

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

THIRD QUARTER.

Lesson VII.—AUGUST 14.

THE RED SEA.

Exodus xiv. 19-27.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 26, 27.

The first-born were slain; the Israelites were preserved; they kept their passover and then marched forth, urged on by the terrified Egyptians. From their starting point, Rameses, they journeyed to Succoth a tenting place, moving toward the Red Sea. Six hundred thousand men went out, besides women, children, cattle, flocks, etc. After a brief delay for rest, organization, and instruction from God, they moved on to Etham, the Lord leading continually; thence to Piabihroth by the sea, where the Egyptians overtook them and the events of this lesson occurred.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."—Exodus xiv. 15.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

N. The Red Sea, Exodus xiv. 19-27.

T. Leaving Egypt, Exodus xii. 21-42.

W. On the Way, Exodus xiii. 17-22.

T. Pursued by Pharaoh, Exodus xiv. 1-18.

F. The Song of Deliverance, Exodus xv. 1-21.

S. Deliverance Remembered, Psalms cvi. 1-12.

S. Israel's Deliverance Completed, Exodus xiv. 19-27.

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE COMPLETED.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Their Pursuers Checked, Vss. 19, 20. II. Their Way Opened, Vss. 21, 22. III. Their Foes Overthrown, Vss. 23-27.

QUESTIONS.—Point out the Red Sea upon the map. What two continents does it divide? What two continents?

I. Vss. 19, 20.—Who pursued the Israelites? (Vs. 5-9.) With how many soldiers? How did the Israelites regard this pursuit? (Vs. 10-12.) How did God comfort Moses? (Vs. 13-18.) How did God check the pursuers? What benefits did the Israelites secure from the cloud?

II. Vss. 21, 22.—Through what was the way opened for the Israelites? By what means was it opened? By whose power? How is the condition of the waters described? How does the Lord describe himself in Isa. xliii. 16?

III. Vss. 23-27.—How is the pursuit of the Egyptians described in vs. 23? How did the Lord trouble them? (Vs. 24, 25.) Describe their final overthrow.

I. The Cloud, (Vss. 19, 20).—As the term angel is used to denote any kind of agency, personal or impersonal, by which the divine will is manifested, it is most likely that the Angel of God, in the first clause of vs. 19, and the pillar of cloud, in the second clause, are the same. That cloud was the visible symbol of the Divine presence,—a royal pavilion of cloud and of fire, in which God attended Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan. It was the Shekinah, or glory, which appeared in the tabernacle (xl. 35), and afterwards in the temple, (1 Kings viii. 10). There was but the one pillar of cloud and fire; not two pillars appearing alternately—one of cloud, and the other of fire. There seems to have been an inner splendor enveloped by a cloudy covering during the day, which was withdrawn, as a curtain, at night, letting the fire of the Lord shine out. Sometimes, it flashed forth in the day-time; as at Sinai. (xvi. 10) and in the destruction of Nadab and Abihu, (Lev. x. 2). "When this cloud went before the army of Israel, it assumed the form of a column; so that by day, it resembled a dark column of smoke rising up toward heaven, and by night, a column of fire, to show the whole army what direction to take."—Keil. Thus it led Israel by day, and gave them light by night. Here, it became their defence. It went from before their face, and stood behind them: Thus it was between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The glory of the Lord became their reward, (Isa. lvi. 8). To reach them, Pharaoh would have to strike through the pavilion of God.

II. The Sea, (Vss. 21, 22).—The phrase, "Red Sea" (xv. 4) means "sea of weeds," a name which was applied to the whole system of lagoons and

marshes in the north of Egypt. The weight of authority is given to the vicinity of Suez, as the place of crossing the Red Sea,—a place having, at that time, it is supposed, a breadth of three or four miles, although now much narrower. There, the crossing could have been effected in the specified time, and it would also, if as wide as supposed, have furnished ample room for the overthrow of the Egyptian army. Moses stretched out his hand, with the wonder-working rod in it, over the sea. This was according to the Lord's command, (vs. 16). The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind. That he used natural agencies, is no argument against the miraculous nature of the whole event. The stormy wind fulfills his word, (Psa. cxlviii. 8). It is difficult to understand, but all things are simple and easy to omnipotence. Into this path they went, into the midst of the sea, upon the dry ground. They went out of Egypt "harnessed" (xiii. 18), that is, marshalled, or in an orderly way, marching somewhat like soldiers, they, doubtless went in this manner, through the sea; and this would have greatly facilitated their passage. The whole company could have crossed at the rate of a mile an hour, making the time required for three miles, three hours.

