
• HOME • DEPARTMENT MAGAZINE

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION SERIES



PEACEFUL WATERS IN THE PLEASANT HIGHLANDS

NASHVILLE
TENNESSEE

THIRD QUARTER
1926

MARK YOUR RECORD EVERY WEEK IN THE BLANKS BELOW

Record of _____ for _____ Quarter

HOME DEPARTMENT of
Sunday School of _____

Visitor _____

Month of _____

Dates of Sundays _____

Lesson for this Sunday Studied _____

Attended Sunday School Today _____

Offering Inclosed, cents _____

You have agreed to study the Sunday-school lesson for half an hour each week. The other items are voluntary. Please mark this record each week, and have it ready for the Visitor, who will call at the end of each quarter.

Quarterly Total: Lessons Studied _____ Time present in Sunday school _____ Amount Contribution \$ _____

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HIGHT C. MOORE, Editor

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NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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The Little White Steeple

By DOROTHY L. KINNEY

We're high on the hill,
And the village seems far,
And the leaves of the trees
Hide what houses there are;
But the small village church
Has a little white steeple
Which calls us to go
And commune with its people.

The road's dusty and hot
On a warm summer's day,
But vacation or not
It is needful to pray;
And both morning and night
The bell in the steeple
Is pealing the call
To prayer with its people.

Let us worship, say some,
In God's great out-of-doors,
Mother Nature invites
And there's nothing that bores;
But against the blue sky
Stands a little white steeple.
I must answer the call
To rejoice with its people.

Martha Singleton and the Mail-Order Catalogs

By EMILY H. CLOVER

Martha Singleton sat on her wide front piazza in a comfortable rocking-chair with a small table at each elbow. The tables held several catalogs, and Martha was making a careful list from each, stopping now and then to look up at the trees and sky and laugh happily.

"Isn't it just *gorgeous*!" she murmured to herself. "Money for everything I need and more besides! I'll have to pinch myself to make sure it's really I sitting here studying catalogs in the morning, instead of cooking dinner! What bliss to have a perfectly reliable servant! And Jim can go to college this fall! And all I want from each catalog! Oh, dreams fulfilled!"

Martha put down her pen and leaned back in her chair to laugh again. She was still almost a young woman, although her boy was seventeen, and ten long, struggling years of widowhood had left lines of care on her bright face.

During the lonely hours while Jim was in school her habit of talking to herself as she worked had grown on her. She began again to speak softly.

"Think of having time to help the neighbors whenever they want me! Why, I could rush Mary Carroll's preserving through in one day, and help her can everything in sight the same week. With me to help her I do believe Josie Watkins could finish her children's summer clothes in one week! And it generally takes her the blessed summer to get through! And I can go at least every other day and read to dear old Grandma Hilton for awhile. And it would be just *fun* to make cookies once a week for the Grays—bless their little hearts! I know their mother never has much time or money for that sort of thing! Mr. and Mrs. Gray have always been our good angels! I'd just love to do something for *them* now—they've never had any money to spare, but if we counted up all the kind ways in which they've helped us, I'd never be able to pay the debt! Oh, what a beautiful, blessed thing an oil well is—I wish everybody could find wells on their own land! Just pouring out oil that will turn

into money for me and everybody I can find to help!"

You see, Martha was not an ordinary woman—she was one of those whom the neighbors called "the salt of the earth!" Only a few days ago she was struggling in direst depths of poverty, vainly trying to make ends meet, and hoping against hope that she could send Jim to college.

Now oil had been found on her farm, and lo! in a day she had become a rich woman. That was a month ago, and she had not yet spent one cent for her own pleasure. She had hired a good servant, to be sure, but that seemed only to give her more time to work for others. She had always lived in the country, so that city conveniences and city shopping had been impossible things for her. Perhaps that was the reason she had often made Jim laugh by saying she *did so love to get things in the mail*! She would like to have a hundred catalogs and order everything she fancied in each one! "Rocking-chair shopping is so restful," she would say. "You can choose carefully and buy just the thing you want without wearing out your feet!"

But if you could have looked over her shoulder you would have been surprised at the things she was ordering! One was an extra fine axe, sharp and strong but light enough for a boy to use.

"How little Tom Gray will make the chips fly with that!" she laughed. "And Albert must have this tool chest. The boy has a perfect genius for making things! I must add a better pump for Mrs. Gray's kitchen, too, but I'll have to consult Jim first and make sure that I'm getting the *best* for her. Oh, yes, and a nice new clothesline and an up-to-date ironing-board for poor old Venus! (My, but catalogs are wonderful things!) Now I'll just jump back to the front of the book and order a red voile for little Barbey to wear to church—that child would be a picture in red! And I don't see why not throw in a few games and toys while I'm at it! They would really be useful in keeping the children happy in

bad weather and out from underfoot when their mother is busy. They could learn a good deal from some games, too. Oh, yes, and some books—the ones I like best—*Alice in Wonderland*, and *Through the Looking Glass*, *Water Babies*, *Tom Brown's School Days*, *Little Women*, and *What Katy Did*. Such delicious books! I think I must get three sets, one for the Carrolls, one for the Grays and one for the Watkins children. Dear me, Santa Claus must be a happy old fellow! It is such fun to give away things! And here comes Jim!"

A handsome boy ran up the steps and gave her a hearty kiss. Then he laughed and cried, "Oh, just look at the rich lady and her catalogs! Mother, I do believe you're as happy now as we poor mortals ever get to be!"

"It is lovely, Jim," she said gaily. "Just think of the packages that will come to me in the mail! And then there'll be the bliss of giving the things to the children!"

Jim's face suddenly sobered. "Now, mother," he cried, "you're just ordering and ordering things for other people, but I don't believe you have ordered a single thing for yourself! Have you chosen that pretty white dress that we planned for you to buy?"

Martha's face grew pink. "I forgot, Jim," she laughed, "but I'll order it right now. I do love pretty clothes, but it seems so much more important to get things for other people first."

"Well," said Jim with a comical look of pompous pride, "I know that, to you, at least, I'm a very important person, so if you want to make me happy, you must order some pretty things, and wear them, too! If you don't, mother, I won't take my share and go to college! I hate to go, anyway, because I'm afraid you'll be lonely!"

"Oh, Jim, that would be dreadful!" cried his mother. "Rather than have you give that up, I'll dress myself like a peacock and visit the neighbors all day long!"

"Oh, you'll visit the neighbors all right," said Jim, "but I know how it will be! You'll work harder than you ever did in your life before! No wonder everybody congratulates us and says they're so glad we 'struck oil!'"

"Now, Jim, don't be pessimistic!" cried Martha Singleton. "You know you couldn't enjoy money without sharing it, any more than I could!"

"I guess you've got me there, mother," admitted Jim. "Come, let's 'get on with the entertainment.' What shall we order next? A green tie for Mr. Watkins, a car for Mr. Gray, and a—"

"Why, Jim," interrupted his mother, "that's really a good idea! Let's give Mr. Gray a car—it is just what he needs in his work! If he only had a good car, Jim, he could make twice as much—I've often heard him say so! The trouble was to *buy* the car—he simply could not afford it. The question is, will he be willing to accept it?"

"Well," said Jim thoughtfully, "we could never pay him, even if we gave him a dozen cars, for all he's done for us; but I s'pose we'll just have to consent to his paying for it after he gets to making enough to do it. With a car he could easily make double what he's making now! I'm glad you thought of it, mother."

"Why, it was your own suggestion," she answered, smiling with pride as she looked at her handsome boy.

And so they went on planning with shining eyes and happy faces.

The next week the packages began to arrive.

"Mail-time is a regular picnic!" cried Martha Singleton, and Jim was almost as much excited as she was. The children of the neighborhood decided that Christmas had come at least four months ahead of time! It took a good deal of persuasion to make Mr. Gray accept the car, and, just as they feared, he insisted that he would pay for it as soon as he "was fairly on his feet." But it was a satisfaction to know that the Grays were now in a fair way to become prosperous.

On the fifth day of their huge mails, full of hulging packages of every shape and size, Martha just hugged Jim, and cried:

"Oh, isn't it *lovely* to have lots of money and catalogs!"

Don't Wait for a Burnin' Bush

By GAZELLE STEVENS SHARP

I went to meetin' Sunday mornin' as usual but to a different meetin' house,—our preacher is taken' a vacation—poor, dear man, it must seem good to have a chance to let up, an' I don't begrudge it to him, nor to any one else who can see their way clear to get a little rest an' change. Sometimes I sort o' hanker after a vacation myself, but as long as the children is little and things is as they be, don't do no good to hanker, an' its somethin' I don't allow to do much of.

It sort o' rests me sometimes to slip away from 'em all an' go to some other meetin' like I did Sunday, not from any sense o' duty an' not feelin' beholden to the preacher ner obliged to stand by 'em in anything he says ner agree with 'em in anything, but jest sit there an' listen not a mite disappointed if he don't 'pear to have any special message fer me, but with my heart open to take in any thing that is in hymns er prayers er any of it.

I was standin' there repeatin' the Lord's prayer with the rest an' hed' jest come to "forgive us our debts" when it come over me how I had been feelin' sort o' put out with Jonathan when he didn't probably sense it how tired company and the tooth ache—not to mention some other extras—had made me—and hadn't meant to be unkind, an' was more unthinkin' than selfish after all—an' I jest substituted in my mind—I prayed the regular words out loud with the rest, an' they're all right, too, exceptin' that I needed a little extra under the circumstances, so I substituted, or rather I sandwiched in between the rest, "I forgive Jonathan for what he done this mornin' like he fergives no end o' things I keep a doin' that I wish I had n't."

Jest that little extra prayer was wuth goin' to meetin' fer. Of course, I might o' prayed it if I hed stayed to home but I might not, if it hadn't been fer sayin' the Lord's prayer out loud with the rest.

The hull service was good an' helpful, but what stayed by me especially, was in the Scripture readin'. It was the Lord God Jehovah's question to Moses in regard to

sendin' him to release the children of Israel from the power of Faro, and he didn't feel equal to it an' all like that.

I know jest how he felt. I've felt that way lots o' times—jest bore down by the care an' responsibility o' what seems restin' on me, so hard I can't hardly stan' up to it. An' the Lord said, "Moses what have you in your hand?" An' Moses said, "A rod," an' the Lord said, "Use that." An' then went on to tell him what to do with it.

An' it all come over me how the Lord didn't tell him to use the burnin' bush or even to go and get anything but jest to take what he had in his hand; and it seems to me that there's a good bit of a lesson fer us all right there. We ain't none on us called to do any thing we can't, nor to use anything we hain't got er can't get, but we air expected to use what we've got an' do what we can an' not hang back an' make excuses because it ain't more er different—least ways, that's what I got out of it, an' it done me good.

I'm constituted that-a-way that I'd like to see my way clear to do somethin' a little extra with somethin' fer a "weapon O' warfare" besides a broom er a dish cloth er a set o' knittin' needles; but if a big man like Moses was give his every day, common rod fer his work, it stan's to reason that I won't be likely to get anything unusual fer mine, an' I might as well get to work in earnest "in the battle o' life" with what I've got an' where I be.

An' that's what I've been a doin' ever sence I got back from meetin' Sunday. I ain't a waitin' fer a burnin' bush an' all like that, an' I've been thinkin' as how this is a pretty good idee, an' I'd best "pass it on" so as maybe someone else might want to go an' do likewise also.

An angel paused in his onward flight
With a seed of love and truth and right,
And said, "Oh, where can this seed be sown
Where 'twill yield most fruit when fully grown?"

The Saviour heard and said as he smiled,
"Place it at once in the heart of a child."

—Selected.

Entertaining Greatness

By SUSAN HUBBARD MARTIN

When the question of entertaining the great Dr. Conway first came up in the Ladies Aid, every one agreed that little Mrs. Pendexter was the one who was best situated to do it.

In the first place, she had two Oriental rugs and an oil painting. She used doilies instead of table cloths and had silver on the table every day. And as Fairbury wanted to make a good impression on this most august personage, the Pendexter home seemed the most suitable place for him to go.

He was to stop in Fairbury but one night, for the Doctor was a busy man and must hurry on.

But Fairbury all agreed that he ought to be in a home which would reflect especial credit on the church, and what one would better do than that the Pendexter residence with its one hundred dollar oil painting and two Oriental rugs?

Little Mrs. Pendexter agreed to the proposition with true hospitality and, it must be admitted, just a little degree of satisfaction. For while Fairbury was a little town, it was something to own the best residence in it, and be the acknowledged leader in social circles. Fairbury voiced its pleasure and approval of the arrangement and then forgot all about it and went on about its affairs.

But the day before Dr. Conway's arrival, little Mrs. Pendexter took tonsillitis and was not able to raise her head from the pillow. She sent for Mrs. Cameron post haste.

"What will we do?" cried the poor sick lady with tears in her eyes. "I never felt worse in my life and as for entertaining Dr. Conway, that's out of the question."

Mrs. Cameron was silent.

"Well," she finally replied, "I'll not attempt to either. My house is shabby, my best table cloth has several darns in it and I'm not a very good cook. In view of his greatness I wouldn't dare to ask him to my house."

Several other ladies came in to condole with Mrs. Pendexter that day but none of them offered to take her expected guest off her hands.

He was to arrive on the evening train and by four o'clock Mrs. Pendexter had worked herself up to a high fever. But at five minutes past four in came Prudy with a plate of fresh gingerbread.

Prudy lived with Grandmother in a little plain cottage further up the street. They had very little money indeed, but by careful management they made it do. Prudy couldn't do much in the way of earning, for Grandmother insisted that she keep on at school, but being an industrious, energetic little lass, it was wonderful to see what she accomplished besides keeping at the head of her class in high school.

For she had a real liking and talent for cooking and did it so well that more than one person spoke of it. Mrs. Priddy declared she made the best biscuit she had ever tasted, and Mrs. Turner admitted that while she prided herself on her feather cake, it couldn't compare to Prudy's.

She and Grandmother got along beautifully in the little cottage, for it has been proven that two people can get along as economically as one, especially if they know how to manage, and the love that went with it more than made up for the scarcity of fine pictures and silver.

Prudy loved little Mrs. Pendexter very much. She had been so kind to her, and Prudy, along with the rest of Fairbury, was very proud of the beautiful little home that had its oil painting and Oriental rugs.

She looked sympathetic indeed when little Mrs. Pendexter poured out to her her troubles.

Prudy listened to it and then she took the hot hand and said soothingly:

"Is that all? Why if there is no one else, Grandma and I will take him. I never cooked for a really great man, but probably great men like biscuits and honey just as well as men that are not great. And we had a present of three pounds of the finest honey ever yesterday. Deacon Hicks brought it in from the farm together with a fine chicken. Grandma and I have been planning to have it for Sunday but we'll feel it a privilege to cook it for the great Dr. Conway. Now just stop worrying and I'll run over home and tell Grandma and

put clean sheets on the bed in the front bedroom and ask Mrs. Gibson if she'll give us a few of her late asters. I'm awfully sorry you are sick but I'm real glad I can be of service to you, and have the opportunity besides of doing what I can for the Lord's own."

"Oh, Prudy," cried little Mrs. Pendexter, with a grateful sigh, "you don't know how you've relieved my mind. I've lain here and tumbled and tossed, saying to myself over and over again, Who will entertain Dr. Conway? Who will entertain Dr. Conway?"

"Well," replied Prudy with a twinkle in her eye, "I don't know about entertaining him but we'll take care of him. Now that that's settled, I'm going to get you some fresh water and beat up your pillows."

But as she went out she paused.

"You don't suppose he'll miss the Oriental rugs and the oil painting, do you?" she asked anxiously.

Little Mrs. Pendexter shook her head.

"Not the least in the world," she returned quickly, "with you as hostess, Prudy dear."

The train pulled in on schedule time but instead of the automobile that he had expected would meet him, all he saw was a bright-eyed, slender girl in a plain hat and dress smiling at him from the platform.

"This is Dr. Conway, I am sure," she said as she went up to him. "Mrs. Pendexter, to whom you were to go, is sick, so you are to stay at our house instead. I hope you won't mind. We'd love to have you."

The great man saw the situation and saved it.

"I don't mind in the least," he replied. "I love girls, probably because I have one of my own about your size."

And then Prudy led him to the horse and buggy she had borrowed of Mr. Silas Perkins, who kept the grocery store, and they started off up shady lanes and wide streets.

"You should have ridden in an automobile," said Prudy a little wistfully, "but I did the best I could. I got Mr. Perkins' buggy."

The great Dr. Conway smiled.

He was beginning to enjoy himself. How long, how very long it had been since he had jogged in this fashion behind a gentle old horse up country lanes such as these! Not since he had become the great Dr.

Conway at least. And sometimes even he wished he might go back to the old times with their simple ways before he had tasted of greatness. He seemed to have come back to them again in this quiet little village.

Already his jaded spirits were being refreshed. He was still enjoying it when Prudy drew up to a little weatherbent cottage with vines running over the windows and a few late hollyhocks blooming in the yard.

And then he was taken into a very plain little room where an old white-haired woman sat in a clean gingham dress with a Bible on the table beside her, her hands busy with her knitting.

And after he had greeted her, Prudy took him in to another clean little room with a gay patchwork quilt on the bed, a chair beside it and the 23rd Psalm printed and neatly framed hanging on the wall just over the bed.

And then after a few moments rest in the clean little room he went out and visited with the white-haired tranquil old woman, and somehow he forgot the rush and hurry of life as he absorbed the peace and serenity of the quiet little house.

An hour later when Prudy invited him out to supper, he was more satisfied than ever with this little refuge—the refuge from the pomp and show that were showered on him whether he wished them or not.

For the supper he felt an appetite he had not experienced in many a day—for greatness always has to wear its fetters—and the acclaim of an admiring public often took away what appetite he had. But there was nothing here of that—no sign of a course dinner or obsequious waiters. Everything was placed on a little round table covered with a clean cloth.

There was no gorgeous centerpiece. Just a modest little vase of asters and flanked about it were a platter of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, biscuits, cool sliced tomatoes, and a dish of honey.

Prudy had prepared the meal all herself, for Grandma was too feeble to do much. But how good it tasted! And the great Dr. Conway said so as he ate the fried chicken and biscuits and honey. It seemed to him he had not enjoyed anything so much in years as he did that simple little

meal prepared by that bright-eyed, slender girl.

And after supper they had a little time of conversation and soon it was time to go to his room.

He had not been sleeping well of late but the plump pillows and old-fashioned patchwork quilt brought back old and happy memories of his grandmother and the peppermints she used to carry in her black silk bag—memories of the many times when she had read to him about David and Daniel and Elijah—and pillowing his head on these sweet recollections, he slept like a child.

He arose refreshed and feeling better than he had in weeks. Nervous prostration was something that seemed very far away and he was ready to enjoy the breakfast that Prudy got ready for him—bacon, eggs, coffee and cornbread.

Just as he was about to get ready for his train in rushed Deacon Pettigrew, and Mr. Silas Pratt, the banker.

"Dr. Conway," they both exclaimed almost in chorus, "we regret exceedingly the disarrangement of our plans. You were to have been entertained at the home of Mrs. Pendexter, our town's social leader, but tonsillitis has made her a victim. We have both been out of town and just now learned of your arrival. We apologize humbly."

The great Dr. Conway smiled a little.

"I am sorry for the poor lady's illness," he replied, "but it has been my gain."

"My dear friends," he went on, "your apologies are needless. I never fared better in my life. I slept as I have not slept in years. I am going on my way refreshed and strengthened and with a firmer and a purer faith. Praise the Lord for the people in humble places who minister to his servants."

And then he turned to Prudy, who had not been afraid to take him in and make him comfortable if older people were.

"In Romans, 16," he said as he took Prudy's small hand, "we read about Paul and his friends, those who helped him in his ministry. Now I could not go on with mine very well without cooks. But I never came across a better one than I found in this little house."

He looked at Prudy with his kind eyes.

