

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

MAY 23rd, 1858.

Subject.—HOW THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS IS CONNECTED WITH THE SAVIOUR'S SACRIFICE.

For Repeating. For Reading.
Heb. x. 1-4. Heb. x. 11-25.

MAY 30th, 1858.

Subject.—CONSEQUENCES OF SINNING WILLFULLY AFTER WE HAVE RECEIVED A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.

For Repeating. For Reading.
Heb. x. 11-14. Heb. x. 26-39.

THE QUESTIONER.

Mental Pictures from the Bible.

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

[No. 61.]

We see the encampment of a vast army. A veteran warrior, surrounded by the princes of his people, is giving audience to a party of strangers, whose weary looks and travel-worn garments bespeak their having journeyed from a far country. Near them are asses, laden with old provision-sacks and leathern bottles, apparently worn out with long service on a tedious march. They seem to tell a piteous tale, to which the noble warriors listen with keen attention.

Solution to Mental Picture from the Bible No. 60.

12. In GEN. xxiii. 16.—"Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver current money with the merchant."

13. The city of Enoch; it was built by Cain.—GEN. iv. 17.

THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS.—Live as long as you may, the first twenty years form the greater part of your life. They appear so when they are passing; they seem to have been so when we look back to them; and they take up more room in our memory than all the years that succeeded them.

If this be so, how important that they should be passed in planting good principles, cultivating good tastes, strengthening good habits, and fleeing all those pleasures which lay up bitterness and sorrow for time to come! Take good care of the first twenty years of your life, and you may hope that the last twenty years will take good care of you.

RUM AND CRIME.—An Eastern story runs to this effect: Satan once desired to possess himself of the soul of a particular person, and offered him a soul for an immense amount if he would do one of three things,—murder his wife, set fire to the house, or get drunk. The man agreed to get drunk, wondering that Satan should be so "soft" as to think there was anything peculiarly bad in that; but while he was drunk he set fire to his house and killed his wife. Half the crime in the world is the immediate or remote consequence of liquor-drinking.

SOMETHING NEW.—A horrible accusation has been brought against the Princess Royal by some of the Berlin people. They are enraptured by her beauty, amiability, and condescension; but they bring against her the most awful charge they could against a woman—namely, that she speaks too little.

A SENSIBLE DOCTOR.—A doctor up town gave the following prescription for a sick lady, a few days since. "A new bonnet, a Cashmere shawl, and a pair of gaiter-boots!" The lady recovered immediately.

The oldest clock in America is one in the Philadelphia Library, which is nearly two centuries old. It was made in London, keeps good time, and is said to have been owned by Oliver Cromwell.

How to cook Potatoes.

We are all potato eaters, yet few persons know how to cook them.

TO BOIL POTATOES!—Put them into a saucepan with scarcely sufficient water to cover them. Directly the skins begin to break, lift them from the fire, and as rapidly as possible pour off every drop of the water. Then place a coarse (we need not say clean) towel over them, and return to the fire again until they are thoroughly done, and dry. A little salt, to taste, should have been added to the water before boiling.

POTATO CHEESE CAKES.—One pound of mashed potatoes, quarter of a pound of currants, quarter of a pound of sugar and butter, and four eggs, to be well mixed together; bake them in patty-pans, having first lined them with puff paste.

POTATO COLCAGON.—Boil potatoes and greens, and spinach, separately; mash the potatoes; squeeze the greens dry; chop them quite fine, and mix them with the potatoes with a little butter, pepper, and salt. Put into a mould, buttering it well first; let it stand in a hot oven ten minutes.

Select Sermon.

[From the Fourth Series, just published.]

The Parable of the Ark.

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life."—GENESIS vii. 15.

(Concluded.)

VI. But though there were many rooms in the ark, I want you to notice one thing more, THERE WAS ONLY ONE DOOR. It is said, "And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof." And so, there is only one door into the ark of our salvation, and that is Christ. There are not two Christs preached, one in one chapel, and another in another. "If any man preach any other doctrine than that ye have received, let him be accursed." There is but one gospel. We take in the righteous out of all sections, but we do not take in all sections. We pick out the godly from amongst them all, for we believe there is a remnant according to the election of grace in the vilest of them. But, still, there is only one door, and "he that cometh not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." There was only one door to the ark.

Some animals, like the camelopard, whose heads are higher than other animals, might have to bow their necks to go in by the same entrance as the waddling ducks, who naturally stoop, even as they enter a barn; and so, some of the lofty ones of this world must bend down their stiff necks, and bow their proud heads, if they would enter into the church by Christ. Thus, again, the swift horse and the slow-paced snail must enter by one door; so, too, the scribes and pharisees must come in the same way as the publicans and harlots, or be forever excluded.

