

Youth's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH, 1863.

Read—ACTS xii. 20-25 and xiii. 1-12: Judgments on Herod and Sergius Paulus. JUDGES vi. 1-24: The calling of Gideon.

Recite—ACTS xii. 11, 12.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16TH, 1863.

Read—ACTS xiii. 13-37: Paul preaching at Antioch. JUDGES vi. 25-40: Gideon's zeal and signs.

Recite—ACTS xii. 21-23.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

Write down what you suppose to be the answer to the following question.

31. Which of the tribes of Israel was omitted in the blessing pronounced upon them by Moses?

Answer to question given last week:—

30. The free will offering. Lev. xxii. 23.

Amusement for the thoughtful.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE PUZZLE, No. 33.

That you are of an "ancient, noble" race There is no doubt; but what you say of "grace" And "courtesy" I cannot think quite true. For why, indeed, should those be claimed by you? You, who so often deluge land with blood, Caring not how you please or displease God. "Oft chosen Arbitrator"—yes, and how Do you decide the causes of a "row?" By taking lives that might be better spent! By slaying thousands of the innocent! Goliath, that gigantic man of Gath, Chose you his mighty instrument of wrath, Challenged the bravest of God's chosen land, Insulted Heaven with uplifted hand! But none was found the challenge to accept, And thus God's army was in terror kept. At length a little shepherd boy appears,— The merest stripling—few, indeed, his years! To see his warrior brothers he had come, Bearing refreshments, and a word from home. He heard the challenge of that mighty man; He saw the terror that through Israel ran— But felt it not! Brave and strong his heart— He feared not Goliath's sword, or dart! "Shall that bold heathen stand there and defy The army of the God of hosts? and I, Who once slew both a lion and a bear, By great Jehovah's help, shall I not dare To meet him, trusting in the God of hosts? I'll slay him, notwithstanding his great boasts." No sword, nor spear, nor shield he took with him,— But, a bag of little pebbles and a sling Composed his armour. Forth he went to meet The man whose height was more than seven feet, He took a pebble—put it in his sling— And threw it at the mighty giant-king. Deep in his forehead 'twas made to penetrate— He "licked the dust," and yielded to his fate. Then SWORD, you traitor turned, and, in The hand of him, the mighty future king, The head you severed from your master late, Whose pride and insolence had been so great! Then followed a tremendous slaughter! Philistine blood was shed like water! The heathen fled pursued and slain by thee And Israel's godly land again was free!

Liverpool, July, 1863.

SCRIPTURE PUZZLE, No. 34.

I never had father or mother; Ne'er had I a sister or brother; But a large family I had, Many of whom were very bad; And here I would confess with shame, I was the cause and most to blame, Urged by the vile one from beneath, I poisoned them and caused their death. My crime I dared not to deny. I was judged, condemned, sentenced to die; My body for dissection given; Pronounced unfit to enter Heaven. The judgment has been all reversed Of this sad tale, so oft rehearsed. Search the Scriptures till you find Who the writer has in mind.

Onslow, 1863.

Going to find Heaven.

Such a child as philosophers reason over and sceptics sneer at, was little Lena Summers.— Her father had died broken-hearted when she was but two years old, and her mother, too feeble to struggle against the harsh barriers reared by poverty, sickened after three years of sorrowful womanhood, and left her little "strange child," as the neighbors called her, alone, in a world too cold and cruel for one so shrinking

and sensitive. Her father had been an artist, her mother a poor minister's orphan. Both were physically unfitted for the battle of life, and lay down almost before the strife began.

It was in a flourishing town that Mary Summers breathed her last, in a pretty cottage, a few rooms of which she had rented, hoping to find employment that she might support her little child.— There the neighbors found her, one day, insensible, on the floor, the cheek of the child pressed against her cheek, which was wet by the falling tears of the little Lena, who was moaning as if her heart was broken. The poor widow never awoke from that long fainting fit, and Lena sobbed, as she hung about the cold clay, "O! mamma, where is my dear mamma?"

"My child, mother has gone to heaven," said the woman who had dressed the poor corpse decently, and she took Lena on her knee. "But Lena wants mamma," said the little one, placing the tiny fingers over the streaming eyes, while it was pitiful to hear the great sobs of the heaving chest.

