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BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1874.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, March 1st, 1874.

The Red Sea—Exodus xiv. 19-31.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He turned the sea into dry land; they went through the flood on foot; there did we rejoice in him.—Psalm lxxvi. 6.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 30, 31.

SUMMARY.—The passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea and the overthrow of the Egyptians.

ANALYSIS.—The cloud removed. vs. 19, 20. The passage through the Red Sea. vs. 21, 22. The destruction of the Egyptians. vs. 23-31.

EXPOSITION.—The Egyptians seeing that the source of their wealth—their laborers—had escaped from their hands are still desirous of retaining them, and they therefore make a movement to bring the Israelites back again. The whole army is gathered together in haste and as they find that the Hebrews do not proceed as yet in a direction to get as far as possible away, but that they go on from Etham south to Pihahiroth, Pharaoh believes it possible to bring them back again. That, being in such a place, they are "shut in" by the sea and the wilderness. In their confusion and weakness he believes he will find them an easy capture. The chariots of Egypt were light vehicles open behind suited but for two persons—one for driving and the other for fighting. The consternation of the children of Israel, (verse 10) is somewhat unaccountable after so many wonders had been wrought on their behalf.

Yet they are greatly terrified so that they rebel against Moses and charge him with evil designs upon them. Here the courage of Moses shines forth and the assurance that God will appear for them. Although so confident of ultimate success, yet Moses calls earnestly upon God and shews that in Him only is his trust. Verse 19, 20.—The angel of God, the pillar of cloud. It is evident that the motion of the cloud from the front to the rear is an object of deep interest, and produced a powerful impression. Isaiah lviii. 8; lxxii. 9; chap. xxiii. 20-22. It proved an effectual barrier between the Israelites and their pursuers, and whilst it gave light and aid to the former it became darkness and a source of confusion to the latter. 2 Cor. ii. 16.

Verse 21.—Moses stretched out his hand. This action would call the attention of the people to the wondrous power of God in producing such marvellous result by such inefficient means. A strong east wind This would be directly in their face. This is not given as a cause of the dividing of the waters, but as an accompanying phenomena. The waters stood up on either side and were not blown back by this "east wind." It was evident then to all that it was a divine interposition.

Verse 22.—Into the midst of the Sea. It is probable that Moses and Aaron went first in, stepping on the bed of the Sea. See Joshua ii. 10; iv. 23; Psalm lxxvi. 6; lxxiv. 13; cvi. 9; Isaiah lxxiii. 11-13; 1 Corinthians x. 1; Hebrews xi. 29.

Verse 23.—Went in after them. From the darkness it is probable the Egyptians were not aware of the nature of the road over which they were travelling. In their haste to overtake the fugitives before them they rushed into the road already gone over by them.

Verse 24.—The Lord looked, &c. It is possible that the light of the cloud was permitted to shine upon them, and the sudden light terrified the horses making them unmanageable, and so that some wheels became fixed against each other, others came off, and sank into the soft earth.

Verse 26, 27.—It was in obedience to God's command that Moses stretched forth his rod for the destruction of the Egyptians. It was evident that no natural motion of the water would make such a return. Joshua iv. 18; chap. xv. 1-17.

Verse 28.—Here was complete destruction. Psalm cvi. 11.

Verse 30.—Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea shore. They were able now to secure the arms and other valuables from their enemies. There are differences of opinion as to the exact locality of this passage through the Red Sea. Supposition has fixed upon several for various reasons, but there have been defects and uncertainties in them all. Local tradition affirms that it was at Wady Tawarik, ten or twelve

miles below Suez. The sea at this place is now about 6 1/2 or 8 miles in breadth. This distance through the bed of the sea could be easily travelled in a night.

Verse 21.—The result of the deliverance was trust in the Lord. Moses was now fully relied upon and all was now well. The people were prepared to follow him even into the great and howling wilderness.

QUESTIONS.—Did the Israelites take the shortest route to the promised land? By what were the Israelites alarmed? Why did the Egyptians seek to bring back the Israelites.

Vs. 19. By what name is the cloud called? What was the difference in the aspect of the cloud to the Egyptians and the Israelites.

Vs. 20. What means were used to open the way through the sea? Was this supposed to be the real source of power. What were the waters compared to? Why?

Vs. 23. What part of Pharaoh's army went after the Israelites?

Vs. 24. What caused trouble to the Egyptians? What is likely to have been?