"I don't know whether to call you Tryphena or Tryphosa," he said very gently.

Why the Hurry?

By MARGUERITE FAUST

"You seem to be in a hurry," called Mrs. Nagle to her next-door neighbor as she watched the energetic way in which Mrs. Hollen was putting up her clothes line.

"Yes, and just because I am in such a hurry this line gets all tangled. There! I will have to get a knife—that big knot will never come out!"

"Oh, don't cut it," exclaimed Mrs. Nagle; "let me see what I can do?" As she deftly unwound the cord she asked—"Why are you so rushed this morning?"

"Well, you see," returned Mrs. Hollen, "I've got an awful lot to do to-day." "That's nothing new. You're always terribly busy. What is it to-day?"

"All the winter clothes have to be hung out. While they are airing I have the kitchen to scrub and a cake to bake. Then the stockings are to be mended and I have to go to the store, and write a couple of letters before time to get supper. And of course—bring all these clothes in again!"

"You will get all that done easily. Don't hurry so!" advised Mrs. Nagle, "and then you will not be so tired at night."

"If I don't hurry I will not get through," complained her neighbor. "I am not like you with my work always done up ahead of time. I don't see how you accomplish so much. I'm always envying you. What's your secret?"

"No secret," returned Mrs. Nagle, "I just won't hurry, that's all! I take my time and do everything calmly and coolly, thinking out beforehand the simplest and easiest way and the things get done before I know it. If I attempted to hurry and rush or push myself as though I did not have enough time, everything would go wrong."

"Just like the knot in my line," interrupted her neighbor.

"Just so," smiled Mrs. Nagle, "and besides I would be dead tired by night and not a fit companion for my husband. I found out long ago that hurrying did no good, so I stopped."

"But I can't stop. Whether I have a lot to do or not, I hurry just the same."

"That's the unfortunate part of it. I know, because I had the hurry habit a few years ago. I had it so bad that it seriously threatened my health—and still I hurried!" Finally the doctor said that the

hurry and I could not both continue to live. One or the other would go! That cured me! I decided to live and kill the hurry. I've been so much happier and healthier since, that I wouldn't go back to the hurry habit again for anything."

"How did you break yourself of the habit?" eagerly questioned Mrs. Hollen.

"I started each morning to do things slowly and calmly. As soon as I felt myself beginning to hurry I sat right down in a rocking chair. I relaxed every muscle as much as possible and with closed eyes I repeated for five minutes some poetry I had learned—or I contemplated the various blessings for which I should be grateful—or something equally as abstract. Of course at first I had to do this very often, but inside of a week I noticed a difference. It was not so very long until I had to stop only once a day. And now—well—I just naturally do things slowly and I get twice as much done as I used to. Try it! It will make your husband woo you all over again, because your disposition will be happier and sweeter."

"Indeed I am going to begin this very day," agreed Mrs. Hollen.

The Rain

By ALICE THORN FROST

Rain on the shingles like little feet a-tripping,
Rain on the cornice, and on the window pane;
Raindrops, bright tears, sad, clinging to the ivy,
Raindrops, wild, blowing, down the misty lane.
Yet is the rain the thirsty brooks swift swelling,
Streams that are born in mountain spaces far,
Dreaming and dark, and over pebbles slipping,
Twisting and curving where low branches are.
Joy thrilled are meadows that were patient, waiting,
Hillsides and valleys, ev'ry spreading tree.
Young rills awake, and lakes give grateful welcome;
Rain on the shingles is music sweet to me.

High Heart

By LENORA MATTINGLY WEBER

The back yard was grass-plotted and just the place for a three-year-old Stephen, Junior, to play. The front porch was smilingly hospitable. The sun room, the breakfast nook—all were plentifully sun-spattered—but Stephen always declared that it was the enameled laundry tubs in the basement that sold the house to Constance.

Walker, a realtor friend of Stephen's, had told them about this house, had given them the key and they had driven out; and now the very hominess of it filled them with a heart-catching yearning for it.

"Oh—Stephie," and Constance laid caressing fingers on the gleaming faucets, "the way I can soak and douse and rinse little Steppin's clothes here. You know I've always had to crowd them into wash pans and dish pans and bath tubs. See, here's where you put the soap—the big bar of yellow soap!"

Stephen laughed. Constance was always a delightful surprise to him. Constance had been a disappointing surprise to her own family. Her father, Gideon Monroe, was one of the foremost art critics of the day. Her mother, Aurelia Monroe, had been made poet laureate of their state; and at their apartment had always gathered the talent of the day.

But Constance had shown neither literary, artistic or musical talent. She frankly admitted that she didn't know what half of her mother's free verse was about. In the imported smocks her mother liked to buy her, in the evening dresses her father's critical eye picked out, Constance with her round pink cheeks and uncomprehending eyes, listening to their eager discussions, had seemed a little incongruous—a little out of place. Then she married Stephen Campbell and in the modest home he had provided, she blossomed like a gay, ginghamed princess. Happy, always humming, hands always busy!

"Constance, you're a funny little thing. To like washing—"

"Oh—but if you knew, Stephie. Even when I was a little youngster I would play for hours making a suds in—just anything. Mother used to get so provoked; but there's something about it. I love to hang up the

bright colored things, pinks and blues and yellows in the breeze—like flowers nodding. Then the white things, all snowy white and I always think of 'like thoughts immaculate.' And ironing, too! I take up a piece, all wrinkled and lifeless, and then the iron smooths it out like magic and the thought comes: Well, aren't our lives like that?—until something, sometimes nature's hand, sometimes God, a great love—sometimes even sorrow passes over us—"

"Why, Connie, your mother would be proud of you! You're quite a poet."

"A poet of soapbuds," she laughed, as she turned reluctantly away. They lingered again through the rooms, lingered as they turned the key in the door behind them.

"That's where Cecile lives," she pointed out. "That house with the black and cream awnings. They're buying, too. Cecile, you know, is such a fine accompanist on the piano. She had helped so much. Then Anne lives about two blocks over. She was telling me that she has a standing order to supply hand-painted novelties for a store here. And yet," wistfully, "I'm not talented—not a bit."

Stephen was very thoughtful on the way back to the office. He talked of monthly payments, interest, taxes, insurance. "It'll be a load to swing," he said, "our payment down isn't so much and if—" But with an eloquent salesman on one side and an eager, shining-eyed Constance on the other—they took the house.

They were happy days that followed. Lilacs in bloom. Little Steppin's cheeks rose-deepening in the back yard. A white rabbit that had been given them for a Sunday dinner, a yellow kitten that someone had cast away on the vacant lots beyond, a dog with a lame foot—all these shared Constance's glad bounty. And she, even as she had predicted, found endless things to soak and rub and rinse in the laundry tubs; though she admitted to Stephen, sometimes drooping over the evening dishes, that the rubbing did tire one.

Then one evening she hurried down in the basement to show him a shining, square electric washing machine ranged chummily by the side of the tubs.

"You didn't buy it, though—did you, Constance?"

"Well—the salesman told me confidentially that they were going up the first so

I thought I might as well sign up for one—now. He said he wouldn't be surprised but that they'd go up to two hundred.

"But, Connie, that's a lot of money for us—now."

"Oh, but I'm only to make monthly payments on it. He demonstrated it today and honestly! Why it's just like play. See the wringer is attached. You run the clear water in here and let the dirty water out here. You even rinse in it. You can partially dry your clothes in it. I hardly had my hands in water and we were through in one-third the time—"

Stephen's eyes had that preoccupied look of addition and subtraction and maybe multiplication going on behind them. "Are you working on commission?" He tried to laugh.

The girls at the club asked her the same thing. The club was meeting at Cecile's and all twelve were there. "—and a wringer attachment—no rubbing, just turn on the electricity." Constance brandished an olive in her enthusiasm.

"Are you in the business, Connie?"

"No, I'm not," she laughed. "But I wish you each one had one and then you'd do your own laundry and like it, too."

"But child!" exclaimed their hostess, don't you realize that my lily white hands are my stock in trade? No washing for mine!"

"I simply can't," wailed Louise. "I just hate it and it tires me so and gets me so upset that since I have the baby. Though goodness knows, after I've spent hours embroidering his things, I hate to see them ruined in the laundry."

"Do they come in collapsible, go-shutable models?" asked Helen. "I couldn't squeeze one in my two-by-four apartment unless—"

"I might get one," and they all laughed at this for Gertrude's husband was an insurance promoter and they were always being sent to different parts of the state, "if they make them on wheels so we could trundle it along back of our car."

It was late when Constance hurried home. Stephen was there ahead of her. And all through the quickly got-together meal while Constance talked of their meeting, Stephen seemed to hardly hear.

"And guess what!" said Constance. "Cecile's mother is president of the Home Economics Club, you know, and they are remodeling their club rooms so that they had

to take the equipment out and she said I could use their electric mangle for the summer."

"Mangle?" Stephen was partially aroused. "Yes, to iron with. You just put the flat clothes through it like a clothes wringer."

In an abstracted excitement, Constance put little Stephen to bed but big Stephen sat down at Constance's desk and figured and figured.

"Why, Stephe," she interrupted once, "if it irons all things that are flat like she says, you could use it for bungalow aprons and children's rompers and shirts, even, by just ironing the collars and cuffs and yokes, you know—"

It was about a week later that Stephen came home with a dragging listless step. He reached down absent-mindedly for the overjoyed Steppins who stumbled to meet him.

Constance had put the chops on at the slam of the front screen and raised a smiling face, "What's the matter, Steve,—head-ache?"

Stephen shook his head. The lines seemed to deepen, quiver in his face. "I—I— They cut my pay today."

"Cut!" Constance gasped. "Oh—Steve—"

He leaned against the door jam. "I've felt it coming. They can't help it," he defended loyally. "The chief called me in the office today, showed me the books. I knew it was bad—all the electric supply shops are. They're letting out men by the dozen but of course—I started with them. I won't lose any in the long run. They're giving me stock in the company; and when the railroads open up, when this mine trouble is settled—"

"How much cut?" asked Constance and then she gasped as she turned the sizzling chops. He was to get only what he had got when they were first married and it had been hard enough to get along then. And now there was little Stephen! There was the house—the electric washer—extorting, demanding their monthly payments.

"I saw Walker today," Stephen found it hard to look at Constance. "We'll have to let the house—go. We couldn't begin to carry it—everything now."

It was a subdued silent meal. To Stephen the chops were as blackened bread for he was thinking of Constance. "Stephie," she had whispered that first day in their new

house, "this is our home, just think—ours. I had things pleasant enough with mother and dad—but apartments and hotels—I never had a real home till now."

Constance would take it like a good sport. In all their troubles together she had carried such a high heart; she had never whimpered, never demurred—

"But Stephen," she was saying, "you mustn't let Walker have it back. I—don't want to give it up—now. You see Cecile has company and the girls in the club have all made plans and I have—"

"You mean that on account of the girl's entertaining and your share that you want to—hold on when it only means putting us in deeper?"

"Yes, yes, Stephen. Maybe something—You see it would be hard to explain. Promise me you'll wait another month!"

Stephen promised. He pushed his chair back and went out on the porch. He shivered in the cool darkness. . . . He had been so sure of Constance.

To Stephen the next month limped by on halting steps, though the subject had not been broached between them again. Constance was her usual flying about, laughing, singing self. Even more so.

At six every morning she was up and it seemed to Stephen that the twittering of sparrows in the lilac bushes and her song and the distant gurgle of water began simultaneously.

"Constance, you are the washingest thing!" he teased.

But Constance laughed as she dried her hands to start breakfast, "Well, you know cleanliness is akin to godliness."

It seemed a gay summer for Constance. With little Steppins between them she drove Stephen to work in the morning. She had always done that in the car her parents had given her for a wedding present.

And in the evening she often came dashing up five, ten or fifteen minutes late, always flushed, breathless. "My Goodness, but Louise is such a talker. Her cousins from the south are here and it was so hard to get away."

The last day of the month came. Walker had another party in view. He'd bring them out the next morning to see the house, he said.

After supper Stephen walked up and down the front porch—up and down. The

white rabbit hopped across the lawn, scurried to shelter in a corner of the porch. The crippled cur that Constance had cured of the wanderlust whined. It was so dear, this place! It fairly breathed of Constance and the now chattering little Stephen.

The light was burning over Constance's desk when he came in, though she was putting the baby to bed with the usual story. On the desk he noticed much figuring in Constance's round hand. He smiled whimsically. Constance had never understood figures.

A car stopped outside, the engine was left running while a quick step came on the porch and Cecile called through the screen.

"Come on in," he answered. "Want Constance?"

"Never mind Stephen, if she's with the youngster. You tell her for me, will you, that I'd like her to do my washing tomorrow if she can. Mrs. White said it'd be all right to move her up a day. You see I'm going on my trip and wanted my clothes and little Marie's all ready. Surely a Godsend that she'll do them. We all think we're so lucky—" Constance had slipped out of the darkened room but Cecile only called a gay greeting and hurried on.

"Constance!" said Stephen. "Why Constance!—are you doing people's washings?"

"Well, what of it?" she tried to summon a sippant laugh. "You look as though I wore a red bandana around my head and carried a clothes basket on my hip down main street!"

But under Stephen's steady gaze she flushed. "Stephen—I didn't mean to, really. I—I just started doing the ones in the club to pay for the washer for I knew I shouldn't have got it. Then they told others and—it was so easy. Look," she showed him the roll of bills rubber-banded in the back of the account book. A column for expenses, soap, starch, electricity; not proceeds at the side. "Some days I made three dollars but most days I made four. I'm not good at figures but—I've got the payment for the house, for the washer, too—"

"Oh, Stephe, it is easy. I soak them at night, start them at six in the morning. I can have one ready to hang out at nine. Then I get another in the car—you know on my way back. I can do an ironing in the afternoon—easy with the mangle. No—it isn't hard. I have it all down to a system.

You ought to see the crocheted bedspreads and children's knitted things, just as soft and fluffy; and the rag rugs and curtains and drapes—the colors just as bright. Why Stephe, I feel as though I were sort of keeping a faith—"

Stephen had often heard that same vibrant joy quiver in her mother's voice when she had read one of her own compositions; had often seen that same look when Gideon Monroe passed a tapering finger over some beauty carved of marble. And he remembered then the old philosopher who had thus classified the Universe—the Thinkers, the Sayers, the Doers. Ah, the Doers!

"I like it," she choked. "I like it and I've been so happy—so proud. But you—I was afraid you'd think I was lowering myself."

And then he took a step toward her. "Why, Constance!" he said huskily, "Constance, with your high heart, nothing—nothing could lower you."

Old Fashioned Gardens

By L. MITCHELL THORNTON

Somewhere the purple asters grow
In quaint old gardens, row on row,
Somewhere in bosky, sheltered places
The smiling pansies lift their faces;
Somewhere the mignonette is found
And ribbon grass makes gay the ground.
Gardens there are, long since I found them

With laurel hedges all around them.

Somewhere the poppies crimson gleam,
And nicotenas nod and dream;
Somewhere the sweet day-lilies whiten
And iris glows and blue bells brighten;
Somewhere are phlox and marigold
And pinks sedate and larkspurs bold,
Old fashioned gardens, once I knew them
With paths grass-bordered running through them.

Somewhere the zinnias flame to gold,
And double buttercups unfold
Their petals, gleaming in the grasses,
And touched by every foot that passes.
Long ribbon grass and iris, too,
Old fashioned gardens always new,
With stately aspens behind them;
Pray tell me quick where now I find them.

What One-Half Day Together Meant to Father and Son

By CHARLES D. JOHNSON

Without saying a word about it to anybody a professor in a great university in the South decided to spend every minute of an afternoon with his seven-year-old son. He hardly knew why he made this decision. Neither the son nor his mother had made such request. Perhaps that verse in the Bible which reads "A little child shall lead them" which the father himself had memorized while a child had suddenly arisen from subconsciousness to impress active consciousness and cause the decision.

This explanation of the decision in the light of another passage of scripture, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee" seems wholly reasonable. The latter verse as well as the former sank deep into the mind of the father while he was a Sunday-school student about seven years of age. It was, of course, little more than simple memory when the words were being spoken in childish glee in competition with other boys in a class. But now, when the seven-year-old son was learning these same and other verses, the father selected a Sunday afternoon to put that first verse, "A little child shall lead them" into practice.

Any father, especially a teacher, forms a habit of leading. Most of the time he is leading the sons and daughters of others. This, however, does not prevent him from attempting to lead his own child. It often makes it very difficult for father and son to co-operate in any sort of undertaking no matter whether the father or the son tries to lead. There is nothing wilful about it on the part of either: it is simply a fact known the world around by teachers and sons of teachers. If some one objects to this fact let an article be written, let lectures be delivered, let books be adopted, let scholars who would be leaders as well as teachers demonstrate in some human laboratory, the home or the church or the school or all three as they furnish opportunity a millionfold, which will revolutionize our present wasteful methods of instruction.

Just what that afternoon held for father and son the following will show:

A map of the United States carved from wooden blocks had been waiting for three weeks to be placed in order. A dozen times or more the father had promised the son to help interpret this Christmas present, which of course, meant that Maine and Florida, Texas and Washington and all the other 44 states in the Union would be fitted together. With a large figure of the United States as a guide the son took the large states, the father the small states and soon there was no South, no North, no East, no West. There was a union of states, a real United States. But what was more, there was a union of father and son, a real, spiritual union.

The son wanted to put the states together again. The father followed his lead. While the son's eyes fairly beamed with delight as states placed by the father would fit perfectly with those placed by his own hands. The father forgot to look at the clock. Time is not an element in perfect union.

Attention of the child could not continue indefinitely on a new, puzzling problem. The comic papers were suggested by the son. The father read them, Jiggs and Maggie, Boob McNutt and the rest, using the same care as always to translate the rough words into smooth, the course ideas into fine. This taxes even a university professor for like idiomatic Greek and Latin idiomatic English, especially that hanging on the outskirts of polite speech, requires wide range of vocabulary and quick thinking. When the son learns to read the comic section for himself another problem will demand solution.

The comics were brushed aside quickly as if little or no impression had been made on the son. He made no effort to save any part of the paper.

The Country Gentleman and *The Farm Journal* were brought to the father. They had pictures of dogs, horses and bird houses.

"The carpenter tools and lumber are ready to build bird houses," the son said.

"But this is Sunday," said the father.

"I do not mean build them today," said the son, "but sometime soon when you have time."

The father set a day in the spring for building that bird house. That gives something to do on one of the six days and leaves the seventh free from work. The son was learning more than he imagined. The son was leading as it appeared to him; the father was leading, he knew.

The son slipped away from the living room to his own. He often plays there for hours alone. There he has paste, paper, blocks, book cases, desk, chest for tools and another for toys, scissors, crayon, black-board, and Shoenhut circus animals, ring-master and clown. The father did not call for or spy on the son. He simply waited.

In thirty minutes the sound of the ukelele broke the silence. A broken tune on a still more broken instrument, for one of the four strings was gone and one of the three remaining was too loose to make a sound. When the father saw what effort the son was making to play "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son," assistance was offered.

Just then a string fell off leaving only two.

"That was what was the matter," the son said, "it was in my way."

Ellman or Kreisler might have found fault with the young musician. They might have seen no musicianship in the little boy. The father walked to the piano, the son held to his ukelele. The disharmony of the two musical instruments, if there was any, faded away as perfect concord swept through the soul of father and son.

Stopping short after the duet the son asked the father to tell stories. He preferred stories of the father's boyhood days. They were told probably for the one hundredth time. As the father was the hero in a story the son's eyes would glow with pride but as he was suppressed he grew wary, tears rushed to his eyes and his fist doubled ready for war. He could not hold himself in check if his father as a little boy had been wronged.

Here the father showed how some little boys misunderstand one another because they do not know what a hard time some

other little boys have. The golden rule was translated in the child's language thus:

"Treat other little children the way you want them to treat you."