All the beasts God had chosen went in by the one door, and if any stood without, and said "We shall not come in that way," they would have been standing without until the flood overtook and destroyed them; for there was only one door. There is only one way of salvation, and there is only one means of getting into it. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," but "he that believeth not shall be damned." There is no hope of any other way of salvation. He that cometh in by the door shall be saved; and Jesus saith, "I am the door."

VII. Proceeding in the parable, you will notice, that THIS ARK HAD SUNDRY STORIES IN IT. They were not all of one height. There were lower, second and third stories. Now, this is to me a figure of the different kinds of Christians who are carried to heaven. There is my poor mourning brother, who lives in the bottom story; he is always singing, "Lord, what a wretched land is this!" He lives just near the keel, on the bare ribs of the ark. He is never very happy. A little light reaches him from the window at times; but, generally, he is so far from the light that he walks in darkness and sees very little indeed. His state is that of constant groaning; he loves to go and hear "the corruption preachers;" he revels with delight in the deep experience of the tried family of God; he likes to hear it said "through much tribulation you will enter the kingdom of heaven;" if you paint the Christian life as a very gloomy one he will like your picture, for his is gloomy indeed; he is always poring over texts such as these, "Oh, wretched man that I am," or that other, "They that pass through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools." He is down in the lower story of the ark. But never mind; he is in the ark, so we will not scold him, though he has little faith, and very much doubt. "With lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it." There is one of our brethren up a little higher, and he is saying, "I cannot exactly say I am safe; yet I have a hope that my head will be kept above the billows, though it goes hard with me at times. Now and then, too, the Lord bestows 'some drops of heaven' upon me. Sometimes I am like the mountains of Hermon, where 'the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.'" He is in the second story. Well, but he is no safer than the other one. He that is in the second story is no safer, though he is happier than the man on the ground floor. All are safe, so long as they are in the ark. For my part I like the uppermost story best. I had rather live up there, where I can sing, "O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise, even with my glory."

I love the place where the saints are always admonishing and encouraging one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,—

"Children of the Heavenly King,
As ye journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in His works and ways."

I confess that I am obliged to go down to the lower story sometimes; but I like the running up the ladder to the third deck, whenever I can and there I can say—

"Oh! how sweet to view the flowing
Of His soul-redeeming blood;
With divine assurance knowing,
That He made my peace with God."

But I am no more safe when I am in the top story than I am when I am in the bottom. The same wave that would split the ship and drown me, were I in the lowest story, would drown me if I were in the highest. However high some of us, and however low others of us may be, the same vessel bears us all, for we are one crew in one boat, and there is no dividing us. Come, then, my desponding hearer, is that your place, somewhere down at the bottom of the hold, along with the ballast? Are you always in trials and troubles? Ah! well, fear not, so long as you are in the ark. Do not be afraid, Christ is your strength and righteousness. The ark was in each and every department a secure shelter to all who were shut in. "Ah!" says one, "but I am down there, sir, at the bottom always, and I am afraid the vessel will sink." Do not be so silly; why should your heart beget such senseless fears? I knew a man who went up the Monument, and when he had got half way, he declared it vibrated and was about to fall, and he would come down. But the Monument has not fallen; it is as safe as ever; and if fifty like him, or fifty thousand, went up, the Monument would be just as firm. But some poor nervous Christians are afraid Christ will let them sink. A wave comes against the side of the ship, but it does not hurt the ship; it only drives the wedges in tighter. The master is at the helm—will not that assure your heart? It has floated over so many billows—will not that increase your confidence? It must, indeed, be a strong billow that will sink it now; there never shall be such an one. And where, think you, is the power that could destroy the souls that are sheltered in the ark of our salvation? Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, since Christ hath died, and God the Father hath justified us? Happy assurance! We are all safe, so sure as we are in the covenant. The ark floated triumphantly on amidst all the dangers without, and when it finally rested on Mount Ararat, and God spake to Noah again, saying, "Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing;" then the inventory was complete, all were safely landed. So, too, will Christ present the perfect number of all his people to the Father in the last day; not one shall perish. The ark of our salvation shall bring all its living freight into the haven of everlasting rest.

"Truth is her compass, love her sail,
And heavenly grace her store;
The Spirit's influence the gale
That waits her to the shore."

"Nor winds nor waves her progress check,
Her course she must pursue;
And though you often fear a wreck,
She's saved with all her crew."

