

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson XI.—DECEMBER 11.

THE LAST DAYS OF MOSES.

Deut. xxxii. 44-52.

The time for Moses to die was at hand. He therefore rehearsed the dealings of God with the people for the forty years of their journey. This rehearsal constitutes the body of this Book of Deuteronomy. The Israelites had reached the eastern bank of the Jordan, opposite Jericho, where Moses finished his address to them, and whence he started for the mountains from which he saw the promised land, and where he died.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 46, 47.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Psalm xc. 12.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. Last Days of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 44-52.
 T. Final Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 1-18.
 W. Final Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii. 19-43.
 T. Final Blessing of Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 1-29.
 F. Death of Moses, Deut. xxxiv. 1-12.
 S. Psalm of Moses, Psa. xc. 1-17.
 S. The Deliverer's Work Finished, Deut. xxxii. 44-52.

THE DELIVERER'S WORK FINISHED.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Last Words from Moses, Vss. 44-47. II. Last Words to Moses, Vss. 48-52.

QUESTIONS.—Vss. 44-47.—To what song does vs. 1 refer? Who assisted in this service of song? What land shall they possess who now honor God? What must be passed before they enter it?

Vss. 48-52.—To what mountain was Moses commanded to go up? Why was Moses to die at this time? (Vs. 51). What were the particulars of this trespass? What was Moses permitted to see? To what extent can Canaan be seen from the top of Mount Nebo?

The borders of the Promised Land were now reached. The Israelites were encamped on the east side of Jordan, opposite Jericho; and the time had come to cross the river and take possession. But, first, Moses summed up the points in the institutions and laws already given, and explained to the new generation their covenant relation with God and his requirements. This he did in a series of addresses, recorded in Deuteronomy, beginning on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year of the Exodus, (i. 3). The Book of Deuteronomy is, therefore, not another law, but a repetition of laws; a summary, description, and an enforcement of the most essential revelations made on Mount Sinai.

After this, Moses wrote a song, or ode, for Israel, in which he magnified God's love and care for them, and warned them against rebellion and disobedience. Then, pronouncing his last blessing upon each tribe separately, after the manner of Jacob, he went up to Mount Nebo, according to God's command, and there died.

NOTES.—I. Last Words, (Vs. 44-47)

Verses 44.—All the words of this song. Recorded in this chapter, (vs. 1-43). Moses was warrior, statesman, law giver, prophet, poet. This ode "soars to the loftiest heights, moving amidst the richest abundance of pictures of both present and future; is concise, compressed, pictorial, penetrating, sharp, but full of the holiest solemnity." Its one great theme is the contrast between the unchangeable fidelity of Jehovah, and the perversity of his faithless people. He and Hosea. It looks as if the people were to learn this ode by heart, the two great leaders repeating it to them for that purpose. The name of Joshua is put in many forms in the Scriptures. Here, it is *Hosea*; in Num. xiii. 16, *Oseas*; in Hosea i. 1, *Hosea*; in Rom. ix. 25, *Osee*; in Acts vii. 45 and Heb. iv. 8, *Jesus*. In Numbers xii. 16, the name is changed by Moses, from *Hosea*, meaning salvation, to *Jehoshua*, which means the salvation of Jehovah. It is the name, in the form of Jesus, given to our Lord by the angel who announced his birth, (Matt. i. 21). When Moses was informed by Jehovah that he could

not enter the Promised Land, he asked him to appoint his successor; and Jehovah at once named Joshua, and bade Moses lay his hand upon him and give him a charge before the people. See Num. xxvii. 14-19. We have also seen Joshua going up with Moses upon Mount Sinai (Ex. xxiv. 13), leader of the forces against Amalek (Ex. xvii. 9), and selected as one of the twelve spies, (Num. xiii. 8). He was a wise, courageous, and successful leader after the death of Moses; and, having conquered the whole land of Canaan, and divided it among the tribes, died at the age of one hundred and ten, (Josh. xxiv. 29).

Verses 45, 46.—All these words. Including the series of addresses which make up the Book of Deuteronomy, together with this song. Set your hearts. Moses solemnly bids them to give heed in mind and heart to these closing instructions—to hold them in memory and to obey them—and also to teach them to their children, and to command them to observe them. See vi. 7; xi. 19.