Before supper the son called his mother to ask if she would like to take a ride. The three rode for the remaining fifteen minutes before supper. The mother had been reading all afternoon and needed the fresh air and relaxation. She seemed to understand what was going on between father and son though not a word had been said about it. Even if the pragmatic psychologists deny that there is such an element in human nature as pure intuition woman has a sixth sense which functions just as the former faculty psychologists asserted pure intuition functioned.

The son asked for the privilege of cracking some nuts for supper. The request was granted promptly.

At supper three subjects were discussed: freedom of the slaves, Abraham Lincoln, and worship. The questions were asked by the son and discussed by the father in such detail as the son could understand. Just where he got these questions neither his father nor mother knew.

The father, a Southern man, native of that state which furnished the Confederacy its only president, had talked much at the table about social conditions in the South before and after the freedom of slaves. Abraham Lincoln was pictured in such conversations as being sadly misunderstood in the North and in the South. This may account for the first two questions, for since the father had co-operated all afternoon with the son, the son wished to co-operate with the father by introducing topics in which he knew the father delighted.

The third question was asked in an attitude of appeal. There was a desire to know why other people—he mentioned Indians—did not worship God.

At this point the father told the story of God's love in giving Jesus, his only Son, to save all people everywhere but that Indians and many other people had not heard about Jesus. That was the reason they could not worship him.

"We ought to tell them," he said.

Here again the little seven-year-old son's mind was leading out in the direction of God.

When the son was ready to close his eyes in sleep that night, after praying at his mother's knee—he prays at his mother's not his father's knee, and the father did not expect that habit to be broken even during this sacred half day—a five dollar gold piece, the only one the father had seen since gold was called in by the government during the war, was held up before him. It was the first the son ever saw. Its purity and standard of value were explained.

When the father made the suggestion that the son's life always be pure and true to the highest standard of value the son joyously said, "I will," and fell asleep.

In this epochal half-day the father discovered the real son and the son discovered the real father. Such discoveries are worth more than the discoveries of islands or even continents. Islands and continents are material and will pass away. The souls of men and immeasurable personality endure and happiness increases throughout the ages.

Nasturtiums

By ANNA BEALS PHIPPS

I would not have a garden
Of rare exotic bloom,
Where sweet, old-fashioned flowers
Were never given room,
I love the blaze of color,
The orange and the red,
As sunbeams come and linger
On my nasturtium bed.

There are famous foreign gardens
In story and in rhyme,
With marble statues gleaming,
And silver fountain's chime:
But I would not exchange them
Whatever may be said
For one brave, cheerful blossom
From my nasturtium bed.

The rose-encrusted arbor,
Or jasmine-covered bower,
Where heroines of fiction
Live out their little hour,
Can bring no thrill of rapture
To me as on I roam,
Like flaming of nasturtiums
Beneath the light of home.

Mother Turns on the Water

By HELEN P. METZGER

Marie daintily ate the last of her sliced peaches, then, with a hasty word of explanation, sprang up and left the room. A few minutes later, Mrs. Keller heard her lightly running down the stairs, along the hall, and off the front porch. A look of wonderment came into her eyes—a look that was gradually becoming at home there. Why was Marie going over to Esther Maine's tonight? It was the second time this week. And last week, too, she had spent two or three evenings with Esther, and the week before that. And—

"I may be late tonight," Fred, the high school son was saying, as he left the table. "I have something to do down town." Hastily he left the room and went whistling down the street. His mother, playing with the food on her plate, was wondering again. What was Fred up to, anyway? It seemed that he always had "something to do," somewhere, nowadays.

Fred had scarcely left the house when tired, stoop-shouldered Mr. Keller scraped back his chair from the table.

"Work till nine again, Mother," he said with apology in his tones. "'Twont be long now, I guess, for we must have that rush order about out. Better go to bed early—you look tired. Nanie'll do the dishes, won't you?" He smiled at the little seven-year-old who had jumped up to cling to his work-hardened, blackened hand, and to escort him down the street.

"I do 'em every night—or help to," the child responded. "Marie said if I'd do that much so she could—" she suddenly blushed and finished the sentence in a whisper, roguishly glancing back to be sure her mother had not heard.

This was the last straw. Mrs. Keller was so hurt that she was almost crying. Why did they all act so? Just as though she were an outsider who wasn't supposed to know anything about their affairs. And they weren't satisfied at home any more, else why did they go gallivanting off as soon as their last mouthful was swallowed? That worried her the most. Marie's work in the

store was enough. She ought to be at home resting these hot evenings, instead of racing off somewhere.

But then, Mrs. Keller remembered, when Marie *did* stay home, lately, she spent most of the evening in her room. She wasn't good company at all the way she used to be.

The tired woman pushed away her dish of sliced peaches. She ought to be up washing the dishes, but it seemed she just couldn't. She might as well wait for Dave, anyway, she supposed. He'd soon be coming in from the paper route he had lately taken.

He came, with a rush, and satisfied his hearty appetite as hastily as a ten-year-old boy can.

"Mrs. Bartholomew wants me to mow her lawn tonight. I may, mayn't I?" he asked, masticating his words with his food. "It's so hot, Dave," his mother objected. "And you're not very strong yet from the flu."

Dave over-ruled these objections with something like a grunt, and rose from the table.

"Hard work never hurt anybody," he proclaimed manfully, "and Mrs. Bartholomew's good pay."

"Oh, well," she conceded, "if you're not too tired from your paper route."

At the words, Dave was off, and Mrs. Keller sat alone, her aching, puzzled head on her hands. Nanie, coming in quietly, found her thus, and implanted a fairy-like kiss on the back of her neck.

"I'll do the dishes all my own self tonight," she announced cheerfully, "because Marie said"—Then she stopped, remembering, and began to gather up the dishes.

"What did Marie say?" her mother asked spiritlessly.

"Oh, nothing much," the child replied, flushing. "It's just a secret between her and me."

Mrs. Keller sighed. There it was again. There was no use her asking anybody *anything*, these days, it seemed. Always, they put her off with some hastily invented excuse.

"Please, Mother, go to bed, like Daddy said. Your head aches, I guess," Nanie was saying, as she stacked the plates.

Mrs. Keller's head *did* ache, and moreover, she was so hurt and discouraged that

she didn't care what happened to the dishes.

So, a little later, her aching head was trying to find relief on her pillow. But the futile, mother-questions still kept buzzing around inside it, and a few hot tears found their way down her cheeks.

She had failed, that was it. Of course, it wasn't their fault that things were going wrong, and that they were so anxious to get away. Maybe she had nagged too much, or hadn't made home as pleasant as usual. But, then, no matter how hard she tried, there didn't seem to be the same appreciation that there had been only a few months ago.

Mrs. Keller fell asleep at last, from sheer weariness, of trying to solve the problem. And while she slept her family, one after another, came in, and held an excited, impromptu conference downstairs.

"Oh, but I'm tired," Dave exclaimed. "But I've fifty cents extra."

"I finished two tonight," said Marie, with satisfaction, "and I've orders ahead for a dozen more. The folks I have made them for are showing their handkerchiefs to others, and that way I'm getting more orders. Esther helping, too. And at fifty cents apiece—" she broke off to ask, in an excited whisper. "We'll soon have enough, won't we?"

Her father, washing his hands in the old tin wash basin, nodded, a slow smile lighting up his face.

"My night work counts," he said. "Time and a half for every hour. It's hard, coming when the weather's so hot, but still I hope it keeps on a couple of weeks longer. I can hardly wait to see how mother takes it."

Then again they went over ways and means of managing so "it" would be a complete surprise for mother. And at last they tip-toed upstairs to bed where, in spite of the heat, their tired bodies were soon regaining strength in sleep.

The next day, events took an unexpected turn for the Kellers. A letter came for mother. Her youngest sister was very ill, was being taken to a hospital. Could mother come and keep house for a week or so, until they'd have time to look around for someone else?

Of course, mother was very anxious about Hetty, her "baby sister," but she didn't see how she could go just now. All

her old puzzling worries, plus this new one, were in her mind when she presented the problem to her family at the noon hour. They had been so queer lately, she wasn't sure how they'd respond.

But Marie, exchanging an odd glance with Mr. Keller, took the situation in hand.

"You just go, mother," she said. "You can start right away, too. My vacation's due soon, anyway, and I'll ask Mr. Bobb if he'll let me have it right now. That will give you two weeks, and we can get along all right."

Again Marie looked across at her father, and again Mrs. Keller caught, but did not understand, the twinkling, knowing look he sent back. But to Marie, that look said as plainly as words, "Now, we'll manage."

Nanie promised to be "awful good," and Dave and Fred both seemed anxious to have their mother go.

So, when the four o'clock train pulled out of the Granville station Mrs. Keller was aboard. A vague resentment, the like of which she had never known before, lay like a weight on her spirits. For out of her wonderment had grown the conviction that her family wasn't treating her right. They were shutting her out of their lives.

The next few days were the most exciting ones the Kellers had ever known. There was much to be done before mother came back, and dear knows how soon that would be. She might take a notion to come any day.

There were more family conferences, and much planning and working. There was a hasty clearing out of the tiny upstairs room that had always been used for a "trash room."

As they had anticipated, mother didn't stay quite a week. Her sister was better, she wouldn't need an operation after all, and Uncle Harry had found someone to keep house for him and take care of the children till Aunt Hetty grew strong again.

As mother's train rumbled along, she felt the old resentment stirring within her. She had received several short letters from the folks at home, and they all seemed very cheerful, and not at all as though they were missing her. Of course, they loved her, she knew that. But if only they'd stay at home sometimes after working hours and have the jolly times they used to have.

They didn't know she was coming, so she walked up from the station alone. She found the family at supper, and a hilarious time they seemed to be having. When they became aware of the little woman in the doorway there was such a mad scramble toward her and around her that there was no doubt of their welcome.

They were talking, too, all at once, strange, incoherent things that mother didn't understand. And in a sort of frenzied center rush, she was being pushed toward the stairway.

"We can't wait another minute to show you," from Nanie, and, "I earned ten dollars toward it—extra, mind you," Dave was saying, proudly. Quiet, dignified Fred had somehow managed to get hold of his mother's arm and was helping her up the steps. "It's a beauty, mother," he said, quietly, "I'm sure you'll like it."

Nanie rushed ahead and flung open the door of the former "trash room." And mother looked and looked, and the glow in her tired, discouraged eyes grew and grew till it lighted up her whole face.

"Oh," she said softly, "Oh," and then she turned to father as though asking him for an explanation of the shiny new bathroom whose door stood invitingly open before her.

"You've always wanted one," he said, simply, "but somehow, it's seemed, I never could get enough ahead to pay for the furnishings. Along back a few months ago Fred, here, noticed that you looked more than usually tired. And he says to me he's going to begin saving up to give you a real vacation this summer. I told him I thought 'twas a good idea, an' maybe I could help a little. Then all at once something seemed to tell me you'd rather have a bathroom. So I talked it over with the youngsters and we agreed we'd do all the extra work we could till we had enough to pay for it. An' here it is!" triumphantly.

Father was rubbing his calloused hands together with a little rasping noise. And mother—why, mother was crying so she could no longer see the beautiful white enamel and the shiny faucets. For suddenly, mother had seen it all—the extra work they had done when they should have been resting, for they weren't, any of them,

very strong, the long hot evenings when they had gone cheerfully about their "extra" work, and their eager planning and whispering. And she had thought—

Then mother laughed shakily at her own foolish thoughts and doubts. What a family she had, to be sure! And how she had let her imagination "run away with her."

Hesitatingly, almost as though it were a holy place, she stepped across the threshold of the little room.

"I've always wanted a bathroom," she said, dreamily, "but never really expected to have one, what with sickness and all. I don't deserve it, either."

Nanie rushed up to one of the faucets. "I want to see the water splash in the tub," she cried. "We haven't hardly touched it yet, for daddy said—"

Her father forestalled her eager little plan.

"Mother'll be the first to turn on the water, like I said," he reminded her. "It's our present to her, you know."

Nanie cheerfully stepped back, and mother, as though she were about to perform some solemn rite, moved to the head of the tub and, her toil-marked hand trembling a little, turned on the silver stream.

Vespers

By MAE NORTON MORRIS

Hushed woods—and filtered gold
Through waiting trees,
Down columned aisles
The dusk-born breeze
A prelude plays.
Then one wee cloistered singer
Trills and trills—
Mysteriously the woodland
Wakes and fills
With caroled praise;
The evening star,
Tuned to the silver thread
Of harmony joins swiftly overhead
With quiet trend.
First singer there—
High heaven and humble earth
Are met at prayer.

Watering a Girl's Ideals

By PRISCILLA CARPENTER

It was the tiniest rose bush of all in my garden. A year before it had been a small slip, which, through much careful shading from the hot sun in the middle of the day, and watering gently morning and night, had in time sent sturdy young roots downward into the moist earth.

The height of the little slip above ground still remained infantile the following spring. June followed May, and to everyone's surprise, the little bush which only boasted two leaves, put forth a bud. There were many buds on the larger rose bushes, but because this diminutive little shrub was so plucky in its output, it was watered and watched with the most loving care. The tiny bud might easily have blasted, the mother stem was so small, or withered in the hot sunshine, with only two leaves to shade it, but instead it bloomed into a most beautiful rose, holding its head high and bravely above its two green companions.

My little rose bush and its early budding and blossoming, portrays what we often meet, and perhaps do not understand as well, in our young daughters. In their infantile years individuality and originality are small. If obedient, they are apt to follow the mother's lead, but sooner, often, than we expect it, they begin to have aspirations and ideals of their own, and we are not ready. I had been planning to tend my little rose bush through another summer, till it had grown taller and stronger and full of sturdy green leaves. The tiny bud of beauty outstripped the plans made for it. Then we watered and guarded it, that the blossom might be perfect.

Some of our girls are real little house-mothers at twelve or sixteen, and still others not until after marriage has given them matronly feelings.

"I can't bear to have Millie musing in the kitchen," said one mother of a girl of twelve.

"Laura wants to cook. She would rather do it than study, but I tell her this is her study time. The housework can come later," repeated another mother. Laura was sixteen.

Both girls had discovered aspirations ahead of their mothers' plans. Both mothers wished their daughters to be good housekeepers and homemakers some day, but they were not ready to water the little buds of aspiration when they appeared. School days must have study time, but there are Saturdays and holidays and vacations for the watering of the little buds of promise, and it is such joy to a girl to live out her aspirations, not choke them, and some day do as a task what would in the beginning have been a fresh pleasure.

"Nellie made her first corn muffins yesterday morning," smiled another mother, "and I think all her friends heard of it after church." Corn muffins and church! one would not have thought of joining them together, but the child did with happy elation.

The love of the beautiful is always peeping over some girl's shoulder. Gertrude was only eight when she came home with a great mass of autumn twigs and leaves, and being short of stature, like the little rose bush, trimmed the family sitting room at her own height. Every door knob held a red or yellow spray, each window sill or sash above, a beautiful line of color. The largest bough was placed behind the head of the sofa, and the loveliest spot of all—the baby in her carriage—laughed through a nodding bower of color. It made a little clutter and disorder, but it left a joyous thought in Gertrude's mind, and who knows what beautiful dreams it gave to the starry-eyed baby.

It was another young girl of fifteen, who brought her arms full of autumn glory and adorned the living room of an invalid. Higher than the door knobs this time, old portraits seemed rejuvenated by the brilliant fall coloring, and ancestral mirrors reflected a double beauty. The intertwining of delicate kindness offered to one who could never visit the fall woods, and the radiant loveliness of the young girl with her face alight with the joy of beauty and life, was a mother's reward for sympathy and encouragement in the undertaking.

"My girls really learned dressmaking with their dolls," declared one mother of her daughters. "I resolved that they should play with dolls as long as they wished, and instead of sewing long seams, they dressed their dolls in the prevailing styles

of the day. I was often amused at some of the pretty and very stylish costumes on the little figures, but I never showed it. The girls learned to observe color and fabric and shape, to cut little patterns and to sew very neatly. It has been a great help in later years."

Watering the buds of aspiration in the children prepares us for the years when changes come swiftly, the girl scarcely knowing today what she may be aiming at with all her heart tomorrow. Many an aspiration lies quietly in a girl's mind and heart, growing in strength, till some day it suddenly raises its head to the light. Most of all it wants sympathy. It needs watering and sheltering from the too glaring sunshine. A girl and a mother rarely grow apart, when the mother is watching for and meeting with a welcome each budding ideal.

They come in a hundred forms—the interests of adolescence. If we only see them aright, they are the guards to true-hearted, clean-minded young womanhood.

The girl who is deeply interested in flowers and birds, in golf and tennis, in beautiful embroideries and knitting, in tramps after rare stones and wood-lore, in butterflies and music, in philanthropic and church work among children, or in any other healthful ideal, is not likely to go astray, or outgrow the love of home, if the home sympathizes with her interests and aspirations. She may be taking only the first steps in any of these pursuits, but she hopes to excel at last, to make the largest collection, do the finest work, gain the most noteworthy results.

Will our daughters have the same ideals and aspirations as they mature into womanhood? Sometimes these budding ideals are identical with life's full crop. Sometimes they are only a training in aim and perseverance and concentration of mind on worthy objects. But the budding ideals, be they fair and healthful, are useful in any case, provided the mother sees with the girl's eyes, and they go hand in hand, and heart to heart in the aspiring years. They are the promise of the best things in life. Let us give them the sunshine that they may not blight, and water them in the dry seasons that they may not wither. So may the buds of our daughter's ideals bloom and blossom into beautiful womanhood.

Always a Place to Stop and Rest

By FLORENCE JONES HADLEY

It was Saturday, and I had been rushing around, as little Bob said, like a hen with her head cut off, just because I thought I had to do all the work of a week in one day. And just when I was trying to see through to the end of my various duties, I heard a call.

Looking up, I saw a bent old man, coming around the corner of the kitchen, and judging by his heavy suit-case, he was one of the class we slightly speak of as "peddlers."

A cheery greeting came in a quivering voice, and then he asked permission to stop and rest awhile from the heat of the morning.

I seated him in the big easy chair, and while he was wiping his wet brow and getting his breath, I hurried for a drink of fresh water which he quickly gulped down.

And then he talked in a quivering voice, while I, thinking of all the work waiting two pair of hands, sat listening rather ungraciously I fear.

"Yes, ma'am, it is pretty hard traveling around this way, but our Lord always walked, and I guess I am no better than he is. I get mighty tired sometimes, of course, for, you see, I am almost eighty years old," smiling at me, "but I often find some one going the same way who asks me to ride, and that helps a bit, you see."

"But," and I studied him, wondering at the brave spirit that could carry a man of his years along the hills and rocky roads without grumbling as the most of us do whenever we have to travel over them, "it is so hot for one of your age to be out. You could endure the long walk better if it were not for the awful heat that makes us all grumble." I fanned myself as I spoke, wondering how he ever stood it.

"Yes, ma'am, it is pretty hot, and I do get mighty tired, but you see, there is always some place where I can stop and rest and cool off. This is a mighty fine place," as a cool little breeze sprang up as if on purpose to bless the cheerful spirit, "and I sure enjoy the rest."

So he chatted on, between times showing me the few cheap, tawdry wares he carried, and seeming deeply grateful when I bought things I knew I never could use. Then, with hands that shook so he could not hold the glass of fresh water I handed him, he bade me a cheerful good-bye.

To my caution that he must take it easy, he responded, "Yes, ma'am, I shall. I can stop here at the next house and rest a bit. Isn't it good that there is always some place where we can stop and rest awhile, and cool off?"

I stood and watched the dear old man as he trudged away on his dreary rounds, and right there I found my lesson, and right there I sat down to learn it thoroughly, instead of rushing back to get at the work that was waiting for me.

"Let it wait," was my decision, as I sat and looked around at the hills, tree-crowned and hazy with the heat, at the little valleys where some tiny stream found its way over the stones and between rocky banks, never in a hurry, yet always finding its goal just as certainly as if it hurried.