III. The Pursuit and Overthrow, (Vss. 23-27).—Verse 23. Josephus takes the view that the Egyptians "were not aware that they went into a road made for the Hebrews, and not for others." The thick darkness prevented them from seeing on what ground they were driving. They simply heard the fugitives ahead, and, in hot haste, pushed after them. Special mention is made of Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and horsemen, as, in a pursuit like this, the chariots would naturally go first; and these "six hundred chariots" (vs. 7) were the chosen chariots which the king kept in his capital for immediate service; hence, the most splendid ones in the kingdom. Egypt was famous for its fine horses, and "Pharaoh's horses" would be best of all. It was the flower of the army that followed after Israel, and was destroyed.

Verses 24, 25. In the morning watch. The Jews divided the night into three watches, of four hours each. The Lord looked. Not simply viewed the scene, but put forth his power. Bush gives this explanation: "We suppose the fact to have been, that the side of the pillar of cloud towards the Egyptians was suddenly, and for a few moments, illuminated with a blaze of light, which, coming upon the dense darkness which had preceded, so frightened the horses of the pursuers, that they pushed confusedly together, dashing the wheels of one chariot furiously against those of another, upsetting, breaking, and tearing them from their axles, while the horses themselves, floundering in pools, or sinking in quicksands, were thrown into inextricable confusion, and thus became an easy prey to the returning waves." The Jewish writers were wont to connect a terrible storm with this scene. See Ps. lxxvii. 17, 18. Josephus says: "Thunderbolts darted upon them, nor was there anything which God sends upon men, as an indication of his wrath, which did not happen at this time." The troubled probably refers to the panic into which the Egyptians were thrown. Their expression, Let us flee from the face of Israel, indicates their terror while too late, they acknowledge the power of Jehovah, who fought for Israel, and against them.

Vs. 26, 27. The rod that stretched over the sea, brought the east wind and dry ground for the Israelites, was, by God's command, again stretched out; and the sea returned to its strength. Ten awful plagues failed to subdue the obstinacy of his heart. A final judgment, of terrific sublimity, terminated his career of presumption. Overthrew the Egyptians. The margin has it, "shook off"; which is better. They were hurled from their chariots into the sea. There can be no doubt that Pharaoh himself was destroyed with the rest. See Pa. cxxxvi. 15.

Dean Stanley notices the geographical transition in crossing the Red Sea,—from Africa to Asia; the social transition,—from bondage to freedom, in this earliest recorded instance of a general national emancipation; the spiritual transition,—from terror and unbelief to trust. This great deliverance sets forth the

transition from the Kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of Christ.

Israel were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea"; and as Dean Stanley observes, "the plunge in the baptismal bath has never been forgotten." Like the believer's baptism, its language was—complete separation, death to Egypt and all pertaining to it, and raised to a new and wilderness life.

The destruction of the wicked is inevitable. Woe to him who strives with his Maker.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Where had God promised that the children of Israel should go? Who tried to keep them from going? Why did Pharaoh let them go at last? The supper. The dreadful cry heard in Egypt. Many people started on the journey.

God showed the people the way he wished them to go; do you know how? Read ch. xiii. 21, 22. When Pharaoh let the people go, do you think he was sorry for having disobeyed God so many times? No, he was only sorry for his dreadful punishment. He obeyed because he was frightened.

Pharaoh did not "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance." Tell the story in ch. xiv. 5-9. Pharaoh could travel much faster than the children of Israel; why?

Moses trusted God. Listen to what he said. Read vs. 13, 14.

Then God told Moses what to do. Teach Golden Text. Read vs. 16, 21, 22. God helped the children of Israel in another way; he hid them from Pharaoh by a great cloud; explain vs. 19, 20. Illustrate by a large piece of black card board, covered with red paper on one side; let one child stand in front of it, and another behind it, and tell what they see; so it was with the cloud between the Egyptians and the Israelites.