Vs. 25. What was the exclamation of the Egyptians in their calamity? What was the extent of the destruction of the Egyptians. Did the Israelites obtain any other advantage by the destruction of their enemies. What were the results of the Egyptians discomfiture.

Scripture Catechism, 171, 172.

SUNDAY, March 8th, 1874.—Bitter Water Sweetened.—Exodus xv. 22-27.

Youth's Department.

"NEW SONGS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE."

Lee & Shepard, 149 Washington Street, Boston, have sent us a copy of this very pretty book. The getting up both inside and outside is exquisite, the illustrations are nicely executed. The "songs" are well suited to take the place of the old Nursery Rhymes. We give below a specimen:

SONGS FOR FIVE FINGERS.

I. This little bird lived in a tree, This little bird sang, full of glee, This little bird slept in her nest, This little bird loved cherries best, This little bird sang chick-a-dee, Chick-a-dee-dee-dee.

II. Porter, open wide the door, Let me see the ladies four, Though you are so short and stout, You know how to frisk about.

This first lady works all day, We'll just bow and go away, She has never time to talk, Though she sometimes takes a walk.

Her next sister, though no older, Taller is by head and shoulder; When her sister writes a letter, She stands by to make it better.

This next lady's always dressed, Like a princess, in her best, She is fond of pearls and things, Thinks of nothing but her rings.

This last sister, slim and wee, Idle is as she can be; Yet, though you should scold about her, All the rest can't do without her.

MARCH.

Wind and snow, and hail and rain! March is surely here again. Tell us now what is the matter, That you make so great a clatter? Rap, rap, rap, upon the door; We have told you twice before That we mean to keep you out, So you need not knock and shout.

Still, although you are so rude, Out-of-doors you do some good; Scrubbing house and garden clean, Washing grass and evergreen, Sweeping dead leaves all away, Clearing out the snow-drifts gray, Shaking vines that grew awry, Mopping all the wet earth dry.

You wake up the maple sap, And wear catkins in your cap; You call back the bluebirds, too; Here they come, a merry crew. We must love you, though your joys Are half spoiled by so much noise; And we're glad when, cleaning done, You pick up your broom and run; Then, as quiet as a mouse, April comes to paint the house.

The book may be had at M. A. Buckley's

BETTER WHISTLE THAN WHINE.

As I was taking a walk early in September, I noticed two little boys on their way to school. The smaller one tumbled and fell, and though he was not very much hurt, he began to whine in a babyish way—not a regular roaring boy cry, as though he were half-killed, but a little, cress whine. The older boy took his hand in a kind and fatherly way and said:

"Oh, never mind, Jimmy; don't whine; it is a great deal better to whistle."

And he began in the merriest way a cheerful boy whistle.

Jimmy tried to join in the whistle.

"I can't whistle as nice as you, Charlie," said he; "my lips won't pucker up good."

"Oh, that is because you have not got all the whine out yet," said Charlie; "but you try a minute, and the whistle will drive the whine away."

So he did, and the last I saw or heard of the little fellows, they were whistling away as earnestly as though that was the chief end of life. I learned a lesson which I hope I shall not soon forget, and it called out these few lines, which may possibly cheer another whiner of mature years, as this class is by no means confined to the children. It is better to whistle than whine; It is better to laugh than to cry, For though it be cloudy, the sun will soon shine Across the blue, beautiful sky.

It is better to whistle than whine. Oh! man, with the sorrowful brow, Let the words of the child scatter murmurs of thine, And gather his cheerfulness now.

It is better to whistle than whine. Poor mother! so weary with care, Thank God for the love and the peace that are thine, And the joys of thy little ones share.

It is better to whistle than whine. Through troubles you find in your way, Remember that wise little fellow of mine, And whistle your whinnying away.

God bless that brave boy for the cheer He brought to this sad heart of mine; When tempted to murmur, that young voice I hear, "It is better to whistle than whine!"

THE CONVERTED OXEN.

Our neighbor, Mr. Angle—that was not his name, but it will do just as well as the real name for the purposes of this article—was a man of acute angles. In fact, his angles were so sharp as to amount to an unpleasant peculiarity. He found a great many things not quite right in the affairs of the neighborhood, and he had a fine faculty of letting people know what he thought. His rhetoric was quite energetic, and when one met him it was not certain whether he might not say something sharp, or thrust his angular elbow into his side.