"Let it wait," I watched the old hills that had reared themselves before me for years, with an interest that I might have had for them if viewing them for the first time. I had found some place to stop and rest and cool off my impetuous haste. I knew now that the "life is more than meat and the body than raiment," that there are other things in life besides cooking and cleaning and serving.

There are the eternal hills, from which cometh my help. Why confine my view to narrow kitchen walls all the time? There is the soft breeze from the hills to help me in the "cooling-off" process so necessary to check the heat of my enthusiasm for drudgery, which work sometimes becomes to one who will allow it. And there is always a place to stop and rest, if we avail ourselves of it. A place to stop and rest. Thank you, dear old traveler, for your text, sermon and song!

Do American Parents Know What Their Children Sing?

By IZANE PECK

American parents usually oversee their children's education but neglect to supervise their children's music. As a noted visiting musician said: "American parents fail to bring their children to a proper appreciation of good music."

Is it as bad as that, you ask?
Yes and more--much more.

I doubt if five parents in a hundred know off hand what sort of music their children are singing and playing. True, they have given John and Mary lessons; but there the responsibilities ended. Music was thenceforth up to John, Mary and the teacher.

The lessons have stopped. But John and Mary go singing on forever--except when they are dancing to the latest fox-trot!

By their words ye shall know them. And this is very true of songs. Do you wish to discover the sort of songs John and Mary sing? Then walk over to the piano and select a handful at random.

The slush and mush of these written words may startle you; but it should reveal much. Words taken from the "cesspools of modern capitals" are incorporated in some of them. These are the words sung thoughtlessly by the growing youth of our land.

The worst of the matter is that the 'popular' music is not really popular. If so, would it not last? The "craze" for a popular song is short-lived. It lives merely long enough to give the publishers time to 'boom' another.

Many of these songs are sensuous and smutty. Such songs are viler than vile.

In the words of one song little seventeen year old Mary, whose mother reproves her for flirting with boys, replies in words which are too obscene to print.

It is of little use for parents to blame their boys and girls for their choice of music. The youth have no choice. They merely buy "what is going now." The thing that is "going" is an unfit song, usually. This is crammed down their throats by hired "artists" (?) who sing it from coast to coast. It is screamed at them by phonograph records

everywhere! Flaring advertisements are displayed in lurid colors. Such is the advertisement given our "popular" songs.

And finally, after the song is hummed here, there, and the other where, your boy and my girl hum it, too. They buy it simply because the piece follows them everywhere and they cannot escape.

It is alleged that a consolidation of publishing corporations control 80 per cent of the copyrighted songs used by manufacturers of reproducing instruments.

Some time ago they were charged by the United States Government in an equity suit in The Federal District Court, with violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Law.

These so-called "popular" songs are thrown at the public by monied business interests which are certainly not actuated by a love for your children's good nor by love of good music.

So, as has been said, it is almost impossible for John and Mary to escape buying some of this vitiated music because "good" business places it ever before them.

But would it not be "good business" on the part of all parents to cleanse the "musical temple" of the unclean songs which defile the home? Would it not be well to substitute music which would appeal to the children and yet be music?

Music is of two kinds--the clean and the unclean. The clean music makes for happiness. It helps and cheers others and makes one familiar with great and pure thoughts.

Perhaps you parents do not care who "makes the songs of the nation," but can you so neglect your children's welfare as to allow indecent music upon the parlor piano?

The child cannot expect to have the tangled string untangled for him, if he keeps pulling willfully on its knotted loops. Neither can we expect that to make all things in our tangled lives work out for good, unless we fully surrender our lives to his control. *Selected.*

Lesson Studies and Daily Home Readings

Prepared by JESSE DANIEL MOORE

Lesson 1--July 4

Israel Enslaved in Egypt

READ EXODUS 1: 1-14

DEVOTIONAL READING--Psalm 94: 10-17

GOLDEN TEXT--*Jehovah will not cast off his people.* Psalm 94: 14.

God's care of his people is exercised in many ways. Even when it may seem to them that he has forsaken them, he may be preparing them to receive special attention at his hands. He must have a people in the world. He selects them. He keeps them. They cannot protect nor provide for themselves without him. All the details of their lives fall under his observation. His wisdom, as well as his goodness, is shown in his shifting the scenes and actors which are concerned in their protection and deliverance from harm. But it is by means of afflictions that his preservation of them is most often accomplished. Even good people are prone to think too highly of their own strength unless exhaustion takes place occasionally. They are not apt to lean on God as they should until they are made to feel their own arms giving way. Loss and defeat are the better discipline, as well as the higher tests, of life and character. It is far more becoming and needful that people act prudently under trial than that they should play a noble part when all goes well. We honor our earthly parents who corrected us, why should we not the more willingly yield to the will of the Heavenly Father whose love we can never doubt and whose tender care follows us all our days?

Lesson Text

Exodus 1: 8-14

1. The Proposal of Pharaoh.

8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph.

9 And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the Children of Israel are more and mightier than we.

10 Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass that, when there shall fall out any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and get them up out of the land.

11. The Bondage of Israel.

11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Rameses.

12 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor.

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigor.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Proposal of Pharaoh.* The service which Joseph rendered to Egypt was not soon forgotten by the rulers of the nation, and his memory was held in great honor by the people whose country had been saved from famine by his wisdom and administration. But a change in dynasties eventually took place, and the new line of kings did not acknowledge the debt to Joseph which their predecessors had recognized. Hence the descendants of Joseph and his brethren were no longer favored by the rulers. They had grown to be a great multitude and had become a conspicuously large part of the population of Egypt. The new king was not disposed to look upon their presence as a menace provided he could reduce them to slavery and thus deprive them of becoming a military force. Serfdom tends to destroy the power, as it takes away the opportunity, of slaves to organize into a distinct or cohesive body.

Hence the new Pharaoh decided to make all the Israelites his slaves. He had to have some sort of pretext to do it. Even though he did not acknowledge the debt of the nation to Joseph, yet he had to have some ground for making slaves of Joseph's people. He evidently did not want them to leave the country. His fear was that they "might get them up out of the land." Later, he was assaulted time after time by the plagues of God to force him to give his consent for them to go away; but he would not yield until death stalked abroad throughout the land. Under the ruse of political sagacity, or his plan to "deal wisely" with them, he forcibly placed them under bondage; lest they should join with the enemies of Egypt in time of war and thus "get them up out of the land."

2. *The Bondage of Israel.* By royal decree the Israelites were compelled to undergo exacting physical labor, under cruel task-masters and without any pay whatever; though, it would seem, they were well fed. It would have been poor policy

to have starved his slaves. An undernourished man is a poor worker. The people were not deprived of "the flesh-pots" of Egypt. The king was an ambitious builder, especially of military cities and fortresses; and under his direction, the people of Israel were made to build two big military centers at Rameses and Pithom on the northeastern boundary of his empire protecting the valley of the Nile from invasion by the eastern nations which would have to bring their armies into the country through the section lying northwest of the Red Sea.

Notwithstanding the hardships imposed upon them, they grew in number and in spirit. The king evidently did not expect to diminish their number by oppression: he would have been a simpleton had he thought that physical hardships reduce population. But he hoped to crush their spirit and suppress any growing tendency to independence on their part; and thus effectually make them his slaves forever. Because of their serfdom, they were "spread abroad" in the land. They could no longer cling together as they had done. They were mixed in with the Egyptians; but fortunately, for them and for the rest of mankind, it was as slaves and not as freemen. In every sort of labor, they were made to do the drudgery and bear the brunt. Upon them was heaped all the loads which the masters of Egypt were pleased to place on the shoulders of the despised children of Israel.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, JUNE 28

Read Genesis 46: 1-7

ISRAEL JOURNEYS INTO EGYPT.—It was through many trying experiences that God led Jacob to the evening of life. He had long mourned Joseph for dead; and it was not until he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him down to Egypt that "the spirit of Israel, their father, revived." He then said, "It is enough: I will go down and see Joseph before I die." But before he left the land of his fathers, he built an altar at Beersheba and worshiped the God of his fathers. His departure was the occasion of worship. His going away to another land was a transition, not so much in his own life at an advanced age, as in the history of God's chosen people. His worship

related to the covenant which God had made with Abraham and Isaac. Israel himself wanted to preserve the line unbroken; and ere he went into Egypt to die there, he desired to drive down a stake in the Promised Land and erect an altar which would forever connect his children with the covenant of Almighty God. So God promised to go with him into Egypt and to make of him a great nation of people whom he would bring back to the land which he was leaving; and, as a personal favor to the aged Israel, he granted that Joseph should with his own hands close his eyes in death.

How beautiful is the sunset of life when God's own hand has pushed all the clouds away!

TUESDAY, JUNE 29

Read Genesis 47: 1-12

THE LONG SOJOURN IN EGYPT.—Israel was 130 years old when he left Canaan and went into Egypt to make his home with Joseph. When he arrived, Joseph wisely told Pharaoh that his father and brethren had come. Their coming, therefore, became a state event. He was considerate of his brothers, five of whom he personally presented to his emperor. Joseph was not ashamed of his poor kin. He was willing to share his honors with them. His character shone with surpassing brilliancy when, with his scepter in hand and clad in his robes of state, he introduced the king to his shepherd father who was doubtless leaning heavily on his staff and perhaps wearing the coarse garments of his profession. His extreme age interested Pharaoh who immediately asked him how old he was. The great age to which he had attained was doubtless uncommon in Egypt where the people were more luxurious in their habits and hence were shorter-lived. The patriarch replied with becoming modesty that his days had been "few and evil," and that his life had been a mere "pilgrimage." He told the king that for 130 years now he had been going somewhere! How few are the days of this life, and how wise it is to consider them as but the duration of a journey to a better country! Though he was only a shepherd and a suppliant before the king, Israel blessed Pharaoh in the name of his God.

May the days of the years of our lives, whether they be many or few, be the mark-

ers or the mileposts on our journey from earth to heaven.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30

Read Exodus 1: 8-14

ISRAEL ENSLAVED IN EGYPT.—In Egypt the Israelites kept themselves separate from the Egyptians. They did not intermarry with them. There was a religious as well as a racial difference between them. As a people they lived inclusively, and hence exclusively, to themselves. Eventually there was a change in the dynasty of the Pharaohs and the line of kings which had been benefited by the services of Joseph was overthrown by another set who did not acknowledge that debt, or perhaps any other obligation, of their predecessors. Hence they repudiated the national debt of gratitude to the Israelites. This meant that they became at once the object of Egyptian hate. When a debtor disowns his debt he falls out with the creditor. Under the pretext of a national policy, the new king alleged that, since the people had not become a part of the commonwealth after a residence in the country of more than 300 years, they were to be regarded with suspicion. And besides this, he affirmed that, since they had not become fully identified with the kingdom, they might become an ally of the enemies of Egypt in time of war and thus gain their independence. Politically speaking, it was not an unreasonable supposition. The policy of the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph" was, therefore, to bring the people of Israel into bondage, and to make them the property of the empire, at least as far as their labor was concerned, so as to break their distinctive religious and national spirit and prevent the possibility of their forming such a military organization as might threaten the supremacy of the throne. His policy of repression accomplished only that which, in the providence of God, made for the ultimate success of Israel. Slaves multiply faster than freemen. It is luxurious living that retards growth in population. A nation's greatest wealth is in its people, provided they are an asset instead of a liability.

How truly God sets aside the wisdom of men and makes even their wrath and despotism to serve and honor him.

THURSDAY, JULY 1

Read 2 Kings 17: 6-12

THE ASSYRIAN EXILE OF ISRAEL.—After the death of Solomon, the kingdom was divided and two empires were set up: one under Jeroboam, called "Israel," with its capital at Samaria; and the other, "Judah," was a continuation of the line of Solomon under his son, Rehoboam, with its capital kept at Jerusalem. The kingdom of Israel consisted of ten tribes and was known as the Northern kingdom, while the two tribes composing Judah were known as the Southern kingdom. In the kingdom of Israel there were nineteen kings and nine dynasties during its existence of nearly 250 years. In the ninth year of king Hoshea, the Assyrian king captured Samaria, and carried the people away to Assyria and put them at two places, Halah and Habor. They were thus scattered and divided; and because they did not have a profound religious sense which would have given them a coherency in worship, they mixed with the people of their surroundings and never got together again. In this way they are said to have become "lost." The cause of their downfall was their sin in following the example of their idolatrous neighbors. When they came to serve the gods of other nations, they eventually came to serve those self-same nations, and to lose their power as the people of God. Their moral lapse was the cause of their national collapse. The nations that forget God are doomed. They are weaker and more vulnerable than the nations that never knew him. Ingratitude to God reacts to a people's loss of their moral ideals and resisting power.

May we be ever mindful of him who has the power to destroy both soul and body, that he may not be compelled to do either.

FRIDAY, JULY 2

Read Psalm 137: 1-9

JUDAH'S SORROW IN EXILE.—The kingdom of Judah outlived that of Israel by about 134 years, but was finally itself the victim of a foreign conquest, and the greater part of the people was carried captive to Babylon. After an exile approximating seventy years, they were permitted to return and rebuild Jerusalem under a special grant from the Persian king who had overthrown the old Babylonian government. But while in exile, the Jews felt the pang of separa-

tion from their beloved Jerusalem. Theirs was the sorrow of a sacred memory. They "remembered Zion." They wept for the Lord's house. They were bereaved of the assembly of the Lord's people. Therefore, the voices of praise were hushed. Their harps were hung on the willow trees and the songs of Zion were unsung by the worshiper in a strange land. Grief for the loss of God's benefits was expressed in their declarations of loyalty to God. Dire distress often brings his people to a deathless oath to live unto God and unto him alone. The bruised heart of the Jews in captivity, quivering in agony and yet constant in its devotion, found a sense of relief in the reflection: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy." Their sorrow vented itself in imprecations against their enemies, the Edomites, who had aided Babylon in accomplishing the destruction of Jerusalem. So intense was their anguish that they pronounced blessings upon those who should destroy their own destroyers.

May our greatest grief be that of a distance from God and that of our own lack of intimate and constant fellowship with him.

SATURDAY, JULY 3

Read Psalm 80: 1-7

A PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE.—The afflictions of Israel were understood to have been evidences of God's displeasure; and hence God alone could be expected to give relief. Since God had cast them into prison and bondage, he only could fetch them out. Israel was the flock: Jehovah was the shepherd. The sheep must look to the shepherd for protection and for deliverance from distress. When they have wandered from the path, it is he who must bring them back. He was the God who "went before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manassah,"—the tribes who followed closest to the Ark of the Covenant, on the journey out of Egypt, with which God was considered by the people as being mystically identified. Their prayer was that they might be led to repent. "Turn us," is the cry of a soul that

is sorry for its sin, and that can get some relief by becoming even more sorry for it. The impenitence of the people was evidenced by the fact that God was angry even with their prayers,—he was irritated by the insincerity of their petitions and by their coming to him with sin on their hearts unlamented. It was God who had given them the bread of affliction and the drink of tears; and had made them a strife to their neighbors and a laughing-stock to their foes. Therefore, the singer prays for converting grace and for that relief from sorrow which comes from sins forgiven.

May we have that deliverance from grief which will purify our hearts and thus provide unending joys.

SUNDAY, JULY 4

Read Psalm 94: 10-17

THE FAITHFULNESS OF JEHOVAH.—The Psalmist notes (1) the surety of God's faithfulness. If he corrects the heathen who are not his spiritual children, will he not certainly chasten his own sons? He knows the thoughts of men; and his discipline, therefore, is applicable and just. His purpose is to teach his laws to his children. Therefore, he administers correction and rebuke. That they may know him and the righteousness of his ways, he lets fall on them the rod of correction. And how often the lash has to be applied to keep wanderers from going astray into dangerous places! How often God guards our safety by sending such afflictions as will hold back our feet from slippery ground, and that "give us rest from the pitfalls." The singer affirms (2) that God's faithfulness is a righteous judgment. He does not pronounce nor disown his people. Let no one think, when he is afflicted, that God has cast him away. By the Lord's hand, judgment is taken out of the clutches of unrighteousness and is reposed in the hands of righteousness. But for his help and for our hope in him, our souls would be dumb under afflictions, and our hearts stunned into utter silence by the blows of his chastisement.

May the goodness of God be apparent to us even when his ways may seem severe.

Lesson Comment

Lesson 2—July 11

Childhood and Education of Moses

READ EXODUS 2: 1-10; ACTS 7: 22

DEVOTIONAL READING—Proverbs 3: 11-18

GOLDEN TEXT—*Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Proverbs 22: 6.

The rearing of children is a grave responsibility upon parents. Waywardness on the part of the child is not always due to parental neglect, nor is excellence in him invariably the result of parental discipline and care. But the parent is the child's natural keeper and guardian, and his responsibility is therefore direct and personal. Proper training during the early, tender, impressionable age usually results in rearing a child correctly, and in fixing such righteous ideals in his nature that he never gets away from them nor loses them. It is not in every instance, however, even where the parent tries to rear the child properly, that he actually succeeds in doing so. Should he succeed in training up the child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it. In so far as the parent is responsible for his success in properly raising the child, he is responsible for the child's adult condition.

Lesson Text

I. A Hebrew Babe (Exodus 2).

1 And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife daughter of Levi.
2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.

II. A Child of the Water (Exodus 2)

3 And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch: and she put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink.
4 And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river: and her maidens walked along by the river-side: and she saw the ark among the flags, and sent her hand-maid to fetch it.

6 And she opened it, and saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said: This is one of the Hebrews' children.
III. An Adopted Son (Exodus 2).

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maiden went and called the child's name Miriam.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, and said, Because I drew him out of the water.

IV. An Egyptian Prince (Acts 7).

22 And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works.

1. *A Hebrew Babe.* Moses was of the tribe of Levi, which became a priestly line upon the installation of his brother, Aaron, as the first high priest in Israel. He was born at the time when an edict was in force, by command of Pharaoh, that all male children of the Israelites should be slain at birth. He mercly wanted, it seems, to halt the growth of Hebrew population and the edict was evidently for only a while and was soon revoked. He did not desire to exterminate them, but merely to check their increase which had become phenomenal, and hold their population down to the point at which he could safely keep them in servitude.

2. *A Child of the Water.* Realizing the danger to which her baby was exposed, his mother, Jochebed, hid him carefully in her house for three months, but his cries would soon betray his presence and she could conceal him no longer. With a true mother-heart and with the strategy of a commander-in-chief of armies, she resorted to the bold but discreet measure of placing him indirectly into the hands of the king's daughter. She accordingly made an ark water-tight and, placing the baby in it, set it out among the rushes in the river where the princess came frequently to bathe.

3. *An Adopted Son.* As the king's daughter heard the infant cry floating out over the water, her heart was touched and she sent her maid to fetch the little boat containing the babe. Miriam, Moses' sister, who had been stationed near-by, appeared with the transparent suggestion of calling one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for the princess. Thus he was placed securely back into his mother's arms, with whose milk he drunk in a knowledge of God and a conviction of duty to God's people.

4. *An Egyptian Prince.* Adopted into the royal family, he was educated in the best universities of Egypt, and received academic training which was intended to make him a great servant of the state. Thus Moses became a mighty man in "word and works." From under a sentence of death by the king, he rose to become the king's son. But Jochebed got in her work before the professors in Egyptian universities got a chance at the young man.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, JULY 5

Read Exodus 2: 1-10

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION OF MOSES.—In the history of Moses, three women were leading factors. There was his mother whose resourcefulness was equal to the emergency under which he was born and which averted the royal edict that he should have been slain at the time of his birth. It was his mother who invented the novel plan of placing him in the ark among the rushes in the river at the place where Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe, trusting that he might be found and accepted by the princess under whose protection his life would be spared. The baby's real first public appearance was in the basket-bow when the king's daughter looked in upon him and admired him for his beautiful face and form. Miriam, his sister, performed her part as watcher and adviser to the princess when things turned out happily for the baby. The princess evidently knew full well what it all meant when she saw the beautiful child whose uplifted arms clutched her heart-strings. She readily consented to Miriam's offer to call one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for her. She could not have been ignorant of the relationship which existed between the child and its nurse. But she thus kindly offered the defenseless little one the protection and support of her royal position. In the meantime, his mother poured into his tender young heart a knowledge of who he was, and the importance of loyalty to Jehovah and to the people of God. How swiftly the years flew by, and how eagerly she sought to make an indelible impress of her own idealism on his mind, trusting that God would some day use him as a prince of Egypt to alleviate the sufferings of the Israelites.