"Lena will go to heaven some time, if she is good," said the woman, her lip quivering,—for what heart would not be touched by the sad grieving of a little child!

"Lena go—find heaven?" queried the child, suddenly ceasing to sob. "Lena good, Lena find heaven?"

To this question the woman replied with a few common-place words of sympathy, but the little girl lifted herself in her lap, and began to look intently at her mother. Nor did she afterwards, save when she slept, lose sight of the cold clay. Some new impulse had touched the spring of her heart, and set thoughts that had never before stirred her little pulses in motion. She was carried to the grave and saw the form of her mother lowered down, and though she grew pale with the fearful tension of her great grief, that strained every nerve of the little body, yet she did not weep.

It was remarked what keen notice she took of all the surroundings, and the sobbing sighs that came up from her little heart were mixed with a sort of triumph in eye and manner, as they were conveying her home.

The minister who buried the parish poor took her on his knee when they had returned, and, charmed by the beauty of her infant face, talked to her as a people usually talk to children at such a time. Mamma was very happy, he assumed her, and heaven was a beautiful world, where there were neither sorrow, death nor sin. Mamma would never be sick up there, never want for anything. Papa was there, too, and, both together, they were waiting for their little daughter, who, if she was very good, might go to them.

All this Lena interpreted in her own childish way. Heaven was a veritable place to her, where her mamma was living, but how could she stay without her little Lena? Nobody kissed her and loved her the way mamma did, and the child made a deliberate resolve. She could find heaven some way; she could be good, very good, and go look for the beautiful place which she believed in with a child's holy faith.

Many were the consultations held over the poor little child, and it was at last decided to place her in the poor-house, until some better disposition could be made for her. The people immediately around were very needy, most of them had large families and could not afford to keep her. "What is everybody's business," the old saying is, "is nobody's business." Some of the neighbors, seeing the child gone, concluded that others had attended to her, and that she was safely housed. A day, nearly two had passed, when they discovered the fact that little Lena had gone—no one knew whither. They searched here and there without success; nobody remembered having seen the child; who must have gone towards night and been hidden by the darkness.

It was true that the little one, taking advantage of the absence of her friends and full of her great mission, had started one day to find heaven. The sky was cloudless, the earth smiling in beauty as the child hurried along, dressed in her little white cape-bonnet, which her mother's hands had fashioned just the day before she died. Heaven she knew was beyond the sky, but away off in the distance did not the sky and the earth seem to meet? And if she walked till she found that place would there not be some door there, some great, beautiful angel to let her in to her mother? Yes, she firmly believed there would be, and trudged on till the twilight fell, and she could not see where the sky and the earth met. By this time her little feet were very tired, for she was not much used to walking, and she had eaten sparingly, so absorbed was she in her great mission.

It was very sad to feel that heaven was yet so far off. It would take her a great many days to get there, and while she was on her way who would give her food and a bed to sleep in? She had always said her little prayers, and her mother had taught her to ask God for what she specially desired; so, kneeling down by the roadside amid the fragrance and beauty of the hedge roses, she prayed fervently that the dear Lord would show her the way to heaven, and give her something to eat.

It happened that a rich man was driving along that way in a handsome barouche. His little sons, three in number, kept him company, amusing him with their prattle. Squire Ellison, as he was called, had built up a beautiful village where not long ago, had been woods, and rocks, and waterfalls. He was what Christians call a godless man. He cared nothing about religion, took his Sabbaths for holidays, built a church, but never entered it after its dedication, and laughingly queried whether he was not prospered about as much as those fellows who made such canting pretensions to be better than their neighbors. It seemed so. Never was there a happier family circle than his. His children, all boys, were amiable truthful and affec-

tionate, but it remained yet to be seen whether the foundations were secure; whether their principles were built upon the sand or upon the rock of truth that should never be moved.

The child was on her knees. "Pray look, papa, at that beautiful little girl! What is she doing?" Squire Ellison knew in his heart what she was doing; as for the boys, they had never bent the knee in prayer. Beautiful she was indeed; a pureness of tint—too fair long to be mortal, and radiant as new fallen snow—made the face seem almost angelic. Blue, large and soft were the eyes, with that clouded color beneath them that gave such depth and spiritual clearness as is seldom seen, and when seen pre-figures to the mind of the beholder an early but beautiful translation.

