment of the law?

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 5.

THE TENT OF MEETING.

Ex. 33: 7-16.

7 ¶Now Moses used to take the tent and to pitch it, without the camp, afar off from the camp; and he called it, The tent of meeting. And it came to pass, that every one that sought Jehovah went out unto the tent of meeting, which was without the camp.

8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the Tent, that all the people rose up, and stood, every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the Tent.

9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered into the Tent, the pillar of cloud descended, and stood at the door of the Tent: and *Jehovah* spake with Moses.

10 And all the people saw the pillar of cloud stand at the door of the Tent: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man at his tent door.

11 And *Jehovah* spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his minister Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the Tent.

12 ¶And Moses said unto *Jehovah*, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found favor in my sight.

13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, to the end that I may find favor in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

14 And he said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest.

15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence.

16 For wherein now shall it be known that I have found favor in thy sight, I and thy people? is it not in that thou goest with us, so that we are separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth?

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Jehovah* spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” (Ex. 33: 11.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Sinai.

PERSONS.—*Jehovah*, Moses, and the children of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 5: 1-7.

HOME READING.—

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| August 30. | M. | <i>Jehovah</i> the Architect. (Ex. 30: 1-10.) |
| August 31. | T. | Skill and Devotion. (Ex. 31: 1-11.) |
| September 1. | W. | The Tent of Meeting. (Ex. 33: 7-16.) |
| September 2. | T. | <i>Jehovah</i> 's Glory Fills the Tabernacle. (Ex. 40: 34-38.) |
| September 3. | F. | Giving God the Best. (Hag. 1: 3-11.) |
| September 4. | S. | Joy in God's House. (Ps. 122: 1-9.) |
| September 5. | S. | Safety in God's House. (Ps. 5: 1-7.) |

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

In order to be more seriously impressed with the lesson and to get the greatest good out of the study of the Bible at this point, it is necessary to consider

The Connecting Links

between the last lesson and this one.

Let us remember that the awe-inspiring scenes upon Mount Sinai, when *Jehovah* first came down upon it, were given in Lesson VIII. (Ex. 19: 16-25.)

Jehovah first spoke the Ten Commandments to the people.

"And all the people perceived the thunders, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. . . . And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was." (Ex. 20: 18-21.)

God then told Moses what to teach the people. This teaching is recorded in Ex. 20: 22 to 23: 33.

Moses told the people all these commandments and ordinances of Jehovah, and the people said they would keep them. Moses wrote the commandments and ordinances of the Lord in a book, built an altar under the mount, and sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice upon it and upon the book and the people. But this can all be better told in Bible language:

"And Moses came and told the people all the words of Jehovah, and all the ordinances: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which Jehovah hath spoken will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the mount, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto Jehovah. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words." (Ex. 24: 3-8.)

In comparing the second covenant with the first covenant, the new covenant with the old covenant, and the blood of Christ with the blood of animals, the apostle, in Heb. 9: 11-22, refers to this passage in Exodus.

In Ex. 24: 1, 2, God told Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel to come a part of the way up the mountain and worship afar off; but Moses alone should come unto Jehovah. Verses 9 and 10 state that they did this.

"And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness."

While these nobles of Israel beheld the glory of Jehovah, but not his face, the hand of Jehovah was not upon them to harm them, and they ate and drank. (Verse 11.)

Jehovah then told Moses to come up into the mountain—that is, higher up—to him, "and be there," saying: "And I will give thee the tables of stone." Instructing all to remain there until he should return, Moses, with Joshua, his minister, ascended the mount into the cloud, the glory of Jehovah abiding upon Mount Sinai. They remained there six days, and on the seventh day Jehovah called Moses out of the midst of the cloud into his glory upon the top of the mountain.

It seems that Joshua remained where he was in the cloud. "Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights." (Verses 12-18.)

Chapters 25-31 give the directions from Jehovah to Moses for the construction of the tabernacle, including its furniture, the priestly garments, and the consecration of the priests.

Emphasis should be placed upon the following declaration: "According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it." (Chapter 25: 9; see also Acts 7: 44; Heb. 8: 2-5.)

When Jehovah had finished giving these directions, he gave to Moses "the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders did not remain on the mountain side as Moses directed. (Ex. 24: 14.)

Having urged Moses to act as mediator between them and God and to speak to them for God, the people began to complain at his delay in returning from the mountain and to use it as a pretext for sinning. They said to Aaron: "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him." (Ex. 32: 1.)

Josh. 24: 14 and Ezek. 20: 8 state that the children of Israel were idolatrous in Egypt.

Ex. 32 gives an account of the fact and the sin of making the golden calf, and the consequences of this sin.

Stephen (Acts 7: 39, 40) says that in this the people thrust Moses "from them, and turned back in their hearts unto Egypt." Aaron said they were "set on evil." (Ex. 32: 24.) But Aaron himself was not guiltless. He offered a most flimsy and shuffling excuse for this enormous sin. "Jehovah was very angry with Aaron to destroy him," and Moses "prayed for" him "at the same time." (Deut. 9: 20.) Moses said to the people: "Ye have sinned a great sin."

All this was ingratitude and unfaithfulness in the people, because they did not patiently await Moses' return and did not trust God, who had delivered them from Egypt. It was rejection of God, because he had promised to go before them, and his glory was there before their eyes on the mountain.

An Aid to Worship.

Aaron said to the children of Israel: "These are thy gods [or, "This is thy god"—margin], O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Aaron evidently intended for them to worship Jehovah through this idol—a visible representation. Hence, "he built an altar before it, . . . and said, To-morrow shall be a feast to Jehovah." (See Ex. 32: 4-6.) The altar was for offerings, and the golden calf was an "aid" to the worship of God. Several years ago Peloubet's "Notes" said: "So those that bow down before crucifixes, images, paintings, relics, altars, shrines, plead they do it as an aid to the worship of the true God."

Those who use instrumental music in the worship to-day claim that it is an "aid" to that which under Christ must be "in spirit and truth."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. God Withdrew His Presence.

From the verses (Ex. 33: 1-6) preceding the lesson we learn the solemn fact that on account of the sin of making and worshiping the golden calf God declared he could not go up in the midst of the Israelites, lest he consume them in the way. This caused them to mourn and to strip off "their ornaments from Mount Horeb onward." God said they were a stiff-necked people; and if he should go up into their midst "for one moment," he would destroy them.

Stripping off their ornaments—the spoils which they received in abundance from the Egyptians, jewels of silver and jewels of gold, together with raiment (Ex. 3: 22; 12: 35, 36; Ps. 105: 37)—was a sign of their humiliation and sorrow and of their defenseless and helpless condition without God. It was the custom then to tear and to strip off the clothes and to lay aside ornaments of silver and gold and costly dress in deep distress. (See 1 Sam. 19: 24; Mic. 1: 8.)

"That I may know what to do unto thee" is significant. The merciful God was ready yet to show mercy to this weak and sinful people upon their contrition and penitence; and, accommodating his speech to their conceptions, he would know what to do should they show signs of repentance by stripping off their ornaments as he required.

Taking all this together, it seems that Jehovah had said these things before Moses' prayer of intercession in the last part of chapter 32.

These facts, as we see them, are about as follows: (1) When the people made the golden calf, before Moses had gone down from the mountain to them, God said to Moses he would destroy them and make of Moses a great nation; (2) Moses besought God to spare the people, urging the reasons for this, and God granted it; (3) Moses and Joshua then went down to the people, and the facts of Ex. 32: 15-30 occurred; (4) the declaration of Jehovah in chapter 33 that he would withdraw his presence, that Moses could take charge of the people and lead them on, but he would send "an angel" before Moses, which we are not to understand was the angel of God's presence; (5) Moses hastened to return to Jehovah upon the mount and to make the prayer of Ex. 32: 32-35; (6) God promised then that his angel should return and go with Moses; (7) nevertheless, he would visit upon the people their sin; (8) that when the people showed signs of repentance he would know how to treat them; and (9) that the people repented.

These threats and promises of God were based upon the condition that the people either continued in their idolatry and other sins or repented of them and clung to the true God.

But because of the sin "Jehovah smote the people." Stephen (Acts 7: 42) says: "God turned, and gave them up to serve the host of heaven." This sin weakened them and prepared them to yield more easily to other idolatry, which also led to sorer punishment. Except the slaying of three thousand of the prominent ones in this sin, God inflicted no further punishment at this time; but this sin seems to have been remembered by Jehovah in dealing out justice for all transgressions afterwards.

II. The Tent of Meeting.

7. This tent was not the tabernacle, the directions for building which God had just given Moses and the pattern of which he had showed him in the mount, for it had not yet been built; but this was Moses' tent, or some tent in which Moses heard the causes of the people and in which God communed with him. From the language of the Revised Version it seems that from this time on, at least, Moses was accustomed to pitch this tent "without the camp, afar off from the camp; and he called it, The tent of meeting." This was done until the erection of the tabernacle, which stood in the center of the camp (Num. 2), all keeping a reverential distance therefrom. Because God there met with Moses and the people went there for judgment and justice it was called "The tent of meeting." This removal of the tent "afar off from the camp" emphasizes God's threat to withdraw from the people. It is not astonishing that the children of Israel mourned and stripped off their ornaments. Later the Psalmist prayed: "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Jehovah; let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me." (Ps. 40: 11.) And again: "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me." (Ps. 51: 11.)

8. "It came to pass, when Moses went out unto the Tent, that all the people rose up, and stood, every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the Tent." This was done in deep reverence and, no doubt, with great anxiety.

9, 10. With what joy and renewed hope must the people have witnessed the descent of the cloud until it stood at the door of the tent and Jehovah spoke with Moses! This was an assurance of God's presence and that he would hear Moses, their mediator. How gladly now all the people worshiped God, "every man at his tent door," in preference now to the golden calf! Through what experiences had the people passed!

III. Speaking to Moses Face to Face.

11. At different times it is stated that God spoke to Moses "face to face," or "mouth to mouth," or knew him "face to face," and "not in dark speeches" (Num. 12: 8; Deut. 34: 10-12), or through dreams or angels; but in an audible voice and in his own language, "as a man speaketh unto his friend." Abraham is called "the friend of God" (Isa. 41: 8; James 2: 23) and God's "friend forever" (2 Chron. 20: 7). Jesus called his apostles "friends." (Luke 12: 4; John 15: 14, 15.) What a glorious privilege to be called by the Lord his "friends!" Yet, as may be learned from verse 20, Moses did not look directly upon Jehovah's face.

Moses, it seems, went out of the tent back into the camp to speak with the people in regard to some further instruction from Jehovah, leaving his minister, Joshua, in the tent until he should return.

Joshua here is called "a young man," not because he was so young in years, but he was younger than Moses and comparatively young in service. Abraham called his servants "young men." (Gen. 14: 23; 41: 3.)

IV. God's Presence to Go with Moses.

12-16. Through Moses' intercession God had spared the people, had brought them to repentance, and had said to Moses: "Bring up this people." Moses returned, it seems, to the tent and pleaded with God, saying that while God told him to bring up the people, knew him by name, and he had found favor in God's sight, yet God had not told him whom God would send with him. Therefore, since this is true, he pleads with God to show him God's way that he might know God, to the end that he might find favor in God's sight. Moses declares that to go God's way is to know God (see 1 John 2: 3, 4); and as God knew him, he desired to know God. He asked God also to consider that nation as his people. In answer to this God said: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses realized that without God's presence—that is, his guidance and miraculous manifestations of his power—he could not lead the people to the land which had been promised them. Hence, he said: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." By Jehovah's going with Moses and by separating the Israelites from all other people on the face of the earth it would be known that Moses and Israel found favor in Jehovah's sight.

See the note on the angel of God's presence in Lesson III of this quarter.

At the end of this forty years' journey Moses declared that God's presence had led the people through. (Deut. 4: 37, 38.) "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. 63: 9.)

Verses 17-23 state that Jehovah did still more for Moses, in that he showed Moses his glory. These verses explain, too, how this was done.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What is necessary in order to receive the greatest good from the Bible study at this point?

Why did the children of Israel ask Moses to act as mediator between them and God?

What did Moses write in a book?

How did Moses dedicate the altar, the book, and the people?

What did the people say they would do?

How was the New Testament sealed?

Where did God direct Moses to take Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel?

What did they behold?

Into what did God command Moses and Joshua to go?

How long did they remain there?

Into what did God then call Moses?

Where did Joshua remain?

What directions do chapters 25-31 give?

According to what was the tabernacle to be constructed?

What did Jehovah then give to Moses? Who wrote the Ten Commandments on the tables of stone?

Did Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the elders remain on the mountain according to Moses' direction?

What great sin did the Israelites commit?

What shows that the Israelites were idolatrous in Egypt?

Of what does chapter 32 give an account?

What does Stephen say the people did in committing this sin?

What excuse did Aaron make for himself?

Why did God not destroy him?

What did Moses say the people had done?

As an aid to what was the golden calf used?

What shows that the people intended to use it as an aid to the worship of God?

- What plea is made for bowing before crucifixes, images, paintings, etc.?
 What claim is made for instrumental music in the worship?
 Why did God say he could not go up in the midst of the children of Israel?
 What did God say they were?
 What caused the people to mourn and strip off their ornaments?
 What does stripping off their ornaments show?
 What is meant by, "That I may know what to do unto thee?"
 State the nine facts given here in the order they seem to have occurred.
 Upon what were God's threats and promises based?
 What effect did this sin have upon the people?
 To what did God give them up to serve?
 How were the people punished for this sin?
- 7 What tent was this?
 How do we know it was not the tabernacle?
 Where was it pitched?
 Why called "the tent of meeting?"
 Why suppose it was pitched afar off from the camp?
 Repeat Ps. 40: 11 and Ps. 51: 11.
- 8 What did the people do when Moses went out of the camp into the tent?
 Why do this?
- 9, 10 What descended upon the tent and stood at the door?
 What did this bring to the people?
 Who spoke to Moses?
 Whom did the people worship?
- 11 How did God speak with Moses?
 Who specially are called "friends" of God?
 How would you like for God to call you his "friend?"
 Who remained in the tent when Moses went out into the camp?
 Into what did Moses return?
- 12-16 Why had God spared the people?
 What did God tell Moses to do?
 For what did Moses plead with God?
 What is it to know God?
 What did he ask God to consider concerning the people?
 What did God say in answer to Moses' prayer?
 How would it be known that Moses and the people had found favor in God's sight?
 What can you tell of the angel of God's presence?
 At the end of the forty years' journey, what did Moses say God had done for the people?

Somebody did a golden deed;
 Somebody proved a friend in need;
 Somebody sang a beautiful song;
 Somebody smiled the whole day long;
 Somebody thought, " 'Tis Sweet to live;"
 Somebody said, "I'm glad to give;"
 Somebody fought a valiant fight;
 Somebody lived to shield the right.
 Was that "somebody" you?

(Author unnamed.)

"Half the wrecks upon life's ocean,
 If some star had been their guide,
 Might now be riding safely;
 But they drifted with the tide."

LESSON XI.—SEPTEMBER 12.

GIFTS FOR THE TABERNACLE.

Ex. 35: 20-29. Read Ex. 35: 4 to 36: 7.

20 [And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.

21 And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and brought Jehovah's offering, for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all the service thereof, and for the holy garments.

22 And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought brooches, and ear-rings, and signet-rings, and armlets, all jewels of gold; even every man that offered an offering of gold unto Jehovah.

23 And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, brought them.

24 Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought Jehovah's offering; and every man, with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it.

25 And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, the blue, and the purple, the scarlet, and the fine linen.

26 And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun the goats' hair.

27 And the rulers brought the onyx stones, and the stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate;

28 And the spice, and the oil; for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense.

29 The children of Israel brought a freewill-offering unto Jehovah; every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all the work, which Jehovah had commanded to be made by Moses.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Honor Jehovah with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." (Prov. 3: 9.)

TIME.—B.C. 1491.

PLACE.—Plain before Mount Sinai.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Moses, and the children of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 84.

HOME READING.—

- September 6. M. Gifts for the Tabernacle. (Ex. 35: 20-29.)
- September 7. T. Robbing God. (Mal. 3: 7-12.)
- September 8. W. Giving in the Early Church. (Acts 4: 32-37.)
- September 9. T. Generous Giving. (Ex. 36: 1-7.)
- September 10. F. Miserly Giving. (Acts 5: 1-11.)
- September 11. S. Our Example in Giving. (2 Cor. 8: 7-15.)
- September 12. S. Gifts for the Church. (Ps. 84: 1-12.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The study of the tabernacle and its purpose is too much for one lesson. Not only the construction of the tabernacle itself as a whole, but also the construction, use, and design of every piece of furniture in it, would make a practical and very instructive lesson.

This one lesson may beget a desire to learn more of the tabernacle and the use of its furniture and God's purpose in building it.

To understand the construction of the tabernacle and its purpose, embracing the use and purpose of every piece of furniture in it, the last sixteen chapters of Exodus must be studied. These chapters should be read consecutively, so as to get the whole outline of the tabernacle before the mind. Then each separate part of the tabernacle—the

court, the holy place, and the most holy place—and every piece of furniture and its location should be studied.

There is much in the New Testament, especially in the book of Hebrews, which cannot be understood without first understanding the construction of the tabernacle and the system of worship then.

It must be remembered that the Israelites reached Sinai in the third month after leaving Egypt. (Ex. 19: 1.) Soon afterwards Moses was in that mount forty days and nights with Jehovah. After the sins and incidents recorded in chapters 32-34 he was in the mount the second time forty days and nights. Chapter 40: 1, 2, 17 states that "on the first day of the first month" of "the second year" after the Israelites had left Egypt, the work of constructing the tabernacle had been completed, and God then commanded Moses to set it up. Therefore, the Israelites had only about six months at most in which to prepare the material and to build the tabernacle.

"Tabernacle" means "tent," and it is called "the tent of meeting." There God promised to meet with the people. "And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." (Ex. 25: 8; see also Ex. 25: 22; 29: 42, 43; 30: 6.) "In every place where I record my name I will come unto thee and I will bless thee." (Ex. 20: 24.)

When the tabernacle was completed and set up according to God's directions, his glory filled it and abode upon it. (Ex. 40: 34-38; Num. 9: 15-23.) There God met with and blessed the people, as he promised to do. (Ex. 25: 18-22; 29: 42-46.)

This was true of the temple of Solomon. (2 Chron. 6: 6, 20; 7: 1-3.)

This is true now of the spiritual temple, or church, of God. (Acts 2: 2; Eph. 2: 19-22.)

It was sin for the Israelites to refuse to carry their offerings "unto the door of the tent of meeting." (Lev. 17: 1-7.)

The tabernacle was called "the tabernacle of the testimony" (Ex. 38: 21) because it contained "the ark of the covenant," "the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (Ex. 31: 18; 32: 15; 25: 10-17).

When Moses was in the mountain the first forty days and nights, God commanded him to build the tabernacle, and gave him the plan, or pattern, of it in every minute detail. (See Ex. 25: 9, 40; 26: 30; 27: 8; Acts 7: 44; Heb. 8: 5.) It is very significant that God gave the dimensions of the tabernacle and all its furniture, specifying the different materials of which everything was to be made, from the ark of the covenant to the least clasp of brass.

Also, later on, God gave to David in writing the plan and specifications of the temple, which David turned over to Solomon, charging him to carry out every minute detail of the same. (Read carefully 1 Chron. 28: 11-21.)

The tabernacle and temple of Solomon were types of the church, "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man" (Heb. 8: 2); and it, too, was built according to God's plan and specifications. God was the architect of it and Christ the builder. (Matt. 16: 16-20; Eph. 2: 19-21.)

Every building must have an architect, a plan, a builder, and a purpose. Of the tabernacle, the temple, and the church, God was the architect, and the plan in every particular was absolutely as perfect

as God himself; the builders of each were inspired; the constructions in every detail were complete; and the purpose, coming from God, was as full and pure, as high and holy, as the wisdom and love of God.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Collecting Material for the Tabernacle.

20. When Moses came down from the mountain after the second forty days and nights, he assembled the Israelites together and told them what God had commanded concerning the tabernacle. This is expressed first in Ex. 25: 1-9; but the work was interrupted by the sin of making the golden calf and the consequences of that sin. After this, as we have learned, Moses for the second time was called back upon the mountain, spending again forty days and forty nights. After this he was sent back with the other two tables of stone, with the instruction to begin and complete the building of the tabernacle. The directions concerning the materials of which the tabernacle was to be built and how to collect them were repeated in Ex. 35: 4-19.

It is well enough to study in detail the various materials and the use made of them which went into this structure. Materials different from these would not have been acceptable to God.

II. The Offerings.

21. After the instruction given in the previous part of the chapter, as verse 20 stated, the children of Israel departed from Moses to gather the materials, and, as this verse states, returned with them, "every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and brought Jehovah's offering, for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all the service thereof, and for the holy garments."

Let us note how much this short statement embraces: (1) Their hearts stirred them up; (2) their spirit made them willing; (3) that which they brought was Jehovah's offering; (4) these offerings were for the work of the tent of meeting, where God promised to meet with the people; (5) for all the service thereof; and (6) for the holy garments. Nothing was omitted, and there was an abundance for everything.

22-24. These verses state that both men and women gave of that which each one possessed. The women gave their mirrors of brass. (Ex. 38: 8.) These verses show, too, the different kinds of jewelry worn then. To part with this jewelry and other costly material shows a great interest in the Lord's work. In noting what each gave, we learn the lesson which is stated in the New Testament: "For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not." (2 Cor. 8: 12.)

25, 26. The women not only gave their jewelry, but they spun with their own hands the coverings of goats' hair and the curtains of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen. They were enthusiastic, wise-hearted, and were stirred up with love for God's work.

27, 28. These verses state the precious stones, the spices, and the oil which the rulers gave. The precious stones were for the ephod and breastplate for the priest. The spices and oil were for the light, anointing oil, and incense.

III. A Freewill Offering.

29. This verse states again that this was a freewill offering unto Jehovah. All men and women, "whose heart made them willing to bring for all the work, which Jehovah had commanded to be made by Moses," willingly and freely made these offerings.

No other offering is acceptable now to God. "God loveth a cheerful giver." One must purpose in his heart to give to the Lord. The offering must not be grudgingly made. When it is made cheerfully and willingly, be it little or much, it is acceptable to God, as the widow's mites. Back of all giving must be the right motive. Alms must not be given to have praise of men. If all one's goods are given to feed the poor without love, it profits nothing.

The sum of gold, silver, and brass given for this work is stated in chapter 38: 24-31. There was more than a million dollars' worth, besides the other materials. The purchasing power of money then was much greater than it is now. These people were not rich, but willing. They had been for many years in long, cruel bondage; yet on leaving Egypt they had "despoiled the Egyptians." (Ex. 3: 22; 12: 35, 36.)

It is remarkable that they gave so freely that they had to be restrained, because they gave more than enough. (Ex. 36: 5-7.)

They put their gold now to a much better use than making a calf.

After the tabernacle had been set up and sanctified, the offerings stated in Num. 7 were made.

This liberality should teach many Christians a lesson.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

What should the study of this lesson beget in all?

What is necessary in order to understand the construction and purpose of the tabernacle?

What is necessary in order to understand some things in the New Testament?

How long were the children of Israel in constructing the tabernacle?

Where did God promise to meet with and bless the people?

What occurred when the tabernacle was completed and set up?

What occurred when the temple of Solomon was completed?

What occurred when the church was set up?

Where was it a sin for the children of Israel not to carry their offerings?

Why was the tabernacle called "the tabernacle of the testimony?"

When did God first command Moses to build the tabernacle?

What is most significant in regard to the construction of the tabernacle?

What did God give to David in writing concerning the temple of Solomon and its furniture?

Of what are the tabernacle and temple types?

After whose model, or pattern, was the church built?

Can the church be changed without rebellion against God?

20 How was the building of the tabernacle interrupted?

After this interruption, where did Moses go for the second time?

Coming down the second time, what directions did he give to the children of Israel?

Where are the directions concerning the materials out of which to build the tabernacle first given?

Where are these directions repeated?

21 What did the Israelites then do?

How many gave to this work?

Give the different significant statements of this verse.

22-24 What did each one give to this work?

What shows the great interest of the people in this work?

According to what is one's offering acceptable to God?

- What different kinds of jewelry were worn then?
- 25, 26 Besides giving their jewelry, what else did wise-hearted women do?
- Where did they learn to spin?
- 27, 28 What offerings did the rulers make?
- For what purpose were these offerings made?
- 29 What is again emphasized by this verse?
- What offerings alone will God accept? What motives are acceptable to God? What is it supposed the gold, silver, and brass of these offerings were worth?
- Where did the people get this wealth? What remarkable thing is connected with making these offerings?
- Did the people then exhaust their wealth in making the golden calf? To what better use did they put their wealth than in making this calf?
- To what better use can people put their wealth now than to worship it?
- After the tabernacle had been set up and sanctified, what other offerings were made?
- What lesson should this liberality teach Christians?

THE TABERNACLE.

(Read Ex. 39, 40.)

This being such an opportune time to study the construction of the tabernacle and its purpose, attention is called to the following article:

It Was Built by Inspiration.

God not only showed to Moses in the mount the pattern of the tabernacle and charged him to make all things like this pattern, but he also inspired men to build it. He called Bezalel, of the tribe of Judah, and "filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; and to devise skillful works," etc.; and with him Oholiab, of the tribe of Dan. They were also to teach the wise-hearted men and women whose hearts stirred them up to do this work. The women spun the blue, purple, scarlet, fine linen, and goats'-hair curtains. (Ex. 25: 35, 36.)

When God's people work in self-sacrifice, God's cause prospers in their hands; when they refuse to work, God places his cause in the hands of those who will.

The Structure.

We must understand the dimensions, different apartments, and different pieces of furniture of the tabernacle; the situation of the furniture in the tabernacle; and the dimensions of the court around the tabernacle and what was in it.

The tabernacle was thirty cubits long, ten cubits wide, and ten cubits high; it was made of boards of acacia wood, each board being one and a half cubits wide and ten cubits long. These boards had each two tenons on the lower end, and were set upright in sockets of silver in forming the sides and western end of the tabernacle. There were twenty boards on the north side, twenty boards on the south side, and eight boards on the western end—six inclosing the end and two corner boards. These boards were overlaid with gold. Each of the two tenons of a board went into a socket of silver, and there was one talent of silver to a socket. This would make so far ninety-six sockets and as many talents of silver. These boards were held in place by five

bars of acacia wood extending along the sides and across the western end, and the middle bar passed through "from end to end." The bars were overlaid with gold and passed through rings of gold. (See Ex. 26: 15-28; 38: 27.) If a cubit was eighteen inches, we can readily see that the tabernacle was forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high. A cubit was probably a little more than eighteen inches.

The tabernacle fronted the east, and the eastern end was not inclosed with boards; it was inclosed with a curtain, called "a screen for the door of the Tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer." This screen was hung by hooks of gold upon "five pillars" of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, set in "five sockets of brass." (Ex. 26: 36, 37.)

The tabernacle was divided into two rooms, or apartments, by "a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen," made "with cherubim the work of the skillful workman;" this veil hung by hooks of gold upon "four pillars" of acacia wood, overlaid with gold and set in four sockets of silver.

The first room was the holy place; the second, the most holy. (Ex. 26: 31, 32.)

Add these four sockets of silver to the ninety-six, and we have a hundred. This, then, was a gold house, with a silver foundation.

It must now be covered. The first covering was ten curtains "of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim." Each curtain was twenty-eight cubits long and four cubits wide. Five of these curtains formed one set and five a second set. One set was "coupled" to the other set by fifty loops of blue on the edge of each set and fifty clasps of gold.