May mothers everywhere realize that it is never too early to begin the religious training of their children.

TUESDAY, JULY 6

Read Acts 7: 20-28

THE EARLY LIFE OF MOSES.—Moses was a Hebrew by birth, and an Egyptian by adoption and education. It was God who created him a Hebrew, while a virgin prin-

cess could make him an Egyptian and educate him in all the learning of the day. He associated God with his origin, and his foster-mother with his culture. But with him, religion was more than learning. The worship of God was more than the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was conscious from the very beginning that God had raised him up to be a deliverer of his people, and it was that which became the passion of his life. Even after he had been invested with his princely estates, he betrayed his Hebrew origin and preferences. When, one day, he saw an Egyptian cruelly maltreating a Hebrew, he hastily drew his sword and slew the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand, thinking no one else had witnessed the deed. But on the next day, seeing two Hebrews in a fight, he appeared as peacemaker when the one who was in fault asked him if he meant to kill him as he did the Egyptian. Thereupon Moses knew that the deed was known, and he fled for his life.

May we ever have a preference for the worship and the people of God above the honors, riches and learning of this world.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7

Read Hebrews 11: 23-28

MOSES IDENTIFIES HIMSELF WITH ISRAEL.—It was faith that made Moses the great man that he was. The ties of blood are stronger than the fraternities of culture. But even stronger than family bonds are the ties of faith. It was, first of all, faith on the part of his parents who hid him three months in their home, after he was born, in defiance of the royal decree that he should be exposed and slain. It was by faith that he was hidden in the ark and placed among the rushes at the bathing-place of the king's daughter, by which his mother trusted in God as the keeper of her child. It was in an atmosphere of faith and devotion that he was born and was saved from an early death and was adopted into the royal family of Egypt. He, therefore, recognized his duty to God above his obligations to his state, where the two came into conflict. When he became of age, he came to exercise for himself that faith which had been exercised in his behalf by his parents before him. In compliance with the terms of that faith, he forfeited his position as a prince in Egypt and took the place of an outcast with the people of God. He turned his

back on the wealth of Pharaoh and incurred his royal displeasure by an act of disloyalty, because he saw him who is invisible to whom he had to be true. Moses did not deliberately renounce his benefactor, but rather emphatically acknowledged his allegiance to God as the greater sovereign and the one who is to be obeyed above all other rulers. His faith led him to be loyal to the people of God among whom he instituted the rites and ceremonies which were ordained of God, the more important of which was the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb on the door-posts of the Israelites the night before they left the land of Egypt forever.

May we renounce the world with its lusts and attractions for the more abiding pleasures of following out the will of God.

THURSDAY, JULY 8

Read Exodus 2: 15-22

MOSES A FUGITIVE IN MIDIAN.—Pharaoh was very angry when he heard that Moses had slain the Egyptian who had a difference with an Israelite. With him one Egyptian was worth more than many Israelites. He took Moses' act as one of disloyalty to the Egyptian government and of defiance of his royal decrees concerning the inferiority and servitude of the Israelites. Moses immediately fled into the wild, rugged, mountainous country in the Sinai peninsula. He there soon came upon another opportunity to show a friendly spirit and to befriend the oppressed. Some ruffian shepherds were seen driving back some young women from the watering-troughs where the flocks of the various herdsmen, who used the pasture lands of the country, were accustomed to drink. Moses' refined nature revolted against such indignity and impolite treatment. With the swiftness of a leopard and with an arm that was irresistible, he sprang upon the ruffians and drove them back, allowing the young women to come first with their flocks to the troughs. For this kindness he was admitted as a guest in their home. Jethro, the father of the young women, was a servant of Jehovah although he was not an Israelite, and a priest officer in the land of Midian. No doubt Moses' culture and graces of character immediately introduced him favorably to the inner circle of the home, for in due

time, Jethro gave him one of his daughters as wife. He then became a sheep-tender for his father-in-law. It seems he never tried to acquire any flocks of his own. He was born to be a leader of men and not to be an owner of sheep, or the possessor of worldly wealth.

May we remember that often the best preparation for public life is God's appointed place of retirement in humble and unprofitable occupation.

FRIDAY, JULY 9

Read Deuteronomy 6: 4-15

ISRAEL'S HOME TRAINING.—The fireside instruction to be given in every home is the Word of God which gives (1) his commandments, (2) his promises, (3) his warnings and penalties for disobedience. His commands are to be taught from generation to generation. The first of these is: "Thou shalt have no other gods." There is only one true and living God. Those who have many gods err, first of all, in having many,—since there is only one. Let the Word of God be made conspicuous. Let it be displayed on the frontlets and the door-posts of our lives. The Israelites also received the promises of God that in the land to which they went they would receive gifts from him of lands which they would not need to buy, vineyards and fields which they did not plant, but which were theirs by right of an inheritance which antedated that of the people who held the country when he entered it,—titles which consisted in the promise of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, their ancestors. They were not, however, to presume on the mercies of God, nor were they to forget God when they should prosper, nor worship the gods of their neighbors in the land which Jehovah should give them. The penalty for disobedience would be heavy. God is a jealous God. He will not tolerate a rival. His people are his by the most sacred relationship. No other claim must be made upon their affections. Dreadful will be the consequences upon them if they should renounce his lordship, or upon others who should entice them to forsake him.

May we make our homes the first and most efficient of all institutions for the religious training of our people.

SATURDAY, JULY 10

Read 2 Timothy 1: 3-14

AN EXAMPLE OF HOME TRAINING.—Timothy was a close personal friend of the Apostle Paul. He was one of his converts, and was his companion and associate in many of his missionary labors and trials. The last letter he wrote to anybody was written to Timothy. In it he expressed his thoughts and prayers for him, and his confidence in his unfeigned faith which had been supported in him by the training which he had received from his mother and grandmother. He gave him words of counsel—"to stir up the gift that was in him," and "to hold fast the form of sound words"; that is, to be faithful to the trust committed to him by his religious teachers and guides in the family circle and in his ministerial life. How great was the influence of Eunice and Lois on the life of Timothy! Preachers usually come out of homes where God's Word is taught and honored.

May God give us more homes in which the Bible is read every day and where the influences of parents will lead the children to an early and an abiding faith!

SUNDAY, JULY 11

Read Proverbs 3: 1-12

THE REWARDS OF WISDOM.—To observe the laws of God is wisdom. It is folly to ignore or to break them. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Understanding starts where faith begins. It is wisdom to trust in God rather than in oneself. He can direct our paths better than we can guide our own feet, for we cannot see how nor where we should go. We should acknowledge him in all our ways, that he may keep us in the right way and guide us as we journey on. His wisdom means health and well-being, physical, mental and spiritual. To honor the Lord wins honors from the Lord. In whatever way we may glorify him, he gives a corresponding receipt and credit therefor. We honor him when we submit to his correction and yield to his discipline. It is unwisdom to resent it, and to fall out with God because of our afflictions and sufferings.

May we honor the Lord by yielding to him his every right and title to our affections and possessions.

Lesson 3—July 18

The Call of Moses

READ EXODUS 2: 11 to 4: 18

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 90: 12-17

GOLDEN TEXT—*Certainly I will be with thee.* Exodus 3: 12.

God always goes with his servants when they go as he directs. In the pursuit of his will, they can be assured of his presence and blessing. When he gave the great commission to his disciples, our Lord promised to be with them to the end of the age in case they obeyed that command. He is spiritually present with all his people, but in a peculiar sense he is with those who follow him in the direction of a special duty and in obedience to his special call. He accompanies them as their guide, advocate and helper. All that he has is behind his word: his authority and power, his conquests and triumphs. By his aid there is certain victory, and in his companionship there is joy forevermore. But in order to realize his presence, faith must be exercised. How often God has made this promise to his people! And never once has he failed to fulfill it in the case of those who put their trust in him.

Lesson Text

Exodus 3: 10-15; 4: 10-12

I. The Call (Exodus 3).

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

II. The Authority (Exodus 3).

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

III. The Ability (Exodus 4).

10 And Moses said unto Jehovah, Oh, Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And Jehovah said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? is it not I, Jehovah?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Call.* Moses was engaged in keeping the sheep of his father-in-law in the land of Midian, and had penetrated into the wilderness peninsula of Sinai even unto Mount Horeb in search for adequate pasture for his flocks. From the bush that burnt with unconsuming fire, God spoke to him and directed that he go back to Egypt and there lead the people of Israel out of slavery. Moses for eighty years had carried a burdened heart for his people, but he had found no way to help them or to relieve their sufferings. Now that God called him to this special task, he faced his mission written out in letters larger than he could recognize as his own identification. "Who am I?" he asked, "that I should go unto Pharaoh and should bring forth the children of Israel?" God gave him the promise of his presence accompanied by the sign that he should serve God, in company with the children of Israel, in the very mountain whereon they were then standing.

2. *The Authority.* Moses felt that he must have some definite means of making known to the children of Israel that he was an authorized leader and deliverer for them, and that he was not an ambitious politician who sought some persons' advantage by playing to the duplicity of the people. So he asked the Lord, "By whom shall I tell them I am sent to lead them out of bondage?" God then gave him a characterization of himself by which he has been known ever since, "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,"—the God of their fathers, the God of individuals who believed in him and trusted in his word.

3. *The Ability.* In order to be a successful advocate, Moses thought he must be a fluent speaker. He supposed it would require much speaking to accomplish that task. He himself was "slow of speech," and perhaps stammered. But God assured him that he would be with his mouth, and that whatever he wanted him to say with his mouth, he would help his mouth to say. His difficulty was more imaginary than real. Sometimes the most burning eloquence is the hesitant speech that bubbles up from a heart that is pent up with vehemence and enthusiasm: that is bursting with the volume of its emotions and convictions.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, JULY 12

Read Exodus 3: 10-15

THE CALL OF MOSES.—Before Moses received the call to his life work, there were two periods of preparation for it. Two thirds of his life were spent in training. His career is divided into three sections of forty years each; the first as a prince in Egypt; the second as a fugitive in Midian and the third as the leader of Israel. Doubtless from childhood, he felt God had chosen him to be a friend to his oppressed people, and yet the definite task which he was to perform as their advocate had not been clearly made known to him. As he tended the sheep of Jethro on the mountains of Midian he received the call clearly and definitely. The burning bush was a counterpart of the flame of holy passion that burnt in his own soul. Out of it God spoke to him audibly and summoned him to the specific task of going to Egypt to lead the people out of bondage. Although it had been the one ambition of his life, when he stood face to face with it, he shuddered and faltered. He alleged that he was incompetent and God allowed that he was, but promised to go with him. He wondered how he would be able to convince the Israelites that he was an authorized representative of their interests, and asked by whom he should tell them he had been sent to them. God said that he should say to them: "The God whose name is I am hath sent me to you." His commission came from the God of whom alone neither the past nor the future tense of the verb to be can be used, but only the present tense. Furthermore, he might be identified by them as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, their forefathers.

May our hearts be ready to hear God's voice when he calls to any special work for him.

TUESDAY, JULY 13

Read Exodus 4: 10-17

AARON HELPING MOSES.—After a series of signs by which God indicated to Moses his divine authority in the name of which he should go to the Israelites, Moses expressed doubt of his ability to convince the people that God had sent him because he was not eloquent and could not speak persuasively. The greatest law-giver of the ages was not

an orator but a writer. No doubt his rapid-fire mind acted too swiftly for his tongue, and his powers of speech lay helpless on the bosom of his profound thought. God made him two offers; first, to be with his mouth and teach him what to say and, how to speak, affirming that there was more eloquence in what one said than in how he said it; and second, that since eloquence of speech had its place in his ministry among God's people, he would authorize him to appoint his brother Aaron to go with him to say words for him. Aaron was to be a mouth-piece for him, a sort of "loud-speaker"! But as for Moses himself, he was to speak mostly with the rod that was in his hand. That was the voice of action, more eloquent and convincing than a thousand pleasing tongues. By it, when Moses spoke for God, the land would be filled with vermin, the rivers turned into blood and the heavens mantled in unutterable darkness. By it, the set throne of the Pharaohs would tremble under the fell stroke of God's destroying angel.

Let us remember that it is deeds rather than words that make the most eloquent and powerful testimony for God.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14
Read Exodus 4: 18-23

MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT.—The Lord commands Moses to return to Egypt, assuring him that those who sought to kill him, because of his having killed the Egyptian who maltreated a Hebrew, were dead and that he could now go back with perfect impunity. So he took leave of Jethro, taking his wife and two small sons,—all that he could claim as his own,—set them on an ass and started for the land of Egypt to espouse the cause of two and a half million slaves and to question the power of the greatest monarchy on earth. On the way at an inn, the Lord intercepted him and was about to kill him. God dealt Jacob a heavy blow before he became qualified for admission into the promised land. Now Moses must learn for himself something of the wrath of God and more of the discipline of divine interference. His wife was evidently a worshiper of God but was not a Hebrew, and hence she had evidently objected to Moses circumcising his sons. Now

God halts the company and holds Moses to severe account for having failed to bring his own family into covenant relations with God. When Zipporah perceived Moses' danger, she petulantly performed the circumcision herself, and charged Moses with being the occasion of her making herself bloody with the performance, declaring that he was a "bloody husband" to her. Whereupon Moses sent her with his two sons back to his father-in-law in Midian.

May the call of God be obeyed even though it means the anguish of an interrupted family tie.

THURSDAY, JULY 15
Read Exodus 1: 27-31

AARON MEETS MOSES.—After forty years of separation, the two brothers, Moses and Aaron, meet at the command of God. To each the call had come, and their meeting was of divine appointment and for a definite purpose. Aaron was directed to go into the wilderness and meet Moses there,—not in Midian nor in Egypt but at the midway ground where everything could be considered in the light of God's will rather than under any local conditions whatever. The wilderness was the proper place for a conference of the two brothers. In a quiet sequestered spot, Aaron needed to get full and confidential information from Moses as to all that had taken place and all that God had in mind for them to do. For forty years Moses had been with God in the wilderness, and Aaron must qualify as Moses' assistant by a dip into the same experience. They subsequently gathered the elders of the children of Israel together and Aaron related to them the whole matter and gave signs before them to prove that a miraculous and divine power was back of them. The people believed that the two brothers were authorized to accomplish their deliverance and avowed their loyalty to them as the leaders of Israel's cause against the tyranny and despotism of Egypt. They worshiped God, rejoicing that the day of deliverance was approaching and that the men of the hour had appeared.

May we co-operate one with another to the end that God may operate through us to the accomplishment of his will among men.

FRIDAY, JULY 16
Read Exodus 5: 1-9

MOSES BEFORE PHARAOH.—After Moses and Aaron had convinced the people of Israel that they were God's chosen agents for their deliverance from bondage, it became necessary to carry the matter to Pharaoh and secure his consent. To move that great body of about two and a half millions of people there could be no secret plans. Every thing had to be done under a royal decree. When Moses and Aaron appeared before the king with a petition to let the children of Israel go into the wilderness to observe a religious festival, Pharaoh expressed his contempt for every body concerned in the proposal. He disdained God in whose name the request had been laid before him and in whose honor release for the Israelites was asked, and said, "Who is the Lord? Who is this God you are talking about, that I should do as he wants me to do?" He expressed contempt for Moses and Aaron who, he affirmed, were putting vain and idle notions in the heads of the people and were preaching foolish dreams to them. The people also fell under the king's contempt for giving ear to such proposals and for being so idle that they had time to entertain such vagaries. On the principle that an idle mind is the devil's work-shop, he declared that they were lazy and that they could be cured of their notions by being put to harder tasks. So he ordered that their burdens should be increased.

How often God allows us to fail in our early efforts in order that we be fully prepared to credit him with success when it is later granted.

SATURDAY, JULY 17
Read Exodus 5: 10-19

ISRAEL'S BURDEN INCREASED.—In a violent rage, Pharaoh ordered that the tasks of the Israelites should be so severe that their "wander-lust" would be dissipated and their slavery become abject. His policy of repression had not been successful, he thought, because it had not been severe enough. So he determined to exhaust every means of crushing out the national and religious spirit of the people. Under his taskmasters they had already built two great military cities, Pithom and Rameses, and yet their

tasks must be doubled in order to keep them employed, he affirmed. They were, therefore, ordered to make the same tale of brick as before, each Israelite supplying his own straw which had hitherto been supplied for him. In their effort to comply with the king's command, they went all over the land to gather stubble, but yet they could not make the usual number of brick per man per day. The officers of the children of Israel were then beaten because they did not make the people produce the customary tale of brick. They complained to Pharaoh that it was not their fault nor that of the people, but that it was a physical impossibility for the workmen to do double work. But he answered, "Ye are idle; that is the reason why you want to go and worship your God. No relief shall be given you."

May the ever increasing burdens of life dislodge our hearts from this world that we may set our affections on things above!

SUNDAY, JULY 18
Read Psalm 90: 12-17

WISDOM THROUGH AFFLICTION.—This psalm was written by Moses when he was in the wilderness with the people of Israel after they were turned back from Kadesh-barnea and were forced to stay there until their unbelief had died out in the passing of that generation. Mortality among the people was great. He had, as never before, opportunity to observe the brevity and transiency of human life. Because our days are few, we ought to "number" them, or count them, as we count the days until some important coming event. No time is to be squandered or lost. Every day brings us nearer the end. Make the most of it. Afflictions bring one to a realization of his sinfulness and of God's discipline for sin, and to pray for his returning goodness, "Return, oh Lord, how long?" In afflictions, only God's mercies can satisfy the famishing soul and heal its painful hurts. But we should balance God's goodness over against our troubles. God does other things for his people than to send upon them distressing visitations. Let us remember them.

Although life is fleeting, may we remember that God's work abides, and that our work can be established only by his hands.

Lesson 4—July 25

The Passover

READ EXODUS 11: 1 TO 12: 36

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 91: 1-7

GOLDEN TEXT—*Christ our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ.* 1 Corinthians 5: 7.

Perhaps there is no type or symbol of the Old Testament that more beautifully or more appropriately pictures Christ than the Passover. As it meant the saving of the first-born of Israel from death, so Christ by his death saves all who are under the redeeming power of his blood. As it accomplished the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery to Pharaoh, so Christ gives liberty to those who are in bondage to sin and sets free the captive to Satan's pernicious will. He is our Passover, the Paschal Lamb of God. He hath been sacrificed. He does not remain to be sacrificed. He was offered up once for all. The redemption which he has wrought out does not need to be done over, nor repeated. It is sufficient for every man and is efficacious with all who will accept it. We look for a King to come, but to the Deliverer who saves. To be saved from sin is to be freed from the bondage of sin and to be delivered from death at the hands of angels commissioned of God to execute his judgments upon all who do iniquity. What a glorious privilege is ours, in having a Passover in Jesus Christ!

Lesson Text

Exodus 12: 1, 2, 21-28

- I. Date of the Passover.
 - 1 And Jehovah spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,
 - 2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.
- II. Preparations for the Passover.
 - 21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out, and take you lambs according to your families, and kill the passover.
 - 22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side-posts with the blood that is in the basin: and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.
 - 23 For Jehovah will pass through to smite the Egyptians: and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, Jehovah will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come unto your houses to smite you.
- III. Observance of the Passover.
 - 24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.
 - 25 And it shall come to pass, when ye are come to the land which Jehovah will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.
 - 26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?
 - 27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of Jehovah's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.
 - 28 And the children of Israel went and did as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Date of the Passover.* It was early in the Jewish month of Abib that God gave instructions to Moses concerning the Passover. This corresponds to the period in our calendar from about the middle of March to the middle of April. It was to mark the beginning of the new year with the Israelites, because it was to be the starting point in their national history. Till this day, the Jewish New Year dates from the anniversary of the Passover, which comes either the latter part of March or the first of April.

