

Christian Messenger.

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THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1873.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, June 29th.

REVIEW.

- 1 Israel—The New Name Gen. xxxii. 24-30.
2 The Dreams of Joseph Gen. xxxvii. 3-11.
3 Joseph Sold Gen. xxxvii. 23-24.
4 The Lord with Joseph Gen. xxxix. 1-23.
5 Joseph's Exaltation Gen. xli. 27-49.
6 The Report from Egypt Gen. xli. 29-38.
7 Joseph made known Gen. xli. 1-8.
8 Joseph sends for his father Gen. xlv. 19-28.
9 Israel in Egypt Gen. xlv. 1-4, 29-32.
10 Joseph and Pharaoh Gen. xlv. 5-10.
11 Prophetic Blessings Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.
12 The Last Days of Joseph Gen. l. 15-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. iv. 8.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Heb. xi. 20-22, 39, 40.

SUMMARY.—Through conflict into peace, through toil into rest, through gloom into light.

ANALYSIS.—I. Alienation. Lessons 1, 3, 11. Separation. Lessons 4, 6, 11. Reconciliation. Lessons 7, 8. IV. Union. Lessons 9, 12.

General Survey.—Of the lessons of the quarter now closing, we to-day make one lesson. We first meet with Jacob at the crisis in his life when he becomes Israel, and enters into his birthright, when he is about to settle in Canaan as an independent head of a family. Before he had been merely a dependent, and the servant of another. The history of the family, as related to God's providential purpose, hinges on the history of Joseph. Joseph, and God's dealing with him, is thus the central object of study, and the family history finds its unity only as it is seen to centre in him. Thus the death of Jacob and the death of Joseph are narrated in closest connection, and those two events bring to its fit close the story of Israel's family. Again, viewing the lessons in a national aspect, their unity is seen. From the struggle and conquest to the death of those two, the nation of Israel passed through one distinct stage. That stage is clearly marked off from all that went before and all that followed after. Yet was it so one that no division into parts is required, even if possible. Again, it has a unity of providential teaching, as a lesson in principles. It begins with the distinct acceptance and recognition by God of Jacob and his family as peculiarly the Lord's, and then proceeds to bring out the principles of God's dealing with his own. Though a saint, Jacob was but partly sanctified, and his sins and follies brought on chastisement, the meaning of which was hidden from him, and in this was involved an innocent person, and the wicked alone seemed to prevail. The two who were most plainly the Lord's were both for a time (though one much longer than the other) in darkness, but it was at last made to appear that God was never more fatherly and true to them than when he seemed to have most abandoned them, while the wicked persecutors were never so thoroughly vanquished as in the very act which, in their view, was their triumph. Nothing can be more complete than the vindication here given of the divine control in Providence, the perfection of reason, which every child of God has to trust in at all times and circumstances. The lesson is brought out full and clear. Nothing is wanting.

I. Alienation.—The first lesson leads us to anticipate a future of unquizzed good for Jacob. There is the conflict and its conquest. From a servant of an unjust man, Jacob becomes a prince with and seemingly over God, an Israel. His foe, Esau, becomes his friend, and Providence surrenders to him. Fair is the prospect, bright the promise. Hope smiles, and Memory, now cheered, wipes her tears away. So how often seen at the beginning of a Christian life. It seems to the convert and to others, that the way will be clear and smooth.

The second lesson lets us hear the mutterings of a rising storm, the rumble of far off thunder, threatening havoc. We see the rising cloud, and foresee the furious tempest. Jacob's folly is at the root of the matter, but the Lord's own spirit in inspiring the prophetic dreams, as how often, seems to be the ally and fellow-worker with that folly, and the two thus joined are like the blast of a furnace on the fire of envy in the brother's hearts.

Lust, sin, death, a trinity of ruin; no description can so impress us with their reality and nature as the simple story of envy and woe which the third lesson of the quarter brings out. What if the story of Israel's family had ended here! Very unlike to our present estimate would be our judgment of the meaning of these events, and of God in permitting them. It ought to teach us to wait till the end comes, before we begin to murmur. In the light of eternity, after the whole series of events is completed, things will appear so unlike what they now do.