"For a tent over the tabernacle" there were eleven curtains of goats' hair; each curtain was thirty cubits long and four cubits wide. Five curtains were coupled together in one set and six in the other set; and the two sets were coupled together by fifty loops on the edge of each set and fifty clasps of brass, "that it may be one." (Ex. 26: 7-13.) There was still another "covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of sealskins [or porpoise skins] above." (Ex. 26: 14.)

The Tabernacle One.

"And the tabernacle shall be one." (Ex. 26: 1-6; Ex. 36: 13, 18.) The Lord emphasizes in different places the fact that the tabernacle "shall be one." Since this was a type of the "true tabernacle" (Heb. 8: 2), the church, which Christ built, the church is one. (See Rom. 12: 4; 1 Cor. 12: 20, 27; Eph. 4: 4, 5.) As the temple of Solomon was one in all its perfection and glory, so the spiritual house, or temple, of God is one. (Eph. 2: 19-22; 1 Pet. 2: 4-6.)

The Furniture and Priestly Garments.

Entering the tabernacle from the east (this was the only entrance, and it had no window through which to receive light), on the right-hand side, or north side, was the table of showbread; opposite, on the left, or south side, was the golden candlestick; in the back end of the holy place, next to the veil, was the golden altar of incense; in the most holy place, behind this veil, was the ark of the covenant, above

which, on the golden mercy seat, stood the cherubim with overshadowing wings.

The dimensions and uses of these pieces of furniture and their accompanying vessels will be learned later on.

Around the tabernacle was a court a hundred cubits long from east to west and fifty cubits wide, inclosed by a "fine twined linen" fence, five cubits high—just half the height of the tabernacle. This linen curtain, or fence, was hung by silver hooks upon pillars of brass filleted with silver and set in sockets of brass. These pillars were placed five cubits apart.

This court was entered likewise from the east through a gate twenty cubits wide, and for this gate there was "a screen of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the embroiderer." This screen was hung on four pillars. (Ex. 27: 9-18.)

Entering this court, then, from the east, the first thing reached was the altar of burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle, and between that and the tabernacle was the laver.

The priestly garments are described and directions for making them are given in Ex. 28 and 39.

The ingredients of "the holy anointing oil" are given in Ex. 30: 22-34, and the ingredients of the incense are given in Ex. 30: 34-38.

Directions for consecrating Aaron and his sons are given in Ex. 29. "The ark of the testimony" was put in the most holy place. (Ex. 26: 33.) For a description of the ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubim, see Ex. 25: 10-22.

"And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." This is a precious and most encouraging promise.

This was called "the ark of the testimony" and "the ark of the covenant," because in it were placed "the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant." (Deut. 9: 9; 10: 5; Ex. 40: 20; Heb. 9: 4.) In it were placed also a pot of manna "and Aaron's rod that budded." (Heb. 9: 4; Ex. 16: 32-34; Num. 17: 1-11.)

When Solomon placed the ark in the temple, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod were not in it; but the two tables of stone were. (1 Kings 8: 9.)

Into this most holy place the high priest alone could go, and he only once during the year, which was on the day of atonement. (Heb. 9: 7; 10: 3; Lev. 16: 11-14.)

This most holy place was a figure, or type, of heaven; and the high priest was a type of Christ. (Heb. 9: 8-12, 23-28.)

"Thou shalt screen the ark with the veil." The ark was behind the veil.

When Jesus died, "the veil of the temple [this veil of the most holy place] was rent in two from the top to the bottom." (Matt. 27: 51.)

This veil was a type of Jesus' flesh. (Heb. 10: 19-23.) "Through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Read all these references in the book of Hebrews.)

As stated above, the table of showbread was to be placed in the holy place on the right of the entrance, and its vessels to be set in order. For the dimensions of the table and the names of its vessels, see Ex.

25: 23-30. Its vessels were of gold. On this table were placed twelve cakes of showbread in two piles, six cakes in a pile; and pure frankincense was put upon each pile. This bread was renewed every Sabbath, and Aaron and his sons ate of it in the holy place. (Lev. 24: 5-9.) Christians eat of the Lord's Supper every week—on the first day of the week (Acts 20: 7)—and feed always otherwise in obedience to Christ on the bread of heaven.

A description of the candlestick, with its seven lamps, is given in Ex. 25: 31-40. Of a talent of pure gold it was made. A talent of gold was about \$28,800. This was to give light in the holy place, and was lighted every evening. (Ex. 27: 21; Lev. 24: 1-4.)

This typified the light of the gospel. Christians are the light of the world.

The golden altar of incense is described in Ex. 30: 1-10, and the incense is described in Ex. 30: 34-38. This burning incense typified the prayers and praises of God's children. (Ps. 141: 2; Luke 1: 10; Rev. 5: 8; 8: 3.) The incense was offered morning and evening. How often do we pray?

We have learned how "the screen of the door" was made and hung.

This holy place, with the table of showbread, the light of the golden candlestick, and the incense upon the golden altar, was a type of the church—"the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man." (Heb. 8: 2; 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17; Eph. 2: 19-22; 1 Pet. 2: 4, 5.) As we have seen, the tabernacle was one, and the church is one. The tabernacle or temple of Solomon was not a type of houses of worship of to-day.

The altar of burnt offering is described, with its vessels, in Ex. 27: 1-8. Upon it were offered the sin offerings, burnt offerings, peace offerings, meal offerings, all daily offerings, etc. This was placed in front of the door of the tabernacle.

The dimensions of the laver are not given. It was made of brass—the brazen mirrors. (Ex. 38: 8.) Its location and purpose are given in Ex. 30: 17-21. "The molten sea" which Solomon made is described in 1 Kings 7: 23-39. If the priests did not wash as God directed, they must die. Paul speaks now of "the washing [margin, "laver"] of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3: 5) as the way through which we are saved by the mercy and grace of God. That washing must have typified baptism now. Baptism is called a "washing." "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22: 16; see also Heb. 10: 22; Eph. 5: 25-27.)

Dedicated with Blood.

The tabernacle and all in it—the altar and all its vessels, the laver and its base—must be anointed and sanctified, or set apart, to a holy use. Not only so, but "the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry" were sprinkled with blood, or dedicated by blood. (Heb. 9: 20, 21.) Not even a pin or vessel could be used unless it was thus anointed, or sealed.

The church of Christ has been cleansed and bought with the blood of Jesus and filled with his Spirit, and we can have no "vessels of the ministry" in it which have not been dedicated, or sealed, by his blood.

The children of Israel were blessed by the blood of the animals when

they worshiped in the blood-sealed tabernacle and practiced the blood-sealed service.

So we are blessed by the blood of Christ by coming to him through his blood-sealed service. We accept Jesus as our sin offering, believe in him, repent of our sins, and are baptized into him as our righteousness, and become priests unto God to serve in his spiritual temple.

We are told how Aaron and his sons were hallowed to minister in the priest's office in Ex. 29: 1-37.

The holy garments are described in Ex. 28: 1-43. Learn these well. Also, Aaron's sons were anointed as the Lord directed.

"As Jehovah Commanded Moses."

Ex. 40 gives the account of the rearing up or the "setting up" of the tabernacle.

In chapters 39 and 40 it is stated eighteen times that all these things were done as God had commanded Moses.

When Moses had built the tabernacle and set it up, with everything in its place, as God had specified, then God covered it with his cloud and filled it with his glory. Thus God accepted the work Moses had done. The cloud and pillar of fire were signs to the Israelites when to travel. When the cloud was taken up and went before them, they followed it; while it abode upon the tabernacle, they remained in camp.

Note these facts: (1) Moses built the tabernacle according to God's plan, or pattern, and Christ built the church after God's pattern; (2) the tabernacle was dedicated by the blood of animals, and the church by the blood of Jesus; (3) when Moses had finished the tabernacle, God filled it with his glory; and when Jesus finished his work and set up his church, God filled it with his Spirit (Acts 2), and it became the "habitation of God in the Spirit."

Lord, help me live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way
That even when I kneel to pray,
My prayers shall be for others.

Help me in all the work I do
To ever be sincere and true,
And know that all I do for you
Must needs be done for others.

And when my work on earth is done,
And my new work in heaven begun,
May I forget the crown I've won,
While thinking still of others.

(Selected.)

LESSON XII.—SEPTEMBER 19.

OBEDIENCE TO LAW.

(TEMPERANCE LESSON.)

Lev. 26: 3-5, 14-20. Read Lev. 26.

3 ¶If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

4 Then I will give your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

14 ¶But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

15 And if ye shall reject my statutes, and if your soul abhor mine ordinances, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but break my covenant;

16 I also will do this unto you: I will appoint terror over you, even consumption and fever, that shall consume the eyes, and make the soul to pine away; and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be smitten before your enemies: they that hate you shall rule over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

18 And if ye will not yet for these things hearken unto me, then I will chastise you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power: and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass;

20 And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Drink no wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee.”* (Lev. 10: 9.)

TIME.—B.C. 1490.

PLACE.—Plain before Mount Sinai.

PERSONS.—Jehovah, Moses, and the children of Israel.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 23: 29-35.

HOME READING.—

September 13. M. Obedience to Law. (Lev. 26: 14-20.)

September 14. T. Warnings Against Disobedience. (Lev. 26: 21-26.)

September 15. W. Warning Against Disobedience. (Lev. 26: 27-33.)

September 16. T. Blessings Following Obedience. (Deut. 28: 1-6.)

September 17. F. Blessings Following Obedience. (Deut. 28: 7-14.)

September 18. S. Daniel's Fearless Obedience. (Dan. 1: 8-21.)

September 19. S. The Woes of the Drunkard. (Prov. 23: 29-35.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

On the first day of the first month of the second year after the children of Israel left Egypt, Moses set up the tabernacle, placing everything in order “as Jehovah commanded” him. (Ex. 40: 17.)

As learned in the preceding article, when Moses had finished this work, God covered the tabernacle with a cloud and filled it with his glory. So long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle, the children of Israel remained in camp; but when the cloud was taken up, they pursued their journey, camping only when the cloud stopped. Throughout all their journeys the cloud was upon the tabernacle by day and the pillar of fire by night. (Ex. 40: 34-38.)

After the tabernacle had been set up, the children of Israel remained

in the plain before Mount Sinai for one month and twenty days. "And it came to pass in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, that the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel set forward according to their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud abode in the wilderness of Paran." (Num. 10: 11, 12.)

All that is recorded from Ex. 19: 1 to Num. 10: 11, including, of course, all the book of Leviticus, occurred at Sinai.

This lesson is in Leviticus.

The name "Leviticus" is taken from Levi, the priestly tribe, because this book gives directions concerning the duties of priests, the offerings to be made, and the ceremonies to be performed. It is simply a continuation of the directions given in the last chapters of Exodus.

"Previous to the erection of the tabernacle God had given no particular directions concerning the manner of offering the different kinds of sacrifices; but as soon as this divine structure was established and consecrated, Jehovah took it as his dwelling place and described the rites and ceremonies which he would have observed in his worship, that his people might know what was best pleasing in his sight, and that, when thus worshipping him, they might have confidence that they pleased him—everything being done according to his own directions. A consciousness of acting according to the will of God gives strong confidence to an upright mind." (Adam Clarke.)

In Ex. 28 and 29 God describes the priestly garments and gives directions as to how Aaron and his sons were to be hallowed, or consecrated, and in Ex. 40: 12-15 he told Moses to anoint them, and verse 16 says Moses did "according to all that Jehovah commanded him;" and Lev. 8 relates when Moses did this. In Lev. 9, Aaron, "on the eighth day," or the day after his consecration, offered for himself a sin offering and a burnt offering, and for the people a sin offering, burnt offering, peace offering, and meal offering.

"And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of Jehovah appeared unto all the people. And there came forth fire from before Jehovah, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: and when all the people saw it, they shouted, and fell on their faces." (Lev. 9: 22-24.)

God answered David by fire upon the altar at the threshing floor of Ornan (1 Chron. 21: 25-27); also, when Solomon dedicated the temple, "the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house." (2 Chron. 7: 1.) God answered Gideon by fire (Judg. 6: 21), and also Elijah (1 Kings 18: 38).

God sent forth fire from heaven and destroyed Nadab and Abihu, because in disobedience they offered "strange fire before" him. (Lev. 10: 1-11.)

Temperance.

Since this is a temperance lesson, we should learn something from the case of Nadab and Abihu.

From God's command in this connection to Aaron and his sons, not

to drink wine or strong drink when they went into the tabernacle, it seems that Nadab and Abihu were drunk when they offered the strange fire. The reasons which God gives for this prohibition on such occasions confirm this supposition: (1) "That ye die not;" (2) "and that ye may make a distinction between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean;" (3) "and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which Jehovah hath spoken unto them by Moses."

Nadab and Abihu made no distinction between the holy and the common, the clean and the unclean; and strong drink may have caused this sin.

"Strong drink" is any intoxicating liquor. It beclouds the mind, stupefies the brain, and unfits one for duty to God and men.

The priests must be sober and clear-headed, so they could teach the people and worship God acceptably.

Christians are all priests, and teachers, and worshipers; they are the light of the world. What kind of teacher and light is a wine-loving, whisky-drinking priest or professed Christian?

Strong drink unfits one for any good work or service, or even daily labor; it destroys his opportunities of every kind; it weakens and finally destroys all his spiritual nature and transforms him into a brute; it destroys his physical life and sends his soul to hell; it brings distress and immeasurable sorrow upon innocent women, helpless children, and aged parents. Untold suffering comes upon the innocent because of the sins of the guilty.

The cost, misery, woe, and perdition of strong drink are simply immeasurable, indescribable, and inconceivable.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Walking in God's Statutes.

3, 4. God's forbearance, mercy, and continued goodness are manifested in his efforts to teach the children of Israel the good and the right way and in his solemn warnings against disobedience to him.

On account of the principles and the types of "the good things to come" which they contain, it is very profitable to study the laws given in Leviticus concerning the consecration and services of the priests, and the differences between the clean and the unclean, the holy and the unholy, obedience and disobedience.

Holiness belongs to God. "Holiness unto Jehovah" must be inscribed upon all his work and upon all things used in his service. The spirit of holiness must pervade the whole church of God to-day. The spiritual temple of God is holy. (1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.) Children of God must "be partakers of his holiness," and must "follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification [or holiness] without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12: 10, 14.) Christians "should be holy and without blemish" before Christ "in love." (Eph. 1: 4; Col. 1: 22.) They have been called with a "heavenly" and "holy calling" (Heb. 3: 1; 2 Tim. 1: 9), and are themselves called "holy brethren" and a "holy priesthood" (1 Pet. 2: 5). They are commanded to be holy (1 Pet. 1: 15) and to pursue a course of "all holy living and godliness" (2 Pet. 3: 11). Their very bodies are to be presented to God "living sacri-

fices, holy, acceptable to God," which is their "spiritual service." (Rom. 12: 1.)

How far short of this does the church fall in most places! Respect for the word of God, reverence for him, and holiness to the Lord do not characterize the lives of many church members and the worship of many congregations. This grievous lack of reverence and godly living springs from a lack of respect for the word of God.

II. Blessings Conditional.

One very important consideration is, these blessings were conditional. "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them," were the conditions. These conditions were oft repeated. (See Deut. 7: 12 to 8: 10; 28: 1-14.) They could not be misunderstood. They could be complied with or not. They could not be changed; nothing could be added to them and nothing could be subtracted from them. When they were repeated forty years after this lesson, God said: "And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them; that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you." (Deut. 4: 1, 2.)

Note the reason given why they must not add anything to the word of God or take anything from it—namely, "that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God." Should they add anything of their own wisdom to the word of God and keep that in addition, nothing they did would be obedience to God, because that would be placing their wisdom above God's wisdom, and that which they did of God's commandments would not be obedience to him, but obedience to the dictates of their own judgment, because they would be doing that which God says only in so far as their wisdom approved of what he says. The same would be true should they take anything from the commandments of God.

For this reason it is said: "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. 29: 29.) No man, however great his learning or deep his piety, can know the secret things of God. Let all be forever impressed with the fact that the things which have been revealed have been made known for the express purpose "that we may do all the words" of God—that is, that we may obey God. Again, it is seen that this is the test. He who seeks after "the secret things" which belong to God and is not contented with the things which God has revealed has not purposed in his heart to implicitly obey God, but is seeking to appear wiser than God. He is seeking to know and to appear to teach that which man cannot know.

This principle is eternally true; hence, it is emphasized in the New Testament.

The issue is between obedience and disobedience to God. The reason God forbids the addition of anything to or the subtraction of anything from what he commands is that all may learn obedience to him. Obe-

dience to him is the supreme lesson he has sought and is still seeking to teach the human race.

The very act of adding anything to or taking anything from the word of God is disobedience. But it is more; it is the greatest sin man can commit against God, because it is presumptuous sin—it is rebellion. The exaltation of man's wisdom above God's wisdom—adding some things to or taking some things away from the word of God—"is the mystery of lawlessness" mentioned by Paul and which developed into "the man of sin," or the "lawless one," described in 2 Thess. 2: 1-12. Any man who presumes to add to or take from the word of God—in the New Testament, the gospel of Christ, the church of God, the work and worship and the pure Christian life of that church—is, to say the least of it, the beginning of the exaltation of oneself "against all that is called God or that is worshiped" and to set oneself "forth as God." This is true because the man or body of men that would add anything to or take anything from the word of God declares in that act that human wisdom considers that God has not said enough or has said too much, and, in either case, has made a failure to govern or guide aright the human race.

"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) To abide in the teaching of Christ is to be satisfied and contented with that teaching and to continue steadfastly to practice it. To do this is to have God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. To go beyond this—"beyond the things which are written" (1 Cor. 4: 6); to be restless, not satisfied with Christ's teaching, and to desire and to try to teach more than God has revealed through Christ, is not to have God; it is to leave the church, the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God behind. On what does the man who attempts to do this stand, except upon his own speculations and wisdom?

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1: 8, 9.)

Paul, with his learning, culture, and wide experience, determined to know nothing, "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified;" and his preaching was "not with excellency of speech or of wisdom," or "in persuasive words of wisdom;" and yet it was not ineffective, but was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." All this was to the effect that the faith of his hearers "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. 2: 1-5.) The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1: 16.) Paul preached not himself, "but Christ Jesus as Lord," and himself a servant (bond servant) "for Jesus' sake." (2 Cor. 4: 5.) Paul did not shrink from preaching the "whole counsel of God;" he preached all the will of God, because it was God's will for him to do that; but he preached nothing more.

Timothy was solemnly charged before God, in the name of Christ and in view of the judgment, to "preach the word." He and Titus were also charged to avoid "untaught questions," or all questions not embraced in the gospel. Every man is forbidden to speak anything but the "oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4: 11.)

"I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book." (Rev. 22: 18, 19.)

"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."

There are many such passages.

III. The Blessings Will Follow.

5. At no time has God ever broken any promise or covenant he has made to any person or nation when that person or nation complied with the conditions of the promise or covenant. He is faithful and just to fulfill his promises. Men do not receive the blessings of God because they fail to comply with the conditions on which the blessings are based. But should the Israelites walk in God's statutes and keep his commandments, "to do them," then God would send "rains in their seasons," the land would "yield its increase," "the trees and field their fruit," and their "threshing" should "reach unto the vintage" and the vintage unto the sowing time. They should eat bread to the full and dwell in safety in their land—that is, in the land of promise, which they should inherit.

The harvest would be so abundant that they would not be through with the threshing before the time to gather grapes and make wine—"the vintage"—and they would not be through the vintage before the sowing time. The barley harvest began about the middle of our March; the wheat harvest, about the first of June; the vintage, a few weeks after that; and the sowing, in the autumn, or about October. Amos (9: 13) expresses this as follows: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." Thus, if the Israelites were faithful to God, they would have no idle time between harvest and vintage and between vintage and sowing time again.

IV. The Blessings Continued.

In verses 6-13 the promises of these blessings are continued—prosperity and plenty, safety from wild beasts and enemies, victory and peace, and the tabernacle of God in their midst. How beautiful and wonderful the promise: "And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people!" This promise was made not only to Israel of old, but to the "Israel of God" to-day, and has been fulfilled in Christ. Read with interest 2 Cor. 8: 14-18, especially verse 16.

V. The Curses of Disobedience.

14, 15. These verses speak of the "commandments," "statutes," "ordinances," and "covenant" of God. Other passages speak of God's "judgments," "testimonies," "precepts," "word," and "law." These are all embraced in the "law," or in "the word" of God, and are so called according to that which each one signifies. For a definition of each one of these terms, see Clarke's "Commentary" on these verses.

16, 17. If the children of Israel would not do that which God had commanded, the punishment which would follow should be in ratio to the privileges and blessings, which would be terrible—terrible diseases, oppression by their enemies, and distress of soul.

18-20. At this juncture, in the mercy of God, he would accept their repentance and stay the punishment; but if they "would not yet hearken" to him, he would punish them "seven times more" for their sins. He would break their "pride and power," he would make their "heaven iron" and their "earth brass," and all their work would be in vain. Read the remainder of the chapter. Read also Deut. 28. The fulfillment of these curses is found in God's dealings with the Jewish race from the time of this lesson until now.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
On what day did Moses set up the tabernacle?
What did God do for the tabernacle when Moses had completely set it up?
How long did they remain at Sinai after the tabernacle was set up?
By what did they journey and remain in camp?
Relate in brief what occurred at Sinai.
In what book is this lesson found?
Why so called?
What does it give in particular?
What consumed the offering on the altar?
What other persons were answered by fire?
How were Nadab and Abihu destroyed?
Why suppose that Nadab and Abihu were drunk?
Relate what this lesson says strong drink does for persons.
- 3, 4 What shows God's mercy and goodness?
Why is it profitable to study the consecration of the priests and the difference between the holy and unholy?
What must be inscribed upon every service of God?
What must pervade the whole work of the church?
- Of what must the children of God partake and follow?
What are they called in regard to holiness?
What kind of temple do they constitute?
In what respects does the church in many places fall short?
Upon what conditions are the blessings of this lesson promised?
Could these conditions be changed in any way?
Give the specified reason why they must not add to or take from the word of God?
What does adding to and taking from the word of God show?
To whom do secret, or unrevealed, things belong?
Give the specific reason named here for God's revealing his will to men?
Whose wisdom is followed when anything is added to or taken from the word of God?
Between what is the issue?
What is the supreme lesson God seeks to teach men?
Why is adding to or taking from the word of God the greatest sin?
Who is the "lawless one," or "man of sin?"
In what does this "man of sin" begin?
What is it to abide in the teaching of Christ?
What is it not to abide in this teaching?
What are the fearful consequences of not abiding in this teaching?

- What angel or man will suffer the anathemas of God?
 What did Paul determine to preach, and what not to preach?
 Why did he preach all the will of God?
 What did he command Timothy and Titus to preach, and what to avoid? Repeat Rev. 22: 18, 19.
 Who alone has the promise of entering into the kingdom of heaven?
 5 Has God ever failed to keep his promises when men comply with the conditions upon which the promises are made?
 Who fails?
 What blessings did God promise to the Israelites if they would do his commandments?
 Why should they have no idle time? Repeat Amos 9: 13.
 What are continued in verses 6-13?
 What is meant by the tabernacle of God being with his people now?
 14, 15 Of what do these verses speak? What does each term signify? What embraces them all?
 16, 17 What would befall the children of Israel should they refuse to keep God's commandments?
 18-20 Would God accept their repentance and pardon them?
 If they would not repent, how much more would he increase the punishment?
 Did you read Deut. 28?

A BARREL OF WHISKY.

"A barrel of headaches, of heartaches, of woes;
 A barrel of curses, a barrel of blows;
 A barrel of tears from a world-weary wife;
 A barrel of sorrow, a barrel of strife;
 A barrel of all unavailing regret;
 A barrel of cares and a barrel of debt;
 A barrel of crime and a barrel of pain;
 A barrel of hope ever blasted and vain;
 A barrel of falsehood, a barrel of cries
 That fall from the maniac's lips as he dies;
 A barrel of agony, heavy and dull;
 A barrel of poison—of this nearly full;
 A barrel of liquid damnation that fires
 The brain of the fool who believes it inspires;
 A barrel of poverty, ruin, and blight;
 A barrel of terrors that grow with the night;
 A barrel of hunger, a barrel of groans;
 A barrel of orphans' most pitiful moans;
 A barrel of serpents that hiss as they pass
 From the bead on the liquor that glows in the glass."

"A pledge we make no wine to take,
 Nor brandy red that turns the head,
 Nor fiery rum that ruins home,
 Nor whisky hot that makes the sot,
 Nor brewer's beer, for that we fear.

To quench the thirst we'll always bring
 Cold water from the well or spring.
 So here we pledge perpetual hate
 To all that can intoxicate."

LESSON XIII.—SEPTEMBER 26.

REVIEW—EARLY LEADERS OF ISRAEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith.*” (Heb. 12: 1, 2.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 105: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- September 20. M. The Childhood and Education of Moses. (Ex. 2: 1-10.)
 September 21. T. The Passover. (Ex. 12: 21-28.)
 September 22. W. The Giving of the Manna. (Ex. 16: 11-18.)
 September 23. T. Jethro's Wise Counsel. (Ex. 18: 13-24.)
 September 24. F. The Ten Commandments. (Ex. 20: 1-21.)
 September 25. S. The Tent of Meeting. (Ex. 33: 7-16.)
 September 26. S. Jehovah's Wonderful Works. (Ps. 105: 1-8.)

The only leader whose history is given in this quarter is Moses; but the history of this grand man of God is a most helpful and encouraging one. The sublimest thing in his character is his faith. This is concisely stated in Heb. 11: 24-30; but his work of faith extended from the day he refused to be called “the son of Pharaoh's daughter” until on Nebo, having looked over the promised land, at the age of one hundred and twenty years, with eye undimmed and strength unabated, he died.

This Review should bring out what has been learned about Moses and the children of Israel during his life.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

About what leader have we learned during this quarter?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.

Whom would Jehovah not cast off?

What does “exodus” mean?

Of what does the book of Exodus give an account?

How were the children of Israel afflicted and their lives made bitter?

What did Pharaoh order to be done with all male children born unto the Hebrews?

LESSON II.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Why was not Moses destroyed with the other boys born at that time?

Give the story of his parents' faith, of Miriam's conduct, and of the part performed by Pharaoh's daughter.

LESSON III.

Give the subject.

What did God promise in order to encourage Moses?

Why and when did Moses have to leave Egypt?

Give the story of Moses' becoming Reuel's son-in-law.

Where, when, and how did Moses receive his call to appear before Pharaoh in behalf of the children of Israel?

What excuses did Moses offer, and how did God remove them all?

What different things did Moses do by faith?

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Name the ten plagues sent upon Egypt.

Why was the passover instituted?

Of what did it consist?

When was it to be observed, and what did it perpetuate?

Who is our Passover?

LESSON V.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Why did God not lead the children of Israel the most direct way from Egypt to the land of promise?

Give the facts of the passage through the Red Sea.

Why is this called "the salvation of the Lord," since the children of Israel had to do so much, or anything, in order to get out of Egypt?

LESSON VI.

Give the subject.

Who is the true bread, the bread of life?

What was "manna," why sent, how long did it continue, and when did it cease?

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.

What is meant by the words of the Golden Text, "To each one his work?"

Who was Jethro?

What wise counsel did he give to Moses?

Was this advice inspired of God?

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

When and where were the Ten Commandments given?

Describe the appearance of Sinai and that which occurred there.

Repeat the comments called "Duties to God."

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the commandments called "Duties to Man."

Upon what were these commandments written, and who wrote them?

LESSON X.

Give the subject.

How did God speak unto Moses?

What was "the tent of meeting" spoken of in this lesson?

What occurred at this "tent of meeting?" Whom did God promise to send with Moses?

What led the people by day and by night?

Who was the angel of God's presence?

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.

With what is God to be honored?

What offerings of different kinds did the children of Israel make?

Where did they get all these things?

What was the purpose of the tabernacle?

Of what was it a type?

LESSON XII.