"Let's stop, papa, and ask her."

"Certainly, my boy. Ned stop the horses. Now will you get out children? And what are you doing, baby, so far away from home? How did you get here in the woods? It's two miles from anywhere. Where are you going, my little lady?" The child, at first, was frightened, then, encouraged by the kindly smile, she looked up and said, in her infantile accents, "I going to heaven, to find mamma."

She had to repeat this twice before the Squire would believe his ears.

"Whew!" he whistled; "you've got a long way to go, little lady."

"What does she mean, papa?" asked the boys.

"She means that her mother is dead, children: poor little kitten! I can't make it out. Where is your mother, baby?"

"Up in heaven," lisped Lena.

"And your father?"

"Father's up in heaven with mamma, and Lena's good, and sh'll find heaven and go up with mamma and papa."

"The poor little innocent!" ejaculated the Squire, with watery eyes.

"Papa, let's take her home," suggested one of the boys.

"Where are you going to get some supper?" queried the Squire.

"Lena ask God," was the simple reply. "God give Lena some supper."

"I declare! what a silly fellow I am," exclaimed the Squire, turning away to wipe his eyes. "The creature has preached a better sermon to me than ever a minister did. Come, little one, you mustn't stay out in the road to-night, whoever you are. Make room there, boys, we must take this birdie home and give her some supper. So Lena was encoined in the beautiful barouche; her little face looking out gravely upon one and another. Mrs. Ellison was delighted with her, and signified her wish to keep her, if the Squire could find out who she was.

"Will you stay and be my little girl?" she asked. The child thought, with grave eyes and an earnest countenance, then shook her head.

"Lena go to heaven," she said, serenely.

"But you can't go to heaven, Lena, unless you die and are buried in the churchyard."

The child looked wistfully up; but she still said with the old decision of voice and manner.

"Lena want to go to heaven—see mamma."

"But mamma is down in the ground."

The little one seemed perplexed for a moment, then exclaimed, with a triumphant smile:

"No! mamma up with God—up in heaven. Lena knows!" and she would listen to no other argument; neither could they shake her faith.

Lena remained a day or two, but her little heart was set upon the fulfilment of her mission. Night and morning she prayed that God would show her the way. On the morning of the third day, the child, taking advantage of temporary loneliness, set out again on her travels. She had been gone hours before any one thought of what might be her object. The Squire caused a search to be made, but it resulted fruitlessly. Probably, he said, some one else had taken her in, somebody who could cure her, perhaps, of her foolish fancy. Still it seemed as if the Squire was a different man since the little angel had dropped down upon his happiness. An unrest had been created in his bosom which made him dissatisfied with all the beauty about him. None knew what it was, perhaps he did not know himself. But then he often talked about her, wished she had staid; often spoke of first seeing her kneeling by the roadside, and of her childish faith in what he knew nothing about. How strange are God's providences! Had he brought that lonely little child, so sufficient for herself in her faith and innocence, to prove His Word to the rich man living in ease and without God in the world? Who can tell? The pebble may be very small that dimples the surface of the still water, shining so placidly in the sun, reflecting only beauty, but how quickly the lairy circle deepens into another and another, till as far as the eye can reach the waves respond to the touch?

Three suns had set when an old man presented himself at the Squire's house. What sent him there?

His children had talked of seeing a ghost in the churchyard the night before. He had laughed at it till he saw through the misty showers of the following day, going to dig a grave, a figure quite small, lying close to one of the mounds. Moving towards it, he found a little child, completely drenched through, a delicate thing, as he thought, in a fever. It was at his house now, and needed help. He being a poor man, thought he would see what the Squire advised.

"It is that dear little child," exclaimed his wife. "I told her she couldn't go to heaven unless she died and was buried in the churchyard. Too young to understand, she thought she must go there and die—poor little soul!" The Squire had his carriage ready soon, and drove rapidly to the sexton's house; back again—and little Lena was deposited in the arms of his wife. From that to bed, quite delirious, her little hot

hands lifted in supplication to heaven; her dry lips calling for the dead mother, praying, beseeching that God would take her to heaven.

"I think her wish will be gratified," said the doctor, as, later, he stood by the little canopied bed, out side of which the child's hands laid like two spotless lilies.