II. Separation.—During the period covered by Lessons IV-VI, we see the family broken up. If the father believed the son's report, and did not recall and confide in the dreams which had made such an impression on his mind, he believed that it was broken up no more to be united on earth. He felt himself to be stricken, smitten, perhaps abandoned. Lust had conceived, brought forth sin; and this was finished in death. So his sight would judge, and so in some sense it was. But mark here how grace comes in as the antidote of sin, and where death would have been, life comes to be. Hence we can have for the first of these three lessons such a title as The Lord with Joseph, and that even when the frown of Providence was on him. Joseph was in prison, placed there on an accusation which would naturally cost him his life. But he lives, for the Lord was with him. The father grieves at home, the ten brothers keep their secret from all, it may be, save God and their own consciences, and plod on in Canaan, seemingly neither the better nor the worse for their villainy. Nothing is known at the old homestead of the wonderful grace of God to the lost boy, nothing guessed of the one marvellous plan unfolding. "It is always darkest just before the dawn." It was never so dark to dear old Jacob and to the family in Canaan, as when that famine came and held on one and another year.

III. The reconciliation.—What a dawn was that which brightened Israel's sky when Joseph, laying off his Egyptian speech, said in his own native Hebrew, "I am Joseph." Here was light where blackness had been thickest. Clearest sky where the clouds of stormy tempers were massed. No wonder the ten were confounded and alarmed, for sin changes into terror the gladdest objects of desire.

Joseph sends for his father.—So reads the subject of the eighth lesson. After such long waiting. So many years of heavy grief, of dubious groping, when he had felt, if not said, "Has God forgotten to be gracious?" But though late, the blessing was not one day too late. It was "in due time." God hastens not, where haste is not wanted. Though at times he moves more swiftly than the lightning, and outstrips in his swift working the imagination of man. We have to wait, though always with girded loins and trimmed lamps. When the glad news came to the old man, it was so glad that he could not believe it.

IX. The union.—So he went to Egypt, taken to his son long lost, the family again together in the safe haven. The old man sees his separated children again, united. The light shines far down into his nation's future. A type is here of the way in which God brings together his broken family, and most sadly broken up at present is the family of the Lord. But they draw together, and will be one. One shepherd, one flock.

And so he gathers his children and speaks to them God's words of prophetic blessing, and is then gathered to his father. Joseph in due time follows. His personal history need not be further told after the father's death, save to state how he held to his brothers, and thus made possible the rise of the twelve-tribed nation.

QUESTIONS.—At what time in Jacob's history did the lessons of this quarter begin? At what time do they close? Give a brief statement of the course of events studied.

How came Jacob by the name Israel? What acts of Jacob's provoked envy against Joseph? What was the effect of Joseph's dreams? In what crime did the envy end? Who were the chief sufferers by this crime?

What friend had Joseph with him, in Egypt? How came Joseph to be exalted to the second place in the government? How came Jacob to find out about Joseph? Would you say that all this simply happened? Were Jacob's last days better than he had hoped?

Did Jacob intend that Egypt should be the final place of abode for the descendants? How old was he at his death? What did he do for his sons before death? What of the family after it?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 124, 125.

SUNDAY, July 6th.—The Child Jesus.—Matt. ii. 1-10.

Youths' Department.

LITTLE STREAMLET.

Little streamlet, glide along, 'Neath a sunlit sky, Murmuring ever, haste thee ever, For thou hast a gentle song, Rippling as thou goest by.

Thou dost never pause or stay, Though we rest beside thee; Thou art going, onward going, All the night as thou to day, Now art passing by me.

Stainless are thy waterfalls, Borne from mountain springs, Over ledges, rocky ledges, Nature's rude but strong built walls, Where the green moss clings.

Onward, onward, purling stream, Breeze whirring low, Doth caress thee, age across thee, Kissing eddies, while I dream 'Neath the sunlight's glow.

Thou hast not incoming tide, Never ebb and flow; Onward ever, stopping never, Hastening to the river wide, Thou dost murmuring go.

So thou goest, while we watch thee, Dreaming by the side; While the wavelets, tiny wavelets, Dance and sparkle as they flee, To the river's tide.

"KATY DIDN'T."

"Papa," said Katy, sitting on her father's knee, "what is the reason that some days are so lucky, and other days so unlucky? To-day began all wrong, and everything that has happened to-day has been wrong; while on other days I begin right, and all goes right straight through. If Aunt Linie had not kept me in the morning, I should not have been marked at school, and then I should not have been cross, and then I should not have had so many disagreeable things the rest of the time."

"But what did Aunt Linie keep you for, child?"

"To sew on the string of my hat, papa."

"How did it happen to be off?"

"Well," said Katy, slowly, "that I suppose was my fault, for it came off on Tuesday, and I didn't fasten it on."