I wish not to be understood that Mr. Angle was dishonest, or untruthful, or hard-hearted. He was far from either of these faults. In fact, he was "honest to a fault," priding himself on stating any fact "exactly, with all its ins and outs," as he was wont to express it, and his heart was as tender as a child's to any appeal for pity from a real sufferer. And yet he had a peevish irritability that was constantly showing itself in the house and by the way, when he sat down and when he rose up. To this general rule there was one exception. He fully believed his minister to be "just right." He had lived not far from him for many years, had been married by him, and felt a kind of daily benediction from the good pastor. He had narrowly scanned his "walk and conversation" in that difficult and hard field. He had seen him going into the mountains and among the valleys of his rough parish, entering every house with a gentle dignity, and Christian love that won him a welcome everywhere. He was no rich man's minister, but he sought the poor and rich alike, with a fidelity that was as fruitful as it was marked.

Mr. Angle did not spare his approbation of the pastor—and knowing as I did that great winner of souls, I did not wonder—and he was wont to say, "He is a good man, and no mistake. If all church-members were only like him, we would be better off in these parts." The pastor, like a wise man, chose his times and modes of approaching his unconverted parishioner on the one theme of his personal salvation. Now he sought to arouse his anxiety for his children—a house-full there was—and to ask if it were quite right to lay the whole burden of their religious training on his wife. At another time a neighbor had died suddenly, leaving to his friends no cheering hope that he had attained "a better country," and was it "right for Mr. Angle" to leave the great thing undone?

And at another time he bombarded him with the word of God, and brought the authority of his statements as to man's ruin and salvation to bear on him. And it was no unfrequent thing for the pastor to kneel in Mr. Angle's house, to pray for him and his household.

Why wonder, then, that Mr. Angle became uneasy and disturbed concerning his relations to God as just, and Jesus Christ the only Saviour? He had tried sharp words with the pastor to parry his blows. He had enumerated a formidable list of faults in the "saints of the parish"—as he waspishly termed them; but it did not silence the one reply, "Well, Mr. Angle, and what good does all this do you? If these are what you say, does that make you what God says you must be?"

And sure enough, Mr. Angle broke down in the defence, as he ought to in so unworthy a cause, and in the use of such unworthy means. He seemed on the point of becoming a Christian.

But, as if his acute angles must be allowed a presentation even on so thrilling an occasion, he suddenly said to the pastor, "You know what a scold I have been; how I have fretted in the house, and 'picked at' my neighbors whenever I had a chance. Indeed, I am a very passionate man, and there is one thing that now worries me. You ask me to become a Christian, and I want to be one; but what shall I do when I drive the most contrary yoke of oxen that ever plagued a man? I am certain they will drive me distracted; and then people will say, 'And so Angle is converted, is he?'"

Some may smile, but is not life made up of trials quite as trivial as that which Mr. Angle was mentioning to his minister?

"Never fear the oxen," said the pastor. "If you find them getting contrary, stop a little while, and think of Him who today is asking for your heart."

My article needs only a conclusion. A day or two after this conversation, Mr. Angle told his minister that what was stranger than his own conversion was that of his oxen; "for since God put into my heart the hope that I am a Christian, my oxen have been all I wanted them to be!"

Do you laugh at the notion of Mr. Angle's "converted oxen"? Many a poor beast in yoke or harness has felt the whip, and heard the enraged words of savage men, who have vented the unrest and anger of their unconverted and unhappy hearts on the beasts they were driving. They tried to apologize to themselves for this brutality by saying, as Mr. Angle did, that nobody ever had such vicious and contrary beasts as they. Nay, worse than this, some have displayed their ill-humor at the hearth-stone, at the table, and in the family, and felt themselves to be real martyrs to very unloving children and possibly very unsympathizing wives! The case is only to be changed a little, to suit many a fretful and scolding wife.

If such can get their hearts full of a new life by a true conversion to God, they shall find in their surroundings a change quite similar to that which took place in Mr. Angle's oxen.—President Tuttle, of Wabash College.

HOW TO PROMOTE PEACE IN THE FAMILY.