Verses 47.—The commands of God were, and are, not a vain thing, something to be lightly treated.

II. Last Hours, (Vs. 48-52.)

Verses 48, 49.—The selfsame day. The day in which he had rehearsed his song and given this warning, leaving him but time to utter the blessing in the next chapter; a day long to be remembered by the children of Israel. Thrice before had Jehovah told Moses that he was not himself to enter the Promised Land (Num. xx. 12; xvii. 13, 14; Deut. iii. 23-26), and had acquainted him with the reason of this denial. This mountain Abarim was the range of mountains running parallel with the Jordan, in the land of Moab, and forming the eastern wall of the Valley of Jordan at that part. Either the whole range or a part of it was also called Pisgah (xxiv. 1), and Nebo was its most elevated spot opposite the city of Jericho.

Verses 50.—Die in the mount. "Behold the goodness and severity of God," (Rom. xi. 22). Goodness in gladdening the heart of Moses with a sight of the fertile and smiling land which Israel should possess; severity in meeting sin, even in this noblest servant, and calling him to die in full physical vigor, while "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." Gathered unto thy people. The intimation is that he would join Aaron, his brother, although Aaron had died on Mount Hor.

Verses 51.—Because ye trespassed against me. No illustration of the penalty of sin could have made a profounder impression upon the minds of the children of Israel, than this disappointment to their great leader on account of his trespass. The incident referred to is recorded in Num. xx. 1-11. The sin was deeper than a momentary outbreak of passion, and an act of petulance in striking, instead of speaking to, the rock. Thirty-eight years before this scene at Kadesh, Moses had seen the whole people terrified at the evil report of the spies, and refusing to go up into the land which was then ready for them. Patiently he had borne with them, and for all these years he had waited until that generation had died in the wilderness. Moses earnestly besought the Lord to let him "go over and see the good land" (iii. 23-26), but the Lord would not hear him. Sanctified me not. Did not honor God in trusting him supremely and in obeying him. The conduct of Moses said that God had given an improper command, and, therefore, was an imperfect being, unwise, or unholy.

Verses 52.—Thou shalt see the land. With a little knowledge of the principal natural points of interest in Palestine, and a little imagination, one can make the picture for himself. No miracle was wrought to bring the land before Moses. There it lay, the centre of such ardent longings and earnest hopes, full in view. Thou shalt not go thither. A sore punishment, even though Moses was taken to the realms of the blessed. There Moses died, and God "buried him." No hands could be so tender to minister to his dying servant, as those of the Almighty. For fourteen centuries, Moses dwelt with God, and then appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, speaking with Elijah and Jesus concerning the great redemption which our Lord was to accomplish on the cross.

Moses was a wise law-giver. He

believed in early religious instruction and was, himself, an example of its power.

There is but one spotless character presented in Scripture; only one who was absolutely "without sin."

The best of men have failings; and hasty words may bring a life-long sorrow.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Moses lived 40 years. Moses went to take care of sheep 40 years. The children of Israel were in the wilderness 40 years.

The Bible says that, although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old, his eyes were bright and his body was strong. Moses led the children of Israel very near to Canaan. Our lesson is about "The last days of Moses." What he said is written in this Book Deuteronomy. He told them not to forget God, not to forget his commandments, but to talk about them very often; to teach them to the children. He said to them: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might." See Deut. vi. 4-7, 12, also xxxi. 6. Read also vs. 45-47 of the lesson. Moses was not buried; it was only Moses' body. Where had Moses gone? Moses was disappointed at first, because he could not go to Canaan; but God took him home to heaven, and he was happier there than he would have been in Canaan.

Learn a little prayer that Moses once said about counting the days we have to live? Teach and explain the Golden Text.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 147.

- In every house my first was found, And rolled and rumbled round and round; And this was woman's work, 'tis said, To fill each mouth with daily bread. But now they press the running stream Such work to do, or haply steam; So changed its form, and yet its name Still to this day remains the same.
- My next once propped a pilgrim's head; Once laid a threatening giant dead; Once showed God's help, and power to save; Once a new name to Peter gave. Type of His strength who guards the humble, But makes the disobedient stumble.
- Part of my first will make my whole, True picture of a callous soul! The paradox may make you stare; But of your own hard heart beware! 'Tis a man's life, the Law alleged, And hence forbade it to be pledged. A prophet once my whole beheld— By a strong angel's hand propelled— Into the deep with fury hurled, To show the judgment of the world, When Satan's kingdom shall be o'er, And Babylon be found no more!