"So, you see, we must go back of Aunt Linie for the beginning of this unlucky day of yours. Did you ever hear the old saying, 'For the want of a nail, the shoe was lost'?"

"Tell me," cried Katy, who loved stories dearly. So her father repeated:

"For the want of a nail, the shoe was lost; For the want of a shoe, the horse was lost; For the want of a horse, the rider was lost; For the want of a rider, the battle was lost; For the want of the battle, the kingdom was lost; And all for the want of a horseshoe nail."

"O papa!" cried the little girl, "I see what you mean. Who would have thought such a speck of a thing as not sewing on my string at the right time could make a difference in a whole day? Whenever I feel like neglecting little things, I will say, 'For want of a nail, the shoe was lost,' I will."—Miss Condit's "What Katy Did."

THE DUKE'S LESSON ABOUT DILIGENCE.

There was a duke once who disguised himself, and placed a great rock in the middle of the road near his palace.

Next morning a peasant came that way with his ox-cart. "Oh, these lazy people," said he, "there is this big stone right in the middle of the road, and no one will take the trouble to put it out of the way." And so Hahns went on scolding about the laziness of the people.

Next came a gray soldier along. His head was held so far back that he didn't notice the stone, so he stumbled over it. He began to storm at the country people around there for leaving a huge rock in the road. Then he went on.

Next came a company of merchants. When they came to the stone, the road was so narrow that they had to go off in single file on either side. One of them cried out: "Did anybody ever see the like of that big stone lying here all the morning, and no one stopping to take it away?"

It lay there for three weeks, and no one tried to remove it. Then the duke sent around word to all the people on his lands to meet near where this rock lay, as he had something to tell them.

The day came, and a great crowd gathered. Old Hahns, the farmer, was there, and so were the merchants. A horn was heard, and a splendid cavalcade

came galloping up. The duke got down from his horse, and began to speak to the people:

"My friends, it was I who put this stone here three weeks ago. Every passer-by has left it just where it was, and has scolded his neighbor for not taking it out of the way."

He stooped down and lifted up the stone. Directly underneath it was a round hollow, and in the hollow lay a small leathern bag. The duke held up this bag, that all the people might see what was written on it. "For him who lifts up the stone." He untied the bag and turned it upside down, and out upon the stone fell a beautiful gold ring and twenty large, bright golden coins. So they all lost the prize because they had not learned the lesson or formed the habit of diligence.—Methodist.

THE TWO GIFTS.

A collection for missions was being made at a church door. Up walked the richest man in the congregation, and laid a fifty dollar bill in the plate. The people admired the gift, and praised the giver.

Directly after him there came a little, pale, poor girl, meanly clad, with poverty written in all her looks, yet with a countenance full of sweetness and a tear trembling in her eye, and she laid beside the rich man's bill a single penny. No one noticed or cared for her gift. But the Savior saw it and he accepted it, as far more precious than the rich man's offering. Why?

That morning the rich man had said to himself:

"What shall I give to the collection today for foreign missions? I must give a fifty dollar bill, for that is what will be expected of me. I wish my donation to be above all others."

That morning the little girl had been reading her Bible, and as she laid it down she thought:

"If Jesus did so much for me, oh, what can I do to show my love to him? There is to be a collection for missions to-day, and I have only a penny; but I will give my penny for Jesus' sake; and he will accept it from me, for I love him very much."

Then she knelt down and asked for a blessing on it. She said:

"O, my Savior, here is a penny, which I will give to thee. Take it, Lord, although I am not worthy to give it, and bless it so that it may do good to the heathen."

Then rising from her knees, she carried it to church, and modestly dropped it into the plate.

Bear in mind, dear reader, that it is not only what we give, but how we give, that makes the service acceptable.

Tell me where a boy spends his evenings and I will tell you what kind of a man he will make.

"I spend mine, part in study, then I talk with father," said James a boy whom I knew.

That is a good way.

"I wish my father would let us talk with him," said Fred; "but he gets the newspaper after tea, and then it is nothing but 'Keep still boys.' So we steal off."

"Where?"

"Ah that's telling," said Fred.

This stealing off is generally bad business, for there is nobody so busy in the night-time as Satan, who always contrives to find "some mischief still for idle hands to do."

ABOUT TEA.