2. *Preparation for the Passover.* The Passover was a divine institution. It was God's own plan of delivering his people and at the same time of leading them into a closer fellowship with him and to a greater dependence upon him. He gave full instructions to Moses and Aaron concerning it. The lamb was to be slain; one lamb for each household; but, because all the flesh was to be eaten, "If the household was too little," then two families could unite in the preparation of it so that there might be eaters enough to consume it entirely. The blood of the lamb was to be sprinkled on the two upright door-posts and the upper door-post of each house, as an evidence of compliance with the command of God on the part of all who were within the house, and of their readiness to abide the further movements and commands of the Almighty.

3. *Observance of the Passover.* It was to become a memorial, an ordinance to be forever observed by the children of Israel. It was certainly not a saving agent, but was an event which commemorated their salvation as a people. In the land of Promise to which they were going, it was to be observed by them annually, in order that children's children might be reminded of "Jehovah's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in the land of Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses." There was complete compliance with the command of God on the part of the people; and on the early morning, while Egypt lay prostrate under the tenth terrible plague and in the bereavement of its first-born in every home, the obstinate will of Pharaoh was broken and the people of Israel were free.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, JULY 19
Read Exodus 11: 4-10

THE FIRST-BORN THREATENED.—After the land had been visited with nine terrible plagues, Moses went to the king for the last time. He told him plainly that the first-born of every family in Egypt would be slain. But against the Israelites not a dog would move his tongue,—either to bark or to bite. God had made a difference between the Israelite and the Egyptian, and that difference would become apparent in a terrible scourge that would come upon all Egypt. Moses told Pharaoh that his servants, who had been in authority over the Israelites, would soon bow down before them in humble and tearful plea to leave the land. God was going to reverse the order of things. His appearance before the king at this time was more to announce his doom than to renew his request to let the people go. But when, after a final petition, Moses heard the king refuse to release the Israelites, he left him in a towering righteous indignation,—never again to plead with him for God's people. God himself would speak now,—in the swish of the swirling death angel's wings and in the gurgle of flowing blood.

How terrible is the exhaust of God's power when his mercy has spent itself!

TUESDAY, JULY 20

Read Exodus 12: 1-11

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PASSOVER.—The deliverance of the people from Egyptian bondage was to become a national celebration and to be observed with exact conformity to the original. To the liberated Hebrews, it was to become the "beginning of months." It should mark every New Year. Their national history would start with their departure from the house of bondage. Concerning the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb: it was to be eaten rather than offered. It was to be emblematic of what God would do for them and not of what they would do for him. The blood of the lamb on the door-posts would indicate that the Paschal lamb had been slain and that God's commands had been observed by all that were in the house. It afforded them a sense of safety. It gave them preparation of mind. By it also their bodies were nour-

ished and strengthened for the march outward at the earliest possible morning hour.

May our souls rest securely under the blood of Christ Jesus, our Paschal lamb, and stand ready and able by his strength to follow God where he leads.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21

Read Exodus 12: 21-28

THE PASSOVER.—The Israelites did as they were commanded by Moses in the preparation of the Paschal lamb. Behind doors with blood sprinkled on the posts, they were to remain until they were at liberty to venture out towards morning. It was the blood and not the fact that they were Israelites that saved them that night. It was not the blood of Abraham and Isaac that was in their veins, but the God-appointed blood of the lamb on their door-posts that caused the destroying angel to "Passover" them. That was God's remission of their sins, while the Egyptians had no remission provided, or did not take advantage of that which was offered, and which they could have used as did the Israelites had they wanted to do so. Under the covenant with God, the blood of the lamb was a substitute for that of the first-born. It was God's way. He wrote it into the very text of his covenant with his people that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins."

May we comply with the terms of God's covenant made in the blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin!

THURSDAY, JULY 22

Read Exodus 12: 29-36

THE FIRST-BORN OF EGYPT SLAIN.—In a contest between God and man there can be no doubt as to who the victor will be. The fiercest wrath of man must yield to the divine hand. Pharaoh might have supposed that the plagues of different sorts were the work of magic, powerful and disastrous as it was; but when death swept over the land like a whirlwind and took all the first-born of man and beast in one night, there was no room to say that it was due to some black art,—it was clearly the work of an almighty hand. When God has to strike, he deals a death-blow and hits a vital spot. Pharaoh surrendered to Moses and Aaron, whom he called into his presence as the shrieks of the people holding their dead in

their arms rose like the moaning of the sea all over the land of Egypt, and while his own soul burst as its hardness was pelted by this personal bereavement in the death of the crown prince. He said to them, "Go, and bless me before you go." God had at last broken the chains of slavery and his people were free. They were not only free-men but were entitled to the spoils of victory. Jewelry, clothing and anything else they wanted was gladly allowed them by the Egyptians who were anxious to get them out of the country.

May we remember that God will eventually deliver his people even if the downfall of nations and the destruction of human civilization itself is necessary to do it!

FRIDAY, JULY 23

Read Exodus 13: 3-10

THE PASSOVER A MEMORIAL.—The Passover had a two-fold significance: (1) the saving of the first-born of the Israelites, for it was only by the goodness of God that they were not included in the scourge that visited the Egyptian, and (2) the deliverance of the people from political servitude to a despotic government. It, therefore, commemorated both spiritual and civil liberty as the gift of God. That which he has preserved to us is his by divine title, and is placed by him into our hands as a trust. We should, therefore, recognize the priority of God's claim upon it. The value of the Passover as a memorial was that of keeping the Hebrews regularly reminded of what God had done for them and how good God had been to their forefathers.

"Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget; lest we forget!"

The people who forget the principles, privations and sufferings of their pious forefathers who wrought out their institutions, are taking a backward step toward oblivion and national forgetfulness.

Let us remember the goodness of God to the fathers and pioneers of our faith in America and keep ourselves true to their ideals of heroism and devotion.

SATURDAY, JULY 24

Read 1 Corinthians 5: 6-13

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER.—Christ is our Passover, the Lamb of God by whose death

we may be exempt from death and saved unto eternal life. He was the fulfillment of the ancient Passover-type. As our Passover, he is to be observed continuously, not once a year only but all the time. The old Passover was to be commemorated by the use of bitter herbs, a symbol of sin, but since Christ in his death took away sin, the "old leaven is to be put away" and the new life in Christ is to be observed. Therefore, malice and wickedness has no place in the heart of the Christian who has come under the covenant of grace in the blood of Jesus Christ. Its observance is to be maintained also in the social life of Christians; the company and fellowship of fornicators and others like them are to be spurned. To keep the Passover in his blood is to have the spirit of Christ in our lives and to accept his substitutionary death as propitiation for our sins.

May our daily walk and conversation be a perpetual observance of the new Passover established in the sacrificial death of Christ Jesus our Lord!

SUNDAY, JULY 25

Read Psalm 91: 1-7

SAFETY IN JEHOVAH.—God is a shelter to which souls exposed to danger may flee and find safety. He is a refuge to which the guilty conscience may run and get relief through pardon and forgiveness. He is a fortress in which beleaguered lives may withstand the violent attacks of temptation and the forces of evil in the world. He is a deliverer from dangers seen and unseen; from foes that creep up noiselessly in the dark and from the hosts that shout as they rush to the attack. He is an overspreading protector, whose truth is a shield and buckler, who covers his trusting children with his outstretched arm. He is a watchman against the unseen pestilence that infests the night-time and the invisible swift-flying arrow that makes the day to be dreaded. He is a friend who spares his friends when thousands fall under his wrath at their side. It was he who saved the people of Israel when all around them there was not a home in which there was not one dead.

May God help us to know that in him there is safety and joy forevermore!

Lesson 5—August 1

The Deliverance at the Red Sea

READ EXODUS 13: 17-22; 14: 10-16

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 37: 1-7

GOLDEN TEXT—*Jehovah is my strength and song, and he is my salvation.* EXODUS 15: 2.

Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah. They need nothing else to make them happy. In him they have the source of all felicities. He is their strength and they need no other strength. Although weak themselves, they have him whose grace is sufficient and whose strength is made perfect in their weakness. He is their song; though they may sorrow on many accounts, yet in him they have occasion to rejoice always.

Lesson Text

I. The Departure from Egypt (Exodus 13).

17 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt.

18 But God led the people about, by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea; and the children of Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt.

19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

20 And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. 21 And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go by day and by night:

22 The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, departed not from before the people.

II. The Deliverance at the Red Sea (Exodus 14).

10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto Jehovah.

11 And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to bring us forth out of Egypt?

12 Is not this the word that we spake unto thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians. For it were better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 Jehovah will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 And Jehovah said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.

16 And lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Departure from Egypt.* When King Pharaoh had sufficiently relaxed his grasp on the children of Israel to let them go, after the tenth plague of the death of the first-born, they assembled at Succoth to form the line of march toward Canaan. There seemed to have been some hesitation on their part as to which way they should go, but "God led the people about, by way of the wilderness by the Red Sea." When they left Egypt they were given jewelry, garments and money by the Egyptians in order to "speed the parting guests"! The able-bodied men also took weapons, so that the "children of Israel went armed out of the land of Egypt." Journeying from Succoth, they encamped first at Etham in the edge of the wilderness, where Jehovah appeared to them in a pillar of cloud to lead them by day which, at the close of the day, became a pillar of fire by which they might see both how and where to travel at night. God went before them as guide, protector and comfort, whose presence was visible every moment of the day and the night.

2. *The Deliverance at the Red Sea.* Because there seemed to have been some delay on the part of the people in leaving the land of Egypt, Pharaoh evidently thought they were so unorganized and aimless that they could be easily recaptured and brought back into bondage again. He therefore sent his army to pursue after them, which overtook them as they faced the Red Sea. The Israelites were in consternation and complained against Moses because he had led them to what seemed certain death in the wilderness. But he told them to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." They had come to the place where God would make bare his arm, before which their enemies would melt away like snowflakes in the sea. He then ordered the people to "go forward." They went, even though the broad expanse of the sea lay out before them. At the command of God, Moses raised the rod over the sea and it divided so that the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground. And that which looked like an impassable gulf became a thoroughfare.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, JULY 26

Read Exodus 13: 17-22

GUIDED BY JEHOVAH.—Pharaoh's permission that the Israelites leave the land was a concession wrenched from him by the strong hand of God. Their commission to go came from God who directed them where to go. The deliverer is always the leader. God led the people not by the nearest route to Canaan, which lay through the country of the Philistines, for that might have been the quickest way back to Egypt! The Philistines would surely have made war on them in opposing their passage through their country. So God led them by way of the Red Sea into the wilderness, because it was better for them to battle with privations than with armed men. The mummy of Joseph was carried along with them, according to the oath of the children of Israel, made by request of Joseph, that his bones should be carried back with them when the time should come for them to return to the Promised Land. It served as a monument of the glorious past and as a reminder of the covenant of God with their fathers. Before the slowly moving hosts there went a pillar of cloud by day, which became a pillar of fire by night, to direct their course. It was a supernatural and special provision made for their guidance, so they could travel both day and night because they must get out of Egypt as quickly as possible.

May the presence of God in our hearts be our guiding cloud by day and our comforting campfire by night.

TUESDAY, JULY 27

Read Exodus 14: 10-14

ISRAEL'S FEAR AND MOSES' FAITH.—When the soreness of his bereavement wore off after three or four days following the Passover night, Pharaoh rued his permission to let the Israelites go and decided he could not afford to lose so many slaves without making an effort to regain possession of them. Furthermore, it seemed to him that they were wandering aimlessly about the western border of Egypt, without competent leadership, and that they could be easily captured and enslaved

again. So he sent his army after them, which overtook them encamped by the Red Sea, with mountains rising precipitously on both sides of them. Their situation was exceedingly grave. Before them lay the sea, on each side of them rose the mountains, and in their rear there came up a hostile army. The people thought they were trapped. Their anguish was inexpressible. They complained against Moses for having induced them to leave Egypt at all, declaring that they had told him the plan was not feasible. But with a firm faith in God, Moses said to them that God would save them out of the dilemma, for he knew what God would do.

May God help us to have the strongest faith in him when our severest trials come and when fears assail us on every side.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28

Read Exodus 14: 15-22

THE DELIVERANCE AT THE RED SEA.—In the extremity to which the Israelites had come at the Red Sea, Moses himself felt the stress of the situation and cried mightily unto the Lord. His faith did not prevent his becoming intensely agitated over the situation—not as to its outcome, but as to its effects, upon the people of whose guidance he was responsible. God told him to speak to the people rather than to him, and to tell them to go forward; and as for himself he should take the rod and raise it up over the waters of the sea that a pathway might be made for God's people and a death-trap laid for their enemies. In the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites and the complete destruction of the Egyptian army, God's honor would be forcibly got from the Egyptians and visibly established among the children of Israel. Then the angel of the Lord and the pillar of cloud and of fire moved from in front and took a position in rear of them in order to guide them from the rear, and to intercept the advancing cohorts of the enemy. The uplifted rod in the hand of Moses brought a strong East wind, which rolled back the waters and the people of God marched out from a ravine in the mountains through a dry channel in the sea.

May we trust God to open the way when he directs us to go forward even in the face of what might seem to be an impassable difficulty.

THURSDAY, JULY 29

Read Exodus 14: 23-31

THE EGYPTIANS DESTROYED.—How presumptuous are they who defy God. The Egyptians, perceiving that the Israelites had crossed the sea dry-shod, imagined they could do likewise and so hurriedly entered the channel in pursuit of them. They did not reckon with God who, however, reckoned with them; for he "looked forth upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians." That by which God guided his people was that through which he looked with dreadful scorn upon their foes and pursuers. Their chariot wheels sank in the sand, and the drivers could not make the horses pull them, though they twisted the wheels from their axles—they "drove them heavily." The Egyptians realized that they had fallen into the hands of Almighty God when they saw the walls of water closing down upon them. They turned to flee, but it was too late. Moses, at the command of God, again raised the rod up over the sea and the waters rolled back to their regular channel and drowned the entire Egyptian army. The Israelites had the witness of their deliverance in the sight of the dead Egyptians on the seashore when the dawn lifted the curtain of the night and displayed the havoc wrought upon their enemies by the tide of God's power. Thus Pharaoh failed in his last attempt to hold the Israelites in Egypt. Nevertheless did an Egyptian raise his hand against Israel to keep the children back from their journey to the land of their forefathers. The effect upon the people of the miraculous deliverance was beneficial and strengthening to their faith who were led anew to recognize God as their deliverer and Moses as his servant and their leader.

How firm and constant should be our faith in God who, at times, lays our greatest fears dead at our feet!

FRIDAY, JULY 30

Read Exodus 15: 1-10

THE SONG OF DELIVERANCE.—For their safety the people of Israel gave God all the praise. They were well aware that it was his power alone that had delivered them. It was by miraculous intervention that they were led out of danger. They could not have extricated themselves. To them God had shown the might of his mercy and the power of his love. Out of inescapable perils, he had lifted them by visible and unmistakable hands, and had placed their feet on safe ground. He was recognized as the God of their fathers, who was not a stranger to their history, with whom their ancestors had acquaintance and with whom they had made a covenant of everlasting loyalty. The Lord is his name; mighty in battle and victorious over all foes. He is jealous of his name, who triumphs over all opposition and who utterly destroys all rivals for the affections of his people. He is exceedingly great and powerful because he is surpassingly good, for in the greatness of his excellence he overthrew those who rose up against him. But it is in behalf of his people that the majesty of his hand is shown. It is for their sake that he congeals the deep in the heart of the sea so that limpid water becomes as solid granite and stands up in a wall as of stone.

May God fill our hearts with songs of praise to him for all his wonderful mercies toward us!

SATURDAY, JULY 31

Read Exodus 15: 11-21

THE SONG OF TRIUMPH.—In a beautiful hymn, the singers of Israel ascribed their deliverance to the triumph of Jehovah over their enemies. They sang of what God did against those who were against them; because God in that way did wonders for them. Praise is the heart and soul of music and of song. The choirs of Miriam on the banks of the Red Sea sang of the greatness, holiness and power of God, whose mercy was shown in leading and redeeming his people. The reports of his wonderful deeds would go ahead of the marching hosts of Israel and inspire dread in the hearts of all who might afterwards

oppose them. Palestine, Moab, Edom and Canaan should hear of it and would tremble at the approach of the people for whose sake the flower of the Egyptian army had been destroyed utterly. So it was that Balak, king of Moab, offered Balaam any reward if he would anathematize the people of Israel so that they might lose the protection and favor of God. And when the spies afterwards visited the Land of Promise they were sheltered and delivered by Rahab of Jericho, because she had heard of God's doings among the children of Israel, and therefore had a righteous fear of him. The people were God's purchase. He would certainly plant them in the mountain of their inheritance, and would lead them to the place which he had made for them and to the sanctuary which he had established for them. In an antiphonal chorus Miriam and her choir answered the singers of Israel, with the glad refrain, "Sing ye unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." With the songs of triumph ringing in their ears the people should have been heartened for the battles ahead of them in winning the land which God had given them from of old.

May we ever have the victory which is of that faith which overcometh the world!

SUNDAY, AUGUST 1

Read Psalm 37: 1-7

SECURITY THROUGH FAITH.—Why should we envy the workers of iniquity since their prosperity is only apparent and temporary? Those who trust in the Lord and do good shall have shelter and food—that much at least. Those whose delights are in the Lord shall have their desires fulfilled. In all our plans and ways we should submit a prospectus to the Lord and let him approve or reject before we start any undertaking. Although there may seem to be inequalities and discriminations against the righteous, vindication for all who trust in him is assured and will come at last.

May we, in perfect confidence, rest our souls in the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Lesson 6—August 8

The Giving of the Manna

READ EXODUS 16: 1-36

DEVOTIONAL READING—John 6: 33-40

GOLDEN TEXT—*Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. John 6: 35.*

That Jesus came to give himself for the world appears in all he said and did while on earth. He did not offer his precepts as a balm for sin but he offered himself as a ransom for many. In this aspect of his nature, he was a revelation from the Father and was divine and spiritual. His words were "spirit and life" because they were flashes of his own nature. Never before him nor since his day, has there arisen one who truthfully said he was the bread of life. All who receive him, not merely accept his teachings, have life in them. He is then their Mediator, their Peace, their Righteousness, their Redeemer. Our bodies could better do without food than our souls without Christ. It is he alone who gives life, spiritual and eternal; the life of the soul in endless communion with God and in the realization of all happiness and the satisfaction of every need.

Lesson Text

Exodus 16: 11-16, 35

I. The Manna Promised.

11 And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God.

II. The Manna Provided.

13 And it came to pass at even, that the quails came up, and covered the camp; and in the morning the dew lay round about the camp.

14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoarfrost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, What is it? for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat.

III. The Manna Prepared.

16 This is the thing which Jehovah hath commanded. Gather ye of it every man according to his eating; an omer a head, according to the number of your persons, shall ye take it, every man for them that are in his tent.

17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered some more, some less.

18 And when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating.

IV. The Manna Perpetual.

19 And the children of Israel did eat the manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat the manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

Lesson Comment

1. THE MANNA PROMISED. When the Israelites murmured against God and against Moses because of the scarcity of food in the wilderness God spoke to Moses, requesting him to say to them that they should have both meat and bread; that at evening they should have flesh and in the morning they should be supplied with bread. It was done as proof of the fact, and in order that the people might realize that Jehovah was their God and that he would provide their necessities wherever his hand might lead them.