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

273. Make a right angled triangle of words as follows:

- A talking bird.
- Encore.
- Awkward walking.
- A hole in the ground.
- Within.
- The centre of sheep.

274. Transpose 5 letters, and in accordance with these rhymes, and give the result.

We are five comrades singled out From others quite as good, no doubt. First, as we stand, we are a mold, Wherein to fashion forms of gold.

Transpose us and we'll show you fair Trees, evergreen, with fruitage rare. Change us again, then greets your sight Our strong, clear, artificial light.

Change us once more, and to your ear A song we'll bring your heart to cheer. These few brief hints may be of use To show the changes we produce.

275. I am composed of two words. My 1, 7, 6 is what Jesus was. My 6, 2, 8, 9 is what Jesus did. My 5, 7, 2, 3 is what Jesus does. My 3, 4, 8 is what Jesus will do, with us. My whole, of Scripture so small a part, Might touch, we think, the hardest heart.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 146.

- Gaza; 2. Enon; 3. Tanus; 4. Hor; 5. Sinai; 6. Emmaus; 7. Moriah; 8. Ararat; 9. Nebo; 10. Ebal.

GETHESEMANE.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

265. Perfected Poetry.

So should we live, that every hour May die as dies the natural flower, A self-resolving thing of power.

That every thought and every deed May hold within itself the seed Of future good and future need.

Esteeming sorrow, whose employ Is to develop, not destroy, Far better than a barren joy.

266. Word square:

M I T E R
I R E N E
T E N D S
E N D U E
R E S E T

267. Proverbs xxx. 31.

268. Damascus.

269. Two hundred. 1 Sam. xxx. 21.

270. Babel.

271. Mule.

272. The year 1881.

A Swiss Hero.

"God has his plan For every man."

Whatever may be our views of war, the patriotic defence of a country has, in all ages, received its proper merit of praise. And whatever horrors there may be associated with war, we have never hesitated to admire courage. So now to our tale.

A soldier's widow lived in a hut, near a Swiss mountain village. Her only child was a poor cripple. Hans was a kind-hearted boy. He loved his mother, and would gladly have helped her to bear the burdens of poverty, but that feebleness forbade him. He could not even join in the rude sports of the mountaineers. At the age of fifteen years, he felt keenly that he was useless to his mother and the world.

It was at this period that Napoleon Bonaparte was making his power felt throughout Europe. He had decreed that Tyrol should belong to Bavaria, and not to Austria; and sent a French and Bavarian army to accomplish this purpose. The Austrians retreated. The Tyrolese resisted valiantly. Men, women and children of the mountain land were filled with zeal in defence of their homes. On one occasion, ten thousand French and Bavarian troops were destroyed in a single pass, by an immense avalanche of rocks and trees prepared and hurled upon them by an unseen foe.

A secret arrangement existed among the Tyrolese, by which the approach of the enemy was to be communicated from village to village by signal fires from one mountain height to another, and materials were made ready to give instant alarm.

The village where Hans and his mother lived was in the direct line of the route the French army would take, and the people were full of anxiety and fear. All were preparing for the expected struggle. The widow and her crippled son alone seemed to have no part but to sit still and wait.

"Ah! Hans," she said one evening, "it is well for us now that you can be of little use; they would else make a soldier of you."

This struck a tender chord. "The tears rolled down his cheek. "Mother, I am useless," cried Hans, in bitter grief. "Look around our village—all are busy, all ready to strive for home and fatherland; I am useless."

"My boy, my kind, dear son, you are not useless to me."

"Yes, to you. I cannot work for you, cannot support you in old age. Why was I made?"

"Hush, Hans," said his mother, "these repining thoughts are wrong. You will live to find the truth of our old proverb—

"God has his plan For every man."

Little did Hans think ere a few weeks had passed this truth was to be verified in a remarkable manner.

Easter holidays, the festive time of Switzerland, came. The people lost their fears of invasion in the season. All were busy in the merry-making—all but Hans; he stood alone on the porch of his mountain hut, overlooking the village.