Mr Chan Lai Sun, Chinese Imperial Commissioner of Education, recently delivered a lecture in Springfield, Mass., on the subject of tea and its culture. He began by stating that tea grows in every province in China except three or four upon the northernmost Siberian border, but the quality and quantity depends largely upon the locality. The leaves resemble those of the willow, and are gathered during the spring and early summer. They are first exposed in a cool dry place for a day or two, then rolled into a ball on a table of bamboo slats, and dried in the sun. The rolling is to extract a portion of the juice of the leaves. After they have been dried in the sun, they are put into an egg-shaped iron pan over a charcoal fire, and incessantly stirred until a certain point of dryness is reached. The operator stirs with his hands thrusting them in all portions of the pan, and practice enables him to dry the leaves almost exactly alike. The raiser superintends this process, and then brings his tea in

bamboo baskets to the tea merchant, who judges its quality, and buys it at prices ranging from \$15 to \$20 per picul, equal to 133 1/2 pounds. The merchant mixes his purchases together in a large reservoir, and at his convenience weighs out a number of pounds of tea leaves, and women and children spread them upon a large stage, and separates the leaves into grades according to quality. The tea stalks are the lowest grade, and the sorters are paid by the number of ounces of stalks they bring in. Children earn from 4 to 5 cents a day the very best workers rarely earn as much as 10 cents a day. Americans could hardly live upon such wages, and until other nations can raise tea for 12 cents a pound they cannot compete with China in its production.

After the sorting each grade is packed by itself in chests or bamboo baskets, the first for exportation and the latter for home consumption. It is ordered by importers abroad through a tea taster, who receives a salary of some \$3,000 a year and operates as follows: He has a long, narrow table, on which 60 or 70 cups are set; a boy weighs exactly one ounce from a small box into one of these cups, and if he has samples enough, all the cups are used. Hot water is then poured into each cup, and after five minutes the boy calls the master, who sips from every cup, holds the liquid in his mouth a moment, then ejects it and notes in his book the quality of the tea. The purchaser orders upon his taster's estimate, and when his packages arrive at the warehouse, about one in twenty is opened for comparison with the sample. If it proves of inferior grade, a material reduction is at once made in the price, so that without connivance with the tea taster the adulteration of tea is next to impossible in China.

The tea is always examined to determine its age, as it is choicer when young. It is a vexed question whether black and green tea belong to the same species; it is probable, however, that they are branches of the same variety, and the color depends upon the locality. If a seed of black tea be planted in the green tea region, a few generations will make them both alike. When black tea is high, green can readily be turned into black, but black cannot be made to appear green. The latter obtains its bluish color artificially, Prussian blue being used in the coloring but in such small quantities as to be harmless. The annual average yield of a tea plant is about twenty ounces, and too much rain affects the quality as well as the amount. The plants live from 20 to 30 years, and when old are frequently cut down, and a young shrub grafted in the old stock. Quicker returns are thus obtained, but the plant does not last so long.

Tea is drunk pure in China, but there are very different ways of preparing it. The Chinese tea connoisseur purchases an article costing variously from \$16 to \$20 per pound. If he uses this choicest kind, which is only grown on the tops of mountains, and of which only ten or fifteen piculs are produced in the kingdom, he has a baby teapot, an inch and a half high, and about an inch in diameter. A pinch of tea is put in, about twenty drops of hot water turned on, and it is ready to sip. It would be very intoxicating to drink much; even the taste of a sip will remain in the throat for hours after the tea has evaporated. The more common way of tea drinking is to have a teapot six feet high and three feet in diameter, kept warm, ready for any one to drink who chooses.

The speaker considered that, as long as the tea is of good quality, it matters little how it is prepared. The best way is to warm the pot with boiling water, then put in the tea and pour the water upon it. It should never be boiled. The seeds of the plant are about the size of a small cherry; and from those not wanted for planting, oil is expressed, used for cooking purposes. The tea in this country is generally much injured by long conveyance by sea, and has a moldy taste to one who has drunk it in its freshness. The individual consumption of tea is much greater in China than here.—Scientific American.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION.

The Baptist Teacher says the following "new idea" is being put in practice in the Sunday school of the First Baptist church of Philadelphia:

At the close of each month, the scholars' knowledge of the lessons learned during the month is tested by means of a written examination. The examination, of course does not cover all the ground gone over, but as nobody knows just what ground it will cover, there is a stimulus to the faithful study of each lesson, and a careful review of them all.

On the day of examination, printed slips of stiff paper are distributed among all the scholars, containing five or six questions, with blank spaces for the answers. At the expiration of fifteen or twenty minutes these are collected. They are subsequently examined by a judicious committee, and medals are awarded to the scholars who have answered most satisfactorily. It is said that manifest benefits have already resulted from the adoption of this plan.