2. THE MANNA PROVIDED. According to the promise of God, quails came up in the evening and were so many that they covered the camp, so that they were easily caught and were made available for every one. They were the choicest sort of meat. What God sends is the very best, most wholesome and delicious. And the ground around the camp was covered with a frost-like coating. When the children of Israel saw it, they asked, "What is it?" or in Hebrew, "Ma-na?" Thus their inquiry about it became the name for it.

3. THE MANNA PREPARED. Just as the quails were to be caught alive and prepared for their tables, so the manna was to be gathered and made up into bread. Each person was allowed an omer, or about a tenth of a bushel, per day. It had to be gathered before sunup, and every man could take enough for all who were with him in his tent. It could be made into any kind of bread the eater might desire for the sake of variety. When every man had gathered according to Moses' instructions of an omer for every person, there was neither an excess nor a lack anywhere.

4. THE MANNA PERPETUAL. It was not in answer to a complaint on the part of the people that God gave them quails and manna, but because they needed supplies and, in the wilderness, had no means of securing them except by direct gift from God. As long as that necessity lasted, the supply was continued. When they came, after forty years, to "a land inhabited," where the people could secure their provisions by natural means, the supernatural provisions ceased.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, AUGUST 2

Read Exodus 16: 1-3

ISRAEL MURMURING.—The complaints of the Israelites on account of the scarcity of food was not unnatural. But they did not view their need in the certain light of divine care and protection. They were hungry. And a hungry crowd does not think rightly. Besides, they were in a wilderness where no provisions could be procured. Naturally enough, also, they would make complaint against the man who had led them into such a poverty-stricken state. Their murmuring had bitterness in it. That was their big mistake. They could have expressed their wants without being rebellious at heart, both to God and to Moses. Their sin consisted in their longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and for the old situation in which they ate to the full, unmindful of the deplorable condition of servitude under which they were well nourished. They affirmed they preferred death on a full stomach, at the hands of taskmasters, to starvation in the wilderness. Their bitterness expressed itself in the fear that they were going to starve! They thought that death occupied both horns of their dilemma. How many good people live in mortal dread of the poorhouse or the privations of dire physical want!

May we realize that where God has led us he will assuredly feed us.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 3

Read Exodus 10: 11-18

THE GIVING OF THE MANNA.—God recognized the people's need, although he was not plessed with the complaints which they made because of it. The manna was a direct gift from God. It was a miraculous provision of material for bread. God did not give them loaves nor biscuit, but furnished that which the people were to gather and of which they were to make bread in any form it was desired. Thus God cares for all his creatures and his people. He does not throw cracked corn into the raven's nest nor does he bake griddle-cakes for the poor, though he may do so through his ministering servants. The Israelites did

not at first recognize the gift, and asked, "What is it?" It was therefore called manna, which is the Hebrew language for the question they asked concerning it. Moses told them what it was and how to use it; declaring that they should accept it as God's gift, who had said to them, "I am the Lord, your God." About a half a gallon per person per day was allowed. All had the same amount, rich and poor alike. It could not be hoarded, nor bought nor sold. None could have too much and none too little. It was to be gathered every day except on the Sabbath, in order that the people might be daily led to acknowledge God as their keeper and provider.

How often God's mercies come to us in forms in which we do not at first recognize them as the very things we need!

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4

Read Exodus 16: 21-30

THE MANNA AND THE SABBATH.—There was no manna given the Israelites on the Sabbath day for two reasons: (1) As a means of bringing the people to acknowledge God, the Sabbath was more effective than the manna. God's words are more important than his works. His goodness should not become the grounds of presumption on the part of those who receive it. His commands can be more easily understood than his mercies. The spiritual is more necessary than the physical. (2) There was to be no gathering of food materials on that day. The manna gathered the day before might be prepared on that day, but no labor, even to procure food, was permitted on the Sabbath. So no manna was given on the seventh day. Those who obey God as to the six days will not need to disobey him by unnecessary labor on the seventh. Those who did not gather Sabbath supplies on the preceding day had no bread on the Sabbath. Failure to obey God's program of labor is to lose both the greater and lesser blessings—both the spiritual rewards of obedience and the temporal fruits of labor.

May we accept God's words as more vital to our interests than his gifts.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5

Read Exodus 16: 31-36

THE MANNA A MEMORIAL.—Under the directions and blessings of God the perishable becomes imperishable. The manna that was for a day was to be a memorial for all the days. As the Passover commemorated the deliverance of the people from Egyptian bondage, the manna was God's means of delivering them from a wilderness famine. One was a saving power, while the other was a sustaining grace. One generation is to lay up stores of testimony for God, to be passed on to succeeding generations. Thus children's children are to enter into their inheritance as heirs of a divine promise of a larger and freer life. God's special providences, as the manna, may be temporary, but the testimony is to be permanent. It is often true that what God does we know not now, but shall know hereafter. The full significance of his dealings with his people usually awaits later and larger developments. By a proper regard for the manna on the part of those who ate it, generations that never tasted it would be led to acknowledge God as the giver of daily food and of every daily blessing.

May we so receive God's favors that in the very use of them we may commemorate his goodness and mercy.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6

Read John 6: 5-14

BREAD FOR ALL.—In the feeding of the five thousand there were two general aspects: (1) The human need and (2) the divine supply. The Master's question to Philip was intended to bring before the disciples the problem of feeding the multitude and to force them to recognize and acknowledge their inability to meet the need. Peter's suggestion of five loaves and two fishes had in it the hint of faith which, however, immediately disappeared behind the doubtful remark, "But what are these among so many?" When the disciples had faced their extremity and confessed their helplessness, the arm omnipotent swung into action, and the hands of Jesus supplied what their treasury many times over could not have purchased. They could not inau-

gurate, but could co-operate. They could make the people sit down in companies, and carry the baskets of provisions to the seated thousands. As the lad's lunch of five barley cakes and two dried herrings passed under the hand of Jesus, the Master, they became ample food for all. And when the multitude was filled, the Lord commanded that the disciples gather up what remained that nothing be lost; and they gathered up twelve baskets full. Why save the leftovers, since Jesus could make more when he chose to do so? He who had everything to give away had not a thing in the world to waste. The amount which was left after every one had eaten was testimony to the bounty of his beneficence.

Let our sufficiency be in Jesus Christ, who can give us even more than we can ask or need.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 7

Read John 6: 48-59

THE LIVING BREAD.—Christ is the Living Bread, that which gives life, not that which merely sustains life. That which does nothing more than to support life is physical or material, and will therefore become stale, being itself subject to decay. But that which gives life is necessarily spiritual. The creation of life is a spiritual rather than a scientific fact, and can be accepted as a truth in experience rather than a dictum of science. The Bread of Life is Jesus Christ, who is also the Water of Life, because he is the origin and source of all life. He who is "from above is above all." He made the world and all that is in it. He created the various forms of life. All life comes from him. He must, therefore, be taken into the soul in order that one may have eternal life; eternal life and temporal life being separate creative acts of the divine Son from above. Because he had power over the natural, he had control of the spiritual, forces. Because he could say to the lame man, "Get up and walk," he could say to him, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Literally viewed, this doctrine is hard to understand. Many of the people who thus heard him speak of himself misunderstood him entirely because they did not perceive him

as a spiritual revelation from God the Father.

May our daily prayer be that of the singer who said, "Bread of Heaven; feed me till I want no more."

SUNDAY, AUGUST 8

Read John 6: 33-40

THE BREAD OF LIFE.—Note the difference between the Bread of God and the bread from God. The Bread of God is the gift of life from above, while the bread from God is the gift of something to eat. Therefore, the Bread of God is a person, immaterial and spiritual; while the bread from God is temporal, material and substantial. The Bread of God is life-giving, life-creating, but more especially life-recreating, because the highest work of Christ is to impart the new life from above to all who will accept him, thus accomplishing their recreation. Christ as the Bread of Life is available to all men, and yet he is actually the Bread of Life to those only who come to him and who believe on him as the Son of God and as the revelation of the Father. As the Bread of Life he will supply the utmost necessities of his people, giving them those things which they could not secure for themselves. Because he is the source of their life, he is the giver of their supplies. They do not get their life from one origin and their maintenance from another; that which supports life must be of the same nature as the life itself. In them he is an unending, perpetual and ever fresh life. By him they will be raised from the dead, because he is in them and his conquest of death is awarded to them as his partners in life and eternal destiny. Their life in him is eternally victorious because it is essentially apiritual. Even their bodies will be raised from the grave and "death shall have no more dominion over them." As the Bread of Life, he actually enters into and becomes the life of all believers.

May we accept Christ as the Bread of God, and receive him into our hearts, both as the source of life and as its everlasting support.

Lesson 7—August 15

Jethro's Wise Counsel

READ EXODUS 18: 1-27

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 106: 1-5

GOLDEN TEXT—*To each one his work.* Mark 13: 34.

In the kingdom of Christ, every citizen has some place to occupy, some particular duties to perform and definite obligations to discharge. One cannot do another's work. Each must perform it for himself. God has given to every one individual gifts and opportunities; and it is the duty of each to find out and to fill his place. All of Christ's servants are appointed to work; not one is authorized to be idle. Even those who bear rule are special workers; they are worthy to bear their authority only when they carry extraordinary burdens and responsibilities in the interests of those whom they serve. Authority is given where work is assigned. Those who have the greatest power and authority have them because they are charged with the most important business. Whatever one's work may be under Christ, let him address himself faithfully and diligently to it.

Lesson Text

Exodus 18: 13-24

I. Burdensome Administration.

13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood about Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand about thee from morning unto even?

15 And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

II. Efficient Organization.

17 And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good:

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee: for the thing is too heavy for thee: thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19 Harken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God be with thee: be thou for the people to Godward, and bring thou the causes unto God:

20 And thou shalt teach them the statutes and the laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

21 Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge themselves: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people also shall go to their place in peace.

24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said.

Lesson Comment

1. *Burdensome Administration.* The day after Jethro arrived in the camp of Israel on a visit to Moses, his son-in-law, he observed Moses sitting to judge the people on every matter which required a judicial hearing. Among so many people, about two and a half millions in all, there were necessarily many questions for adjudication and adjustment by a recognized civil authority. Moses was looked upon as judge as well as leader. The people thought they had to get his decision on every point of difference among themselves or on every phase of the divine law governing their conduct. He was therefore surrounded by clients who stood about him from morning till evening; most of whom even then did not get a chance to present their matters to him. Of course, the work was more than any one man could do. Much that was very important had to be left undone; and much that should have been presented was doubtless not even brought because of the slim chances of getting a hearing. So Jethro asked Moses why he tried to do all that work alone. Having just come in among them, he perhaps could see the difficulty even better than Moses could.

2. *Efficient Organization.* Jethro immediately made a suggestion that Moses could save himself and at the same time the better serve the people by bringing to his help a corps of workers, with an organization which included all the people even down to groups of tens. They needed instruction in the laws of the Lord, whether they had private affairs to be adjusted or not. And whether they went so far as to enquire of the Lord, they needed overseers who would enquire of them, and teach them, concerning God. Jethro devoutly declared that he did not wish to obtrude his plan where God did not authorize Moses to act. But "if God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure and all this people shall go to their place in peace." Moses himself was to guide and teach the captains and thus multiply his powers proportionately to the number of rulers who came under his influence and instruction. He immediately adopted the plan and did all that Jethro had said.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, AUGUST 9

Read Exodus 18: 1-12

JETHRO VISITS MOSES.—The children of Israel were now in the peninsula of Sinai, not so very far from where Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, lived. He had heard of the many wonderful things God had done for them and rejoiced greatly. He was a worshiper of the true God, though he was not an Israelite. His visit to Moses had a three-fold purpose: (1) To enquire concerning the things which were reported to him to have been done by the Lord for the children of Israel; (2) to felicitate Moses and the people upon having received such wonderful blessings, and (3) to carry Moses' wife and sons to him. In a most respectful manner Moses met him, and after a deferential salutation, told him all that God had done. Jethro was exceedingly glad. He praised God and offered sacrifice to Jehovah, in which the people joined him.

May we always be glad and rejoice in the Lord as we see God wonderfully blessing others.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10

Read Exodus 18: 13-24

JETHRO'S WISE COUNSEL.—It was an arduous daily routine of judging and instructing the people which devolved upon Moses as observed by Jethro. The Israelites looked to Moses for everything—and there were more than two and a half million of them. They had just emerged from slavery and had to be taught the principles of independence and self-government. They could trust the wisdom and fairness of Moses. They came to him in great numbers to get his ruling on questions of relationships and differences among them, so that he had to be very busy from early morning till late evening, giving personal attention to each petitioner. Seeing this, Jethro told him that he was taxing his own strength unnecessarily, and that he was wearing out the patience of the people; and suggested a wiser course. Let there be organization. No doubt Moses had felt the need of it, but had not considered it practicable. It was simple: Let Moses be the

supreme counsellor, and let there be subordinate judges over groups and units. But Jethro wanted it understood that his suggestion to Moses was not to be considered at all unless "God command it."

When we have occasion to call attention to the mistakes of others may we do so only to make a tactful suggestion of a possibly wiser and better thing.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11

Read 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11

DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS.—The Holy Spirit is the organizer of all the spiritual forces in the world. He who is the agent in regeneration is also the wisdom of God and the power of God for service. There are diversities of gifts, but there is only one Spirit. The purpose of diversification of gifts among God's people, as in crops among planters, is that each "may profit withal." To this end, each should be adjusted to his place, for in that alone can he be happy and useful, and secure the greatest blessings for himself and make the highest contribution to the common cause. By that means, also, there will be distribution of labor so that everyone, doing a necessary part, will carry a share of the burden, thus making the load as light as possible on each and not intolerably heavy on any. Every gift of the Spirit is needful. He does not dispense toys, but useful tools. To one man he gives one gift, or implement for service, to another he gives some other. He is our Supreme Counsellor, he is "toward God" for us. As he is the Giver of spiritual gifts, he is the Center of all Christian unity.

May we accept and use the Spirit's gift to each of us, whatever it may be, realizing that he knows what we can do best.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12

Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31

WORKING TOGETHER.—Under the administration of the Holy Spirit there is unity among members of a church. In functions they are independent and separate—and in that respect alone. Each is free to perform his own distinctive work for the whole body. So there is an inter-dependence among them. All are subject to the

constitution of the whole. To illustrate: The different States composing our nation are severally free to frame their own laws and to conduct their own affairs, *provided* they are consistent with the fundamental principles of our national government as set forth in the Constitution of the United States. The grade of service to be rendered by each Christian indicates the relative importance or honor of members. Some occupy positions on the surface and are to be useful to the body in its connective and organic activities. Others are hidden away in the vitals of the inner life, and are to be useful in maintaining the strength and power of the church. In the churches of Christ there are no ecclesiastical orders, but different functionaries or servants. In their working together harmoniously under the Holy Spirit, there is well-being for each of them and prosperity for the whole body.

May we be ever mindful that to be yoked with Christ is to have spiritual co-operation with all who bear the yoke with him.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 13

Read Matthew 25: 14-29

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.—The term "talents" evidently means responsibilities or duties. To each of his servants the lord gave them according to his ability to use them, and not according to his willingness to use which he allowed each servant to determine for himself. The servants would be judged by their conduct, as to their willingness. He gave them the utmost freedom, himself going into a distant country. They exercise their own volition. Two of them increased their talents according to their ability. He had judged two of them rightly, but missed it on the third. In the case of the two, the exercise of their gift was exactly equal to their ability. Each of them did the best he could with what he had. Both, therefore, had the same degree of merit and received the same commendation and reward which consisted of correspondingly larger trusts and responsibilities. But the third did not use the one talent he had, which corresponded to his ability, because he lacked willingness to use it. He therefore charged his lord, not with partiality, but with austerity and

dishonesty. He was seeing him in the false light of his own jaundiced eyes. To an unwilling and unfaithful servant, the master on pay-day is the embodiment of all that is mean and dishonest.

May we realize that the misuse of our opportunities will surely mean the loss of them, and may we employ rightly what God has given us to use for him.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14

Read 1 Corinthians 3: 10-15

WISE BUILDERS.—Wise builders have a good foundation for their building. Christ is the foundation, the founder, of the Christian life. That foundation has already been laid. There must be, first of all, a heart of faith. On that the superstructure of works is to be erected. God's servants are builders. Christ is the architect. Builders should follow the blueprints—not make them. The life and labors of Christians should conform to the foundation and be built up agreeably to its designs and features. Not only so, but they should be built of the same material as the foundation. To a heart of faith, works of faith should be added. Unwise builders may erect on this foundation a structure of temporal and temporary works; in which case their works will be destroyed by the severe fire-tests of God's judgments, but the foundation, or heart of faith, only will be saved.

May we build a Christly life on him as the foundation.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

Read Psalm 100: 1-5

JEHOVAH OUR COUNSELLOR.—God is ever to be praised for his goodness. His wisdom cannot be uttered by men, nor can his praise be adequately expressed in human speech. But blessed are they who keep his counsels and happy is the man who doeth righteousness all the time. To his people especially are God's counsels given. For his wisdom they should pray, for from him come personal salvation, national gladness and everlasting joy.

May God be our wisdom and strength, our guide and companion through the wilderness of life.

Lesson Comment

Lesson 8—August 22

The Ten Commandments: Duties to God

READ EXODUS 19: 1—20: 11

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 19: 7-14

GOLDEN TEXT—*Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* Deut. 6: 5.

To love God is a command of God. He has a right to command and therefore deserves to be loved. Because he is love, he has the authority to give commands: for no right to give orders to others belongs to one who is in himself worthy of respect and admiration. In the love of God, men find their own highest and purest life. He orders men to do that which is most needful for them. God is to be loved with one's whole soul. Not only is nothing else to come in between the soul and God, but there is to be nothing else in the affections of men but the love of God. They are forbidden to love him with a part of their heart and soul and might, but with all of them. There is to be no rival to him in the hearts of people.

Lesson Text

Exodus 20: 1-11

- I. The Giver of the Law.
And God spake all these words, saying,
I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- II. The First Commandment.
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- III. The Second Commandment.
Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me.
- IV. The Third Commandment.
Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
- V. The Fourth Commandment.
Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:
But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

1. *The Giver of the Law.* The enacting clause of God's laws was his declaration of his own personality and his right to give commands. To the Israelites he was to be known as the "God who brought them up out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage." He was the Liberator to whom they were indebted for their freedom. Therefore, to him they owed the debt of gratitude and love. They were to become his subjects, as love's slaves. They were to obey him as their Deliverer and Counsellor.

2. *The First Commandment.* The chosen people were to have no other god. The people among whom they were going had many gods. But the Israelites were to know that Jehovah would tolerate no rival. He is either alone in the heart or else he is absent from it. He does not consort with other divinities nor race with them for the affections and homage of mankind.

3. *The Second Commandment.* Not only should he be solitary in the worship of his people, but their homage to him should be direct and personal. It was not permissible to make any image of God, or any likeness of him which would, since it would have to be original with the maker, be a misrepresentation of God. No one can get a correct notion of God by copying after his own conceptions of Deity.

4. *The Third Commandment.* The name of Jehovah is to be honored instead of disrespected. Any discourtesy shown to his name is a contempt for his character. We honor the name "mother," and any aspersion thrown on it would meet with speedy and violent resentment. So the name which is above every name should be respected.

5. *The Fourth Commandment.* God's day is to be kept and observed, because it is his day and because it honors him to observe it according to his wishes and plans. The sabbath law required work during six days as well as rest on the seventh. It is as much a violation of the divine command to be idle six days as it would be to engage in one's usual secular business on the seventh. To regard God's ordinance is to respect him; to desecrate it is to scorn his character and claims.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, AUGUST 16

Read Exodus 19: 9-16

ISRAEL PREPARES TO MEET JEHOVAH.—God had often spoken to Moses and through him to the people, but they needed to come into closer and more personal acquaintance with him. They needed to hear God for themselves. God was not establishing a priesthood, or a religious monarchy through Moses and Aaron, but a spiritual democracy under their leadership. It was on account of the people that he had called Moses and had spoken to him in so many ways. In preparation to meet God the people were called upon to make (1) a profession of obedience to God and (2) a ceremonial acknowledgment of him. As Moses told the words of Jehovah to them they were to promise obedience. There was no need that God should speak to them unless they would agree to hear and heed what he might say to them. They needed to commit themselves to the divine word before it was spoken. This was mental and spiritual preparation. Then there was ceremonial preparation necessary. Every one of them was to sanctify himself three days, that is, observe the laws of personal purification for that many days consecutively, in order that they might be outwardly clean. Furthermore, they were to observe the limits and boundaries set by Jehovah for them, and were not to go beyond the line encircling the mountain on which God should appear. They were to stand back, in awe and reverence, before him. They were to wait speechless and silently for his voice and for the manifestation of his coming.

