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INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Third Quarter-Lesson II, July 14.

THE GOLDEN CALF.—Exodus 32 : 1-8, 30-35.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Little children, keep yourselves from idols.*—1 John 5 : 21.

THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT.—This is the name given to chapters 20 to 23, containing the covenant of the Ten Commandments, and about seventy enactments based upon them. These were given to Moses on Mount Sinai, for the government of the people.

RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT.—Chap. 24 : 3-8. No government can succeed in training the people without their practical consent. Accordingly, the words of the covenant were written in a book, an altar was built, the people assembled, sacrifices were offered, expressing gratitude, consecration, and atonement for sin ; the book of the covenant was read before the people. They make a solemn promise to obey. The blood of the sacrifice is sprinkled upon the altar, upon the book, and upon the people, as the most solemn ratification of the covenant possible.

The Blood Covenant. The blood was regarded as the very life. It was therefore the most precious thing one could give another. It was regarded as a means of infusing life into another by infusing the blood of a healthy person into one who was sick. The mutual transfusion of blood from one person to another by tasting each other's blood made them blood relations of the most intimate kind. They were one evermore. The blood of sacrifices was regarded as a substitute for their own blood. Henceforth the parties were to keep their covenant as their very life.

MOSES' ABSENCE FOR FORTY DAYS IN THE MOUNT.—Chap. 24 : 9-18. After this Moses was called up into the mount, to receive the tables of stone, and further instructions ; and also to be prepared by communion with God for his work of forming the people into a nation that could dwell in the promised land. Every minister, every teacher, every believer needs periods of solitude and communion with God. And, coming back from the monntain of contemplation, he touches life with a steadier hand, and does his duty with a completer obedience.

THE DISCOURAGED PEOPLE.—V. 1. The absence of Moses was also a time of testing both the leaders and the people. They had just promised to obey God. But they were inexperienced. These weeks were their time of trial, of growth, of development. *Saw that Moses delayed.* He was gone forty days. *The people gathered themselves together*, for something must be done. *To Aaron*, Moses' brother, left in charge during Moses' absence. *Up, and make us gods*, or a God, *which shall go before us*, and be our leader. They wanted some visible manifestation of God. They had just come from the land of idols, where the heathen gods were everywhere visible. *For this Moses....we wot* (know) *not what is become of him.* They had known him but a very short time, and now he had left them in the very heart of the wilderness.

THE GOLDEN CALF.—Vs. 2-4. *Break off the golden earrings*, which they had begged from the Egyptians on their departure. *In the ears of your wives*, etc. It costs them something to do wrong. *Your sons.* Earrings are worn in the East almost as much by men as by women. *And the people brake off the golden earrings.* This shows how discouraged the people were. *Fashioned it with a graving tool.* He framed with a graving-tool the image to be made, and, having poured the liquid gold into the mould, he made it a molten calf. The choice of a calf for the form of the image arose either from the sacred bulls worshipped in Egypt, or more probably from the bull worship in Chaldea In Chaldea, the bull, generally winged and human-headed, represented the combination of wisdom, strength, and omnipresence, which characterizes divinity.

Idols of the Heart. Have we made any calves? Ah, many. Pride, Gluttony, Self-Indulgence, Wealth, Station, Influence, Appearances. Whatever we make first in our heart's love, that is our God. That to which we sacrifice precious things is our God.

THE COVENANT BROKEN.—Vs. 4-6. *These be thy gods, O Israel.* They did not deny Jehovah, but made a representation of him, contrary to express command, and the solemn covenant they had made with God. *And when Aaron saw it*, how the people regarded the image. *To-morrow is a feast to the Lord.* Aaron would lead the people to worship the true God through an idol. *And offered burnt offerings*, those wholly consumed, *and peace offerings*, part of which was burnt, part given to the priests, and the rest was used for a feast by the offerers. *Sat down to eat and drink.* It was, as usual, a feast. *And rose up to play*, implying not only singing and merry-making, dancing of an indecent kind.

The Sin. They broke their covenant with God. They practically took away the true God from among the people.

MOSES CAME DOWN FROM THE MOUNT. All this defection occurred while Moses was with God, receiving instruction for the people, and God was writing the words of the covenant upon tables of stone. *And the Lord said*, for Moses was, of course, ignorant of what was going on below. *Have corrupted themselves.* For this the Lord threatened to destroy them all, and to make of Moses a great nation. Then the nobleness of Moses shone forth in self-forgetfulness in his love of God and of the people, while he pleaded for their forgiveness. Moses' character showed that he had been with God. God answered this prayer of Moses, and sent Moses down to save the people. In his hands he carried the tables of the testimony.

When he saw the people in their mad worship of the golden calf, Moses was so amazed with indignation that he threw down the tablets of stone and broke them upon the rocks at the base of Sinai. His next measure was to completely destroy the idol by burning it with fire, and reducing it to powder. He then strewed the powder upon the water of the stream from which they drank, and they were compelled to drink water filled with idol dust.

Object of this Treatment. Moses demonstrates to the people the utter weakness and vanity of idols. They could not resist a single man, much less Jehovah. They were compelled not only to see this, but to swallow their god. Moses summoned those who were on the Lord's side to come to him, and take active measures to put an end to this revolt. They took their swords and slew three thousand men, probably the ringleaders and the turbulent.

Who is on the Lord's Side? There are two great interests on foot in the world, with the one or the other of which all men are siding. The interest of sin and wickedness is the devil's interest, and all wicked people side with it. It concerns us all to inquire whether we are on the Lord's side or not. We show that we are on the Lord's side by obeying his commands, by a public profession of faith, by standing by the right even when it costs a great deal to do so, and by doing God's work.