Hear what became of Pharaoh; v. 23. When Pharaoh and his soldiers were out near the middle of the sea, God made flashes of light dart out of the black cloud, so that the Egyptians feared greatly. Even the horses ran this way and that, and the wheels of the chariots were broken off. Now read or narrate vs. 24-31.

The Israelites were so happy that they sang with Moses; hear the words they sang? ch. xv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 18, 19.

Moses trusted God at first. What did Moses say? "Stand still and see how God will save us." Moses said this before God had told him that he would divide the waters. Because Moses trusted God in this way, we say that he had FAITH. (See Heb. xi. 29.) God is pleased to see such faith. —Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Boys' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 132.

The initials of the words which answer the following questions form a title of the Supreme Being indicative of the attributes of self existence, eternity and immutability, equally applicable to Jesus, John viii. 58; Col. i. 17; Rev. i. 8:

- 1. Who led the Israelites the Jordan o'er, And landed safe upon fair Canaan's shore?
2. A favored one to whom this boon was given, Escaping death to pass from earth to heaven?
3. Who prayed for lengthened life, nor plead in vain, For fifteen years were added to his reign?
4. Who aided good King Asa to set free His realm from sinful, vile idolatry?
5. By what meet emblem does the Saviour prove His union with the people of His love?
6. Who by a brother's hand was ruthless slain, But did the glorious name of martyr gain?
7. What element of character in Scripture given, Our only passport to the joys of heaven?

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

216. Let the young people who know something of Bible History see if they recognize me by what I tell them of myself: I was a celebrated king of early times, and am pictured at the head of a magnificent court, surrounded by "princes,

governors and captains, judges, treasurers, counsellors and sheriffs," and waited on by highly educated eunuchs. I was a very cruel and hasty monarch, still I did much for the comfort and advancement of my subjects. I constructed many useful works such as canals, sluices, etc. I also caused a famous imitation of nature to be erected. I was a great conqueror, and of one time invaded a neighboring country, and took a proud nation captive. In the midst of a brilliant and prosperous reign, I was seized with a wonderful madness, which was inflicted upon me as a punishment, for my sins. I recovered from it however, and my closing years were as splendid as my first.

Give my name and the date of the time I captured the nation mentioned.

217. Try and complete these lines by 12 words of proper length, all of which rhyme with each other:

One morning I heard a great — In front of the door of the —; I went to see what was the —; And found the boys there thick as —; And was told that one of the —; Had fallen and broken a —; And caused all the fragments to —; One wounded a small dog, a —; And one hit another much —; And those pieces knocked them down —; Then could a professional —; I waited, and saw that crowd —.

BEHEADINGS.

Behead to dispose of for a price, and leave a measure of a yard and a quarter.

Behead to scorch, and leave a vessel in which the ashes of burned dead bodies were anciently put.

Behead garments worn by men, and leave a kind of grain.

Behead fragrant ointments, and leave charitable donations.

Behead to ascend, and leave part of a tree.

Behead an article of furniture, and leave what grows on the skins of animals.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 131.

- 1. Heavens. 2. Orion. 3. Light. 4. I AM. 5. Eloquent. 6. Noble. 7. Scripture. 8. Salvation.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- 210. Shechem.
211. In Joel iii. 3.
212. Gideon.
213. Jehoshaphat.
214. Sisera.
215. V T E N U S N U T S

How she told a Lie.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

The three travellers—kind Cousin Eva, and her young charges, Cherry and Ruth—were standing on the staircase of the curious old Hotel de Bourgtheroude, by the Place de la Pucelle, Rouen. That narrow, gloomy little square looked still narrower and gloomier in the drizzle of the dull November day; and the ugly pump in the middle of it, with a still uglier statue on the top, marking the place where Jeanne d'Arc was burnt, has been a sore disappointment to the children. They had come, enthusiastic little pilgrims, to see the spot where their favourite heroine died; and Cousin Eva could hardly get them to believe that it was the spot—that the common-looking market-place, where a few ordinary modern market people were passing and repassing; had actually been the scene of the cruel deed—that from the very identical houses, brutal eyes had watched the maid as she stood, the flames curling round her, clasping the rude cross which some charitable soul pushed towards her hand.