Give the subject.

To whom did God in this connection say, "Drink no wine, nor strong drink?"

What had become of Nadab and Abihu, and why?

Upon what conditions did God promise to bless the children of Israel?

What blessings did he promise?

If they should not comply with these conditions, what curses would follow?

Let me be a little braver
 When temptation bids me waver;
 Let me strive a little harder
 To be all that I should be;
 Let me be a little meeker
 With the brother who is weaker;
 Let me think more of my neighbor
 And a little less of me.

(Bessie McClafin.)

FOURTH QUARTER.

EARLY LEADERS OF ISRAEL: FROM MOSES TO SAMUEL.

(*Second Half of a Six-Months' Course*)

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 3.

ISRAEL JOURNEYING TOWARD CANAAN.

Num. 10: 11-13, 29-36. Read Num. 10: 11-36.

11 ¶And it came to pass in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, that the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony.

12 And the children of Israel set forward according to their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud abode in the wilderness of Paran.

13 And they first took their journey according to the commandment of Jehovah by Moses.

29 ¶And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which Jehovah said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for Jehovah hath spoken good concerning Israel.

30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou shalt be to us instead of eyes.

32 And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what good soever Jehovah shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

33 ¶And they set forward from the mount of Jehovah three days' journey; and the ark of the covenant of Jehovah went before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting-place for them.

34 And the cloud of Jehovah was over them by day, when they set forward from the camp.

35 ¶And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, O Jehovah, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

36 And when it rested, he said, Return, O Jehovah, unto the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."*
(Num. 10: 29.)

TIME.—B.C. 1490, about six weeks after the last lesson.

PLACE.—Plain before Sinai.

PERSONS.—The children of Israel, Moses, and Hobab.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 34: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|---------------|----|--|
| September 27. | M. | Israel Journeying Toward Canaan. (Num. 10: 29-36.) |
| September 28. | T. | Israel Loathes the Manna. (Num. 11: 4-15.) |
| September 29. | W. | Israel Supplied with Quail. (Num. 11: 31-35.) |
| September 30. | T. | The Sin of Aaron and Miriam. (Num. 12: 1-8.) |
| October | 1. | F. Moses' Prayer for Miriam. (Num. 12: 9-16.) |
| October | 2. | S. The Journey of Faith. (Heb. 11: 13-16.) |
| October | 3. | S. Jehovah Our Refuge. (Ps. 34: 1-8.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

By consulting a good map, the extent of the wilderness of **Parán** will be seen. It was a wide desert region, extending north from the wilderness of Sinai to Judea and east from Egypt to Edom. In this wilderness the children of Israel wandered forty years. It is called "that great and terrible wilderness." (Deut. 1: 19.) The detailed account of these journeys, or wanderings, is given in Num. 33. It is first mentioned in Gen. 14: 6. In it Ishmael dwelt. (Gen. 21: 21.)

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

This lesson is in the book of Numbers, the fourth book of the Pentateuch.

It is called "Numbers" because it gives the number of the children of Israel when they first left Egypt, and also when the forty years of wilderness journey had ended.

When numbered the first time at Sinai, all the males "twenty years old and upward," except the Levites, were six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty (Num. 1: 46), and all the males of the Levites "a month old and upward" were twenty-two thousand (Num. 3: 39, 45-47). This would make the whole number of all men, women, and children between two and three millions.

When numbered the second time—"in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho"—all the males, except the Levites, were six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty (Num. 26: 51), and the Levites were twenty-three thousand (Num. 26: 62). "But among these there was not a man of them that were numbered by Moses and Aaron" at Sinai, except Joshua and Caleb. (Num. 26: 63-65.)

This book gives the order of their camp; the order in which they marched; how the tabernacle was taken down, and who did it; how it was carried, and who did it; how it was set up when they camped; and an account of their journeys. (Num. 33.)

It tells of the "trials, rebellions, punishments, deliverances, conquests," etc., of the children of Israel, and of the "justice, mercy, and providence" of God, covering the period of the sojourn in the wilderness, almost forty years, beginning with the history of the Israelites "on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt." (Num. 1: 1.)

This is a most interesting and instructive book.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Recapitulation.

11. The previous part of this chapter tells of the two silver trumpets and their use.

The occurrence stated in this verse took place on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after the children of Israel had left Egypt.

"In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai; . . . and there Israel encamped before the mount." (Ex.

19: 1, 2.) There they remained until the day of our lesson—almost a year; there they beheld the awe-inspiring scenes upon Sinai—the glory and power of God, and heard his voice; there they defiled themselves with the golden calf; there they received the law; there they constructed the tabernacle, and there it was set up and dedicated; there Aaron and his sons were consecrated as priests, and there Nadab and Abihu were destroyed; and there they kept the second passover. (Num. 9: 1-14.) All that is recorded from Ex. 19: 1, including Leviticus, to this verse in our lesson, occurred at Sinai, and in about eleven months.

The Israelites, at the time of this lesson, had been out of Egypt one year, one month, and five days. Referring to this time, nearly forty years afterwards, Moses said: "Jehovah our God spake unto us in Horeb [Sinai], saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain: turn you, and take your journey," etc. (Deut. 1: 6.)

On this day "the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony." It was called "the tabernacle of the testimony" because in the most holy place was "the ark of the covenant," containing the tables of "the testimony." (Ex. 26: 16.) "On the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle [Ex. 40: 34-38], even the tent of the testimony: and at even it was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until morning. So it was always: the cloud covered it, and the appearance of fire by night."

When the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel journeyed, following it; and where it stopped, there they encamped again. If it remained over the tabernacle many days, or even a year, there they camped just so long; if it remained only from evening until morning in a place, they followed it on. They did all this by the command of God.

All should read Num. 9: 15-23.

II. The Children of Israel Set Forward on Their Journey.

12, 13. Therefore, in obedience to God's command, "the children of Israel set forward according to their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud abode in the wilderness of Paran." We learn from verse 33 that this was "three days' journey," and that there were three stopping places—Kibroth-hattaavah (Num. 11: 34); Hazeroth (Num. 11: 35); "and afterwards the people journeyed from Hazeroth, and encamped in the wilderness of Paran" (Num. 12: 16).

Different wildernesses are mentioned through which the Israelites passed—(1) the wilderness of Shur, (2) the wilderness of Sin, (3) the wilderness of Sinai, and (4) the wilderness of Paran.

"And they first took their journey," etc. This was the first journey they took after all the occurrences at Sinai; this was the first time the tabernacle was moved. The intervening verses (14-28) give the order in which they journeyed.

III. "Come Thou with Us, and We Will Do Thee Good."

29. Moses married Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel, priest of Midian (Ex. 2: 15-22), also called "Jethro" (Ex. 3: 1). When Moses left the wilderness to go back into Egypt to deliver the Israelites, he sent his

wife and two sons back to her father; and when he had accomplished this great work, his father-in-law visited him at Sinai, bringing to him his wife and children. (Ex. 18: 1-27.)

Hobab was the son of Reuel and Moses' brother-in-law. Hobab must have come with his father on this visit to Moses and remained after his father returned.

The subject of this lesson and Moses' declaration here, "We are journeying unto the place of which Jehovah said, I will give it you," are significant. Christians are journeying to the land of promise, the heavenly Canaan. Their guide is the word of God; their place of worship is the church (not house of worship); their food is the bread of heaven; their drink, the water of life; and the spirit and presence of Jesus are always with them. Every night they pitch their tent one day's journey nearer that rest which remains for the people of God.

Moses, no doubt, had reference to the promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because all he did here was by faith. (See Heb. 11: 23-31.) The promises of God had been repeated to him. This faith had grown with his growth and had gained strength with his strength.

Moses generously invited his brother-in-law to go with them: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good." The reason Moses could say this was: "For Jehovah hath spoken good concerning Israel." This "good" was contained in God's many rich promises, which Moses believed. Hobab, if he would go, could feed with them there upon the manna, follow the cloud and pillar of fire, learn the will of God, and go with them finally into the land of promise.

This same invitation should be offered by every Christian to every sinner. Christians should realize that they are going somewhere, and that God has spoken good concerning them; and they should invite all sinners to go with them. The place to which Moses was journeying was only a type of the heavenly country to which Christians are traveling, and many of the good things which he enjoyed were only types of the richer, deeper, fuller, more enduring spiritual blessings which they have. How urgent should we be in saying to sinners: "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for Jehovah hath spoken good concerning [spiritual] Israel!"

30. Hobab at first declined the invitation. So many Hobabs to-day decline to go with the people of God.

IV. "Thou Shalt Be to Us Instead of Eyes."

31, 32. Moses was still more urgent, saying: "Leave us not, I pray thee, . . . and thou shalt be to us instead of eyes." Hobab knew the wilderness well and could guide the Israelites about in it, and for this reason Moses urged him to go, promising again that Hobab should enjoy whatsoever good God would do to Israel. "The same will we do unto thee" also.

But if God led them by the cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, why did Moses urge Hobab to go that he might be to them "instead of eyes?" God never does for men what they can do for themselves. The cloud led their general journeys, and they must follow it; but they

were constantly looking out for fuel, water, and pasture for their flocks and herds while they were encamped. Hobab could guide them in finding these. God fed them on manna only so long as they could not produce food for themselves. God helps man by placing ways and means in man's hands by which he may in a sense help himself.

Did Hobab go? From other references it seems clear that he did. These Midianites were also called "Kenites," and some of the Kenites did go with the Israelites, and "the children of Hobab" are mentioned among them. (Num. 24: 21, 22; Judg. 1: 16; 4: 11.) Moses' father-in-law worshiped God with Moses and gave him able counsel, but counsel which was to be accepted only by the command of God. (Ex. 18.)

V. The Children of Israel Journeyed in Obedience to God.

33. In obedience to God's command, in verse 13, the Israelites departed from Mount Sinai and made this journey. The ark was carried in the center of the tribes. (Verse 21.) "But as the army never moved till the cloud was taken up, it [the ark] is said to go before them—that is, to be the first to move—as without this motion the Israelites continued in the encampment." (Clarke.)

34. It may be that the cloud also overshadowed them during the day when they journeyed. God is said to be "a shade from the heat" (Isa. 25: 4), and the Psalmist speaks of "the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91: 1).

So the children of God in their journey from earth to heaven must travel every day according to God's directions.

VI. Moses' Prayer.

35. This was Moses' prayer when the ark set forward: "Rise up, O Jehovah, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee." God fought the battles of Israel when they trusted and obeyed him, but allowed them to flee before their enemies when they sinned. One could chase a thousand and two could put ten thousand to flight when they obeyed God. While the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Cor. 10: 4), yet Paul says of all Christians: "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom. 8: 31).

36. When the ark rested, this was Moses' prayer: "Return, O Jehovah, unto the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel." How appropriate to praise God and to ask for his guidance in the morning when we start on the day's journey, and to thank him and to ask for his protection when we camp at night!

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Where was the wilderness of Paran?
What occurred in this wilderness?
What is it called?

How long were the children of Israel in it?
Why is this book called "Numbers"?
Who were numbered?
How many of each?
How many were there of the Israelites in all?
When were they numbered again?

- How many were there then?
 Who had died?
 What else does this book relate?
- 11 What does the previous part of this chapter relate?
 Of what day does this verse speak?
 Where were the Israelites at this time?
 How long had they been there?
 What had occurred there?
 How much of the Bible is occupied in relating these occurrences?
 How long had the Israelites been out of Egypt?
 What did God now command them to do?
 What was taken up?
 What sign did God give them for marching and camping?
 Why was the tabernacle called "the tabernacle of the testimony?"
- 12, 13 What did they do?
 How far was this?
 At what places did they stop?
 Name the different wildernesses through which they passed.
 What is meant by "they first took their journey?"
 What do the intervening verses relate?
- 29 Who was Hobab?
 Whom had Moses married?
 Who was his father-in-law?
- Did Jethro worship God?
 Where did Moses say they were going?
 Where are you going?
 Where do Christians worship God?
 Upon what do they feed?
 What is their home?
 What invitation did Moses extend to Hobab?
 What did he say they would do for him?
 What reason did he give for saying this?
 What invitation should Christians extend to sinners?
 What has God promised to do for us?
 How did Moses know about these promises?
- 30 Did Hobab accept the invitation at first?
- 31, 32 What did Moses urge and say?
 What use would he make of Hobab?
 If the cloud was to guide them, then why ask Hobab to be "eyes" for them?
 Did he finally go?
- 33, 34 Then what did the Israelites do?
 What was the sign for starting?
- 35 Repeat Moses' prayer when the ark set forward.
- 36 Repeat his prayer when it rested.
 When should we pray?
 At what other times should we pray?

But once I pass this way,
 But then—no more;
 But once—and then the Silent Door
 Swings on its hinges,
 Opens, . . . closes—
 And no more I pass this way.

So while I may,
 With all my might
 I will essay
 Sweet comfort and delight
 To all I meet upon the Pilgrim way.

For no man travels twice
 The Great Highway
 That climbs through darkness up to Light
 Through Night
 To Day.

(Selected.)

LESSON II.—OCTOBER 10.

THE REPORTS OF THE SPIES.

Num. 13: 23-33. Read Num. 13: 1 to 14: 45.

23 ¶And they came unto the valley of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it upon a staff between two; *they brought also of the pomegranates, and of the figs.*

24 That place was called the valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

25 ¶And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days.

26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.

27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us; and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

28 Howbeit the people that dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

29 Amalek dwelleth in the land of the South; and the Hittite, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, dwell in the hill-country; and the Canaanite dwelleth by the sea, and along by the side of the Jordan.

30 ¶And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

31 But the men that went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

32 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had spied out unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature.

33 And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, who come of the Nephilim: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*We are well able to overcome it.*” (Num. 13: 30.)

TIME.—B.C. 1490.

PLACE.—Kadesh-barnea.

PERSONS.—Moses, Aaron, the twelve spies, and the Israelites.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 95: 1-7.

HOME READING.—

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|-------------|----|---|
| October 4. | M. | The Spies Sent Out. (Num. 13: 17-24.) |
| October 5. | T. | The Reports of the Spies. (Num. 13: 25-33.) |
| October 6. | W. | Why Israel Failed at Kadesh. (Num. 14: 1-10.) |
| October 7. | T. | Shut Out by Unbelief. (Heb. 4: 1-7.) |
| October 8. | F. | Our Refuge and Strength. (Ps. 46: 1-11.) |
| October 9. | S. | Triumphant Faith. (Heb. 11: 1-10.) |
| October 10. | S. | The Danger of Doubt. (Ps. 95: 1-11.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Kadesh-barnea was a place in the northern part of the wilderness of Paran just below or in the southern border of Judea. (Josh. 15: 3.) It was eleven days' journey from Sinai. (Deut. 1: 2.) From this place the spies were sent, and here the children of Israel remained until the spies returned. They abode here many days. (Deut. 1: 46.) To this place they returned after thirty-eight years. (Deut. 2: 14.) Here, then, Miriam died and was buried, and here the people murmured. (Num. 20: 1-3.) It is called “Meribah” (“strife”). (Num. 20: 13.) It is called “En-mishpat” (“the fountain of judgment”). (Gen. 14: 7.) Hagar was found there by the angel. (Gen. 16: 14.)

Hebron was about eighteen miles south of Jerusalem, and was one of the oldest towns in the world, having been "built seven years before Zoan in Egypt." (Num. 13: 22.)

"The South" was the country south of Palestine and was its southern border.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Between the last lesson and this one are the following facts:

The people murmured at Taberah, "and the fire of Jehovah burnt among them, and devoured in the uttermost part of the camp. . . . And Moses prayed unto Jehovah, and the fire abated." (Num. 11: 1-3.)

"The mixed multitude" which went up out of Egypt with the Israelites "lusted exceedingly;" and the children of Israel cried for flesh, "every man at the door of his tent: and the anger of Jehovah was kindled greatly; and Moses was displeased."

Moses prayed to God for assistance, because the burden of bearing so many people, "as a nursing father carrieth the sucking child," was too heavy for him; and God gave him "seventy men," "elders of Israel," to assist him.

God gave the murmurers quails in abundance, of which the people ate in greediness, and God smote them "with a very great plague."

The name of this place was called "Kibroth-hattaavah" ("the graves of lust"). (Num. 11: 4-35.)

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, and God called the "three unto the tent of meeting," "came down in a pillar of cloud," and reprov'd Aaron and Miriam.

Miriam was smitten with leprosy, and was compelled to remain without the camp for seven days.

"The people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again."

"Afterwards the people journeyed from Hazeroth, and encamped in the wilderness of Paran." (Num. 12.)

To understand this lesson, one must study chapters 13 and 14.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

(Verses in chapter 13 previous to the lesson.)

I. The Spies Sent.

At this time the children of Israel had been out of Egypt about fifteen months and were near the border of the promised land. These spies were sent from Kadesh-barnea. As we have seen, it was in the wilderness of Paran, which extended along the southern border of Canaan. These spies were sent at the request of the children of Israel, which, says Moses, "pleased me well." (Deut. 1: 22, 23.) God approved this, and commanded Moses to do it. "Of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a prince among them. . . .

All of them men who were heads of the children of Israel." (Num. 13: 1-3.) There were, then, twelve spies—none from the tribe of Levi, but one from the tribe of Ephraim and one from Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph. Their names are given in verses 4-16. They were to go "by the South, and . . . into the hill country."

These spies were to report on the condition of the land, whether

productive or not and whether timbered or not; on the cities, and how they were fortified; and on the people and their strength.

"Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes"—about the last of summer or first of fall.

II. The Work of the Spies.

The spies went and "spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, to the entrance of Hamath. And they went up by the South, and came unto Hebron." (Verses 21, 22.) Hamath was the northern limit of the country assigned to the Israelites. (Num. 38: 8; Josh. 13: 5; Judg. 3: 3.) Solomon's dominion extended "from the entrance of Hamath unto the brook of Egypt." (1 Kings 8: 65; 1 Chron. 8: 4.)

23, 24. The spies viewed the land from one extremity to the other, and came "unto the valley of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it upon a staff between two." Perhaps the chief reason for carrying this cluster so was to prevent crushing it. Clarke's "Commentary" speaks of grapes as large as plums and of a bunch at Damascus which weighed more than forty pounds. Bunches in other places have been found to weigh twenty pounds, and even more. This valley was called "Eshcol" from this circumstance, because "Eshcol" means "a cluster." Those who know say the fruit of this valley was very fine. The spies carried also figs and pomegranates.

25. The spies were forty days in doing this work.

III. The Good Report.

26, 27. Having done their work, the spies returned to Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, where the children of Israel had remained while they were gone. They reported unto Moses and Aaron, "and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land," and said: "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us; and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it." We shall learn more of this good land from Joshua and Caleb.

IV. The Evil Report.

28, 29. The word "howbeit" turned the attention of the people from the good report above to the evil report which follows. They presented four reasons why they could not take the country: (1) The people are strong; (2) the cities are fenced and very great; (3) there are giants there; and (4) these different nations occupy the country in these different parts.

Amalekites were the descendants of Esau. (Gen. 36: 9-12.) They were roving people. The Israelites had already overcome them, and God had already declared unceasing war with Amalek. (Ex. 17: 8-16.) All these nations fainted or "melted away" before Joshua. (Josh. 2: 9.) Jericho, one of the walled cities, fell down by faith, even if the Israelites did not possess battering-rams with which to tear it down. (Josh. 6.) Joshua also destroyed the Anakim.

The children of Anak were giants. Some were left in Gaza, Gath,

and Ashdod. (Josh. 11: 21, 22.) "Goliath, of Gath," was "six cubits and a span," or over nine feet tall.

The Canaanites descended from Ham (Gen. 10), and from them the country received its name.

(Comment on verse 30 follows verse 33.)

32. "And they brought up an evil report." It was evil because, in part, they misrepresented the country, as in this verse. "A land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof." They may have meant by this that it was not healthful, or, more likely, that the contending nations devoured one another. The report was also evil in the rebellious effects it had upon the people.

33. "The Nephilim, the sons of Anak," were giants, beside whom the Hebrews were "as grasshoppers." This, doubtless, seemed so to these cowardly spies. Of the Amorites the Lord says: "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks." (Amos 2: 9.) The inhabitants of the land were strong, robust, warlike people. It has been suggested that the long servitude of the Israelites may have cramped their growth.

V. Joshua and Caleb.

30. The reply of Joshua and Caleb to this evil report has been reserved for this place.

This report greatly aroused the people; but Caleb, one of the spies, "stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

Joshua, another one of the spies, joined Caleb in this, as is seen from chapter 14: 6-9. Caleb, doubtless, spoke first.

Caleb is called a "Kenizzite," and it is said of him "that he wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel." (Josh. 14: 14.) Othniel, his brother, is called "the son of Kenaz." It is also said, in dividing the country between the tribes: "And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a portion among the children of Judah." (Josh. 15: 13.) Hence, it is thought by some that Caleb was a proselyte who became identified with the tribe of Judah. He drove out from Hebron "the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai." (Josh. 15: 14.) Thus he demonstrated his declarations in our lesson.

31. The other ten spies replied to him that they were "not able to go up against the people," giving the reason: "For they are stronger than we."

VI. The Effect of This Evil Report.

Chapter 14, which read, gives the effect of this evil report upon the people and the result of their rebellion. They "cried" and "wept that night." Then "all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said, . . . Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would that we had died in this wilderness!"

Two magnanimous spirits, with courage worthy of their cause, stood out against these murmurs and complaints.

In complaining against Moses, their God-appointed leader, and against the way God had commanded, they complained against God. They said: "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt."

They knew Moses would not do this. Nehemiah (9: 17) says: "And in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage."

Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the people, and Joshua and Caleb, in distress, rent their clothes and replied to the evil report of the spies. They said it was an exceedingly good land; and if the Lord delighted in them, they could take it; and, instead of being devoured by the inhabitants, the inhabitants would be food for them; and that the defense of the inhabitants had departed.

The congregation would have stoned Joshua and Caleb but for the sudden appearance of the glory of Jehovah in the tabernacle before all the children of Israel.

God again said he would destroy that rebellious nation and make of Moses one greater and mightier; but again Moses interceded for the people, and God heard his prayer. However, the Lord said all the grown men, save Joshua and Caleb, should fall in the wilderness; but the little ones, whom they said God had brought out of Egypt to destroy, should go into the land of promise.

God said they should turn back and for forty years, counting from the time they left Egypt—a year for every day the spies were gone—they should wander in the wilderness. God confirmed this by sending a plague which killed the ten spies.

God would not allow Joshua and Caleb to be stoned, but himself slew the other ten.

Then in rebellion or presumption the people declared they would go and take the country; but they suffered defeat.

Ten times God declared the Israelites had tempted him, and that it all came from unbelief. "And Jehovah said unto Moses, How long will this people despise me? and how long will they not believe in me, for all the signs which I have wrought among them?" This people believed in the existence of God, but not in God, because they did not believe his word and obey his commandments.

When people distrust God's ways and means and think God's way will not work or is inadequate, it is because they do not believe in God. Christians are now warned against an "evil heart of unbelief." (Heb. 3: 11, 12.) They are journeying to the heavenly Canaan, and the only way to reach it is to follow God's directions. He has given us the church, "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15); the gospel, his power unto salvation (Rom. 1: 16, 17); Jesus, the bread of heaven and the water of life; the pure, simple, and humble worship in the church; and the Bible as our guide; and those who think these are not sufficient or will not produce the desired results are affected with evil hearts of unbelief—do not believe in God.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Where was Kadesh-barnea?

How many days' journey was it from Sinai?

Name the different things which occurred there.

Where was Hamath?

Where was Hebron?

How old was it?

What was "the South"?

What occurred at Taberah?

For what did Moses pray?

Who were given?

How were the people supplied with flesh?

How were they punished?

To what place did they then journey?

From what place were the spies sent?

- Who suggested the sending of the spies?
 What was God's will concerning it?
 How many spies were sent?
 How were there twelve if one was not sent from the tribe of Levi?
 What was the mission of these spies?
 At what time of the year was it?
 When did Israel possess the country between these extremities?
- 23, 24 On their return, what did the spies bring with them?
 From what place was this fruit taken?
 Why was this valley called "Eshcol"?
 What is said of the abundance of this land in Deut. 8: 7-10?
- 25 How long were they gone?
- 26, 27 What good report did the spies make?
- 28, 29 To what was the attention of the people next called?
 What four reasons were given why they could not take the land?
 What became of these nations, cities, and giants when the Israelites did enter the land?
 Were any giants left?
 Who were the Canaanites?
 Who were the Amalekites?
 What had God declared concerning them?
- 32 In what respects was this report evil?
- 33 Who were the Nephilim?
 How did the Hebrews compare with them?
- What is said of the size of the Amorites?
 30 What effect did this evil report have upon the people?
 Who spoke in reply to this?
 What was said?
 Who was Caleb?
 Whom did he conquer later on?
 What reply did the ten make to this?
- 31 What reply was made to Caleb?
 What then did the Israelites do? (See chapter 14.)
 What did they think would become of their wives and children?
 What was their character?
 What did they propose to do?
 What reply did Joshua and Caleb make?
 How did this reply affect the people?
 What prevented them from stoning Joshua and Caleb?
 What did God say he would do with that nation?
 What prayer did Moses offer?
 Who did God say should perish in the wilderness?
 What became of the ten spies?
 What then did the people propose to do?
 How many times had they tempted God?
 What led them away from God?
 When do people believe in God?
 Against what are Christians warned?
 In what ways is unbelief now manifested?

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift;
 We have hard work to do and loads to lift.
 Shun not the struggle; face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!

Say not the days are evil. Who's to blame?
 And fold the hands and acquiesce—O shame!
 Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

Be strong!

It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,
 How hard the battle goes, the day how long;
 Faint not; fight on! To-morrow comes the song.
 (Maltbie D. Babcock.)

LESSON III.—OCTOBER 17.

MOSES HONORED IN HIS DEATH.

Deut. 32: 45-52; 34: 5-8.

45 ¶And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel;

46 And he said unto them, Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, *even* all the words of this law.

47 For it is no vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it.

48 ¶And Jehovah spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying,

49 Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession;

50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people:

51 Because ye trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.

52 For thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither into the land which I give the children of Israel.

5 ¶So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah.

6 And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

7 And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the death of his saints.*” (Ps. 116: 15.)

TIME.—B.C. 1451.

PLACES.—The plain of Moab and Nebo.

PERSONS.—The children of Israel, Moses, Joshua, and Jehovah.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 116: 12-19.

HOME READING.—

October 11.	M.	Moses Honored in His Death. (Deut. 34: 1-8.)
October 12.	T.	The Song of Moses. (Deut. 32: 1-10.)
October 13.	W.	The Song of Moses. (Deut. 32: 11-21.)
October 14.	T.	The Song of Moses. (Deut. 32: 22-34.)
October 15.	F.	The Song of Moses. (Deut. 32: 35-43.)
October 16.	S.	The Faith of Moses. (Heb. 11: 23-31.)
October 17.	S.	The Final Triumph of the Believer. (Ps. 116: 12-19.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

The plain of Moab was east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho, and, it is said, was nine miles long and six miles wide.

The Bible speaks of “the mountain of Abarim” (Num. 27: 12; Deut. 32: 48) and “the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo” (Num. 33: 47); “the top of Pisgah” (Num. 21: 20; Deut. 3: 27); and “mount Nebo” (Deut. 32: 49). Abarim was the range of mountains; Pisgah, a mountain range, or part of Abarim; Nebo, the head and highest peak of the Pisgah range. From Nebo, the top of Pisgah, of the mountains of Abarim, Moses had his first and last view of the promised land.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Thirty-eight years have passed since the last lesson (see Deut. 2: 14), or forty years since they left Egypt (Deut. 2: 7). On the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the children of Israel left Egypt, Aaron died on Mount Hor (Num. 33: 38), and they mourned for him thirty days (Num. 20: 28, 29).