- 1. Remember that our will is likely to be crossed every day, so prepare for it.
2. Everybody in the house has an evil nature as well as ourselves, and therefore we are not to expect too much.
3. To learn the different temper and disposition of each individual.
4. To look on each member of the family as one for whom we should have a care.
5. When any good happens to any one to rejoice at it.
6. When inclined to give an angry answer, to "overcome evil with good."
7. If from sickness, pain or infirmity we feel irritable to keep a very strict watch over ourselves.
8. To observe when others are suffering to drop a word of kindness and sympathy suited to them.
9. To watch for little opportunities of pleasing, and to put little annoyances out of the way.
10. To take a cheerful view of everything, of the weather, and encourage hope.
11. To speak kindly of the servants—to praise them for little things when you can.
12. In all little pleasures which may occur, to put self last.
13. To try for "the soft answer which turneth away wrath."
14. When we have been pained by an unkind word or deed, to ask ourselves: "Have I not often done the same and been forgiven?"
15. In conversation not to exalt ourselves, but to bring others forward.
16. To be very gentle with the young ones, and treat them with respect.

17. Never to judge one another harshly, but to attribute a good motive when we can.

HOW HE PAID HIS BOARD.

An elderly minister who supplied one of the suburban churches near Boston, during the pastor's absence, was made very welcome at the pleasant home of "Aunt Ruth." She loved the Lord, and had much pleasure in the conversation, prayers and preaching of His ministers. When the latter was about taking his leave, he expressed his satisfaction that he had not been obliged to spend his time at a hotel or common boarding-house, and wished to know what was "to be paid."

"Well," said Aunt Ruth, with a shrewd, business-like look. "I think it worth about ten dollars, and here's the money," handing him two five-dollar bills.

"Yes, but," said Father B., "the church committee have already paid me for supplying the pulpit."

"O, well, I suppose so, of course," answered the good woman; "but that was for preaching; this is pay for your board, and if it isn't enough, here's five dollars more."

How much good that money did Father B.'s heart! How much good it did Aunt Ruth's hearth! He loved to tell how high was her price for boarding a minister, and she insisted that she "put the figure too low, and that if he would come again she would make it all right."

COMMUNION WINE.

For the information of those who wish to prepare unfermented wine for sacramental use, rather than to purchase it, (as however, most of the churches would prefer to do) a friend suggests that we state a method of its preparation. He says: "To make unfermented wine for sacramental purposes, all that is necessary is to apply the principles of canning. Grape juice boiled, and the scum that arises very carefully removed till it is perfectly clear, will keep either in glass bottles or tin cans; only be sure that it is hermetically sealed at the boiling point. It can be easily done by treating the grape juice as if it were fruit to be canned. If in bottles, cover the corks with sealing wax. If preferred, the wine thus made can be sweetened according to taste.—Ex.

[In this country, in places where it is difficult to purchase wine, a more convenient mode of making wine for communion purposes, is from grapes in the form of raisins.—Ed.]

A SHORT METHOD.

A few years ago I was stopping at a hotel in Washington while travelling with an eminent Professor of Greek and Latin, and an earnest Pedobaptist. As we were sitting together in the evening, he introduced the subject of baptism in relation to the mode. I told him I feared it would be useless, as we were both strong in our faith. He however preferred to proceed, and I told him I would consent if he would agree to answer me three questions, saying nothing but Yes or No. He readily agreed. Then said I, 1st. Do you know any language, or think there is any, having no word for "dip"? He said No. 2nd. Is not the Greek language eminently perfect? Yes. 3rd. If the word baptize does not mean dip, is there any Greek word that does? No. That will do, let us talk of something else.—Ex. and Chron.

The famous hanging-gardens of Babylon, with bloom and fruitage in rich profusion a hundred feet in the air, were sustained by arch on arch of solid masonry. The interlocking arches of Divine truth hold up the bloom and fragrance of eighteen centuries of church history. If over the world's desert stretch there is borne the odor of rose and lily, and if in the evening air of old age there gleams the waving of a palm of triumph, it is no mirage of sentiment. It is the uplifted glory of truth, it is the masonry of God, which in the upper air of Christian living opens in the flowers of faith and hope in God.

Presbyterians are sometimes called "blue." "The epithet," observes a religious exchange, "arose in this way. The distinctive dress of the Scotch Presbyterian clergy was a blue gown and a broad blue bonnet. The Episcopalian clergy, on the other hand either wore no distinctive dress in public services, or else wore a black gown. From this arose the contrasting epithets of 'Black Prelacy' and 'True Blue Presbyterianism.' So says Dean Stanley, in his lectures on the history of the Church of Scotland."