"Do you remember," Cousin Eva said "how, at the last moment, she retracted all the false confession of heresy and witchcraft which torture had wrung from her, and exclaimed, 'Yes, my voices were of God'?" and how when she saw the flames approaching her, she shut her eyes, called out once 'Jesus!' dropped her head upon her breast, and that was all; till they raked up a handful of charred bones out of the embers, and threw them into the Seine."

The children looked grave. At last they realized the whole.

"I wonder what sort of a day it was," whispered Cherry: "dull and gloomy! like to-day, or with a bright, blue, sunny sky? Perhaps she looked up at it before the fire touched her. And perhaps he stood here—just where we stand—the English soldier who cried out, 'We have burnt a saint!'" "And so she was," said Ruth, with a

quiver passing over the eager little face; "a real saint."

"But, Cousin Eva," added Cherry, "why did she ever own to being a witch? and how could she say her voices were not true when she believed they were true? One way or other she must have told a lie."

Miss Cherry was of an argumentative, rather than a sentimental turn. She thought a good deal herself, and liked to make other people think too, so as to enable her to get at the bottom of things. She could never overlook the slightest break in a chain of practical reasoning; and if she had a contempt in this world, it was for a weak person, or a person who told a lie. This flaw, even in her favorite Maid of Orleans, otherwise so strong and brave, was too much for Cherry to pass over.

"Do you not think," said Cousin Eva, "that it would be possible, under stress of circumstances, to tell a lie—to confess to something one had never done? Bishop Cranmer, for instance—have you forgotten how he signed a recantation, and then cast into the flames that unworthy right hand? And Galileo, when forced by the Inquisition to declare the earth stood still, muttered afterwards, 'E pur si muove.' Yes, yes," continued she, "one never knows what one may be driven to do till the time comes. The force of torture is very strong. Once upon a time, I remember, I told a lie."

"You told a lie!" echoed Cherry, looking with amazement into the bright, sweet, honest face—rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed—her little cousins themselves had not [more innocent eyes than Eva's—as clear and round as a baby's.

"But nobody ever tortured you!" asked tender-hearted Ruth, clinging to the kindly hand, which indeed, she never went far away from, in these alarming "foreign parts."

"No, my little girl; the thumbscrews, the rack, and the maiden belong, luckily, to that room in the Tower where we saw them once; and we are in the nineteenth and not the fifteenth century. Still even nowadays a good deal of moral torture can be brought to bear upon one occasionally, especially when one is only a child, as I was then. And I was tried sharply—enough to make me remember it even now, and feel quite sure that if I had been Jeanne d'Arc I should very likely have done exactly what she did! Also I learned what I have tried to put in practice ever since, that nothing makes people liars like disbelieving them."

Ruth gave a little tender pressure to the hand she held, while Cherry said proudly, "You never disbelieve us, and you never need to! But tell us, Cousin Eva, about the lie you told. Was it denying something you had done, or owning to something you were quite innocent of, like poor Jeanne d'Arc? Do tell! You know we like a story."

"What, here, in this pelt of rain?" answered Cousin Eva, as she proceeded to investigate from under her umbrella the curious bas-reliefs of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, which still remain in the court of the Hotel du Bourgtheroude. "No, children; you must wait a more desirable opportunity."

Which however was not long coming. The day brightened—grew into one of those exquisite days the French people call *Viel de St. Martin*—and truly I know nothing like it, except what it most resembles, a sweet, peaceful, contented old age. So Cousin Eva decided to take the children to a place which she herself had once seen and never forgotten, the little church on a hilltop, called Notre-Dame de Bon Secours.

"Is that the same which Alice sings about in the opera of 'Robert le Diable'?" and Cherry struck up in her clear young voice—

"Quand je quittais ma Normandie. Rouen is in Normandy, so of course it was the same—

Daigne protéger nos amours, Notre-Dame de Bon Secours."

"Please don't sing so loud, or the hotel people will hear you," said timid Ruth, and was quite relieved when they started off. I need not relate how extremely the children enjoyed the stiff climb up the hill, and admired the lovely building, all ablaze with brilliant but harmonious coloring, and the little side-chapels, filled with innumerable rotive inscriptions: "A Marie," "Grâces a Marie." "Elle a exaucé mes vœux," etc. Curious, simple, almost childish, it all was, yet touching to those who feel,