All in Num. 15 to the end of the book and all in the book of Deuteronomy occurred between the last lesson and this one.

Moses a Type of Christ.

This lesson brings us to the end of a grand and sublime life.

Moses, under God's directions, was a deliverer of a race of slaves.

He was a prophet and teacher, who wrote the ordinances and commandments of God and the history of God's people from Adam to the present lesson.

He was a lawgiver and ruler, who led the children of Israel through "that great and terrible wilderness" as "a nursing father."

He was a mediator who pleaded most earnestly for the people when they sinned.

As a deliverer, prophet and teacher, lawgiver and ruler, and mediator, he was a type of Christ.

His meekness is emphasized in Num. 12: 1-3.

He was honored of God by being permitted to appear at Christ's transfiguration. (Matt. 17: 3.)

The following tribute to him closes the book of Deuteronomy:

"And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which Jehovah sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all the mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Deuteronomy.

45. "And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel." "All these words" are contained in the book of Deuteronomy.

"Deuteronomy" means "repetition," "résumé," or "recapitulation," and is a restatement of the law and commandments of God.

We see the importance of a recapitulation of the commandments and ordinances of God when we remember that the generation which left Egypt had all died in the wilderness, except Joshua and Caleb, and that it was necessary for the younger generation to hear them. Some of the generation to whom Moses spoke were only children when God gave the law forty years previous from Sinai, and many had been born since. Many of them had not witnessed some of the wonderful occurrences in the wilderness, and to them Moses repeats the principal events of the forty years and impresses in a solemn manner the precepts and principles of the law and the importance of faithful and loving obedience to God.

Moses began to deliver these farewell addresses on the first day of

the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the Israelites left Egypt (Deut. 1: 3), and continued until his death, which occurred some time in the first week of the twelfth month of the same year. These addresses were delivered at different times.

Moses wrote the law according to the direction of God (Deut. 31: 24-29; Ex. 34: 27), and commanded it to be read "at the end of every seven years," when "all Israel" appeared before God in the feast of tabernacles (Deut. 31: 9-13). God commanded Moses to write the song in chapter 32. Chapter 33 contains Moses' parting blessings upon the children of Israel. Some one else must have written chapter 34, since Moses could not have written an account of his own death. This is supposed to have been written by Joshua, by some of the seventy elders appointed by Moses, or by Ezra.

II. The Heart Must Be Set upon These Words.

46. Moses said to the people: "Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, even all the words of this law." Two very important things were enjoined: first, all God's commandments should be impressed upon their hearts, and they should remember them to do them; second, they should diligently teach their children to do the same. At different times in making these farewell speeches Moses impressed these solemn duties upon the people. Read Deut. 6: 1-9.

47. "For it is no vain thing for you." They could not fear God and keep his commandments in vain. "Because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it." We have seen that God frequently promised abundant temporal blessings upon the condition that the people would faithfully obey him. (See Deut. 30: 8-10.)

III. Moses and Aaron Could Not Enter the Promised Land.

48-52. An account of Aaron's death and the reason for it are given in Num. 20: 22-29, which see.

God said: "Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession; and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: because ye trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. For thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither into the land which I give the children of Israel."

IV. The Sin of Moses and Aaron.

(See Num. 20: 1-13.)

God told Moses to (1) "take the rod," (2) "assemble the congregation," and (3) "speak . . . unto the rock before their eyes, that it give forth its water." In this way God assured Moses and Aaron

that they should bring forth water and satisfy the people and their cattle.

Some think this rod was Aaron's rod that budded to show that he had been appointed high priest. (Num. 17.) Num. 20: 11 says it was Moses' rod. At Rephidim the rod with which Moses smote the rock was the one he had used all along. "This rod" (Ex. 4: 17) of Moses was afterwards called "the rod of God" (Ex. 4: 20; 17: 9). This rod was the one used on this occasion at Kadesh. Why suppose some other one was used? It has been truly said that the rod in Moses' hand at the burning bush, his badge as a shepherd, became his badge of power to water, feed, protect, save, and rule God's flock.

Moses and Aaron did two things God commanded—namely, took the rod and "gathered the assembly together before the rock." The third thing they did not do. Instead of speaking to the rock, as God commanded, "Moses lifted up his hand, and smote the rock with his rod twice." At Rephidim, almost forty years previous to this time, God commanded Moses to "smite the rock" with his rod; but here he told Moses to speak to the rock. Why God told Moses at one time to smite the rock and at another to speak to it is a question not answered; but these two cases show that obedience to God is doing the thing he commands, whether that be smiting the rock at one time and speaking to it at another. When God said "smite" the rock, speaking to it could not have been obedience; when he said "speak" to it, smiting it was not obedience.

The sins of Moses and Aaron were unbelief—"because ye believed not in me;" an intentional failure to sanctify God in the eyes of the people; rebellion—"because ye rebelled against my word" (Num. 27: 12-14); and speaking unadvisedly (Ps. 106: 33).

To sanctify any person or thing is to set apart that person or thing to the service of God. To sanctify God is to set him apart from and above objects of love and adoration as the true and living God in his holy character and almighty power. Instead of doing this, Moses said: "Shall we [not "shall God?"] bring you forth water out of this rock?" Moses did not give God the glory of the miracle. The only way to sanctify God at any time is to obey him. (See 1 Pet. 3: 15.)

Moses and Aaron believed in the existence of God, but did not "believe in" him, because they did not take him at his word or believe what he said. Moses seemed to doubt that speaking to the rock would be sufficient, although that is what God said do. This is unbelief now. To believe in God is to rely fully on what he says and do what he commands. We believe in the existence of Satan, but we do not believe what he says and have no confidence whatever in him. Moses and Aaron came short of the land of promise because of unbelief. "And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief." (Read Heb. 3.)

Moses said God was angry with him for the people's sake. (Deut. 1: 36, 37.) Ps. 106: 32, 33 says "it went ill with Moses" for the people's sake, "because they were rebellious against his spirit." The rebellion of the people provoked Moses.

Moses was almost one hundred and twenty years of age and Aaron three years older; and if this generation should murmur, complain, and rebel as did the former one and should be detained another forty years in the wilderness, it would be more than Moses could stand.

But Moses' sin was not excused, and God did not hear his prayer to allow him to go into Canaan.

In the goodness and mercy of God, the water came, that even the rebellious people and their cattle might drink; yet Moses and Aaron sinned. This is a crushing argument against the theory that it matters not what means are used so that the results are obtained. Apparently the way of Moses and Aaron was a success—the water came; but the means used were fruits of unbelief and rebellion. It would not do in Moses' and Aaron's case to say: "We are after the water, it matters not how we get it." We must not say, "It matters not how the work is done, just so it is done," when God tells how to do it. This is a crushing blow to those who seek results, it matters not how they come.

V. Moses Viewed the Land.

God showed Moses "the land of Gilead, unto Dan." (Verse 1.) He began at the northern extremity and showed him all the land to the southern extremity. We can well imagine Moses' deep feelings as he looked down upon the people in the plain and viewed this long-looked-for land. (Verses 2, 3.)

God promised this land to Abraham first more than four hundred years previous to this (Gal. 3: 17), repeated it later (Gen. 15: 1-21), and renewed the promise to Isaac and Jacob. (Verse 4.)

VI. Moses' Death.

5. "So Moses . . . died there, . . . according to the word of Jehovah"—that is, as God had commanded. "The servant of Jehovah." What more can be said of one than that he is a servant of God? Moses was a servant of God by choice, as all must be servants of God. "By faith" he chose "rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." (Heb. 11: 24-26.) Like Moses, all must choose whom they will serve.

6. "Beth-peor" was a city which "probably had its name from a temple of the god Peor, who was worshiped there." (Clarke.) In this "valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor" the Lord buried Moses. No one knew "of his sepulcher." Why Moses was thus privately buried we do not know, because God never saw fit to give the reason.

7. He was "a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." He died simply in obedience to God's word. (Verse 5.) Fifteen hundred years after that Moses stood in the land of promise on the mountain of transfiguration with Jesus.

8. The children of Israel knew why Moses went up unto Mount Nebo and when he died. (Deut. 31: 1-3; 3: 23-29.) They wept and mourned for him thirty days in the plain of Moab, where they were camped.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?

Where was the plain of Moab?
Give its size.
What were "Abarim," "Pisgah," and "Nebo"?
How is it that Moses could be in the

- mountain of Abarim, on Pisgah, and on Nebo at the same time?
 How many years have passed since the last lesson?
 Where are the incidents between the last lesson and this one recorded?
 Give the different important positions which Moses filled?
 In what different respects was he a type of Christ?
 Give the tribute to Moses with which Deuteronomy closes.
- 45 What book contains all these words mentioned in this verse?
 What does "Deuteronomy" mean?
 State the necessity for this recapitulation.
 When did Moses begin to deliver these addresses?
 At what times were they delivered?
 What did Moses write?
 When and where was the law to be read to the people?
 What does chapter 33 contain?
 Who is supposed to have written chapter 34?
- 46 Upon what were the people to set their hearts?
 What two very important things were enjoined?
- 47 Why was fearing God and keeping his commandments no vain thing?
 What would God do for the people if they would obey him?
- 48-52 Where and when did Aaron die?
 How long did the people mourn for him?
 What would God show him from that mountain?
 Why could not Moses and Aaron enter the promised land?
 What three things were Moses and Aaron to do?
 What blessing would follow?
- Why do you think this was Moses' rod?
 In what did Moses and Aaron obey God, and in what did they disobey him?
 Do we know why, at Rephidim, God commanded Moses to smite the rock, and at this place to speak to it?
 What is obedience to God?
 Give the sins of Moses and Aaron.
 Show how Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel believed in the existence of God and yet did not believe him or believe in him.
 By what fundamental sin did all come short of the land of promise?
 What was the relation of the people to the sins of Moses?
 But were his sins excused?
 Why did God send the water?
 Against what theory is this a crushing argument?
 Unto what mountain did Moses go and why?
 In what order did God show the land to Moses?
 What did God say?
- 5 What is meant by Moses' dying "according to the word of Jehovah?"
 By whose choice was Moses a servant of God?
 What prompted him to make this choice?
- 6 What was "Beth-peor?"
 Where was Moses buried?
 Who buried him?
 Why did no man know of his grave?
- 7 How old was Moses?
 What is said of his eye and natural force?
 Where did he appear fifteen hundred years after that?
- 8 Did the children of Israel know of Moses death?

This was the truest warrior
 That ever buckled sword;
 This the most gifted poet
 That ever breathed a word.
 And never earth's philosopher
 Traced with his golden pen
 On the deathless page truths half so sage
 As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor?
 The hillside for his pall,
 To lie in state while angels wait
 With stars for tapers tall;
 And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave;
 And God's own hand in that lonely land
 To lay him in the grave.

(Cecil Frances Alexander.)

LESSON IV.—OCTOBER 24.

JOSHUA, ISRAEL'S NEW LEADER.

Num. 27: 18-20; Josh. 1: 1-9.

18 ¶And Jehovah said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thy hand upon him;

19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight.

20 And thou shalt put of thine honor upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may obey.

1 ¶Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*“Be strong and of good courage: . . . for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”* (Josh. 1: 9.)

TIME.—Spring, B.C. 1451.

PLACE.—The plain of Moab.

PERSONS.—The Lord, Joshua, and Moses.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Prov. 2: 1-8.

HOME READING.—

October 18. M. Joshua's First Battle. (Ex. 17: 8-16.)

October 19. T. Joshua, Moses' Minister. (Ex. 24: 12-18.)

October 20. W. Joshua's Consecration. (Num. 27: 15-23.)

October 21. T. Moses' Charge to Joshua. (Deut. 31: 1-9.)

October 22. F. Joshua, Israel's New Leader. (Josh. 1: 1-11.)

October 23. S. Joshua Warns Israel. (Josh. 1: 12-18.)

October 24. S. The Need of Wisdom. (Prov. 2: 1-8.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“The plain of Moab”—see Lesson III.

The river Jordan is formed by the confluence of three very large springs. One flows from the western side of the hill on which Dan was built; another, from the northern side of the ancient city of Cesarea Philippi; and the third, further north by several miles, from the western side of Mount Hermon. From their sources, flowing south

and together, these streams fall about twelve hundred feet and spread out into a small lake called "the waters of Merom;" thence about ten miles into the Sea of Galilee, which is about six hundred and eighty feet below "the waters of Merom;" thence into the Dead Sea, six hundred and ten feet below the Sea of Galilee. From its source to its mouth the fall of the Jordan is about twenty-four hundred feet. This fall makes it a very swift and strong stream; but its velocity is broken by its very many turns, or crooked course, which form many eddies. In its serpentine course it is over two hundred miles long, but on a straight line from its origin to its mouth the distance is not half so far. Its ordinary width varies from nine feet to one hundred feet; at its mouth it is one hundred and eighty feet wide; its depth varies from three to twelve feet.

It is not only the most important stream of Palestine, but on account of its connection with so many sacred facts it is the most interesting river of earth. It was crossed miraculously by the Israelites (Josh. 3: 17; Ps. 114: 3), and by Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2: 8, 14). In it Naaman dipped seven times to be healed of leprosy (2 Kings 5), in it Elisha caused iron to swim (2 Kings 6: 1-7), in it John baptized the multitudes, and in it the Son of God and Savior of the world was baptized.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The book in which this lesson is found is called "the book of Joshua" because it gives an account of his exploits and works as a leader of Israel and because it is supposed he wrote it.

This book opens with the beginning of Joshua's work as a leader, gives an account of his conquering the seven Canaanitish nations and dividing the land by lot, and closes with his death and burial. (Josh. 24: 29-31.)

Comments on Num. 27: 18-20 are made in connection with comments on verse 2 of Josh. 1: 1-9.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Moses, the Servant of Jehovah.

1. The expression, "Now it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah," shows that the history of the children of Israel is continued.

All who obey God are his servants, but Moses was God's servant in more than an ordinary way. He was always ready to do God's will; but his famous choice against the pleasures of sin and all the wealth and glory of Egypt (Heb. 17: 24-29) to serve God, and the relation he sustained between God and the people as prophet and interceder, law-giver and mediator, distinguished him as the servant of God from others and made him the type of Jesus Christ that he was. Jesus is called God's "servant" in the highest and deepest sense and in the peculiar sense of being the Savior of the world. (See Acts 3: 26; Matt. 12: 18; Isa. 42: 1; 43: 1-13; 53: 11.) Jesus is that "prophet" like unto Moses. (Deut. 18: 18, 19; Acts 22-26.)

A prophet is called "a man of God" (1 Sam. 2: 27; 9: 6; 2 Kings 5: 8) because God revealed his will through the prophet and he rep-

resented God to the people. This was especially true of Moses. (Deut. 33: 1; Josh. 14: 6.) God gave the law through Moses.

"Servant of Jehovah" and "man of God" were not titles.

What a blessed thing it is that all, in faith and service to God, can so live as to hear Jesus say in the end: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" What a glorious truth it is that all who will come out from the world and keep unspotted from it can become "sons and daughters" of "the Lord Almighty" (1 Cor. 14: to 7: 1), children of God, men and women of God!

II. Joshua.

It was after the children of Israel had wept for Moses thirty days (Deut. 34: 8) "that Jehovah spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses minister."

Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim, one of the sons of Joseph; and his name at first was "Hoshea" ("help" or "salvation"), but Moses changed it to "Joshua." (Num. 13: 8, 16.) "Joshua" means "savior" or "God is salvation." In Neh. 8: 17 he is called "Jeshua." The Greek form of this name is "Jesus." He is first mentioned as leader of the Israelites against the Amalekites at Rephidim (Ex. 17: 8-16) soon after the Israelites left Egypt. He was one of the twelve spies sent from Kadesh-barnea to view the land of Canaan and one of the two who had the courage to say they could take it. (Num. 14: 6.) He is called "Moses' minister" because he was Moses' attendant and served him in his work as lawgiver and leader. Thus he was better prepared for his great work afterwards. He was one hundred and ten years old when he died. (Judg. 2: 8.)

If the events narrated in the book of Joshua cover, as is thought, a period of twenty-six or twenty-seven years, he was eighty-three or eighty-four years of age at the time of our lesson and forty years younger when he left Egypt, where he was born.

It is said he "wholly followed Jehovah." (Num. 32: 12.) He was a very faithful and dutiful man, and, as a leader and conqueror, a type of Jesus, our Captain and Leader against the hosts of Satan.

His most distinguishing characteristic was courage, both physical and moral. Regardless of the choice others should make, it was he who said: "But as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." (Josh. 24: 15.) Moral courage is necessary to make a true man or woman at any time.

No one can be sincere, true, dutiful, and faithful who does not act upon the principle of right, regardless of consequences, and, therefore, what others may think or do. When one will do right for right's sake, he can be trusted anywhere and at all times.

III. Joshua Appointed to Succeed Moses.

18-20. Before the death of Moses, Joshua had been appointed to this position as leader. (See also Deut. 3: 28; Deut. 31: 3-8, 14, 23; Deut. 34: 9-12.)

"And Jehovah said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thy hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give

him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put of thine honor upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may obey."

Verses 22 and 23 state that Moses did that which God commanded.

We learn from this that one who was not prepared for a work should not be chosen to perform it. Joshua was a man in whom was the Spirit. Note, in Num. 11: 24, 25, that Jehovah took of the Spirit that was upon Moses and put it upon the seventy elders selected to assist him; and "when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but they did so no more."

Why did Moses lay his hands upon Joshua? Deut. 34: 9 states that Joshua "was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him." That "Moses had laid his hands upon him" is given as the reason for saying he "was full of the spirit of wisdom." Also, Moses was to put his "honor" upon Joshua. Moses could not confer upon Joshua that which he himself did not possess. By laying his hands upon Joshua, Moses conferred upon him the spirit and honor which Moses possessed.

Joshua was set before Eleazar that he and all the congregation might know that at the word of Eleazar they were to go out and come in.

Having done this, Moses gave Joshua "a charge in their sight." All this having been done, the children of Israel accepted Joshua as their leader, and "hearkened unto him, and did as Jehovah commanded Moses." (Deut. 34: 9.) God had commanded them through Moses to hearken unto Joshua.

By his forty years' service in the wilderness Joshua had been developed into a leader. Faithful in little, he became ruler over much; to him who had, more was given.

IV. God's Purposes Will Never Fail.

2. "Moses my servant is dead." Although Moses was dead, God had a man prepared to carry on the work. Moses left behind him his Joshua; Eli, his Samuel; Elijah, his Elisha; and Paul, his Timothy. God's servants may die, but his work will never die. Great and good men may die now, but God's church will stand forever. His purposes will never fail. He always finds men to carry on his work, although he goes to the bulrushes and mangers for them. Men fall in the wilderness of sin, or are martyred, as was Paul; but God's great work goes on unto perfection and forever.

V. God's Blessings Are Not Unconditional.

"Arise, go over this Jordan." Joshua was not to lead the people over without the preparation mentioned in verses 10, 11. "Thou, and all this people." There were six hundred and one thousand seven hundred and thirty men, "twenty years old and upward," besides the tribe of Levi. (Num. 26: 51, 57, 62.)

Verses 2-9 contain what God said to Joshua.

3. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon" within the limits mentioned in verse 4. God repeats here to Joshua what he had spoken "unto Moses."

This was not an unconditional gift. "For if ye shall diligently

keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love Jehovah your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; then will Jehovah drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves." (See Deut. 11: 18-25.) If they should not remain faithful and obedient to God, they could not conquer these nations and possess this land. While God had promised to bring them into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to give them cities which they did not build, houses full of good things which they did not fill, cisterns full of water which they did not dig, and vineyards and olive yards which they did not plant (Deut. 6: 10-15), yet they must go over the Jordan, dispossess these wicked nations, till the land, cultivate the fruit, occupy the cities, and inhabit the houses.

God blesses us now "with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1: 3), but we must enter into Christ in order to receive and enjoy these blessings. If we refuse to accept Christ, we reject these blessings. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) We believe in Christ, repent of all our sins, and are "baptized into Christ," and thus come into the enjoyment of "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." So "the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6: 23); but this "free gift of God" is not out of Christ, and, hence, not unconditional. "And having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." (Heb. 5: 9.) It is not enough to say eternal life must be received; we must show people how to receive it, as God showed the Israelites how to receive the land of promise. All God's blessings must be received in compliance with whatever conditions he imposes.

VI. The Boundaries of Canaan.

4. This verse gives the boundaries of the land of promise. "The wilderness" through which they had passed was the southern limit; "this Lebanon" which they could see, the northern limit; "the river Euphrates," the eastern limit; and "the great sea" (the Mediterranean Sea), the western limit. This extent of country God promised to Abraham. (Gen. 15: 18-21.)

The Israelites did not conquer this land at once, and they really came in possession of it only in so far as they conquered its inhabitants, and they did not rule in peace over the whole of it until the days of Solomon. (See 1 Kings 4: 21-25; 2 Chron. 9: 26.)

The Hittites descended from Heth. Gen. 10: 15-18 gives the descendants of Canaan, the father of the Canaanites, from whom the land of Canaan received its name, while verse 19 gives "the border of the Canaanites." The Hittites dwelt about Hebron in the time of Abraham. (Gen. 23.) They were not all subdued at once. Uriah, in David's day, was a Hittite. (2 Sam. 11: 3; 23: 39.) Solomon used their service, as he did the service of other Canaanitish nations "whom the children of Israel were not able utterly to destroy." (1 Kings 9: 20, 21.) There were kings of the Hittites in the south. (1 Kings 10: 29; 2 Kings 7: 6.) They still existed after the return of the Jews from captivity. (Ez. 9: 1-4, 7.)

Also, God cast out these nations "by little and little," lest the wild beasts should increase upon the Israelites. (Deut. 7: 22-24.)

VII. Be Strong and of Good Courage.

5. "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life"—in war, or as an enemy. At the beginning of Moses' work to deliver the children of Israel from Egypt, God promised to be with him (Ex. 3: 12); and through many trials, over many difficulties, and in many battles God had led him to success and victory. Joshua knew what God had done for Moses, and, hence, God could give him no greater assurance.

God magnified Joshua before the Israelites by performing miracles through him to show them that he was with Joshua as he had been with Moses. (Josh. 3: 5.)

God promises to be with his people to-day and never to leave or forsake them, and he repeats the promise as often as he repeated it to Moses and Joshua.

6. This exhortation to "be strong and of good courage" is repeated four times in this chapter. (Verses 6-8, 18.) God began to encourage Joshua through Moses. "But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see." (Deut. 3: 28; see also Deut. 1: 37, 38; 31: 6-8.) Joshua needed both strength and courage, will power and wisdom, to conquer the opposing nations and to rule Israel. (See Deut. 6: 17-21.)

So Christians to-day, to be successful, must cultivate and exercise will power, use their wisdom, manifest moral courage, and put forth every energy against sin. God encouraged Joshua by promising him "good success."

This land is called here an "inheritance" because God had long before promised to give it to Abraham's seed.

7. Strength and courage can be cultivated; they grow through exercise. Joshua would gain strength and courage by observing "to do according to all the law, which Moses . . . commanded." He was to turn neither to the right hand nor to the left hand, "that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest." This promise embraces very much indeed.

VIII. Wisdom and Good Success.

8. The condition upon which this promise is to be enjoyed is repeated: "Observe to do according to all that is written therein [the law]: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Prosperity and success are promised always upon faithful obedience to God.

In order to observe all the law, it should not depart from Joshua's mouth, and he was to "meditate thereon day and night." "Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." (Deut. 4: 6.) "Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do

them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do." (Deut. 29: 9.) Read here Ps. 1 and Col. 3: 16. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." (Prov. 9: 10.)

True "success" to-day is to fear God and keep his commandments. "He that would love life, and see good days," should live now as God directs. (1 Pet. 3: 10-13.) God would have his people now "lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." (1 Tim. 2: 1, 2.) This is "success."

9. "Have not I commanded thee?" That God has said this is enough. Whatever he says will come to pass. Joshua should "be strong and of good courage," and neither be affrighted nor dismayed, for God promised to be with him.

IX. Faith Unwavering.

The command given in verses 10 and 11 to the officers shows that Joshua believed God. Although the Jordan lay between them and the land of promise and was then out of its banks, yet Joshua and the children of Israel raised no question as to how they would cross it and expressed no doubt.

The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh reminded Joshua of the promise Moses had made to give them an inheritance on the eastern side of the Jordan, renewed their declaration to pass over and help the others conquer the nations, and promised to obey Joshua as they had hearkened to Moses. (Verses 12-18.)

Chapter 2 gives an account of the visit of the spies to Jericho, and chapter 3 the entrance into Canaan.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Describe the plain of Moab.
Describe the river Jordan, giving its sources, its course, its length, its average width and depth, its descent, and into what it empties.
Why is this book called "the book of Joshua?"
What does it contain?
How old was he when he left Egypt?
To what extent did he follow Jehovah?
In what respects was he a type of Jesus?
What was his most distinguished characteristic?
Repeat Josh. 24: 15.
For what is moral courage necessary?
What person may always be trusted?
1 Of what is the book of Joshua a continuance?
What is Moses called in this verse?
In what way was Moses a servant of God?
Repeat Rom. 6: 16.
When did God speak this to Joshua?
- Where was Joshua born?
What was his name at first?
Who changed it?
What do these names mean?
When is Joshua first mentioned?
What was he to Moses?
In what way was he "Moses' minister?"
How was he trained for his greater work?
18-20 To what had Joshua been appointed before Moses' death?
What was Moses commanded to do for Joshua?
What was given to the seventy that they might assist Moses?
Why did Moses lay hands upon Joshua?
Can one man confer upon another that which he himself does not possess?
Why was Joshua set before Eleazar?
By what did the children of Israel recognize Joshua as their leader?
In what way had Joshua been prepared for this work?
2 What goes on, although good and true men die?
What did God command Joshua to do?

- What preparation was necessary before going over the Jordan?
How many people were there?
- 3 What promise does God repeat here?
Upon what condition could they receive this gift?
Upon what condition do we receive all spiritual blessings in Christ?
Upon what condition do we receive eternal life and enter heaven?
What is it now necessary to explain to people?
- 4 Give the boundaries of the promised land.
Why did God not cast the nations all out at once? (See Deut. 7: 22-24.)
Then to what extent did they possess the land?
When did they rule in peace over the entire country?
Who were the Hittites?
Mention the descendants of Canaan. (Gen. 10: 15-18.)
- 5 What promises did God make in this verse to Joshua?
How was God with Moses?
How did God show he was with Joshua as with Moses?
What does God promise to do for his people to-day?
- 6 What did God exhort Joshua to be?
How often is this repeated in this chapter?
When did God begin to encourage Joshua?
Why did Joshua need encouragement and strength?
What must Christians cultivate?
How did God encourage Joshua?
Why is this land called an "inheritance?"
- 7 How could Joshua gain strength and courage?
What did God promise if he should obey God?
- 8 Upon what condition could Joshua receive and enjoy success?
What must he do in order to be able to observe all the law?
What is wisdom?
What is true success?
- 9 Why should Joshua be strong and of good courage and fear nothing?
What shows that Joshua believed God?
What obstacle lay in the way of their going into the land?
Why did they raise no question about crossing the Jordan?

What had I on earth to do

With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless did I drivell
—Being—who?

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday, in the bustle of man's work time,
Greet the unseen with a cheer;
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be;
"Strive and thrive!" Cry "Speed; fight on; fare ever
There as here!" (Browning.)

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matters I or they,
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said,
And life the sweeter made? (Whittier.)

LESSON V.—OCTOBER 31.

THE EVILS OF STRONG DRINK.

(WORLD'S TEMPERANCE LESSON.)

Prov. 23: 29-35.