THE PRAYER OF MOSES FOR THE PEOPLE.—Vs. 30-35. By saying to the people *Ye have sinned a great sin*, Moses would lead them to repentance. *Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.* He thought that he might be made an instrument of reconciliation. *And Moses returned unto the Lord*, on Mount Sinai. *If thou wilt forgive their sin.* The conclusion is too good to be expressed in words. *And if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book.* The book of his remembrance, making him as if he had never existed. Thus Moses offers himself as an atonement for the people, and is willing to be blotted out of God's book, if on this condition they may be spared. *Whosoever hath sinned.* The soul that sinneth it shall die. *Go, lead thy people.* Go on as you been doing, and I will aid you, for *mine angel shall go before thee.* Not the angel of his presence, the pillar of cloud and fire, but some other guidance, as we learn from the prayer of Moses in 33 : 12-16. *Nevertheless*, although I will not destroy them as a nation, yet *I will visit their sin upon them.* It is necessary that they should suffer some of the consequences of their sin, that they may be prevented from falling again into sin. *The Lord plagued the people.* Sufferings of various kinds befell those who had worshipped the calf.

THE COVENANT RENEWED. The remainder of the book of Exodus shows how the covenant was renewed with the people. The duties were again set before them, and the tables of the covenant renewed. Then the tabernacle was built according to directions, and the Shekinah rested upon it.

W. C. T. Union.

OUR MOTTO.—*If God be for us who can be against us.*

MEETING OF THE WORLD'S COUNCIL IN LONDON.

Miss Willard's Speech Creates Great Enthusiasm.

HIGH PRAISE FOR THE WOMEN OF THE CANADIAN W. C. T. U.

London, June 19.—The third biennial council of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union began in Queen's hall this morning. The principal feature was the presidential address by Miss Frances E. Willard. She said in part: "We are here, English-speaking women, gathered out of the leading nations of the world, with a few native pioneers from oriental and continental countries, to put our hearts and heads together for the building up of the woman's home protection movement, because it is the fittest to survive—the best adapted for its environment; and we are here for the putting down of the liquor system, because, judged by its effect, it is the least unfit and adapted to the slowly improving environment which is the outcome of Christianity working on the minds and bodies of the human race.

"To the labor reformers we have to say, you have united for home protection, so have we; you will bring it about by standing together at the ballot box, so shall we; you will succeed by keeping level heads and hands that do not tremble, so shall we.

"We used to say intemperance was the cause of poverty; now we have completed the circle of truth by saying that poverty causes intemperance, and that the underpaid, undersheltered, wage-earning teetotaller deserves a thousand times more credit than the teetotaller who is well paid, well fed and well sheltered.

"In the slums they drink to forget: we would make life something they would gladly remember, so would you. Our objects are the same; let us clasp hands in the unity of spirit and the bond of peace.

"How to carry out, in the best manner, plans for presenting the polyglot petition is one of the important questions to be submitted to this convention.

"It is now proposed, after presenting the petition to the British government, to go to Norway for the purpose of studying the Norwegian system of handling the liquor traffic, and of presenting the petition to the King of Sweden. It may also be deemed best to accompany Dr. Lunn's Mediterranean excursion, which would afford the opportunity of carrying the petition to several other capitals.

"It is my duty and pleasure to go home to our national W. C. T. U. convention, which meets in Baltimore in October, after which I earnestly wish that the journey to India, China, Japan, Australia and South Africa might be taken up as consecutively as possible and completed before the close of 1896.

"Our American members greatly desire that the superintendencies should be more widely distributed in different countries. A majority of them are now held in the United States, but our desire cannot be too strongly emphasized that the offices, from president down to all the lines of co-workers, might be largely held in England and the colonies. Until this is done, we cannot feel that we are so thoroughly a world's society as we desire to be. The Dominion of Canada has taken a large proportion in white ribbon work. There are no truer leaders than Mrs. Youmans, the pioneer; Mrs. Judge Foster, her successor; Mrs. Williams whom we have lost, and than whom we had no more precious life to lose; Mrs. Todd, who succeeded her as acting president, and Mrs. Edith Archibald, president of the maritime provinces, and all the general officers of the Dominion and its provinces, in which, by a plebiscite, prohibition has been deliberately chosen as the best method of handling the liquor traffic. If correctly reported, all the provinces, save French Quebec, have made this declaration by a popular vote.

"No line based on sex, race, creed color or previous condition of servitude is recognized in the World's W. C. T. U.

"The law of the survival of the fittest has, in the popular mind, two methods of application: tested by them both; ought the liquor traffic to survive? It is no longer reputable to sell wheat and whiskey, bread and beer, apples and ale. In exact proportion to the New Testament character of his daily life, a man is held back by his principles and record from being a publican or a saloon-keeper. Birds of a feather flock together, and the wholesome foods are now wholly separated from unwholesome drinks in public thought. As a general rule, they are not sold in the same place, and those who sell them do not stand on the same plane in public confidence. The fittest has survived. Food holds its place as a necessity; intoxicating drinks are losing theirs, and from great numbers of the most highly developed communities they have been banished altogether.

Lady Somerset, in the course of her address, paid a high tribute to the women of America, who, she said, were the pioneers in taking the work of organization around the world.

After the singing of a hymn Mrs. Sterling made a speech, in which she denounced the infamy of there being any legal age of consent when man could disgrace woman. The union, she declared, ought to make an attack upon all religions and all governments that are willing to make defenseless girls the prey of lecherous men by law.

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