VII. This brings me to notice, in the last place, THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ANIMALS THAT ENTERED INTO THE ARK.—"Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female." Listen to the statement. This great ark was meant to save both clean and unclean beasts. In like manner, the great salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ is intended for sinners of all kinds, the clean and the unclean. There are some people in the world that we may well reckon in the former class. They are in every way respectable; their conduct in society is beyond reproach; exact in their commerce, they were never known to erase a figure in their account books; they would not defraud their neighbors, nor would they be so negligent of their fair fame as to do a disorderly action; their character is so amiable, that their mothers might regard them from childhood as almost without a fault; they have grown up to mature years without the hideous taint of immorality; their practice has ever been akin to piety; their zeal for the law of God has been truly commendable, so that Christ himself might have looked upon them and loved them, although he tenderly and pitifully admonishes them. "One thing thou lackest." Ay, but the desolations of the flood are so universal, that there is no escape except in the ark. The clean beasts must go into the ark to be saved. There is not a soul among you so good, nor a character so clean, but ye have need of Christ, whether ye know your need or not. Ye may be never so good and excellent, but ye will want a Saviour. There is something about your character not

clean. Your lives require purification, which ye can never find but in Christ.

"The best performance of your hands,
Dares not appear before his throne."

But, then, the unclean beasts went in likewise. Here is the opposite class. Are there not some of you (we know there are such) whose education from early childhood has been vicious—certainly not virtuous? From your earliest recollections you have gone into the paths of open profanity; you have dived into the very fips in the gall of bitterness. You have been drunkards, swearers, Sabbath-breakers, and injurious. You are just the sort of persons we should liken to unclean beasts. Ay! the ark was built for you—on purpose for you too. The most moral man will stand no better when he comes before God than you will. He must be saved just the same as you are. You must both be saved by the one common salvation, or not at all. There is but one Saviour for all who are saved—there is but one redemption for every one of you who really is redeemed. There is but one ark for the clean and the unclean. "Ah!" say some, "I suppose, then, you take the unclean beasts to come from the courts, the alleys, and the filthy slums of the metropolis." Oh! no, not particularly so. We can find the unclean as plentifully in St. James's as in St. Giles's. There be some of what you call the "higher circles," who from infancy have revelled in vice. Soon did ye learn to break the rule of your parents' authority. You laughed at your mother's tears, you sneered at your father's counsels; you drank up iniquity in your school-days as the greedy ox drinketh up water. You make a boast of your wild riots. You tell of your wickedness now with an air of impudent triumph. You brag of having sowed your wild oats. So infamous has been your career, in spite of good example and education, that, I suppose, "Newgate" could hardly produce a class of unclean beasts more to be loathed than you are. Well, now, to each class of sinners I preach. If thou feelest and deplorest thine uncleanness, there is mercy for thee, unclean as thou art. I beseech thee, come into the ark, and thou wilt never be turned out. If God constrain thee to come, as he did those creatures, he will never drive thee away. The ark was for the unclean as well as for the clean—for the swine as well as the sheep—for the poisonous asp as well as for the harmless dove—for the carnivorous raven as well as for the turtle. All creatures came in, some of every sort. Ah! thou swinish sinner, one of Satan's swine, come in; thou shalt be safe. And ah! thou lamb-like sinner, gentle and mild come in thou, for there is no other ark for thee, and thou wilt be drowned unless thou comest in by the same door into the great ark of salvation.

Let us divide these creatures once more. There were *creeping things*, and there were *flying things*. On the morning when the ark door was opened, you might have seen in the sky a pair of eagles, a pair of sparrows, a pair of vultures, a pair of humming-birds, a pair of all kinds of birds that ever cut the azure, that ever floated on wing, or whispered their song to the evening gales. In they came. But if you had watched down on the earth, you would have seen come creeping along a pair of snails, a pair of snakes, and a pair of worms. There ran along a pair of mice; there came a pair of lizards, and in there flew a pair of locusts. There were pairs of creeping creatures, as well as pairs of flying creatures. Do you see what I mean by that? There are some of you that can fly so high in knowledge, that I should never be able to scan your great and extensive wisdom; and others of you so ignorant, that you can hardly read your Bibles. Never mind; the eagle must come down to the door, and you must go up to it. There is only one entrance for you all; and as God saved the birds that flew, so he saved the reptiles that crawled. Are you a poor, ignorant, crawling creature, that never was noticed—without intellect, without repute, without fame, without honor? Come along, crawling one! God will not exclude you. I have often wondered how the poor snail crawled in; but I dare say he started many a year before. And some of you have started for years, and still you keep crawling on. Ah! then, come along with thee, poor snail! If I could just pick thee up, and help thee on a yard or two, I would be glad to do it. It is strange how long you have been nigh to the ark, but have not yet entered in; how long you have been near the portals of the church, but never joined it.

Remark again, they all got in. Oh! do not fear, if you are in your own esteem a crawling reptile: you may have the lowest possible opin-