- 29 ¶Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?
Who hath complaining? who hath wounds without cause?
Who hath redness of eyes?
- 30 They that tarry long at the wine;
They that go to seek out mixed wine.
- 31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,
When it sparkleth in the cup,
When it goeth down smoothly:
- 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent,
And stingeth like an adder.
- 33 Thine eyes shall behold strange things,
And thy heart shall utter perverse things.
- 34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea.
Or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.
- 35 They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not hurt;
They have beaten me, and I felt it not:
When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.*” (Prov. 23: 32.)

TIME.—All times are times to be temperate.

PLACES.—All places are places to be temperate.

PERSONS.—All persons should be temperate.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 97: 1-6, 10-12.

HOME READING.—

- October 25. **M.** The Evils of Strong Drink. (Prov. 23: 29-35.)
October 26. **T.** Intemperance and Poverty. (Prov. 23: 19-25.)
October 27. **W.** Intemperance and War. (Hab. 2: 4-17.)
October 28. **T.** Intemperance and Captivity. (Amos 6: 1-11.)
October 29. **F.** Temperance and Health. (Dan. 1: 8-19.)
October 30. **S.** The Use of Our Liberty. (1 Cor. 8: 9-13.)
October 31. **S.** Strength in Jehovah. (Ps. 97: 1-12.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Self-control is bound by no geographical limits, but should be world-wide.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Solomon wrote most of the book of Proverbs. He wrote it, it is thought, about B.C. 1000.

The object of the book is stated in Prov. 1: 2-6.

It is, indeed, a book of wisdom—divine wisdom.

Temperance is self-control or self-government. It is the dividing line between the physical and moral, the animal and spiritual. Following his appetites and passions, man is no more than an animal. To be governed by the flesh is death. (Rom. 8: 5, 6.)

Paul was temperate and controlled his whole body. (1 Cor. 9: 24-27.) Before the unrighteous and intemperate Felix and the profligate

Drusilla he "reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come." (Acts 24: 25.)

Many are the exhortations in the New Testament to self-control. (See Gal. 5: 19-26; Tit. 1: 8, 9; 2: 1-8; 2 Pet. 1: 5-11.)

We must master our passions or they will master us.

The Bible everywhere condemns drunkards and making drunkards. (Isa. 28: 7; 1 Cor. 6: 9, 10; Hab. 2: 5; Tit. 1: 7; 2: 3; Rom. 13: 13; 14: 21.)

Timothy abstained from all strong drink as out of harmony with Christianity, was a teetotaler, and had to be exhorted by Paul to take a little wine for his "stomach's sake" and "often infirmities." (1 Tim. 5: 23.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Gluttony and Drunkenness.

(Read Prov. 23: 20, 21.)

The Bible not only warns against the use of intoxicating liquor; it also warns against associating with those who use it. One is known by the company he keeps. To associate with drunkards is to be considered a drunkard. "Be not among winebibbers; among gluttonous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags." (Prov. 23: 20, 21.)

Gluttony is also forbidden. It is a species of intemperance. "But he that is a companion of gluttons shameth his father." (Prov. 28: 7.) The drunken and gluttonous son was to be put to death. (Deut. 21: 20.) The Cretans were known as "idle gluttons" as well as "liars" and "evil beasts." (Tit. 1: 12.) Christians in Crete were exhorted to be temperate and to follow some useful employment as against idleness.

It is just as true that the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty as that any cause produces effect. Strong drink itself leads to gluttony as well as to many other sins. "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." (Prov. 21: 17.) Drunkenness and gluttony lead to poverty for more than one reason—not only because the drunkard and the glutton spend their money in self-indulgence, but because these sins destroy the powers of body and mind for attending to business. They lead to "drowsiness," "and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags." "Drowsiness" is the lethargy and incapacity for business which necessarily follow a life of dissipation. Such a life as surely leads to poverty and rags as fire burns.

There are two points in our lesson emphasized by Solomon—(1) the beauty, attractiveness, and carnal pleasure in strong drink at the beginning, and (2) the unutterable sorrow, misery, and woe to which it inevitably leads.

II. The Woes of Strong Drink.

29. In this one verse are specified six different evils produced by strong drink. In the margin "woe" and "sorrow" are interjections. "Who hath Oh? who hath Alas?" These warnings are put in the form of questions to give them emphasis.

The troubles and sorrows of drunkards are numerous and indescribable. No one can depict the trouble, the sorrow, and the pain that a drinking man causes his wife and children and the irreparable injury that he does himself in body, mind, and soul. The innocent are compelled to suffer with the guilty. The poverty and crimes caused by strong drink cannot be enumerated, nor can their enormity be measured. "Who hath contentions?" How many are the quarrels and brawls which strong drink has caused! "And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5: 18.)

Strong drink stirs all the evil and arouses all the angry passions in men, causes them to lose their reason, and transforms them into brutes.

Many murders—some say from eighty per cent to ninety per cent of all the murders committed—are traceable directly or indirectly to whisky. It produces much "complaining;" many "wounds without cause;" "redness of eyes," or, as in the margin, "darkness of eyes;" and, finally, death. If drunkards do not kill others, it is only a question of time as to when they will kill themselves, if they continue to drink. Drunkards drink away all their money, their friends, their homes, their health, their manhood, and then complain at all the world, and even at Providence. They have many "wounds without cause;" they receive many wounds in drunken brawls, and also many accidentally. We frequently hear of drunkards freezing to death and being killed by cars and in other ways. They receive many wounds upon their morals, their souls; for no drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God. The drink habit soon shows in the inflamed and bloodshot eyes.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler; and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20: 1.) "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes to say, Where is strong drink? lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the justice due to any that is afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul: let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more." (Prov. 31: 4-7.)

Whisky, indeed, perverts judgment. It sways a mighty influence over our country, and, like a king, dictates to our lawmakers what laws they shall make. Certainly those who drink it are "ready to perish," and to all it brings bitterness of soul. "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink; that justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!" (Isa. 5: 22, 23.) "But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare." (Luke 21: 34.)

III. The Bite of the Serpent, the Sting of the Adder.

30. All these evils come upon those who "tarry long at the wine, . . . that go to seek out mixed wine." As effect follows cause, they are sure to come. As sure as poison kills, whisky produces these effects. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life." (Gal. 6: 7, 8.) There

is no one seed which produces a more abundant harvest of corruption than whisky.

When one begins to drink, he soon begins to "tarry long;" and the farther he goes, the more he is enslaved. Then mild wine to-day calls for stronger wine to-morrow, and ere long it requires "mixed wine" to satisfy the appetite.

It is said by those who have examined the matter that the "mixed" liquors of the present time contain "alcohol, arsenic, alum, aloes, bitter almond, blood, chalk, cherry, laurel water, cocculus indicus, copperas, gypsum, henbane, isinglass, lime, lead, logwood, nux vomica, opium, oil of vitriol, oil of juniper, oil of turpentine, tobacco, sugar of lead, resin, and such like." ("Standard Eclectic Commentary.") It is said to be still worse and more deadly to-day.

31. This verse describes the beauty and pleasure of wine when it is red and sparkling and when its bright color shines from the glass. Its beauty whets the appetite and adds to its attraction and deception. Sin paints in the most beautiful colors and clothes in the most attractive dress and renders most seductive that which is most destructive. "Lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. 3: 13.) "When it goeth down smoothly." This refers to its taste. We are warned against its beauty and taste.

32. Notwithstanding its beauty and pleasant taste, its end is terrible. "It biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

"Serpent" is a general term; "adder" is a specific term. "They have sharpened their tongue like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips." (Ps. 140: 3.) Satan is called "the old serpent" and "the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12: 9), and whisky is one of his most deceptive and most destructive powers. It has the poisonous bite of the serpent and the deadly sting of the lurking adder.

One would better be bitten by a rattlesnake or a copperhead. This destroys the body, but whisky destroys both soul and body. A consummate drunkard goes to hell before his death. He is in hell on earth. As Milton makes Satan say, so can the drunkard say: "I myself am hell."

33. The drunkard's eyes behold strange things indeed when in a state of delirium tremens. It is said that all sorts of horrible things present themselves to his view. He utters blasphemy and all kinds of foul things.

Drunkenness is associated with theft, lying, lewdness, and every other species of debauchery. It leads to all these. It perverts one's imagination, defiles his thoughts, corrupts his life, and ruins his soul.

34. Like one "that lieth down in the midst of the sea" or "upon the top of a mast," the drunkard is surrounded by dangers, is in the midst of a storm, and may fall and perish at any moment. Yet he does not believe he is in danger. He thinks he is one that whisky cannot hurt.

35. This verse teaches that, notwithstanding all the remonstrances of a drunkard's friends, and notwithstanding all the shame, humiliation, his wounds and his bruises, when he awakes from sleep, or is aroused from his drunken stupor, he will seek strong drink again. Nothing can stop him. He travels downgrade with accelerated speed. He squanders all property, forsakes all friends, deserts all loved ones, and gives up home and heaven for whisky.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Who wrote the book of Proverbs?

Give, in Solomon's language, the object of this book.

What are some of the good things which it contains?

What does "temperance" mean?

To what does it relate?

What marks the difference between the animal and the spiritual?

Repeat Rom. 8: 5, 6.

What did Paul do that he might be saved?

About what did he reason before Felix?

Why is it a sin to make and sell whisky?

What scriptures can you give showing it is a sin?

Why did Timothy abstain from the use of all wine and other intoxicants?

What did Paul exhort him to do, and for what reason?

With whom should we associate?

By whom is a person known?

What else, as well as indulging in strong drink, is forbidden?

To what will the drunkard and the glutton surely come?

Why do drunkenness and gluttony lead to poverty?

What is "drowsiness"?

In what will it clothe a man?

What two points are emphasized in our lesson?

29 Give the six evils mentioned in this verse which are produced by strong drink.

In what ways do drunkards have "woe" and "sorrow"?

How does wine lead to "contentions"?

How does it produce "complaining"?

How does it cause "redness of eyes"?

Give the Bible quotations relative to strong drink.

Why should not kings and other rulers drink?

What influence now does whisky exert over many lawmakers, and how is this influence exerted?

What facts does this verse declare?

What effect does whisky produce?

30 What is meant by tarrying "long at the wine"?

What "mixed drinks" do men now take?

31 Against what does this verse warn us?

Why are wine and all sin so deceptive?

To what sad results does this verse say strong drink leads?

32 What is the difference between "serpent" and "adder"?

What misery does a drunkard suffer on earth?

33 What "strange things" do the drunkard's eyes behold?

What does drunkenness cause one to say?

34 What figure is used to illustrate the drunkard's danger?

35 What does this verse teach?

What will the drunkard give for whisky?

IS PROHIBITION RIGHT?

The gospel of Christ is for the whole world. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation;" "make disciples of all the nations." (Mark 16: 15, 16; Matt. 28: 19, 20.) Hence, that which the gospel enjoins is enjoined by the Lord, and that which it prohibits is prohibited by him.

Whatever the gospel of Christ enjoins or prohibits extends to all persons in all nations in all the world who accept the gospel.

Since God is all-wise and is light and love and seeks the greatest good and salvation of all mankind, to follow his laws is the wisest and best thing in time and for eternity that men can do.

The manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage, with all its evil consequences, are prohibited by the gospel; hence, such prohibition is right.

But God leaves every one to choose for himself whether or not he will practice self-control and abstain from strong drink, or obey the gospel at all. One must be moved to action by the warnings and threatenings of the gospel, led by the goodness of God, and constrained

by the love of Christ in order to become a child of God—a Christian. God never by civil authority or any other power forces one to repent, to be baptized, or to otherwise obey him.

But God has ordained "the powers that be"—that is, civil governments—for the restraint and punishment of evildoers and the protection of the righteous. In this way he prohibits many evils and restrains many evildoers, while he protects the righteous. He rules in the kingdoms of men and accomplishes righteous purposes through them—namely, promotes civilization, righteous laws among men, or corrects, chastises, and even destroys some wicked nations. (See Rom. 13: 1-7; 1 Tim. 1: 8-11; Dan. 2: 21, 37, 38; 4: 17, 25; 5: 18, 19; Ps. 47: 8; Prov. 8: 15.)

Christians are commanded to pray for civil lawmakers and rulers in order that they may so direct civil affairs that God's people may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. (1 Tim. 2: 1-4.)

It seems very difficult for Christians to realize that this is the life which God directs them to live, or, realizing it, for them to live it.

All this shows that the civil governments must make laws of prohibition, prohibiting many evil practices. The more wicked men these authorities can restrain and the more sins and wickedness they can prohibit, the better for the world and the happier here will it be for Christians.

If there were no firearms, no munitions of war, no battleships, no military schools, and no manufactories of strong and deadly drink in the world, how much better would the world be!

In this we see the difference between the church and the use God makes of it and civil government and the use God makes of it. The one is distinct and separate from the other. (See James 1: 27; 1 John 2: 15-17.) The one is spiritual—of heaven, heavenly, gentle and persuasive, using spiritual means and weapons; the other is of the earth—"earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3: 13-18), using force and carnal, deadly weapons. Christ's kingdom is not of this world—is not ruled by its ambitions and motives and is not possessed of the spirit of this world; hence, his subjects do not use carnal weapons. (John 18: 36.)

But, as we have seen, one great purpose God has in view in ordaining civil governments is to restrain and punish evildoers and to protect the righteous; so while Christ's kingdom "is not of this world," Christians must submit cheerfully to all civil authorities, in so far as God's laws are not set aside by the civil law, and must encourage all others to do the same. Christians can in no way encourage lawlessness. They are law-abiding, peace-loving citizens, so deporting themselves as to elicit the praise of civil authorities. They "honor all men," "love the brotherhood," "fear God," and "honor the king" (or civil rulers). (See 1 Pet. 2: 13-17.)

O, ye who weep for sorrow's sake,
 Dread not the coming years;
 Doubt not that God's sunshine shall make
 A rainbow of your tears. (Edwin L. Sabin.)

LESSON VI.—NOVEMBER 7.

THE FALL OF JERICHO.

Josh. 6: 12-20.

12 ¶And Joshua rose, early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of Jehovah.

13 And the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of Jehovah went on continually, and blew the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; and the rearward came after the ark of Jehovah, *the priests* blowing the trumpets as they went.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

15 ¶And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early at the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for Jehovah hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be devoted, even it and all that is therein, to Jehovah: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 But as for you, only keep yourselves from the devoted thing, lest when ye have devoted it, ye take of the devoted thing; so would ye make the camp of Israel accursed, and trouble it.

19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are holy unto Jehovah: they shall come into the treasury of Jehovah.

20 So the people shouted, and *the priests* blew the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, that the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.*” (1 John 5: 4.)

TIME.—Spring, B.C. 1451.

PLACE.—Jericho.

PERSONS.—The Israelites and inhabitants of Jericho.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 15.

HOME READING.—

- | | | |
|-------------|----|---|
| November 1. | M. | The Siege of Jericho. (Josh. 6: 1-11.) |
| November 2. | T. | The Fall of Jericho. (Josh. 6: 12-20.) |
| November 3. | W. | The Sun Stands Still. (Josh. 10: 12-21.) |
| November 4. | T. | Joshua Conquers Seven Kings. (Josh. 10: 28-33.) |
| November 5. | F. | Joshua Conquers the Land. (Josh. 11: 16-23.) |
| November 6. | S. | The Victories of Faith. (Heb. 11: 30-40.) |
| November 7. | S. | The All-Conquering God. (Ps. 66: 1-9.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Jericho was an ancient city well known at the time of our lesson. It was called “the city of palm trees” (Deut. 34: 3); it had a king, and was fortified by gates and a strong wall; it was a city of wealth, as our lesson shows; it was on the borders of Ephraim (Josh. 16: 1-7), and was allotted to Benjamin (Josh. 18: 11, 12, 21); after its destruction it was rebuilt by Hiel (1 Kings 16: 34); a school of the prophets was there, and there Elisha healed the waters (2 Kings 2: 15-22); there Jesus healed two blind men and was entertained by Zaccheus, a rich publican (Matt. 20: 29-34; Mark 10: 46-52; Luke 19: 1-10); it

was fifteen or more miles northeast from Jerusalem and six or seven miles west of the Jordan. Between Jerusalem and Jericho, along the road infested with robbers, was laid the scene of the parable of the good Samaritan.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The children of Israel, having passed over the Jordan, encamped at Gilgal.

They had not kept the passover since they left Sinai, and had not observed the rite of circumcision since they left Egypt forty years before.

Here God commanded Joshua to circumcise "all the people that were born in the wilderness."

"And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the nation, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And Jehovah said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of that place was called Gilgal, unto this day." (See Josh. 5: 2-9.)

"Gilgal" means "rolling."

From this time Gilgal was an important place in the history of the Jewish nation. It was five or six miles west of the Jordan and about one and one-half miles (some say farther) east of Jericho.

There were set up the twelve stones as a memorial of the parting of the Jordan waters; there the Israelites encamped and the women, children, cattle, and baggage were left during the Canaanitish war (Josh. 9: 6; 10: 6-43; 14: 6); there the ark was kept until it was removed to Shiloh (Josh. 18: 1); there Saul was proclaimed king (1 Sam. 10: 8; 11: 14, 15); there Saul in rebellion would offer a sacrifice to God when God had commanded him to do entirely a different thing (1 Sam. 15: 1-23); there Agag, the king of the Amalekites, was slain (1 Sam. 15: 33); there the men of Judah went to meet David on his return to Jerusalem after the death of Absalom (2 Sam. 19: 15); there the Israelites kept the first passover in the land of promise; and there the manna ceased.

"Neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." (Josh. 5: 10-12.)

The fruit of this land, however, which came in the natural way, was just as much a gift of God as the manna.

To-day all the temporal blessings of life are gifts from God.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. The Nations Alarmed.

To get all the facts in this case, we must begin with Josh. 5: 1: "And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, that were by the sea, heard how that Jehovah had dried up the waters of the Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel." With this corresponds Josh.

6: 1: "Now Jericho was straitly [closely] shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in."

The king of Jericho had doubtless supplied the city with food necessary for a siege.

II. Joshua Encouraged.

The next important fact is: "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as prince of the host of Jehovah am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the prince of Jehovah's host said unto Joshua, Put off thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so." (Josh. 5: 13-15.) This was probably the angel who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and some think it was no less a personage than Jesus Christ before "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." He is called "Jehovah" in Josh. 6: 2. As he came to encourage Moses then, so he has come to encourage Joshua now.

"It is very likely that Joshua had gone out to reconnoiter the city of Jericho when he had this vision; and . . . God, to encourage him, granted him this vision and instructed him in the means by which the city should be taken." (Clarke.) It was here, doubtless, that the Lord gave him the instructions in Josh. 5; hence, this properly belongs to that chapter.

III. Jehovah Gave Jericho, the King, and His Army to Joshua.

Another significant fact is: "And Jehovah said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor." (Josh. 6: 2.)

Then God did this, notwithstanding the means used and what the host of Israel had to do before the walls fell down and the destruction of the people and city afterwards. That God gave the city to Joshua does not imply, therefore, that there were no means used or that Joshua had nothing to do.

Then, whatever we now have to do in obedience to God in order to be saved, it is God who saves us; but he does not save us before we obey him through faith. (See Heb. 5: 9.)

This was to man a strange way to tear down the strong walls of a city; but it was God's way, and not man's. It shows that the power was in God, and not in the adequacy and efficacy of what the Israelites did; and yet they had to obey God before the walls fell.

IV. The Walls of Jericho Fell Down by Faith.

It is purely by faith when man obeys seeing no adequacy in the thing done to the end to be accomplished. God commanded that "the armed men" should march around the walls one time a day for six days in silence, seven priests blowing on seven trumpets of rams' horns, and seven times on the seventh day; and at the completion of the seventh round, when they heard a long blast on the trumpets, they should

shout, and the walls would fall down flat. (Josh. 6: 4-6.) They marched around in the following order: (1) "The armed men," (2) seven priests blowing on the seven trumpets of rams' horns, (3) the ark of the covenant borne by priests, and (4) "the rearward," or, as some say, "the rear guard." There were seven days, seven priests blowing on seven trumpets, and seven rounds on the seventh day. "Seven" in the Bible seems to denote completion, or fullness.

The ark in their midst represented Jehovah.

They were not to shout or let their voices be heard, neither was any word to proceed out of their mouth, until they were commanded to shout.

Thus Joshua went around the city once on the first day, and returned to the camp and lodged there.

12. "And Joshua rose early in the morning." It did not require a great while to compass the city, because they compassed it seven times on the seventh day. Rising early, then, to make only one round a day shows their faith, earnestness, and zeal. It has been suggested that they "rose early" because the mornings were cooler; but this could have been only a secondary consideration, if one at all; for on the seventh day they regarded not the heat, and nothing stands in the way of those who are determined to obey God.

The best way to accomplish anything is to begin early.

13, 14. On the second day they went around in the appointed order the second time. "So they did six days."

15. On the seventh day "they rose early at the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times."

It is not stated what impression this solemn procession, marching in silence, save the blowing of the trumpets, made upon the inhabitants of the city, and it is useless for us to guess.

16. At the completion of the seventh round on the seventh day Joshua said: "Shout; for Jehovah hath given you the city." The walls yet stood in their huge strength as solid as on the day the marching began; yet Joshua knew they would fall so soon as the Israelites shouted as well as he knew it after they had fallen, because God had said so. Therefore, before the Israelites shouted, he gave specific directions as to how they should act, and charged the spies to remember Rahab. Then when they shouted, "the wall fell down flat." (Verse 20.)

There was nothing in marching around the walls to tear them down; hence, "by faith the walls of Jericho fell down." How could the faith of men tear down the walls, when it was God who threw them down and gave the city to Joshua? The people believed God and did what he commanded, and then he threw down the walls.

V. When Did Faith Throw Down the Walls?

When did the walls fall down by faith? "After they had been compassed about for seven days" (Heb. 11: 30), not before. They did not fall simultaneously with Joshua's faith in God's promise, and he did not then march around because they had fallen down. Joshua did not say, "Since God has given us the city, it is useless to march around;" or, "Since it is 'by faith,' marching around is a nonessential;" or, "Since marching around is that which is to throw down the walls, it

cannot be 'by faith;'” or, “Since God requires only thirteen rounds and we can make them in two days, we will just do so and be done with it;” or, “Since shouting is the last thing; we will do nothing but shout.” None of these would have been “by faith,” and the walls would not have fallen. People can act by faith in so far only as they do just what God commands. Faith is taking God at his word, trustfully doing what he commands and relying on him for results.

VI. When Are We Saved by Faith?

We are saved from sin by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ when we have faith enough to obey God. Jesus says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.” (Mark 16: 16.) He also says: “Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2: 38.) Faith does this as it marched around the walls of Jericho. “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) To-day people are not saved from sin by faith and then obey God in baptism because they have been saved or pardoned. Joshua’s faith must “hold out” or continue in obedience to God for seven days before it can throw down the walls, and faith to-day must obey God before it can save.

VII. Rahab Saved by Faith, Justified by Works.

Rahab was saved by faith (Heb. 11: 31), in that she believed God, and “justified by works, in that she received the messengers, and sent them out another way” (James 2: 25). She did as directed—tied in the window the red cord by which she had let the spies down from her house over the wall and gathered all her people into her house. (Josh. 2: 15-21.) She became the wife of an Israelite, and her name is in the genealogy of Jesus. (Matt. 1: 5.)

VIII. The City Destroyed, or “Devoted.”

17-19. The city and everything in it, except Rahab and her house, were to “be devoted”—that is, to be used exclusively in God’s service or religiously destroyed. In the conquests of other cities only the inhabitants were destroyed, and the Israelites took the cattle and spoil as a prey for themselves. (Josh. 7: 21.) In this case all “the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron” were placed in God’s treasury; men, women, children, oxen, sheep, and asses were destroyed by the sword; and the city was burned with fire. (Verses 21-24.) The Israelites were forbidden to appropriate anything to their own use, and whosoever did so would trouble Israel or bring the curse upon Israel and themselves, as in the case of Achan, who took the wedge of gold, two hundred shekels of silver, and the “goodly Babylonish mantle,” which caused the army of Israel to retreat before Ai and the destruction of himself and family. (Josh. 7.)

20. Having given at the last moment the necessary directions and warnings, Joshua ordered the people to shout; and when they did so, “the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every

man straight before him, and they took the city," and utterly destroyed it, as commanded. (Verse 21.) Then Joshua pronounced a curse upon the man who should undertake to rebuild that city: "With the loss of his first-born shall he lay the foundation thereof, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." (Verse 26.) This was fulfilled years afterwards in the case of Hiel. (1 Kings 16: 34.)

"So Jehovah was with Joshua; and his fame was in all the land." (Verse 27.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Where was Jericho?
What was it called?
What occurred there?
Why conclude there was wealth there?
Where did the children of Israel encamp after crossing the Jordan?
Where was Gilgal?
Relate the different things which occurred there.
Why did the manna cease?
What befell all the kings when they heard how the waters of the Jordan had dried up to let the Israelites pass?
What was done at Jericho?
Who stood before Joshua?
What did Joshua ask him?
What reply was made?
What then did Joshua do and say?
What was he then told to do?
What directions were given Joshua as to how to take the city?
Who gave the city to Joshua?
How can it be said God gave the city, etc., to Joshua, when he must use means in taking it?
Who saves us?
When?
Repeat the instruction God gave to Joshua, and the order in which he was to compass the city.
Whom did the ark represent?
What were the people not to do while compassing the city?
When were they to shout?
How did Joshua proceed?
- 12 Why rise early to make only one round?
- 13, 14 What did they do for six days?
15 What did they do on the seventh day?
Why can we not know what impression all this made upon the inhabitants of Jericho?
16 What were the people commanded to do at the end of the seventh round on the seventh day?
Why did Joshua know the walls would fall down so soon as they should shout?
What directions did he give after the last round and before they shouted?
When did the walls fall down "by faith?"
In what ways did Joshua not reason about it?
When are we saved by faith?
What does God command us to do for the remission of sins?
What must we do to be saved in heaven finally?
If God saves us, then how is it that we are saved by faith?
17-19 What is meant by being "devoted?"
What was done with the gold, silver, brass, etc?
What became of the men, women, children, cattle, etc.?
What was done with the city?
Who disobeyed God?
What did he take?
What did this cause?
Who alone were saved?
Why were they saved?
How was Rahab saved by faith?
How was she justified by works?
20 When did the walls fall down?
Upon whom did Joshua pronounce a curse?
What was the curse?
Upon whom was it fulfilled?

"Yet in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings:
I know that God is good."

LESSON VII.—NOVEMBER 14.

CALEB'S FAITHFULNESS REWARDED.

Josh. 14: 6-15.

6 ¶Then the children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that Jehovah spake unto Moses the man of God concerning me and concerning thee in Kadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in my heart.

8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed Jehovah my God.

9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy foot hath trodden shall be an inheritance to thee and to thy children for ever, because thou hast wholly followed Jehovah my God.

10 And now, behold, Jehovah hath kept me alive, as he spake, these forty and five years, from the time that Jehovah spake this word unto Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, and to go out and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this hill-country, whereof Jehovah spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and cities great and fortified: it may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as Jehovah spake.

13 ¶And Joshua blessed him; and he gave Hebron unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance.

14 Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite unto this day; because that he wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel.

15 Now the name of Hebron beforetime was Kiriath-arba; which Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. And the land had rest from war.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*I wholly followed Jehovah my God.*” (Josh. 14: 8.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1444.

PLACE.—Gilgal.

PERSONS.—Joshua and Caleb.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 107: 1-9.