In the evening of Easter, after his usual evening prayer, in which he breathed the wish that the Father of Mercies would, in his good time, afford him some opportunity of being useful to others, he fell into a deep sleep.

He awoke in the night, as if from a dream, under the strong impression that the French and Bavarian army was approaching. He could not shake off this impression; but with the hope of being rid of it, he arose, hastily dressed himself, and strolled up the mountain-path. The cool air did him good, and he continued his walk till he climbed to the signal pile; but where were the watchers? They were nowhere to be seen; perhaps they were busied with the festivities of the village. Near the pile was an old pine tree, and in its hollow stem the tinder was laid ready. Hans paused by the tree, and as he listened a singular sound caught his attention. He heard a slow and steady tread, then the click of muskets, and two soldiers crept along the cliff. Seeing no one—for Hans was hidden by the old tree—he gave the signal to some comrades in the distance.

Hans saw instantly the plot and the danger. The secret of the signal pile had been revealed to the enemy; a party had been sent forward to destroy it; the army was marching to attack the village. With no thought of his own peril, and perhaps recalling the Proverb his mother had quoted, he seized the tinder, struck the light, and flung the blazing turpentine brand into the pile. The two soldiers, whose backs were then turned to the pile, waiting the arrival of their comrades, were seized with fear; but they soon saw that there was no foe in ambush—naught but a single youth running down the mountain path. They fired, and lodged a bullet in the boy's shoulder. Yet the signal fire was blazing high, and the whole country would be aroused. It was already aroused from mountain-top to mountain-top. The plan of the advancing army was defeated, and a hasty escape followed. Hans faint and bleeding, made his way to the village. The people with their arms were mustered thick and fast. All was consternation. The inquiry was everywhere heard, "Who lighted the pile?" "It was I," said at last a faint, almost expiring voice. Poor crippled Hans tottered among them, saying, "The enemy—the French were there." He faltered, and sank upon the ground. "Take me to my mother," said he; "at last I have not been useless."

They stooped to lift him. "What is this? he has been shot. It is true; Hans, the cripple, has saved us." They carried Hans to his mother, and laid him before her. As she bowed in anguish over his pale face, Hans opened his eyes, and said, "It is not now you should weep for me; I am happy now. Yes, mother, it is true.

"God has his plan For every man."

You see he had it for me, though we did not know what it was."

Hans did not recover from his wound, but lived long enough to know that he had been of use to his village and the country. He lived to see grateful mothers embrace his mother, to hear that she should be considered a sacred and honored bequest to the community which her son had preserved at the cost of his own life.

Great emergencies like these which met Hans cannot exist in the history of all. To all, however, the Tyrolese motto may speak, and all will experience its truth. None need stand useless members of God's great family. There is work for every one to do, if he will but look out for it. So long as there is ignorance to instruct, want to relieve, sorrow to soothe, let there be no drones in the hives, no idlers in the great vineyard of the world.—*Christian Life*.

SPOTTING.—A Western detective kept for many years a scrap book, in which he pasted accounts of crimes in which rewards were offered for the arrest of the criminals. Turning over the leaves of this volume a short time ago, he checked off all the cases in which the fugitives had been caught, and found that a surprising number was still at large. Then he reasoned that Leadville was a likely place for such wanderers to drift into, and resolved to go there. He frequented the public resorts of that city for weeks, looking for men answering to the book's numerous descriptions. One night he observed that a roisterer in a bar-room had a peculiarly flattened finger. That was a mark to John Ott, who committed a murder at Tazewell, Ill., in 1869, and for whose arrest an offer of \$1,000 still held good. Ott's identity was fully established, and the detective has been paid the money.

A FLOWER.—A correspondent relates that the husband of a poor German woman who had suffered a relapse in her illness through the excitement caused in her by the passage of President Garfield's funeral cortege under her window, going to view the remains at the Capitol, brought back to his wife a bud that he caught as it loosened and fell from Queen Victoria's lovely wreath on the casket. It bloomed by her bedside, disclosing a dove in the centre, and the poor woman, calling it the Christ flower sent from the dead President to heal her, began to mend immediately. It was an orchid, the *Esprito Santo*, and as they are usually sold at the price of twenty dollars a blossom, it gives one an idea of the royal prodigality of the wreath.—*Examiner*.