"If she is only spared, she shall be as my own," said Mrs. Ellison, grudging the grave the possession of such sweet beauty. "She is the fairest thing I ever saw; and to think she has been so dreadfully exposed, when we thought her safe in some harbor. Poor little darling!" and bending over, she kissed the waxen brow. The blue eyes flew open.

"Mother!" cried the child.

"She is not looking at you," said the Squire, as the woman's heart bounded, thinking the child could recognize her for her mother, and so be saved. "She is not looking at you—see!"

No; the eyes were wide open and shining as if the mystic splendor of heaven fell upon the blue orbs; the lips were parted with an eager smile, whose brightness seemed as a reflected glory; the little hands were raised, but the glance was just before her, and upward.

"She does see," whispered the Squire, solemnly, unheeding that large tears were rolling down his cheeks.

"Mamma—Lena coming—Lena good. Lena come to heaven with mamma," and with one exulting motion, as if she could bound to meet that presence, seen by her, unseen by all the rest, the light faded out, the hands fell nerveless; there was nothing left of the soul but the smile that marked its dawning immortality.

"She did see," sobbed the Squire, as he turned from the little bed, all broken down.

Is it a wonder, a miracle, that Squire Ellison is a more thoughtful man than ever before? Some say it is; others smile incredulously, when the little story of Lena is told; but there

are some hearts that believe the child was sent by the Spirit of God, to do what all other earthly means had failed to accomplish; to lead with its little, helpless hand, that noble but impious soul to the light of heaven, for the Squire is an altered man. Sometimes he takes children to the churchyard, were a pure white stone, surmounted with a little lamb, marks Lena's resting-place. On a tablet are these words: "She has found heaven."—W. & R.

Giving up the Prayer-meeting.

In a season of religious declension, when two or three Christians bore the whole burden of sustaining a weekly prayer-meeting, an excellent deacon proposed to us to discontinue it. We told him, very frankly, that if he was weary of the yoke he might lay it down, but we should keep up the meeting, if no other brother would give us help. He remained faithful, and in a few weeks rejoiced over a glorious outpouring of the Spirit. Zion's Advocate has some good thoughts on abandoning the prayer-meeting for the sake of convenience:

Some give up the prayer-meeting by staying away, and would let it die by neglect; others, by discontinuing it for a time; and others kill it as you have been showing us, or perhaps it might as well be termed murder it.

An incident occurs which may be related as follows: A certain minister engaged to preach in a place one-half the time, and inquiry arose where they should hold their prayer-meeting, as they had no convenient place. After some consultation it was proposed to give up the prayer-meeting. There would be a saving of expense, as it would cost twenty-five cents an evening to warm and light a room, and it would be some trouble to hold it at private houses. "Well," replied the minister, "perhaps it would; and as they were on the plan of retrenchment, perhaps it would be the better to have preaching only one-fourth of the time, which would save considerable. On the whole, it might be best to give up preaching altogether, and thus save the whole expense, which would be quite an item. And further," he remarked, "perhaps they could save something in other respects; there was the Sabbath, which was now lost to all profitable labor; fifty two in a year—what a saving, if they should no longer be kept as holy time! Then, we are required by the Bible to do to others as we would they should do to us, which involved a loss, for otherwise we might take the advantage—deceive or cheat a little. How much might be saved by laying aside the rules God has given us, and following out our own inclinations; strange this has never been thought of before. To what a discovery has this idea of giving up the prayer-meeting led! Will not the world have reason to bless us for the deliberations of this evening?"

What effect this speech of the minister had, or whether the proposition to give up the prayer-meeting was adopted, we are not informed; but we have no doubt, in many places and with many minds, the argument would appear logical and unanswerable. The minister's propositions would gain many converts.

But there is a moral worthy of notice—the results of little departures in the beginning, and giving up or neglecting the means of grace as they come in their turns. One who neglects his closet will by-and-by neglect the prayer-meeting, then the Sabbath-school, and then will undervalue the Sabbath services, and so on with all the requirements of God's Word. A careful attention to these little things, if they may be called such, is what makes up the Christian life, and Christian comfort and usefulness.—1b

No man has a thorough taste of prosperity to whom adversity never happened.

SIR ASTLEY COOPER, referring to human fallibility, said, "I have made many mistakes myself. In learning the anatomy of the eye, I dare say I have spoiled a handful of eyes."