HOME READING.—

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|--------------|----|---|
| November 8. | M. | Caleb's Faithfulness Rewarded. (Josh. 14: 6-15.) |
| November 9. | T. | The Boundaries of Judah. (Josh. 15: 1-12.) |
| November 10. | W. | Caleb Takes Possession. (Josh. 15: 13-20.) |
| November 11. | T. | The Tabernacle Set Up at Shiloh. (Josh. 18: 1-7.) |
| November 12. | F. | Cities of Refuge Appointed. (Josh. 20: 1-9.) |
| November 13. | S. | Joshua's Exhortation to Israel. (Josh. 23: 1-11.) |
| November 14. | S. | The Righteous Man's Reward. (Ps. 15: 1-5.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Locate on the map Ai, Mount Ebal, Mount Gerizim, the possessions of the different tribes, and other places mentioned in the lesson.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Six or seven years intervened between the last lesson and this one. (See verse 10 of the lesson.) Read the intervening chapters.

After the destruction of Jericho, the Israelites were defeated before Ai, with the loss of thirty-six men. This was because of the sin of Achan. (See Josh. 7; 8: 1-29.)

In some places now the church does not prosper because of the Achans within.

Then Joshua built an altar of unhewn stone in Mount Ebal, offered burnt offerings and peace offerings unto Jehovah, and wrote on plastered stones, in the presence of the children of Israel, a copy of the law of Moses. (Deut. 27: 1-8.)

As God had commanded (Deut. 27: 9-14), half of the tribes took their stand in front of Mount Gerizim to bless the people; the other half, before Mount Ebal, to curse them. Then the entire law was read, and the blessings were pronounced upon those who would keep it and the curses upon those who should break it. (Josh. 8: 30-35.)

This was a solemn occasion, and seriously was the word of God impressed upon the people.

Josh. 9 records how the Gibeonites deceived Joshua into making a covenant with them, and how they became hewers of wood and drawers of water forever.

Josh. 10 records the battle during which the sun stood "still upon Gibeon."

Next, Joshua made the conquest of Northern Canaan. "Joshua made war a long time with all those kings"—the kings of both the south and the north of Palestine. "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Jehovah spake unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land had rest from war." (Josh. 11.)

Josh. 12 recounts the thirty-one kings destroyed by Joshua. Joshua was now "old and well stricken in years," and the entire land had not yet been conquered; but God directed Joshua to divide the land for an inheritance among the nine and one-half tribes.

The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh were now sent back to their inheritance east of the Jordan. (Josh. 13.)

The Levites received no inheritance, "save cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for their cattle and for their substance;" yet there were twelve tribes besides, "for the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim." (Josh. 14: 1-4.)

"As Jehovah commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did; and they divided the land." (Verse 5.) God commanded Moses how to have the land divided. (Num. 26: 52-56.)

The borders of the land were given (Num. 34: 1-15), and the names of those who were to divide it were given (Num. 34: 16-29).

The children of Joseph were discontented with their lot and made some complaint, but their complaints were met and satisfied. (Josh. 17: 14-18.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Who Was Caleb?

6. "Then the children of Judah drew nigh unto Joshua in Gilgal," because they had not received their inheritance. (Josh. 15.)

Caleb was of that tribe. (Num. 13: 6.) He is first mentioned when he was sent as one of the twelve spies to view the land. "He is, as we have seen, styled 'the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite,' and his younger brother, Othniel, afterwards the first judge, is also called 'the son of Kenaz.' (Josh. 15: 17; Judg. 1: 3; 3: 9, 11.) On the other hand, the

genealogy in 1 Chron. 2 makes no mention whatever of either Jephunneh or Kenaz, but represents Caleb, though obscurely, as being a descendant of Hezron and a son of Hur. (See, too, Josh. 4.) Again, in Josh. 15: 13 we have this singular expression, 'Unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a portion among the children of Judah;' and in Josh. 14: 14, the no less significant one: 'Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, . . . because that he wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel.' It becomes, therefore, quite possible that Caleb was a foreigner by birth, a proselyte incorporated into the tribe of Judah." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.) He is usually spoken of in the Bible as "the son of Jephunneh." The Kenizzites descended from Kenaz, one of the sons of Esau. (Gen. 36: 15, 42.)

II. God's Promise to Caleb.

Caleb reminded Joshua of what Jehovah had said through Moses concerning himself and Joshua in Kadesh-barnea.

There God said of Caleb: "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it." (Num. 14: 24.) God said through Moses: "And to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed Jehovah." (Deut. 1: 36.)

Hebron is the place referred to, and near there they cut the large cluster of grapes. (Num. 13: 22-24.)

Joshua understood this promise and readily granted it, as our lesson shows. (Verses 13, 14.)

III. Caleb "Wholly Followed Jehovah."

7, 8. Caleb was forty years old when the spies were sent by Moses, and he was one of the two who brought back a favorable report. He says here: "And I brought him word again as it was in my heart." He was honest, sincere, fully believed in God, and stated the facts without bias. He "wholly followed Jehovah"—that is, in faith and trust he obeyed God, knowing and urging that they could take the land. The evil report of the ten "made the heart of the people melt."

These reports are found in Num. 13: 25 to 14: 10.

9. God's rule was: "Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours." (Deut. 11: 24; see also Josh. 1: 3.) They must take possession by driving out the inhabitants. Caleb had set foot on this country around Hebron, and was now ready to take possession of it by dispossessing its inhabitants. Moses promised this to Caleb, and swore to it because he had "wholly followed Jehovah."

It is no small thing to say of a man that he has "wholly followed Jehovah."

Caleb believed in the guidance, power, and protection of God.

Of Zacharias and Elisabeth it is said that they walked "in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1: 6.)

While the Israelites wept, rebelled, and proposed to return to Egypt, Caleb, with Joshua, stood steadfast; and as a reward God gave Hebron to Caleb and made Joshua leader of Israel.

IV. God Keeps His Promises.

10. "Jehovah hath kept me alive, as he spake." The Lord said all the men of war should fall in the wilderness, and none should enter the land of promise, save Joshua and Caleb; and this promise he had kept for forty-five years.

God always keeps his promises according to the conditions upon which he makes them. Men fail to comply with the conditions and come short of the promises, but God never fails. "For how many soever be the promises of God, in him [in Christ] is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us." (2 Cor. 1: 20.)

Since my earliest recollection I have never seen a day, or an hour of a day, or a minute of an hour, when I doubted any promise God has ever made or any word he has ever uttered. No reasoning or persuasion is necessary in order to induce me to believe God. My doubts and fears arise with my failures to obey God—that is, to comply with the conditions upon which God's promises are made. When one, as did Caleb, wholly follows Jehovah, one can sing with full assurance of faith:

"The Lord has promised good to me;
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

"And when this heart and flesh shall fail
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A life of joy and peace."

V. Caleb's Faith and Courage.

Since Caleb was eighty-five years old on that day and it had been forty-five years since God made that promise, he was, therefore, forty years old when he went as a spy.

11. Caleb states the fact that he was then as strong and as equal to war as he was forty-five years before, in order to prove that he could dispossess the inhabitants of the land. He asked for the privilege of subduing the land. A man eighty-five years old ready for work and war!

12. "Therefore," he said, "give me this hill country"—the mountainous country about Hebron. "For thou heardest in that day [the day the spies returned with an evil report] how the Anakim were there, and cities great and fortified." This was one of the reasons the ten spies gave for saying they could not take it; but Caleb at eighty-five years of age said he could take it and drive out the giants, "as the Lord spake," if the Lord would be with him. This is faith and courage.

From Josh. 10: 36, 39; 11: 21, 22; 12: 10 it seems that Joshua had already captured Hebron and driven the Anakim out of these parts; but from our lesson and Judg. 1: 8-13 it appears that the Canaanites and Anakim were still there. One of two theories is true: either these people took possession of Hebron and the surrounding country again after Joshua's first conquest or this conquest made by Joshua took place after Caleb made this request and Joshua conquered the land through him. It is probable there was but one conquest.

VI. God Rewardeth Caleb.

13. Joshua blessed Caleb and gave him Hebron "for an inheritance."

14. The reason that Hebron was given to Caleb is "that he wholly followed Jehovah, the God of Israel."

15. Before this the name of Hebron was "Kiriath-arba"—that is, the city of Arba. "Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim"—a race of giants.

"And the land had rest from war." This statement is also made in Josh. 11: 23. This helps to confirm the opinion that all this is the history of only one conquest, and that chapters 10-12 state only facts and this chapter and Judg. 1 state how and through whom the conquest was made. Yet the whole land was not subdued, as has been stated, and more fighting followed later on.

As we have before learned, Hebron was about twenty miles south of Jerusalem, and was one of the most ancient cities in the world, having been "built seven years before Zoan in Egypt." (Num. 13: 22.) There Abraham camped and built an altar unto Jehovah (Gen. 13: 18), and there was his family burying ground (Gen. 23). It is connected with many interesting events in the history of Israel.

QUESTIONS.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Did you look out all places on the map?
How long was this since our last lesson?
How many men did Joshua send against Ai?
Why could not the Israelites take Ai?
What became of Achan and his family?
Why does the church not advance in many places?
Upon what did Joshua write the law?
On what mountain?
Where did half of the tribes stand?
Where did the other half stand?
What was read to all the people?
What did those on Mount Gerizim do?
What did those on Mount Ebal do?
State the facts of chapter 9.
What conquest did Joshua next make?
Where did the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasse settle?
What inheritance did the Levites receive?
How were there twelve tribes besides the Levites?
How did God command that the land should be divided?</p> | <p>Where is he first mentioned?
Was he an Israelite or a proselyte?
Who were the Kenizzites?
Where was Kadesh-barnea?
What had God promised to Caleb?
Why did Joshua understand this promise?
7, 8 What kind of report did Caleb bring?
What effect did the evil report of the other spies have?
9 What did God promise to Caleb?
What was God's rule in giving the land to the Israelites?
Why did Moses promise Hebron and the surrounding country to Caleb?
What is it to wholly follow the Lord?
10 What promise does Caleb here say God had kept?
How old was Caleb at this time?
How old was he when sent as a spy?
11 What fact does Caleb here state?
Why did he make this statement?
For what did he not make request?
12 What mountain did he mean?
What had the ten spies said about that country?
What did Caleb say he could do by God's help?
13 What did Joshua do?
What had he and Caleb done together?
14 Why was Hebron given to Caleb?
15 What was the name of Hebron before this?
Who was Arba?
When was this conquest of Hebron made, and by whom?
Where was Hebron?
What is said of the age of it?
What events occurred there?</p> |
|--|--|
- 6 What tribe drew near to Joshua?
At what place?
What did Caleb say to Joshua?
Whose son was Caleb?
Of what tribe?

LESSON VIII.—NOVEMBER 21.

JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT.

Josh. 24: 14-25.

14 ¶Now therefore fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.

16 ¶And the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake Jehovah, to serve other gods;

17 For Jehovah our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed;

18 And Jehovah drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites that dwelt in the land: therefore we also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God.

19 ¶And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake Jehovah, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve Jehovah.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses.

23 Now therefore put away, *said he*, the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken.

25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Choose you this day whom ye will serve: . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.” (Josh. 24: 15.)

TIME.—B.C. 1426.

PLACE.—Shechem.

PERSONS.—Joshua and the Israelites.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 107: 1-9.

HOME READING.—

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|--------------|----|--|
| November 15. | M. | Joshua Assembles Israel. (Josh. 24: 1-13.) |
| November 16. | T. | Joshua Renewing the Covenant. (Josh. 24: 14-25.) |
| November 17. | W. | The Death of Joshua. (Josh. 24: 29-33.) |
| November 18. | T. | Jehoiada's Covenant. (2 Kings 11: 17-20.) |
| November 19. | F. | The New Covenant. (Heb. 9: 11-22.) |
| November 20. | S. | Abiding Faith in Christ. (Heb. 13: 8-17.) |
| November 21. | S. | Praise for Redemption. (Ps. 107: 1-9.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Shechem was about thirty-four miles north of Jerusalem, between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Here Abraham first built an altar in the land of promise (Gen. 12: 6, 7); here Jacob, on his return to Canaan, bought a parcel of ground of Hamor (Gen. 33: 18-20), rescued the altar from the Amorites (Gen. 48: 22), and gave the land to Joseph, “and Jacob’s well was there” (John 4: 5, 6); here Joshua assembled the children of Israel to read to them the law of God and to

pronounce the blessings and the curses soon after they first entered the land (Josh. 8: 30-35); and here the bones of Joseph were buried (Josh. 24: 32). Thus Shechem was surrounded by sacred events.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

Chapter 23 gives an account of Joshua's assembling all Israel before him when he "was old and well stricken in years," but that was probably not the same assembly as the one of our lesson. It is not stated where that assembly was held. The one of our lesson was at Shechem.

Our lesson brings us to the triumphant end of a true, pure, heroic, and eventful life. Joshua passed through many trials and powerful temptations, but his character is not marred by sin; it stands out before the world clean, bright, and beautiful.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. A Solemn Address.

14. This chapter, from verse 1 to verse 28, is a solemn address of an old man ready to die to the people whom he loved and for whom he had sacrificed and fought his long life through. "Now therefore fear Jehovah"—that is, in view of what God had done for them as enumerated in the preceding verses. (1) He had brought Abraham from beyond the river Euphrates, led him through Canaan, and given him Isaac; (2) he had given Jacob and Esau to Isaac; (3) he had given Mount Seir to Esau; (4) he had sent Moses and Aaron and plagued the Egyptians; (5) he had delivered the Israelites from Egypt; (6) he had destroyed the Egyptians in the sea; (7) he had destroyed the Amorites who dwelt beyond the Jordan; (8) he had changed Balaam's curses into blessings; (9) he had given them Jericho and delivered all the different nations of the land west of the Jordan into their hands; (10) the Israelites had not done it by their sword and bow together, but he had sent, as he had promised (Ex. 23: 28), the hornet, which drove out the inhabitants; and (11) he had given them land whereon they had not labored, cities they had not built, and vineyards and olive trees they had not planted. They were familiar with all these wonders God had wrought, and were then enjoying all these gifts God had bestowed upon them. In gratitude and as a matter of right they should serve God and be true to him. So Paul asks now: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2: 4.) In consideration of his mercies and as our "spiritual service" we should present our "bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God," etc. (Rom. 12: 1, 2.) "We love, because he first loved us." (1 John 4: 19.) To "fear" God is not to dread him or to be filled with terror, but to serve him with reverence and awe. All should be afraid to do wrong. "And serve him in sincerity and in truth." "Sincerity" is freedom from all wrong motives, pretense, and hypocrisy. To serve God in sincerity is to serve him with all honesty of purpose and pure motive; to serve God in truth is to serve him according to his will, and not through idols. God's word is truth (John 17: 17), and to obey his word is to serve him in truth. Jesus now says: "God is a Spirit:

and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4: 24.) In serving God, we must do exactly what he says. We must do it when he says do it, in the way he says do it, and with the right motive. The worship by God of those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men is vain. (Mark 7: 1-13.) Anything offered to God as service which comes from the wisdom of men makes the worship vain. Therefore, God says: "Put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah." There were still idols and idolatry among the Israelites. In verse 23 Joshua exhorts them to put away the foreign gods which were among them. (See Amos 5: 25-27; Acts 7: 41-43.) This verse and verses 15 and 23 show what kind of idolatry was among them. The "River" was the Euphrates, and the gods of their fathers "beyond the River" were "the gods of the Chaldeans—fire, light, the sun; those of the Egyptians—Apis, Anubis, the ape, serpents, vegetables, etc.; those of the Canaanites, Moabites, etc.—Baal-peor (or Priapus), Astarte (or Venus), etc." (Clarke.) The "fathers" on the other side of the Euphrates were "Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor: and they served other gods." (Verse 2.) Rachel stole her father's gods when Jacob left Laban (Gen. 31: 30-35), and later Jacob had his household to put away the gods which were among them (Gen. 35: 1-2). It is strange that in Joshua's time, after all they had seen of the wonders, power, and glory of God, there should still be idolaters among the Israelites. They believed in the existence of God; and when they made the golden calf, they intended to worship God through it. (Ex. 32: 4-6.) Idolatry had its attractions. They could see the idols and the temples erected to the worship of idols. Idolatry appealed to fleshly passions, for licentiousness was embraced in the worship. It had attractive social features and the glamour of success. To appeal to the fleshly passions to-day in the service of God is a species of idolatry, though, of course, not so gross as that practiced by the Israelites. Wealth and material success have much to do now in perverting the true, spiritual service of God; while the love of display, pride, and vanity do no little to corrupt it. Are not musical instruments, choir singing, and hired musicians an appeal to fleshly passions? God commands his children now to sing, not to make music; he commands them what to sing—psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; he commands them how to sing—with the spirit and so that all can understand what is sung (1 Cor. 14: 15), "making melody" with the "heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5: 19), and with grace in the heart unto God (Col. 3: 16). God expressly says: "Covetousness . . . is idolatry." (Col. 3: 5.) If it is strange that the Israelites still clung to idolatry, it is stranger still that professed Christians cling to some features of it.

II. The People Called Upon to Make a Choice.

15. Joshua calls upon them now for a choice. After all they had seen displayed of God's power, glory, and wisdom, as recited above, in contrast with idols and idol worshippers, they should be able to make at once and forever a decided choice. If after all this it seemed evil to them to serve Jehovah, then they should let it be known, and should not endeavor to serve God and idols, or God through idols. The worship of God must be pure, sincere, free, and unmixed with idolatry or

corruption of any kind. If so then, how much more so now! Joshua declared the choice he and his household had made: "But as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah." This was an heroic and sublime manifestation of moral courage. He made this declaration to encourage others. This teaches us that all must choose for themselves between good and evil, right and wrong, God and Satan; and that, regardless of what others may do, one should decide for himself to serve God. Joshua was not just then making that choice; he had made it and maintained it long before. This reminds us of Solomon's wise choice (1 Kings 3: 4-15) and of Elijah's conduct (1 Kings 18: 16-39).

III. The People's Choice.

16-18. The people made the choice, and declared, as did Joshua, that they would serve God. They recognized and enumerated what God had done for them and showed their gratitude in declaring that they would serve him, "for he is our God." They were sincere, as verse 31 shows: "And Israel served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and had known all the work of Jehovah, that he had wrought for Israel."

19. "Ye cannot serve Jehovah." Joshua did not mean by this to discourage them or to say that under no conditions could they serve God; but unless they should put away all strange gods, as commanded, they could not serve God. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3: 4), means unless the inhabitants should repent. The reason given why they could not serve God unless they should put away all idols is that God is holy and jealous. They must be holy, or set apart from all that is idolatrous and unclean, because God is holy. God is jealous, because he will not accept a divided heart and service.

20. This verse shows that serving God or idols is wholly a matter of man's choice. After they had decided to serve Jehovah and after he had done them good, if they should forsake him, he would then consume them in his wrath, as the downfall and destruction of the Jewish nation testify to-day. (See Rom. 11: 19-24.) This verse was spoken as a warning to the people.

21. Again the people declared they would serve God.

22. Joshua made them witnesses to this repeated determination to serve God, and they readily consented to act as such.

23. "Now therefore put away . . . the foreign gods." Since they had repeated their determination to serve God, now was the time to put away all other gods, and do so in sincerity and truth. Likewise we should obey God at once.

24. Again, and for the third time, the people declared their purpose to serve God. "Unto his voice will we hearken." To hear and obey God is the only way to serve him. Joshua had them to repeat this declaration three times, and each time was stronger than the preceding one.

IV. The Covenant.

25. "So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day." A "covenant" is an agreement; and this repeated declaration, or agreement, to serve God only was the covenant, and it was made binding by "a statute and an ordinance." All "these words" were then written "in

the book of the law of God," and "a great stone" was set "up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Jehovah." (Verse 26.) This stone was also a witness against the people that they had agreed to serve God. (Verse 27.) Then "Joshua sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance." (Verse 28.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Where was Shechem?
What had taken place at Shechem?
Of what does chapter 23 give an account?
Was this the same assembly of our lesson?
To what does our lesson bring us?
What makes this a solemn occasion?
For what reasons should the people fear God?
For what reasons should we repent and serve God?
What is it to fear God?
How should they serve God?
What is it to worship God now in spirit and truth?
What is vain worship?
14 What were the Israelites commanded to put away?
Were they then still idolatrous?
What did the Chaldeans worship?
What did the Egyptians worship?
What did the Canaanites worship?
What river is meant here?
Who were the "fathers . . . beyond the River?"
What statements show the inclination of Jacob's family to idolatry?
What use did the Israelites intend to make of the golden calf?
What attractions had idolatry?
What is appealing now to fleshly passions in religion equal to?
What has a tendency to pervert and corrupt true worship to-day?
- To what do instrumental music and hired musicians appeal?
What and how does God command Christians to sing?
What is "covetousness" said to be?
What does Joshua call upon the Israelites to do?
15 Was it evil to serve God?
Then why did Joshua say this?
What choice had Joshua and his family made?
How long had he served God?
Why did he declare here his choice?
What does this teach us to do?
16-18 What choice did the people make?
What reason did they give?
What shows their sincerity in this choice?
19 What did Joshua mean by saying, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah?"
What reasons are given for purifying themselves and serving God wholly?
20 What does this verse show?
If the people should forsake Jehovah, what would be the consequences?
21 What did the people again declare?
22 To what did Joshua make them witnesses?
23 What must they put away?
24 What did the people do for the third time?
25 What then did Joshua make with them?
What is a covenant?
Where were all these words written?
What was this stone to be?
What then did Joshua do with the people?

"If you think you are beaten, you are;
If you think you dare not, you don't;
If you like to win, but you think you can't,
It is almost certain you won't.
For out in the world you'll find
Success begins with a fellow's will—
It's all in the state of mind."

LESSON IX.—NOVEMBER 28.

GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED.

Judg. 7: 4-8, 19-21. Read Judg. 7: 1-25.

4 ¶And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and Jehovah said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets; and he sent all the men of Israel every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and the camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

19 ¶So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers that were in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands wherewith to blow; and they cried, The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon.

21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran; and they shouted, and put them to flight.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.*” (Eph. 6: 10.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1222.

PLACE.—The valley of Jezreel.

PERSONS.—Gideon, his army, and the Midianites.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 27: 1-6.

HOME READING.—

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| November 22. | M. | Israel Oppressed. (Judg. 6: 1-10.) |
| November 23. | T. | Gideon's Call. (Judg. 6: 11-24.) |
| November 24. | W. | Gideon's Faithfulness. (Judg. 6: 25-32.) |
| November 25. | T. | Gideon's Faith Strengthened. (Judg. 6: 33-40.) |
| November 26. | F. | Gideon and the Three Hundred. (Judg. 7: 1-25.) |
| November 27. | S. | More Than Conquerors. (Rom. 8: 31-39.) |
| November 28. | S. | The Fearlessness of Faith. (Ps. 27: 1-6.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Bochim was probably near Shiloh. The word means “weepers.” The people wept there because of what the angels had said.

The valley of Jezreel will be described in the body of the lesson.

SOME FORE LESSONS.

Instead of giving simply “Hints and Helps for Teachers,” it is necessary to learn some lessons previous to the one in the lesson text.

More than two hundred years elapsed between the last lesson and this one.

The Book of Judges.

The time of the judges, including that of Eli and Samuel, covered a period of more than three hundred and fifty years. It is not known who wrote this book. Some suppose Samuel wrote it. Its events cover a period of nearly three hundred years.

"It is a most remarkable history of the long-suffering of God toward the Israelites, in which we find the most signal instances of his justice and his mercy displayed. The people sinned, and were punished; they repented, and found mercy. Something of this kind we meet with on every page, and these things are written for our warning. None should presume, for God is just; none need despair, for God is merciful." (Adam Clarke.)

God commanded Israel to drive out all these nations, to make no covenant with them, to have no mercy upon them, to make no marriages with them whatever, and not to serve their gods, but to break down their altars and to burn their graven images. (Ex. 23: 31-33; Deut. 7: 1-6, 16.) If they should fail to do these things and should in any way cleave unto the nations and make marriages with them, etc., then these nations would prove a snare and a trap to them, pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides; and then God would do to them what he had said he would do to these nations. (Num. 33: 55, 56; Josh. 23: 12, 13.)

The book of Judges shows us how this became true. God used these nations to punish the Israelites.

The People Soon Fell into Idolatry.

The author of the book of Judges introduces in chapter 2 the account of Joshua's death to show that the following generation (verse 10) did not obey God, and, therefore, suffered the consequences.

"The people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Jehovah, that he had wrought for Israel." But they did not serve God so well afterwards. During Joshua's lifetime some had their idols, but just before his death, as we learned in Lesson VIII, they promised in a most solemn manner to serve God wholly.

This shows the power of a godly life. It was not only after the death of Joshua, but after the death of the elders contemporary with him, that Israel fell into such idolatry. The influence and works of good men live after them. (Heb. 11: 4.)

The elders were the leaders among the people. (See Num. 11: 16, 17; Deut. 1: 12-17.)

Neither these elders nor any of this generation were as much as twenty years old when they left Egypt. If Joshua was forty years old when he left Egypt, he was eighty when he entered Canaan, and, hence, lived in Canaan thirty years. We do not know his exact age when he left Egypt. If one of these elders was only a year old when he left Egypt, he was forty years old when he entered Canaan and was sixty-five or seventy when Joshua died. Some of these elders died before, some died after, Joshua's death, and the ones who lived the longest could not have survived a great many years—twenty or thirty years.

Some of this generation had seen the wonders God wrought in divid-

ing the Red Sea, giving the manna, bringing water out of the rock, the solemn scenes of Mount Sinai, dividing the Jordan, etc. They had not, it seems, sufficiently impressed these things and God's commandments upon their children.

God had commanded them to teach his word diligently to their children. So he commands us.

Baal.

They did evil "and served the Baalim." "Baal" means "lord" or "ruler." The word "Baalim" is plural and signifies "lords."

"Their false gods they considered supernatural rulers, or governors, each having his peculiar district and office; but when they wished to express a particular Baal, they generally added some particular epithet—as 'Baal-zephon,' 'Baal-peor,' 'Baal-zebub,' 'Baal-shamayim,' etc.—as Calmet has well observed. The two former were adored by the Moabites; Baal-zebub, by the Ekronites. Baal-berith was honored at Shechem; Baal-shamayim, the lord, or ruler, of the heavens, was adored among the Phenicians, Syrians, Chaldeans, etc.; and whenever the word 'Baal' is used without an epithet, this is the god that is intended; and probably among all these people it meant the sun." (Adam Clarke.)

"The worship of Baal among the Jews seems to have been appointed with much pomp and ceremony. Temples were erected to him (1 Kings 16: 32; 2 Kings 11: 18); his images were set up (2 Kings 10: 26); his altars were very numerous (Jer. 11: 13), were erected particularly on lofty eminences (1 Kings 18: 20) and on the roofs of houses (Jer. 32: 29); there were priests in great numbers (1 Kings 18: 19) and of various classes (2 Kings 10: 19); the worshipers seem to have been arrayed in appropriate robes (2 Kings 10: 22); the worship was performed by incense (Jer. 7: 9) and offering burnt sacrifices, which occasionally consisted in human victims (Jer. 19: 5). The officiating priests danced with fanatic shouts around the altar, and cut themselves with knives to excite the attention and compassion of their god. (1 Kings 18: 26-28.) . . . The narrative (Num. 25) shows clearly that this form of Baal worship was connected with licentious practices." (Smith's Bible Dictionary.) They bowed the knee and kissed the image in worshipping Baal. (1 Kings 19: 18.)

Ashtaroth.

"They forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtaroth." "Ashtaroth," the plural of 'Ashtoreth,' as 'Baalim' of 'Baal,' and probably for the same reason, represented all female deity. 'Ashtoreth'—'most happy, or fortunate; the supreme source of happiness'—was the female deity corresponding to Baal; the moon or the planet Venus, as Baal was the sun. . . . She was the goddess of sexual passions, and was worshiped with licentious rites." (Peloubet.) The worship of this goddess was connected with prostitution and the most impure rites.

The Canaanites Not Completely Driven Out.

Judg. 1: 1, 2 says that after the death of Joshua the children of Israel inquired of God who should go up for them against the Canaanites, and God told them Judah should do so. While Judah succeeded

to a very great extent, the chapter shows that the Canaanites were not completely driven out of the country.

Instead of driving out these nations, the Israelites formed marriages with them, which God had forbidden, served their idols, and joined them in their religion.

The Church Must Be Separate from the World.

God would have the church now separate from the world. (James 1: 27.)

"Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 6: 14 to 7: 1.)

It is dangerous now for Christians to marry any but Christians, and Christians are forbidden to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. They are forbidden to love the world or the things of the world. (1 John 2: 15, 16.) They are not of the world, as Jesus was not of the world, but have been chosen out of the world. (John 15: 18, 19; 17: 14.) They must "flee from idolatry." (1 Cor. 10: 14; Gal. 5: 19-21.) Covetousness is idolatry. (Col. 3: 5.) God alone must be served.

All lusts, passions, and sins must be overcome; if not, they will remain in the heart, as so many Canaanites, to destroy the soul finally.

The Place of Weeping.

Chapter 2: 1-5 states the result of this failure. "The angel of Jehovah came up from Gilgal to Bochim." This was, doubtless, "the angel of God's presence," because he speaks as Jehovah. He said he had brought the Israelites out of Egypt into that country, as he had sworn to their fathers, and said he would never break his covenant; but they had broken the covenant themselves in not breaking down the altars of the nations of the land, in not refusing to make covenants with them, and in not driving them out. Therefore, God said he would not drive out these nations, but would allow them to indeed become thorns in their sides and a snare. Then the people wept.

We have our places of weeping. Sin and sorrow cause us to weep.

Our own mistakes, faults, and failures, and sometimes the mistakes and faults of others, bring us to tears.

We are to confess our faults one to another and pray one for another, that we may be healed. (James 5: 16.)

God Raised Them Up Judges.

Chapter 2: 14, 15 says: "And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that

despoiled them; and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as Jehovah had spoken, and as Jehovah had sworn unto them: and they were sore distressed."

These "spoilers" were marauding bands of Canaanites, who took away their cattle, crops, etc., and sold them into bondage as slaves. God was no longer for them, but against them. God's promises to curse or destroy are as sure as his promises to save and bless. (See Lev. 26; Deut. 28.) They realized their weakness and their sins. God punished them to humble and chastise them, to correct and discipline them.

Verses 16-23 of chapter 2 state that when the people repented, "Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand" of their enemies. These were not judges in the ordinary meaning of that term, but generals, leaders, and governors. This book gives an account of most of these judges. God raised them up in the ways mentioned in this book and in Samuel.

After God raised up a judge and delivered them, they then turned back quickly, served other gods, "and dealt more corruptly than their fathers," until Jehovah said he would "not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations that Joshua left," that by them he might prove Israel, whether they would obey him or not.

Chapter 3: 1-6 gives the nations that were left.

Chapter 1: 1-21 relates the fact that Judah and Simeon fought the Canaanites, and states the result; but Othniel was the first judge. He was the nephew and son-in-law of Caleb, and was a brave man. How did he win Caleb's daughter? Othniel delivered Israel from Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, whom they served for eight years. The land then had rest for forty years. (Judg. 3: 7-11.)

The second judge was Ehud, a left-handed man, who slew Eglon, king of Moab. (Judg. 3: 12-30.)

The third judge was Shamgar, who slew six hundred Philistines with an ox goad. (Judg. 3: 31.)

The fourth judge was Deborah.

Chapters 4 and 5 give the account of the victory of Barak over Sisera, "the captain of Jabin's army," and the song of Deborah.

Read Judges 6, which gives the account of the oppression of Israel by the Midianites and the beginning of Gideon's work, and who Gideon and his father were.

Israel was delivered by the hand of Jehovah "into the hand of Midian seven years."

The Midianites, the Amalekites, and Others.

The Midianites were descendants of Midian, the son of Abraham and Keturah. (Gen. 25: 2.) They were a wandering people, like Bedouins, dwelling in tents, occupying the desert south of Palestine and the frontiers east of it. While related to Israel, they were Israel's inveterate enemies. Before this they joined the Moabites in casting a stumblingblock before Israel by inducing Israel to engage in the impure rites of idol worship and in eating sacrifices offered to idols (Rev. 2: 14), for which God slew twenty-four thousand of Israel (Num. 25),

and later almost exterminated them (Num. 31). The Midianites are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. At the time of this lesson they had sorely oppressed Israel for seven years.

The Amalekites were also enemies of Israel. We read of "the country of the Amalekites" in Gen. 14: 7. "Amalek was the first of the nations" at one time. (Num. 24: 20, 21.) Amalek "fought with Israel in Rephidim" soon after the deliverance from Egypt, when Joshua gained a signal victory, and God declared that he would make "war with Amalek from generation to generation." (Ex. 17: 8-16.) Amalek followed Israel, smiting the feeble and faint and weary who could not keep up. God declared that "the remembrance of Amalek" should be blotted out "from under heaven." (Deut. 25: 17-19.) Before the time of this lesson the Amalekites invaded Canaan with other enemies of Israel. (Judg. 3: 13; 5: 14.) King Saul was sent to destroy them (1 Sam. 15), and David smote them (1 Sam. 27: 9; 30: 17).

"The children of the east" were probably Ishmaelites, since Judg. 8: 24 states that earrings taken as prey were from Ishmaelites. (See also Judg. 7: 12; 8: 10.) The Old Testament speaks of "the children of the east" (Gen. 29: 1; 1 Kings 4: 30; Job 1: 3) who were not Ishmaelites.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Gideon and the Place of His Battle.

(Comments on chapter 6: 11 to chapter 7: 3.)

Then "the angel of Jehovah" appeared under an oak at Ophrah to Gideon.

"Gideon" means "feller" or "hewer." He was the son of Joash, a descendant of Abiezer, of the tribe of Manasseh. He lived at Ophrah, near Shechem.

Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian, slew Gideon's brothers at Tabor, who, like himself, "resembled the children of a king." (Judg. 8: 18, 19.)

At this time Gideon had one son nearly grown. (Judg. 8: 20.) Afterwards he had, in all, "threescore and ten sons of his body begotten; for he had many wives." He also had a concubine at Shechem—while judge, doubtless—who bore him a son, whose name was "Abimelech." (Judg. 8: 30, 31.)

When the angel appeared to him, he was "beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites." (Judg. 6: 11.) The angel addressed him as a "mighty man of valor," and said: "Jehovah is with thee." That which occurred between Gideon and the angel and between Gideon's father and the inhabitants of the city is recorded in Judg. 6: 11-32. Tearing down his father's altar was a declaration of war on Gideon's part. His name was changed to "Jerubbaal"—"let Baal contend." (Judg. 6: 32.) "Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east assembled themselves together; and they passed over, and encamped in the valley of Jezreel. But the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered together after him" (Judg. 6: 33); and he sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they all

gathered together after him. Gideon then made the proposition concerning the fleece, which God granted. (Judg. 6: 36-40.) Gideon was not skeptical, but humble, and needed encouragement.

Encouraged by the miracles of the previous chapter, "Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and encamped beside the spring of Harod: and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley." "By far the most important of the inland plains is Esdraelon. . . . In shape it is an irregular triangle, bounded on the north by the Galilean hills; on the east, by the hill of Moreh and the mountains of Gilboa; and on the south and west, by the hills of Samaria and the range of Carmel." This triangular plain is said to be about fourteen miles on the north, about eighteen miles on the east, and about twenty miles on the south-west. From this plain go out three arms, or valleys—"one, to the northeast, between the hills of Nazareth and Moreh; another, running eastward. . . . into the Jordan valley, between the hill of Moreh and Mount Gilboa; and the third, stretching southward toward Engannim. The middle arm is, in the strict sense of the term, the ancient valley of Jezreel, the town from which it took its name, standing at the northwestern end of Mount Gilboa." "The hill of Moreh" was north, and Mount Gilboa south, of the valley of Jezreel.

This plain has been called "the great battlefield of Palestine." King Saul fought his last battle on Mount Gilboa, and in this plain King Josiah was slain. (2 Kings 23: 29.) Those who have traveled in Palestine tell us that at the eastern end of Esdraelon and at the foot of Mount Gilboa, on the north, near its western end, bursts forth a spring, flowing east down the valley of Jezreel in a stream about fifteen feet wide and two feet deep. This must be "the spring of Harod." Gideon's army was on the south of this spring, while the Midianites were encamped on the north, "in the valley."

II. The Faithful and the Fearful.

This was a victory gained by faith, as the walls of Jericho fell down, and not one of physical might, and was designed to teach the people to trust in God and to cleave to him. Therefore, Jehovah wanted to make all realize this; so he said to Gideon: "The people . . . are too many, . . . lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me."

God says he drove out the nations and gave the land to Israel, not because of the righteousness of Israel, but because of the wickedness of the nations of the land. (Deut. 9: 4, 5.)

God made the proposition for the "fearful and trembling" to return. This resulted in the departure of twenty-two thousand, leaving only ten thousand. Over two-thirds of this army were cowards.

This was in accordance with God's directions through Moses that "the fearful and faint-hearted" return, lest they cause others to fear and tremble. (Deut. 20: 8.) One coward will make others, while a brave, true man will encourage others.

Many who profess to be in the church to-day as soldiers of the cross

are "fearful and faint-hearted." They lack confidence in God's means and ways. Some do not hesitate to say God's way is a failure. The church would be much better off if all the worldly-minded, pleasure-loving, cowardly members would either go back or repent and be faithful.

III. Too Many Yet.

4-8. After the departure of the twenty-two thousand, God said: "The people are yet too many." God tried them, or separated them. All who "lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, . . . putting their hand to their mouth"—thus taking up water with the hand, as a dog does with his tongue—were set by themselves, and all who knelt and drank were set by themselves. There were only three hundred of the former and nine thousand seven hundred of the latter.

Some try to find a reason why God gave this test. God does not give the reason why he used this way of separating them.

"By the three hundred" God said he would save Israel. The three hundred "took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets;" the rest went "every man unto his tent." They would be needed later on.

IV. Three Hundred and Victory.

As stated in verses 9-15, God encouraged Gideon by sending him down to the camp of the Midianites that he might hear what the Midianites had to say. Read the Midianite's dream. The interpretation was from God. Gideon was the barley cake. The Midianites, Amalekites, and Ishmaelites (Judg. 8: 24) "lay along in the valley like locusts for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand which is upon the seashore for multitude." There were at least one hundred and thirty-five thousand "that drew sword" (Judg. 8: 10), besides the multitude which did not. Gideon's army now was only three hundred. But "into his hand God hath delivered Midian, and all the host." Gideon worshiped, "returned into the camp of Israel, and said, Arise; for Jehovah hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian."

Verses 16-18 state that Gideon divided the three hundred into three companies, put trumpets into the right hands of all and empty pitchers with torches in the pitchers in the left hands, and directed all to act as he did.

19-21. The companies surrounded the camp of Midian in the night; and "in the beginning of the middle watch" when Gideon gave the signal, as he had said, all broke their pitchers (which disclosed at once three hundred torches all around the Midianites), blew their trumpets, and shouted: "The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon." This is significant. God did the work through Gideon. Gideon and his men had to use the means God placed in their hands. While God did it, Gideon and his three hundred had to act and Israel had to pursue and slay the Midianites. By the blast of trumpets and shouts the Midianites were awakened in confusion and saw themselves surrounded by a circle of flashing light. They were stampeded, fell upon one another, and slew one another in their fright and flight. (Verses 24, 25.)

V. The Lesson for Us.

See the further results of the battle in chapter 8. When the fight was over and peace was restored to the Israelites, in their gratitude they offered to make Gideon king; but it was not God's way of government, and he refused, neither would he allow his sons to be made kings. Gideon was humble and true. He made a mistake in making the ephod mentioned, after which "all Israel played the harlot," and which "became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house."

If we could only be content to do at all times all that God commands, and no more, all would be well.

Under Gideon, Israel had rest forty years, and the Midianites "lifted up their heads no more." Gideon "died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulcher of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites."

The one great lesson taught us by these facts, as brought out in Heb. 11: 32-40, is faith and trust in God. The three hundred may represent "the faithful few" who make the sacrifices and do all the work, while the multitudes who followed on when the Midianites had been put to flight may represent those who enjoy the work of the faithful and self-sacrificing and who would take charge of it and control it.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Give the Time, Place, and Persons.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

Where was Bochim, and why so called?

Who is supposed to have written the book of Judges?

What are some of the remarkable features of this book?

Why is the death of Joshua introduced here?

How long did the people serve Jehovah after Joshua's death?

What shows Joshua's influence over the people?

Who were the elders?

How long did some of the elders probably live after Joshua's death?

What had that generation witnessed? In what had they failed?

What was "Baal" and the "Baalim"?

How was Baal worshiped?

Of what were the images of Baal made. (Bring out all the features of Baal worship.)

What were "Ashtaroth" and "Ashtoreth"?

How was this goddess worshiped?

Instead of completely driving out the Canaanites, what did the Israelites form with them, and in what join them?

From what would God have the church separate?

What is meant by not being "unequally yoked with unbelievers"?

When does God promise to receive us?

Why is it dangerous for Christians to marry people not in the church?

Why not love the world?

From what should Christians flee?

What did the angel say to Israel?

Why did the people weep?

What had God commanded concerning all these Canaanitish nations?

If the Israelites should not obey God in these particulars, what would befall them?

Why was God's anger kindled against Israel?

To whom were they delivered?

Who were the "spoilers"?

What had God sworn unto them?

Why did he punish them?

Why did he allow some Canaanites to remain in the land?

When the people repented, whom did God raise up?

What did these judges do for them?

Name the judges in order to Gideon.

Who were Jabin, Sisera, Deborah, and Barak?

What account does Judg. 6 give?

Who were the Midianites?

Who were the Amalekites?

What had the Amalekites done to Israel?

What had God declared against them? Who were "the children of the east"?

Who were Ishmaelites?

What devastation had these enemies wrought?

For how long had the Midianites oppressed them?

What did Israel do in this deep distress?

Whom did God raise up for them this time?

Who appeared to Gideon?

What does "Gideon" mean?

Whose son was he?

Of what tribe?

Where did he live?

What was his appearance?

What became of his brothers?

How many sons had he during his life?

What was he doing when the angel appeared to him?

What reply did he make?

How did he express his humility?

How was he convinced that God was with him?

How did he declare war upon the Midianites?

What effect did this have upon the inhabitants of the place?

To what was Gideon's name changed? (See Scripture reference.)

What then did the Midianites do?

How did Gideon proceed?

What sign did he ask of God and receive?

Where was the battle ground?

Describe the plain of Esdraelon, telling where it is and giving its dimensions.

Where was "the spring of Harod"?

Give the position of the Midianites and of Gideon's army.

Why did God say he drove out these wicked nations?

Why did God say there were too many with Gideon?

How many returned?

How many were left?

Without whom would the church be better off?

4-8 To what test were those who remained put?

How many were chosen?

By whom did God say he would deliver Israel?

What did the three hundred take in their hands?

When would the rest be needed?

To what place did God direct Gideon to go?

How had God delivered the Midianites into Gideon's hand when Gideon had yet done nothing and the Midianites were still in camp?

How numerous were the Midianites and those with them?

Relate the Midianite's dream and give the interpretation.

What effect did this have on Gideon?

19-21 How did Gideon divide and arrange his army?

What is the significance of "the sword of Jehovah, and of Gideon?"

How did this succeed?

What did the rest of Israel do in pursuing Midian?

Why did Gideon refuse to be made king?

How long did the land have rest?

What sin did Gideon commit?

How long did he live?

Where was he buried?

What lesson do we get from these facts?

Whom may the three hundred represent?

Whom may the rest represent?

Rest is not quitting
The busy career;
Rest is the fitting
Of self to one's sphere.

'Tis the brook's motion,
Clear without strife,
Fleeting to ocean,
After this life.

'Tis loving and serving
The highest and best;
'Tis onward, unswerving—
And this is true rest.

(Goethe.)

LESSON X.—DECEMBER 5.

RUTH AND NAOMI.

Ruth 1: 14-22. Read the book of Ruth.

14 ¶And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 ¶And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God;

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

18 And when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and *the women* said, Is this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty; why call ye me Naomi, seeing Jehovah hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, who returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.*” (Ruth 1: 16.)

TIME.—During the time of the judges.

PLACES.—Bethlehem and the land of Moab.

PERSONS.—Ruth and Naomi.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—1 Cor. 13: 1-13.

HOME READING.—

- | | | | |
|--------------|----|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| November 29. | M. | Looking Toward Canaan. | (Ruth 1: 1-10.) |
| November 30. | T. | Ruth and Naomi. | (Ruth 1: 14-22.) |
| December 1. | W. | Ruth Gleaning. | (Ruth 2: 1-13.) |
| December 2. | T. | Ruth Favored. | (Ruth 2: 14-23.) |
| December 3. | F. | A Kinsman Becomes Redeemer. | (Ruth 4: 1-11.) |
| December 4. | S. | A Name in Israel. | (Ruth 4: 14-22.) |
| December 5. | S. | Love. | (1 Cor. 13: 1-13.) |

“Geographical Notes” are given in the body of the lesson. Note what is said concerning Bethlehem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.**The Purpose of This Book.**

The time when the facts recorded in the book of Ruth occurred is not given, except as stated in verse 1: “In the days when the judges judged.” This means during that period of time, not during all time when all the judges judged.

The name of the one who wrote the book is not given.

It seems a connecting link between the time of the judges and the

time of the kings, since it gives the genealogy of David from Perez. (Ruth 4: 18-21.)

Its purpose is to state the marriage of the dutiful Ruth, the Moabitess, to the pious Boaz, and to show how she was incorporated in the genealogy of David and of Christ. In this sacred line two Gentile women are mentioned, Rahab and Ruth, and both for their faithfulness. (Matt. 1: 5.)

This is a beautiful story of the tenderness, love, and devotion of a true woman. Like the love of David for Jonathan, the devotion of Ruth to her mother-in-law has become immortal; like the woman who anointed the Savior with the precious ointment (Matt. 26: 6-13), the story of Ruth is told wherever the history of God's people is read.

The Famine.

The facts leading to our lesson, as stated in the previous part of the chapter, are as follows: "In the days when the judges judged, . . . there was a famine in the land."

It is not stated what caused the famine, whether it was caused by the depredations made upon the people by the Philistines and other enemies or by a drought, probably by the latter.

At this time Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, with their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, "Ephrathites of Bethlehem-judah," left Bethlehem and went across the Jordan into the land of Moab to dwell there. "Ephrath" and "Ephratah" are the same as "Bethlehem." (Gen. 35: 19; Mic. 5: 2.)

Bethlehem and Elimelech's Family.

Bethlehem, we know, is about six miles south of Jerusalem. The word means "house of bread." Many sacred memories cluster around that place. There Rachel died and was buried (Gen. 35: 19), there Boaz resided, there David was born (1 Sam. 17: 12), there Jesus was born, and there Herod the Great slew the innocents.

"Elimelech" means "God is my King;" "Naomi," "pleasant;" "Mahlon," "a sick person;" "Chilion," "wasting away." Elimelech died in Moab, leaving Naomi alone, with her two sons. They married wives of Moab—namely, Orpah and Ruth. "They dwelt there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died both of them," and Naomi was bereft of her husband and two sons.

Naomi heard that God had visited his people in giving them bread, and she decided to return to Bethlehem. A widow in distress and sorrow, leaving buried in a strange land her husband and two sons, we can well imagine she longed for her own home and her people.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Orpah Turned Back.

14. Read verses 6-13. Naomi's daughters-in-law "went on the way" with her; but she bade them return each "to her mother's house," praying God to deal kindly with them, as they had dealt with her and "the dead"—their husbands—and that each might find again a kind husband. "Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and

wept." Both declined to return, declaring they would accompany her. Naomi stated that she could not hope to become the mother of other sons; who, according to the law among the Israelites, would become their husbands; and, even if she had such hope, they would not be willing to wait for these husbands. Once more they wept; "and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law" farewell and departed, "but Ruth clave unto her."

II. Ruth's Choice and Faithfulness.

15. Nothing more is said of Orpah, except that which has been stated in this verse. Naomi said she had "gone back unto her people, and unto her god."

Once more Naomi urged Ruth to return. Naomi, it seems, did not desire to get rid of these women; but she wanted them to understand fully what they were sacrificing to go with her. If they went, she wanted them to go upon their own choice and through no personal consideration for her.

Like Orpah, many professed Christians, who know more of the truth than she did, turn back to the world. Like these two women, people to-day must choose for themselves and upon their own responsibility to serve God. In the parable of "counting the cost" (Luke 14: 25-33) Jesus does not teach that one should count the cost of becoming a Christian, but of continuing a sinner. Like the man who surrendered all to the advancing foe, so must one surrender all to Jesus. One must deny self, give up everything in the way of his being a Christian, and serve God faithfully. If he does not do this, he will lose his soul. None can be saved except through Christ, but the benefits of Christianity are so enormous that it pays one to surrender all he has for Christ. All are "able" to become Christians and to resist the devil, but they are not willing to make the sacrifice necessary to do so. Orpah represents this class.

Ruth was willing and determined to forsake all for the true God.

16. "Entreat me not to leave thee; . . . for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge." Ruth was personally attached to Naomi and manifested a true, unselfish, lofty, and noble nature. Naomi was old, childish, and poor; but for these reasons Ruth clung to her. Naomi was a good and true mother-in-law, who had taught her daughters-in-law the true God and his worship. Ruth appreciated this and firmly expressed her determination to follow Naomi at any cost.

"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Ruth, although personally attached to Naomi, had a higher reason for accompanying her. She was moved by religious consideration. She had turned from idolatry to worship the true and living God. She was ready to give up her country for another country, her people for a strange people, her god for the true God.

17. "Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." It has been well said that now we must take God's people for our people, and this we will do if we are his children. Rich or poor, whoever does the will of God in heaven is owned by Jesus as his "brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. 12: 50.) Christianity overleaps social forms, family ties, and national bounds. One Christian is brother to every other Christian in the world and loves him as a Christian.

"Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." The use Ruth makes here of the name "Jehovah" and this oath, common at the time, shows that she was acquainted with Jehovah and respected the true God.

18. When Naomi saw that Ruth "was steadfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her"—that is, ceased to persuade her to return to her people. Ruth was settled in her convictions and determined in her purpose. Thus Paul says: "But one thing I do." He had but this one purpose and made but this one effort. (See Phil. 3: 7-15.)

All this presents a beautiful family picture in every particular—the home influence of a devout and good mother-in-law and the dutifulness and faithfulness of a pious daughter-in-law. From every home the light of Christians should now shine. There is great power in a consistent home life. Home is the realm of godly women.

III. "Naomi" and "Mara."

19-21. Naomi and Ruth then traveled together to Bethlehem. "All the city was moved about them, and the women said, Is this Naomi?" The news of Naomi's return soon spread throughout Bethlehem. The people all knew her. They knew that she left there over ten years before with her husband and two sons, and now she has returned, poor, desolate, and helpless. At this, all, and especially the women, expressed surprise. "Is this Naomi?" They did not ask this question because they did not recognize her, but to express their astonishment at her condition—as if they had said: "Can this poor and sorrowful creature be Naomi?"

She replied: "Call me not Naomi ["pleasant"], call me Mara ["bitter"]." She was once happy, but now she had returned in bitterness of sorrow. "For the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." She gave the following reason for saying this: "I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty. . . . Jehovah hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." She did not complain at the working of God, but recognized his hand in it all—that God had visited his people with plenty after the famine, that he had afflicted her and sent her home empty. She went away "full," in that she had her husband, her two sons, and plenty; she returned "empty," in that she returned a widow, in poverty, and her sons dead. She recognized this as God's testimony against her for leaving Bethlehem.

IV. The Result of Faithfulness.

22. "And they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest." This was about the middle of our spring. Following this was the wheat harvest.

Ruth still showed her faithfulness and devotion to Naomi in her proposition to go and "glean" for a living. (On gleaning, see Lev. 19: 9, 10; 23: 22.) She gleaned in the fields of Boaz, "a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech."

Boaz was kind and generous to Ruth. He recognized her devotion to Naomi, her piety, her acceptance of the true God, her purity and virtue, and treated her in accordance with God's word, as he should. When "the nearest of kin," the man whose attention Boaz called to

Ruth, declined to marry her, Boaz, being the next nearest of kin, married her.

Of this marriage was born Obed; "and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David." (On the duties of nearest of kin, see Lev. 25: 25; Deut. 25: 5-10; Matt. 22: 23, 24.)

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Did you read the entire book?
Repeat the facts in this story in order. (The teacher should ask the different ones to do this.)
When did these things transpire?
What is the purpose of this book?
What two Gentile women are in the genealogy of Christ?
Mention Ruth's characteristics.
What is the meaning of "Elimelech?"
What is the meaning of "Naomi?"
What is the meaning of "Mahlon?"
What is the meaning of "Chilion?"
Why did they leave Bethlehem?
What does "Bethlehem" mean?
Where was it?
Mention some important events which transpired there.
To what country did Elimelech and family go?
What became of him?
Whom did the sons marry?
What became of them?
How long was Naomi there?
Why did she decide to return to Bethlehem?
14 What did her daughters-in-law do?
What did she say to them?
What blessing did she ask upon them?
What did they decline to do?
What further reason did she give why they should return?
What did Orpah do?
15 What became of Orpah?
What did Ruth do?
Why did Naomi again urge Ruth to return?
Like whom is Orpah?
What must all do in order to become Christians?
What does the parable of "counting the cost" in Luke 14 teach?
16 What did Ruth say in this verse?
What had Naomi taught her daughters-in-law in regard to religion?
From what consideration did Ruth determine to go with Naomi?
What had she given up for God and his people?
17 Repeat this verse.
Whom does one choose for his people when one becomes a Christian?
Why do we know that Ruth acknowledged God?
18 What did Naomi see in Ruth?
What did Paul say about this one purpose?
Where is woman's realm?
19-21 What effect did Naomi's return have upon the people of Bethlehem?
What questions did they ask?
What did they mean by the question, "Is this Naomi?"
What did Naomi tell them to call her?
What testimony had God borne against her?
22 At what time did she and Ruth reach Bethlehem?
How did Ruth obtain a living?
What was God's law concerning reaping the fields?
How did Boaz treat Ruth?
What did he recognize in her?
Give the law concerning the duty of the nearest of kin.
Who was born of this marriage?

"I see not a step before me as I tread the days of the year;
But the past is still in God's keeping, the future his mercy shall clear:
And what looks dark in the distance may brighten as I draw near.

"So I go on, not knowing. I would not if I might.
I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light;
I would rather walk with him by faith than walk alone by sight."

LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 12.

THE BOY SAMUEL.

† Sam. 3: 1-10, 15-19. Read chapters 1-3.

1 ¶And the child Samuel ministered unto Jehovah before Eli. And the word of Jehovah was precious in those days; there was no frequent vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place (now his eyes had begun to wax dim, so that he could not see,)

3 And the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was laid down to sleep, in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark of God was;

4 That Jehovah called Samuel: and he said, Here am I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And Jehovah called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know Jehovah, neither was the word of Jehovah yet revealed unto him.

8 And Jehovah called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And Eli perceived that Jehovah had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Jehovah; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 ¶And Jehovah came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel said, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

15 ¶And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of Jehovah. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision.

16 Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he said, Here am I.

17 And he said, What is the thing that Jehovah hath spoken unto thee? I pray thee, hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide anything from me of all the things that he spake unto thee.

18 And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is Jehovah: let him do what seemeth him good.

19 ¶And Samuel grew, and Jehovah was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“*Speak, Jehovah; for thy servant heareth.*” (1 Sam. 3: 9.)

TIME.—Uncertain, about B.C. 1134.

PLACE.—Shiloh.

PERSONS.—Eli, Samuel, and Jehovah.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 119: 9-16.

HOME READING.—

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|--------------|----|--|
| December 6. | M. | Hannah's Prayer. (1 Sam. 1: 9-18.) |
| December 7. | T. | Hannah's Thanksgiving. (1 Sam. 2: 1-11.) |
| December 8. | W. | Samuel and Eli. (1 Sam. 2: 18-26.) |
| December 9. | T. | Samuel's Call. (1 Sam. 3: 1-14.) |
| December 10. | F. | Jesus Calls Disciples. (Mark 1: 14-20.) |
| December 11. | S. | Paul's Call. (Acts 26: 9-20.) |
| December 12. | S. | The Word and the Way. (Ps. 119: 9-16.) |

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Shiloh was about twenty-five miles north of Jerusalem. The tabernacle was removed by Joshua from Gilgal to Shiloh (Josh. 18: 1), where it was at the time of this lesson. There all the males assem-

bled three times in the year to keep the feasts and to worship God. The women also were permitted to attend.

"Ramathaim-zophim" means "double hills of the watchers." It was about four miles northwest from Jerusalem.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

The Books of Samuel.

This lesson is in First Samuel. We do not know who wrote the books of Samuel. Samuel probably wrote parts of them. (1 Sam. 10: 25.) There were the books of Nathan and Gad. (1 Chron. 29: 29.) The books of Samuel may have been compiled from all these writings. They are called after Samuel because he is the leading character in them.

Samuel was the last of the judges. God "gave them judges until Samuel the prophet." (Acts 13: 20.)

Some Important Facts.

While it is not necessary to know the exact date of every occurrence, the following facts give us an idea of the time of this lesson: It was four hundred and eighty years from the departure of Israel out of Egypt until the fourth year of Solomon's reign. (1 Kings 6: 1.) David reigned forty years; Saul, forty years; and Samuel was grown and a prophet when Saul began to reign.

Eli.

Eli was the priest and judge at the time of our lesson. He judged Israel forty years (1 Sam. 4: 18), and died at the age of ninety-eight years (1 Sam. 4: 15). When he heard that the Philistines had captured the ark of God, he fell from his seat by the gate and broke his neck.

Eli had many virtues. He was kind to others, as is shown in his treatment of Hannah and Samuel; he revered God and loved him above his sons and own interest. He failed to control his sons, which was a grievous fault and for which he and Israel greatly suffered. He should have dismissed his sons from their positions when he found that he could not control them. (See 1 Sam. 4.) He reproved them, but that was not enough. While he failed on his own sons, he succeeded in so far as he had anything to do with young Samuel.

Children have wills of their own, are free agents, and can act for themselves; and sometimes, in spite of all the advice, training, and warnings of good parents, they go wrong.

The story of the covetousness, licentiousness, and wickedness of Eli's sons is told in 1 Sam. 2: 12-36.

Samuel's sons, too, became covetous, immoral, and unfaithful to God. The difference between Eli and Samuel, it seems, is this: Eli did not restrain his sons, and Samuel tried to restrain his, but failed.

All this must be studied in connection with this history of Samuel.

Samuel.

Samuel was the son of Elkanah and Hannah. His name means "asked of God" (1 Sam. 1: 20), because God gave him in answer to his mother's prayer. He was born in Ramathaim-zophim.

Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah, which then was not a sin; but it was not best. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. These wives went with Elkanah to Shiloh to worship God. "He gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: but unto Hannah he gave a double portion." He loved Hannah. Peninnah sorely provoked Hannah and fretted her because she had no children. Peninnah did this "year by year" when she went up to worship God. Hannah wept and did not eat.

At Shiloh, Hannah, in the bitterness of her soul, prayed and wept sorely. She vowed to God that if he would give her a son she would give him to God all the days of his life. In her distress Eli thought she was drunken, and reproved her; but she explained to him her condition, and he assured her that God would answer her prayer.

In due time Samuel was born. Hannah remained at home with him until he was weaned; then she took him to Shiloh and gave him, as she had vowed, to God. (1 Sam. 1.) At that time she uttered the prayer of thanksgiving in 1 Sam. 2: 1-10. She left the child at Shiloh, and he ministered, or served, before God under Eli's direction. He wore a linen ephod, made, doubtless, after the pattern of the one worn by the priests. Every year his mother visited him and carried him a linen robe (the garment worn under the ephod).

Samuel was attentive to Eli, who was old and half blind. Thus he was developed in true service and prepared for greater usefulness.

To Hannah, God gave three other sons and two daughters. (1 Sam. 2: 18-21.)

We may be sure that the condition of Hannah's heart and the religious surroundings of Samuel at home from his birth helped much to make him a deeply pious man. The value and power of religious homes cannot be overestimated.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. "Samuel Ministered unto Jehovah."

1. "The child Samuel ministered unto Jehovah before Eli." "Minister" means to serve, and Samuel performed such service in the tabernacle under Eli's direction as he was able—opening the doors, etc. (Verse 15.)

"And the word of Jehovah was precious in those days; there was no frequent vision." The word "was precious," or rare; and there was no frequent, or widespread, vision, because there was no accredited prophet to whom all could go and be taught; and there were, therefore, few revelations from God. The revelations were few because none desired the work of a prophet and few sought the truth; yet there were some then, as there have always been, who loved the truth and right.

II. Samuel's Call.

2, 3. Eli was old, and "his eyes had begun to wax dim;" and the young Samuel was faithful to him, ready at any time, day or night, to render him any service. This speaks well for Samuel. Eli slept in some apartment of the tabernacle, and Samuel slept near him "in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark of God was."

4-6. One night after Eli and Samuel had retired and before daylight—for "the lamp of God was not yet gone out" (see Ex. 27: 20, 21; Lev. 24: 1-4)—God "called Samuel: and he said, Here am I." Samuel thought Eli had called him, and he answered at once. In dutifulness he arose, ran to Eli, and said: "Here am I; for thou calledst me." By the expression, "Here am I," he meant his readiness to do Eli's will. (See Gen. 22: 1; Ex. 3: 4; Isa. 6: 8.)

Eli said he had not called Samuel, and sent him back to bed. "And he went and lay down." The Lord called him the second time, and again he went to Eli, ready to do his will, and again Eli said: "I called not, my son; lie down again."

7. "Now Samuel did not yet know Jehovah." He knew Jehovah as the only true God, who should be served and honored; but he did not know God in the capacity of a prophet. "Neither was the word of Jehovah yet revealed unto him." In this sense he did not know God. Some have guessed Samuel to be only twelve years old at this time, but the Bible does not state his age; yet he was a child. (Verse 8.)

8. "And Jehovah called Samuel again the third time," and again the third time he went to Eli and said: "Here am I; for thou calledst me." It has been suggested by some that Eli's chamber was between Samuel's chamber and the most holy place, where the ark was and whence God called Samuel; therefore Samuel thought the voice came from Eli, when it came from beyond Eli. This is only conjecture. Eli did not hear this voice which spoke to Samuel, but now "perceived that Jehovah had called the child."

9. Eli was humble and gentle, not envious and jealous. He made no complaint that God should pass him by and reveal himself now to a child. In this respect Eli was loyal to God and desired his will to be done. So he said to Samuel: "Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Jehovah; for thy servant heareth." Samuel did as Eli directed. Thus Eli taught Samuel submission to the will of God.

10. "And Jehovah came, and stood"—that is, presented himself before Samuel in a vision. (Verse 15.) God may have presented himself through the angel of his presence, as he did to Moses (Ex. 3: 2) and to Gideon (Judg. 6: 11-14). Again, and the fourth time, God spoke to him in an audible voice. This time God called his name twice. God does not speak in an audible voice from heaven to individuals now. This call of Samuel should not be perverted so as to lead children and grown people to believe that in some secret, mysterious way, or by a voice direct from heaven, they "are called of God." Paul states how people are called now: "Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2: 14.)

III. "Speak; for Thy Servant Heareth."

Samuel did as Eli directed, and said: "Speak; for thy servant heareth." In this Samuel declares himself a servant of God, ready to do his will.

This has ever been the one course pursued by God's servants. Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah each said: "Here am I." When Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus, he said, in submission: "What shall I do, Lord?" Samuel and Saul both meant to do anything and everything God should say. This is the only way to obey God. We must now just as completely surrender to his will. Saul went into Damascus in obedience to God; and there, trusting in Jesus, penitent, and praying, he awaited further instruction. When Ananias told him to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away" his "sins, calling on his name," he did it at once, and continued to do all that God commanded. It is useless to say, "Speak; for thy servant heareth," if one does not mean, as Samuel, to do just as God directs. One does not "hear" God unless one implicitly obeys him. God calls children now through his word to obey their parents in the Lord, to make themselves useful at home, and to further obey his will as they grow older and realize more and more their duties to him.

IV. Bad News for Eli, Which Caused Both Ears to Tingle.

(Intervening verses, 11-14.)

This news would be so horrible and terrible that, like sharp, discordant, and painful sounds, it would cause the ears to tingle. This expression is also used in foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem. (2 Kings 21: 12; Jer. 19: 3.)

This terrible thing was the destruction of Eli, of his sons and house, and of Shiloh. "From the beginning even unto the end" means that God would make thorough work of this destruction.

"For I have told him that I will judge his house forever, for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons did bring a curse upon themselves, and he restrained them not." God told Eli this in 1 Sam. 2: 27-36. Eli was to blame for not restraining his wicked sons. This judgment, as recorded in 1 Sam. 4, was the death of Eli's sons; the capture of the ark of God by the Philistines; and the destruction of Shiloh as a religious center, or place of worship.

In after years, referring to the destruction of Shiloh, God says: "But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I caused my name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel." (Jer. 7: 12.) The destruction of Jerusalem was compared to the destruction of Shiloh. (Jer. 26: 6-9.) The Israelites never forgot the destruction of Shiloh. God sent such warnings for the good of his people.

God swore "that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated with sacrifice nor offering forever." When the people sinned through error, etc., the priest could "make atonement for all the congregation, . . . and they shall be forgiven;" but for the soul that sinned presumptuously and with a high hand there was no forgiveness. (Num. 15: 25-31.) The sins of Eli's sons were willful, premeditated, and presump-

tuous. Presumptuous sin is the greatest sin against God. The Psalmist prayed God to keep him from presumptuous sins. (Ps. 19: 13.)

V. Jehovah Was with Samuel.

15-18. On the next morning Samuel arose, "opened the doors of the house of Jehovah," continued his work, and "feared to show Eli the vision." But when interviewed by Eli, he told him all that God had said. Eli was submissive, and said: "It is Jehovah: let him do what seemeth him good."

19. Samuel grew, "and Jehovah was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground"—that is, established him as a prophet. "All Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Jehovah." God continued to reveal himself to Samuel in Shiloh.

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
Where was Shiloh?
What made it so important a place?
How long had the tabernacle been there?
Where was Ramathaim-zophim?
What does this name mean?
Why are the books of Samuel so called?
State the facts which give an idea of the time of this lesson.
Who judged Israel at the time of our lesson?
Give Eli's virtues.
Give his faults.
What caused his death?
How old was he?
How long had he judged Israel?
Who were Samuel's parents?
Where did they live?
Why was it not a sin then to have two wives?
How did Peninnah provoke Hannah?
What did Hannah do in her distress?
What did Eli think of her?
What answer did God make to her prayer?
Why did she name the child "Samuel"?
How long did she keep him at home?
Did she leave him at Shiloh?
What did he do there?
What did he wear?
What did his mother take him every year?
What helped to develop Samuel into a good and true man?
- 1 Who called Samuel?
How old was Samuel then?
What is meant by the word of God being "precious"?
- Why was the word of God rare?
- 2, 3 What was Eli's physical condition at this time?
Where did he and Samuel sleep?
- 4-6 Who called Samuel?
Why did Samuel respond to Eli when God called him?
Where were Eli and Samuel when the Lord called Samuel?
- 7 What is meant by "Samuel did not yet know Jehovah," etc.?
- 8 How many times did the Lord call Samuel before Eli perceived who it was?
- 9 What did he direct Samuel to do?
What shows that Eli was humble, and not envious?
- 10 Who then appeared to Samuel?
In what form did the Lord appear?
What did Samuel say?
What did Samuel mean by this?
What others said the same?
What is it now to hear God?
Into what should this call of Samuel not be perverted?
How does God call us now?
What does he call upon children to do?
What did God tell Samuel should happen?
What effect would this news have upon the ears?
What does that mean?
On what other occasions was this expression used?
What was this terrible news?
Where had God told this to Eli?
What was compared to the destruction of Shiloh?
What did God swear should not be done for Eli and his house?
For what sins was there no pardon?
Of what character of sins were Eli's sons guilty?
- 15-18 What did Samuel do after receiving this vision?
What did Eli say to it?
- 19 What did all the people recognize Samuel to be?
Why?
Where did God continue to appear to Samuel?

LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 19.

SAMUEL THE JUST JUDGE.

1 Sam. 7: 3-12, 15. Read chapters 7 and 12.

3 ¶And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto Jehovah with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you, and direct your hearts unto Jehovah, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, and served Jehovah only.

5 ¶And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray for you unto Jehovah.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpah, and drew water, and poured it out before Jehovah, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against Jehovah. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpah.

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto Jehovah our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a whole burnt-offering unto Jehovah: and Samuel cried unto Jehovah for Israel; and Jehovah answered him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel; but Jehovah thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten down before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car.

12 ¶Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath Jehovah helped us.

15 ¶And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Direct your hearts unto Jehovah, and serve him only.” (1 Sam. 7: 3.)

TIME.—About B.C. 1904.

PLACE.—Mizpah.

PERSONS.—Samuel, the Israelites.

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 46: 1-7.

HOME READING.—

December 18.	M.	Samuel the Just Judge. (1 Sam. 7: 3-12.)
December 14.	T.	Strong in the Lord. (Josh. 1: 1-9.)
December 15.	W.	Strength in Weakness. (Joel 3: 9-17.)
December 16.	T.	Chosen for Service. (Acts 6: 1-8.)
December 17.	F.	A Servant of the Lord. (Acts 27: 20-25.)
December 18.	S.	Triumph in Christ. (2 Cor. 2: 12-17.)
December 19.	S.	The Secret of Strength. (Ps. 46: 1-7.)

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

“Kiriath-jearim” means “city of trees,” and was about six miles northwest from Jerusalem.

“Mizpah” means “watchtower.” It is a hill northwest from Jerusalem about six miles, farther toward the north than Kiriath-jearim. From Mizpah all central Palestine can be seen.

Locate on the map Ramathaim-zophim, Beth-shemesh, Ramah, and Shiloh.

HINTS AND HELPS FOR TEACHERS.

"The Wages of Sin is Death."

The facts stated in 1 Sam. 4, 5, and 6—the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines; the death of Eli's sons; Eli's death; the death of Phinehas' wife; and God's declaration that the strength of Eli's house should be cut off, that none in it should become old, or should "die in the flower of their age," and every one left should become a beggar—all show that "the way of the transgressor is hard" and "the wages of sin is death."

The Ark Returned by the Philistines.

The Philistines kept the ark seven months.

God visited upon them such severe plagues that they returned it, with golden images of their tumors and of the mice which marred the land. It was received by the men of Beth-shemesh, thence removed to Kiriath-jearim, and placed in the house of Abinadab, whose son, Eleazar, was sanctified to keep it.

The ark remained at Kiriath-jearim until it was removed by David to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6; 2 Chron. 13)—that is, during a part of the time Samuel judged Israel and during all the reign of King Saul. The "twenty years" of 1 Sam. 7: 2 were the twenty years from the time the ark was removed to Kiriath-jearim until the events of this chapter.

"All the house of Israel" were burdened with their sins and longed for the prosperity and religion of former days, and "lamented after Jehovah." The margin says were "drawn together" after Jehovah.

For forty years had Israel been oppressed by the Philistines. (Judg. 13: 1.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

I. Conditions of Deliverance.

3, 4. Samuel told the people upon what conditions God would deliver them "out of the hand of the Philistines." They must put away their "foreign gods and the Ashtaroth" from among them and return unto God with all their hearts. They must repent indeed. To give up their idols was to revolt really against the Philistines.

Idolatry had its attractions—its wealth, its easy living, its licentious festivals, and its popularity. All this must be given up.

"And direct your hearts unto Jehovah." They must search their hearts and set them upon God, "and serve him only."

It seems that Samuel preached this from place to place and taught and aroused the people before they assembled at Mizpah. They did repent and "put away the Baalim and the Ashtaroth, and served Jehovah only."

We have learned that "the Baalim" is plural and embraces their male gods, and "Ashtaroth" is plural and embraces their goddesses.

To-day people must love God supremely and set their affections upon things above, and not upon things on earth. (See Col. 3: 1-3.) God is ever ready to bless when people repent, put away their sins, and return to him.

II. The Assembly at Mizpah.

5. "Gather all Israel to Mizpah." The purposes for assembling all Israel are expressed in this verse and the next one—that Samuel might pray for them, that they might worship God, and that Samuel might judge them. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." (James 5: 16.)

Samuel was a man of prayer. When Israel did wrong, Samuel took it to God in prayer. (See 1 Sam. 8: 6; 12: 17-19, 23; 15: 11; Ps. 99: 6; Jer. 15: 1.) He is classed with Moses as an interceder for the people. Moses (Ex. 32: 11-14, 30-35; Num. 12: 13), Elijah (1 Kings 18: 36-38; James 5: 17, 18), Ezra (Ez. 9: 5-15), Samuel, and other such men, are examples of prayerful men. The greatest of all is Jesus, who prayed much on earth and who now lives in heaven to make intercession for us. (Heb. 7: 25.)

6. "And drew water, and poured it out before Jehovah." This seemed to represent their penitence and the fact that their hearts were poured out to God like water. Hannah poured out her "soul before Jehovah." (1 Sam. 1: 15.) David said: "I am poured out like water." (Ps. 22: 14.) "Pour out your heart before him." (Ps. 62: 8.) "Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord." (Lam. 2: 19.)

"And fasted on that day." In their deep penitence and intense desire to learn God's will they would not eat. They did not burden themselves with food, that their minds might be clear to act. Their fasting was an expression of their sorrow for sin. They had something before them vastly more important than eating.

"We have sinned against Jehovah." When people truly repent, they are not afraid or ashamed to confess their sins; they are ashamed of their sins, but are not ashamed to confess them. The people whom John the Baptist baptized confessed their sins, the prodigal son confessed his sins, and we are all exhorted to confess our sins one to another and to pray one for another, that we may be healed. (James 5: 16.)

This gathering together at Mizpah, this pouring out of water, this fasting, and this confessing their sins showed they had repented.

"And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpah." He heard their troubles, righted their wrongs, and taught them how to turn to God that he might deliver them from their enemies.

III. The Effect of the Assembly Upon the Philistines.

7, 8. "The lords of the Philistines" were five. (1 Sam. 6: 17, 18.) They took this assembly at Mizpah as a sign of revolt and war, and "went up against Israel," intending to nip this rebellion in the bud.

It has been said truly that activity on the part of God's people arouses opposition. It does to-day.

The Israelites were afraid, but they did not run. Forty years of oppression and sin had weakened their courage and faith, yet they had enough to stand their ground and to ask Samuel to pray for them. They believed God would hear Samuel.

When one's weakness causes him to depend upon God, then in his weakness he is strong.

IV. Prayer—The Battle—Ebenezer.

9. In 1 Sam. 1: 1, Samuel is said to have descended from an Ephraimite, and in 1 Chron. 6: 22-28 he is put down as a descendant of Levi in the family of Kohath. He descended from Levi, since he served in the tabernacle and as a priest.

The "sucking lamb" must remain seven days with its mother before it could be offered as an offering. (Lev. 22: 27.) The whole of a burnt offering must be burned upon the altar. (Lev. 1.)

Samuel prayed, and God answered. "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon Jehovah, and he answered them." (Ps. 99: 6.)

10. The Philistines attacked Israel just when they were engaged in worship. This was an attack upon Jehovah, and he resented it; for he "thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten down before Israel." By this the Israelites could plainly see their deliverance was from God.

11. The Israelites smote the Philistines until they came to Beth-car. The exact location of Beth-car is not known, but it was between Mizpah and the land of the Philistines.

12. The exact spot of Shen is also unknown. "Ebenezer" means "stone of help," for "hitherto hath Jehovah helped us." We all have occasions to sing:

"Here I'll raise mine Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I've come,
And I hope by thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home."

"So the Philistines were subdued"—not forever (1 Sam. 21), but "the hand of Jehovah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." (Verse 13.)

The Israelites recovered the cities which the Philistines had taken from them. Not only so, but "there was peace between Israel and the Amorites," the most powerful of the Canaanitish nations. (Verse 14.)

15. "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life." Verse 16 says: "And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, and Gilgal, and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all those places." Verse 17 says: "His return was to Ramah." This was his home. There he judged Israel, and there he had built an altar to God.

Samuel had many temptations and passed through many difficulties. Out of them all he came better, firmer, and stronger. He was loyal to God. His one misfortune, or failure (if he was to blame for it), was that his sons were corrupt men and utterly unworthy to succeed their father. Eli's sons were corrupt—covetous, greedy, licentious, and ungodly—and one of Eli's sins was, he did not restrain them. For this sin he suffered the punishment of God. Samuel's sons were likewise corrupt and ungodly, but Samuel was not charged by Jehovah with failure to restrain them. This marks a great difference. One man may endeavor to restrain his wicked children and fail, and another

may not make any effort to restrain his. One of the evils of the present is the failure of parents to attempt even to restrain their children from worldliness and wickedness, while some grieve over theirs, try, and fail. God is the Judge.

No one, who is himself true, can read Samuel's solemn address to the people and not love him for his honesty, integrity, high sense of honor, and faithfulness to God and the people.

May God bless and strengthen us all for every temptation and duty of life!

QUESTIONS.

- Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the Time, Place, and Persons.
Did you read the Devotional Reading?
Did you read the Home Reading?
What and where was Kiriath-jearim?
What does the name mean?
Where and what was Mizpah?
What does it mean?
State the facts which show that the wages of sin is death.
How long did the Philistines keep the ark?
What caused them to return it to Israel?
How long did the ark remain at Kiriath-jearim?
How long were the Israelites oppressed by the Philistines?
What is meant by lamenting after Jehovah?
- 3, 4 Upon what conditions would God deliver the Israelites?
What did they do and give up when they gave up idolatry?
What does directing their hearts unto God mean?
Upon what must we set our affections?
What did the Israelites do?
What were "the Baalim"?
What were "the Ashtaroth"?
- 5 What did Samuel direct them all to do?
What does "Mizpah" mean?
Where was it?
Why were all gathered there?
- What is said in the Bible about Samuel as a praying man?
How old was he when he died?
With whom is he classed?
What does Jesus do for us?
- 6 What does pouring out this water signify?
What else did they do?
Why did they fast?
What else then did they do?
What are all penitents ready to do?
By what did Israel show their repentance?
What did Samuel do in judging them?
- 7, 8 How many "lords of the Philistines" were there?
What did they do at this time?
What effect did this have upon Israel?
What did they do?
- 9 What did Samuel offer?
Then what did he do?
In what company do we find Samuel's name?
- 10 What did the Philistines do next?
How did God resist this attack?
- 11 What did Israel do to the Philistines?
12 What did Samuel erect?
Where?
Why call it "Ebenezer"?
For how long were the Philistines subdued?
What did Israel recover?
- 15 How long did Samuel judge Israel?
What circuit did he make?
Name his strong characteristics.
What was his one misfortune, or failure?

"Gently, Lord, O gently, lead us,
Pilgrim in this vale of tears,
Through the trials yet decreed us,
Till our last great change appears.
When temptation's darts assail us,
When in devious paths we stray,
Let thy goodness never fail us;
Lead us in thy perfect way."

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 26.

REVIEW—MOSES TO SAMUEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.” (Ps. 85: 9.)

DEVOTIONAL READING.—Ps. 85: 1-13.

HOME READING.—

- December 20. M. The Reports of the Spies. (Num. 13: 23-33.)
- December 21. T. Moses Pleads with Israel. (Deut. 6: 1-12.)
- December 22. W. Joshua, the New Leader. (Josh. 1: 1-9.)
- December 23. T. Caleb's Faithfulness. (Josh. 14: 6-15.)
- December 24. F. Gideon and His Band. (Num. 7: 1-25.)
- December 25. S. Samuel the Just Judge. (1 Sam. 7: 3-12.)
- December 26. S. The Mercy of God. (Ps. 85: 1-13.)

This Review says, “Moses to Samuel;” but much of the work of Moses as a leader was studied in the third quarter. Much of this quarter is devoted to Joshua, Caleb, Gideon, and Samuel.

These characters are embraced in the list of the faithful—men who accomplished much by faith—in Heb. 11. There can be nothing more encouraging than the study of such heroic and sublime characters.

This Review brings us to the close of another year's work. Have we been faithful? Can the great Judge of all say, “Well done, good and faithful servant?” Some year, we know not which, will be our last year's work on earth; and, whether or not we have done our work well, we will have to meet it in the judgment. So it behooves us to do it well day by day. This is the only way in which we can meet with God's approval. It is true, we can repent and be forgiven; but this is a part of the work we must do in order to receive his praise.

QUESTIONS.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Did you read the Devotional Reading?

Did you read the Home Reading?

To what characters is much of this quarter devoted?

In what famous list are the characters of this quarter embraced?

Will this year's work meet with the approval of God?

LESSON I.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

At what time did the children of Israel set forward on their journey from Sinai to the land of Canaan?

In what order did they travel?

Who was invited to go with them?

How could Hobab serve them, and what could they do for him?

Repeat what Moses said when the ark “set forward.”

LESSON II.

Give the subject.

Who uttered the language of the Golden Text?

Relate the story and different reports of the spies.

LESSON III.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Where did Miriam die?

Where did Aaron die?

Give the sin of Moses and Aaron which shut them out of the land of promise.

What was Moses permitted to view before his death?

Where did he die?

At what age did he die?

LESSON IV.

Give the subject.

Repeat the Golden Text.

Who became Israel's new leader?

How was he prepared for this work?
Why did Moses lay his hands upon
Joshua?

LESSON V.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
What is "temperance?"
Name the evils of strong drink.

LESSON VI.

Give the subject.
What gives the victory over the world?
How was Joshua encouraged to attack
Jericho?
How did the walls fall down by faith,
and when by faith did they fall down?
How and when are people now saved by
faith?

LESSON VII.

Give the subject.
What is it to wholly follow God?
Of whom was it said he wholly followed
Jehovah?
How was Caleb rewarded?

LESSON VIII.

Give the subject.
When and where did Joshua renew the
covenant?
What choice did he call upon the people
to make?
What did he say he and his house would
do?
What was this covenant?

LESSON IX.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.

Into what had the Israelites fallen since
the death of the elders who outlived
Joshua?

By whom had God delivered them from
their enemies?

Give a brief biography of Gideon.

For how long had the Midianites op-
pressed Israel?

Give the account of the way in which
Gideon overcame them.

LESSON X.

Give the subject.
Repeat Ruth 1: 16.
Give a brief history of Ruth.

LESSON XI.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Give the history of Samuel's birth and his
life up to this lesson.
What is meant by, "Speak, Jehovah: for
thy servant heareth?"
What others said, "Here am I?"
What did Saul of Tarsus say when the
Lord first spoke to him?

LESSON XII.

Give the subject.
Repeat the Golden Text.
Upon what conditions would God deliver
the children of Israel from the Philis-
tines?
Why did the people weep?
How did they show their repentance?
Give the account of the battle and the
victory.

"Farewell, Old Year, with goodness crowned;
A hand divine hath set thy bound.
Welcome, New Year, which shall bring
Fresh blessings from our God and King.
The Old we leave without a tear,
The New we hail without a fear."

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VERSUS

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EDITED AND COMPILED BY
E. A. ELAM

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