May we be ready to hear and to heed the voice of God as he makes himself known to us in his Word and in his ways.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17

Read Exodus 19: 17-25

ISRAEL MEETS JEHOVAH.—After three days Moses brought the people out of their camp before the mountain to meet God. They were directed to stand before the mountain, but should not enter it nor go, upon penalty of death, beyond the line indicated at the base of it. They were warned not to presume on their liberty.

God wanted to make them free men indeed—not libertines nor free-thinkers. The mountain was enveloped in smoke when God came down in a fire on the top of it. Wrapt in awe, the people stood waiting for God to speak to them out of the miraculous volcano. But he did not speak to them in the rumbling of the earthquake nor in the tongue of the lightning, but in the voice of warning through the mouth of Moses that they should sanctify themselves and be ready for the declaration of the divine law, for their government and welfare.

Let us be reverent and attentive when we meet together to meet with God; for, whether in the quiet sanctuary or on the thunder-riven mountain, where God is in sacred ground.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18

Read Exodus 20: 1-11

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: DUTIES TO GOD.—Before he gave the law to Israel, God declared his identity. He told who he was. The people needed to keep this in mind and to have it said to them again and again. He it was who had delivered them from bondage. Therefore, he had a right to rule over them. They were his people, by an ancient covenant not only, but by right of redemption and preservation. His law, first of all, had to do with the relation of the people toward him as their God and Deliverer. This was fundamental. To err at that point would be to go wrong in everything. Hence he warns them against (1) idolatry, or the worship of any other deity, divinity or god whatsoever; (2) image-worship; not only were they to desist from worshiping other gods, but to refrain from worshiping any image which they or anybody else might make of him or of any thing he had made or done. They were forbidden to worship their own notions or ideas of God. (3) They were forbidden to desecrate his name, for disrespect shown to his name would be dishonor to him. Reverence for his name would indicate respect unto his character and recognition of his dominion over them. And (4) they were forbidden to desecrate his day, the institution which he had created for the spiritual benefit of man

after he had finished making a world or place for man to live in.

May we as God's children respect the authority and words of our Father and sovereign Lord.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 19

Read Deuteronomy 5: 6-15

MOSES SUMMARIZES THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.—In the reading for today we consider the first four commandments of God as emphasized and reiterated by Moses. He quoted them exactly as God had given them to him. He had no emphasis of his own. God would have to speak for himself, and the people would have to hear for themselves; he himself could only be a mouthpiece for God and a spokesman for the people. But he was careful and diligent to tell the words of God to all the Israelites that they might know them and learn to do them. He affirmed that God's laws were his covenants—not mere arbitrary rulings. They were statutes underlying the personal and national welfare of the people. God merely mentioned the terms upon which he could bless them. The viewpoint of divine legislation was not the infliction of punishment for disobedience, but the giving of rewards for obedience. Emphasis was placed not upon penalty, but upon privilege. God's laws show much of his nature. Hence to disregard them is to despise him. To respect them is to love and obey him.

Let us render implicit obedience to him who not only has the right to reign over us, but whose love is shown in his laws.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 20

Read Psalm 119: 1-8

THE LAW EXALTED.—The blessings of God attend those who keep the law of God. His favors rightly belong to those who favorably regard him. Happy are those who keep and seek the testimony of the Lord with their whole heart, who do it because they want to and not because they have to. God wants willing subjects, who of their own free will, render to him that which is due him. He wants every one to desire to

do his will, to "delight in the law of the Lord." The will of man is therefore the point of divine redemption, and the pivot on which hangs the whole question of acceptable obedience to God's commands. Happy is he who, in observing the will of God, doeth not iniquity, but whose mind and conscience are at rest, "void of offense toward God and toward men." Happy is the one who observes God's will and who is not, therefore, ashamed when he thinks of God's commandments. Happy indeed is he who can quietly face God in his righteous judgments and stand unabashed in his presence with a conscious uprightness of heart.

May we in our lives, as well as with our lips, magnify the laws of the Lord.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21

Read Matthew 6: 24-34

SEEKING GOD FIRST.—There are things of secondary importance, as there is that which is primary. There are not many things, but only one thing, that can be first. The term "fundamentals" is misleading perhaps, in that it implies that more than one thing can be fundamental, or foundational, or first in importance. Strictly speaking, there is only one fundamental, namely, the kingdom of God which began with and rests on Jesus Christ, the one and only Foundation. Everything else, as valuable as it may be, is secondary. Material comforts and bodily needs, such as meat and drink, physical culture and mental training, social education and aesthetic development, have their place in the structure of the full man, but they do not lie at the base of it. For example, who can grow a strong body by reading books on hygiene or taking thought merely of how to do it? Instead of taking thought, let him rather take nourishment and exercise, according to the laws of God written in his physical nature. Therefore, the kingdom of God comes first. It is basic and underlies every other sphere. Put the righteousness of God first. Exalt his character and recognize his greatness. Initiate his

ways and obey his will. Then every other needful thing will be procured, and we shall be provided with grace for every daily need.

May we seek first the kingdom of God, for there is no other kingdom but his, as there is no other god but God.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 22

Read Psalm 19: 7-14

THE PERFECTION OF THE LAW.—The law of the Lord is perfect; that is, there is not too much of it and it lacks nothing of being complete. It shows us our need of God and the necessity of seeking him for instruction and wisdom. The word, or testimony, of the Lord is sure; that is, it is reliable and gives authentic information to the uninformed and correct understanding to the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, giving joy, like that which Ezra enjoined upon the returned exiles at Jerusalem as he read the book of the Law, and said to them, "Neither be sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." The commandments of the Lord are pure, are transparent as glass, giving sight to the eyes which can see through them when they "look into the perfect law" of the Lord. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; it has no impurities or imperfections in it to make it mould or grow old or out-of-date. It is ever new and applicable to the conditions and needs of mankind. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether, worthy to be esteemed above riches and luxuries, for in keeping them there is both warning and reward. Without the law of the Lord, no man could know his faults and could, therefore, be delivered from them.

May we pray earnestly that, knowing God's law, we may not transgress it nor sin presumptuously; but that our every word and thought may be according to his will and acceptable unto him.

Lesson 9—August 29

The Ten Commandments: Duties to Man

READ EXODUS 20: 12-21

DEVOTIONAL READING—PROVERBS 3: 1-7

GOLDEN TEXT—*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* Leviticus 19: 18.

The first part of the Decalogue is concerned with the duties of men to God. That is primary and is the condition upon which all other duties are to be defined and discharged. Until one has met the first requirements, he will not be able to understand what the later ones are, and will be still less disposed and able to do them. It is in relation to God that men are to describe and adjust their relations to each other. But upon a recognition of God is to be observed these rights which belong to our fellowmen, with whose interests are wrapped up our own felicity and our standing with God. It is therefore our duty to God to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. It requires a self-effacing spirit which comes only after a prolonged and intimate knowledge of God to place others alongside oneself in one's affections. It cannot be done except where God comes first, foremost, ahead of all others in the worship and esteem of the soul.

Lesson Text

- I. The Fifth Commandment.
12 Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.
- II. The Sixth Commandment.
13 Thou shalt not kill.
- III. The Seventh Commandment.
14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- IV. The Eighth Commandment.
15 Thou shalt not steal.
- V. The Ninth Commandment.
16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- VI. The Tenth Commandment.
17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.
- VII. The Recipients of the Law.
18 And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off.
19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.
20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before you, that ye sin not.
21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Fifth Commandment.* Children are divinely obligated to honor and respect their parents, both the father and the mother; not one more than the other but both alike. Their watchcare and attention to the children entitle them to respect at their hands. Those who do it, show that good judgment and self-control which guarantee long life and honor for themselves in the world.

2. *The Sixth Commandment.* Every man is entitled to life as long as God wants him to stay in the world. Murder is abhorrent of God's plan. No one has a right to end his own days, nor to shorten the life time of others by his own neglect or indifference.

3. *The Seventh Commandment.* Social evils are common to all generations and the divine law again unchastity is often flagrantly and unblushingly violated by people who disesteem their own welfare as well as the happiness and moral purity of others. Marital infelicity, social disorder and the ravages of disease follow disobedience to this command of God.

4. *The Eighth Commandment.* People ought to own property; that is, they should hold it subject to God's will. That which God bestows upon another, or which he permits another to get for himself is a matter between God and the getter. To take that which belongs to another is to affirm that one's own title is better than that of the possessor.

5. *The Ninth Commandment.* One who deserves a good reputation should be allowed to enjoy it. To slander another is to steal his good name, or to attempt to do it. A good name is to be preferred above great riches; and to lose it is to suffer the loss of more than wealth.

6. *The Tenth Commandment.* Covetousness is forbidden. Let no one covet aught that belongs to another. Let there be brotherhood and fraternity instead. Do not want that which is another's but give him some of that which is your own.

7. *The Recipients of the Law.* From Sinai's summit, encircled with smoke and livid with lightning, the people heard the Ten Words with awe and stood aghast afar off.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, AUGUST 23

Read Exodus 20: 12-21

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: DUTIES TO MAN.—All human relations lie out in two directions, Godward and manward. Let there be a right attitude toward God first, then let the life stand properly related to other people. What are the things included in that relationship? (1) Toward parents; there should be on the part of children an attitude of subordination, respect and obedience. The home is the unit of society and of all human government. Anything which promotes its interests contributes to the well-being and progress of mankind. Its condition is an index to the state of society. Where children learn obedience to parents in the home, they learn to respect the laws of the land in which they live. To honor parents is the first of the laws with a promise and is the only positive command of the Decalogue. Social duties are then outlined as follows: (2) Respect human life. Hold it in high esteem. Let it not become cheap. Regard the life of another, not only refrain from taking it but value and support it. (3) Respect the virtue of another. Do not sin against another by unlawful and incestuous relations. Adultery, though it is the sin of two, is primarily a sin of one against another. (4) Respect the property of another. Do not take from him that which is his, either with or without his consent. To cheat is to steal. Give value received. (5) Respect another's good name. Do not bear false witness, nor slander nor gossip nor sneer when to do so would reflect on the moral character of another. (6) Respect the rights of others. Do not envy them nor want for oneself anything which belongs to another.

May we never take from another that which can not be returned.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24

Read Deuteronomy 5: 16-21

DUTIES TO MAN.—In this passage we have the comment of Moses on the commands of God. Again, therefore, we are called to consider the duties of man to man as given in the law of God. (1) Honor father and mother. It is due them. They have won

it by their care and attention to us. It enriches one's own life and lengthens one's days. (2) Do not kill. To hate is to treat life unlawfully. To disregard the means of others' physical welfare is to disregard life. The assassin is not the only murderer, but he also who imposes any disastrous physical condition on his fellowman. (3) Do not commit adultery. Impure intention is a violation of the law of chastity. By the act one lives a double life and forfeits one's own self-respect and honor, without which the life is a dreary wreck that is being driven dismasted and rudderless on the rocks. (4) Do not steal. Do not take by stealth or secret manœuvres that which belongs to another. Do not misrepresent facts nor state a falsehood to acquire it or to get possession of it either for oneself or for a client. (5) Do not bear false witness. Do not speak maliciously of another, nor quote scandalous rumors. Scandal-mongers, like scavengers, carry diseases: they spread the infectious filth they feed on. (6) Do not covet. Do not entertain selfish desires, but rejoice in the prosperity and good fortune of others. Be not discontent with your own lot in life, nor envious of another's privileges or possessions in any particular.

May the law of the Lord be the rule of our conduct one toward another.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25

Read Ephesians 6: 1-9

CHILDREN'S DUTIES TO PARENTS.—Respect unto the Lord underlies regard for parents on the part of children. Those who consider the Lord will not be inconsiderate of parents. Even unbelieving and impious parents should be treated with special tenderness by believing and righteous children. However unworthy a parent may be personally, the dutiful child respects parenthood and acknowledges a relationship which God himself formed. This honors God and in honoring to the child. It is bestial to show contempt for a sire. On the other hand, parents should deserve the respect of their children, though they should not make it the object of discipline or training. They should

not give them occasion for "wrath" or ill-will toward them, but in the nurture and counsel of God rear and train them. That is the surest way to win the affections of the child. Servants in the home are likewise urged to respect the authority and persons of their masters, serving God while waiting on them, as did Nehemiah, the cup-bearer who served King Artaxerxes in the palace of Shushan.

Let us ever be respectful and attentive to the parents whom God has given us and to whom God gave us, acknowledging him in the relationship.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 26

Read Colossians 3: 18 to 4: 1

OUR SOCIAL DUTIES.—Paul's instructions for the government of the home do not conform to modern ideas and customs—so much the worse for the modern home! First, the wife should obey and submit to the husband, recognizing his place as the responsible head of the home. She may rule him, not by coercion but by submission. The husband should love the wife, showing love, deference and consideration for her in all things. She desires his love more than anything else, and will respond to it as she will to nothing else. Children should obey their parents, because it is right: it is a correct moral principle. To reverse it is to invite disaster to both parent and child. Parents should be thoughtful of their children; mindful of their needs rather than their wishes or whims, so as to win their confidence and love, over and above the natural respect and affection they might have for them as their parents. Servants, or employees, should respect their masters or employers, recognizing their claims, right and responsibilities, and should not cheat them by idleness or indifference to their interests. On the other hand, employers should regard their employees with due consideration, treating them with mercy and justice, knowing that they too have a Master in heaven, who will some day reckon with them for all they do.

May God give us more religion in the home and more Christianity in every business and social relation.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 27

Read Romans 13: 1-7

DUTIES TO THE STATE.—Citizens should recognize all civil authorities, "the powers that be," because (1) they are ordained of God for their good. To disregard them, therefore, is to disregard God's ordinance, or plan, for the government of men. (2) They are ministers for good and not evil: no civil authority has ever been established for the overthrow of society. Revolutions and rebellions have taken place for the downfall of existing forms of government, but society as a whole has never endorsed any movement for its own destruction. (3) Authorities exist for our preservation, that we may "escape the wrath" of any who might wish to do us harm. (4) But Christians owe something more than a civic duty to authorities and powers, for with them law observance should be a matter of conscience as well as expediency. Law observance from religious scruple is the highest form of it and the only one which is absolutely above suspicion. We should do our duty to the state (1) by paying taxes to whom and when they are due and (2) by giving honor to whom honor is due, recognizing and rewarding the services of public servants. Prohibition enforcement officers, and all other agencies for law and order, should be upheld and honored rather than abused and villified for their honest efforts to protect the people's interests and to maintain the dignity of their laws and the peace and welfare of the state.

Let us as citizens of the state honor him who created it for our good, and respect his agencies for its maintenance.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 28

Read Luke 10: 25-37

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?—That question should be easily answered now since Jesus gave us the Parable of the Good Samaritan. He is not the man who lives next door to me but who never gets any closer; and who, for that reason, is distant—so near and yet

so far off. He is not the man who passes me by and is indifferent to my misfortunes. He is not the man who even looks upon my distress with a degree of pity but does nothing more than grieve for my afflictions. He is not the man who has a professional sympathy for me and merely cries over me and passes on about his own affairs. But he is my neighbor who not only stops but also stoops to render the aid which I need. He first gives himself to me, his personal attention. He gets down with me in sympathetic and tender touch. He gives me first aid, simple and unprofessional as it may be, which is worth everything in a crisis and without which subsequent treatment would be useless. Then he gives me second aid also. He goes his limit to help me. He puts me in his own saddle while he walks. He puts his purse-strings into my hands and puts his credit up against my necessities. He is my neighbor.

May God give us more Christian charity and make us neighbors to every needy person we meet.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 29

Read Proverbs 3: 1-7

BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE.—Peace and long life are won by those whose hearts keep God's laws. Mercy and truth bring favor and good understanding in the sight of God and men. To acknowledge God in all one's ways is to be directed by him in all things. In choosing a calling or companion in life, let God be consulted, his will sought and made known; then there will be no misfits in professional or domestic relations. If marriages have been made in heaven, they will not be annulled on earth. Happy and prosperous are the people whose God is the Lord! Blessed are they who are directed by the Lord in all things! Contented are they who completely obey him.

May we so live in obedience to the will of God that his favor can abide upon us all our days.

Lesson 10—September 5

The Tent of Meeting

READ EXODUS 33

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 5: 1-7

GOLDEN TEXT—*Jehovah spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.* Exodus 33: 11.

How intimate was Moses' acquaintance with God, with whom he spoke as a man to his friend. It was not as Jacob encountered God at Peniel when he met him "face to face" in a dark and disastrous interview, which, however, ended happily, but it was as the constant fellowship of Enoch who "walked with God," who was his companion in his daily travels and labors. But it was also God's condescension in thus speaking with Moses as a man to his friend. It was because God came down, rather than because Moses went up. However, he met God on the high levels.

Lesson Text

Exodus 33: 7-16

I. The Tent of Meeting.

7 Now Moses used to take the tent and to pitch it without the camp, afar off from the camp; and he called it, The tent of meeting. And it came to pass, that every one that sought Jehovah went out unto the tent of meeting, which was without the camp.

8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the Tent, that all the people rose up, and stood, every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the Tent.

9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered into the Tent, the pillar of cloud descended, and stood at the door of the Tent; and Jehovah spake with Moses.

10 And all the people saw the pillar of cloud stand at the door of the Tent; and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man at his tent door.

11 And Jehovah spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he returned again into the camp; but his minister Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the Tent.

II. The Prayer of Moses.

12 And Moses said unto Jehovah, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found favor in my sight.

13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee, to the end that I may find favor in thy sight; and consider that this nation is thy people.

14 And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

16 For wherein now shall it be known that I have found favor in thy sight, I and thy people? Is it not in that thou goest with us, so that that we are separated, I and my people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth?

Lesson Comment

1. *The Tent of Meeting.* Moses established the first meeting-house that was ever dedicated to God and set apart definitely for the regular worship of Jehovah. It was a tent, set up outside the camp of Israel, so that it might have its own separate environs suited to the exclusive purposes for which it was to be used. Every person who sought special instructions from the Lord personally went into it. It was open to all. But when Moses entered the Tent, it was a signal for all the people to get into the attitude and spirit of worship; and each man was to stand in his own tent door facing the Tent of Meeting. And as he entered the sacred precincts, the pillar of cloud descended upon it and God talked with Moses audibly. All the people could not for room assemble in the Tent at one time, but they could worship each in his tent-door, with bowed heads, while Moses their representative talked with God. These were special occasions. Moses could not stay in the Tent all the time. There were numerous and exacting duties that called him to labor among the people. Administration was a part of his duty as well as worship. Joshua, a young man at the time, was Moses' attendant at the sanctuary and remained on duty at the Tent regularly.

2. *The Prayer of Moses.* The children of Israel had sinned grievously in the making and the worship of the golden calf, and Moses felt that some further assurance from God was needed to maintain his hope that God still retained the children of Israel as his people, and that he would go on with them to the promised land. As he went into the Tent of Meeting, he offered a fervent intercessory prayer in behalf of the people. He prayed that God would certify to his ownership of the people and give him definite knowledge as to the divine ways and will concerning them. He prayed that God would vindicate his people before the neighboring nations who knew that Israel had been chosen of God, and before whom they would become a laughing-stock should God not go further with them. He prayed for a complete separation and sanctification of the people "from all the people that are upon the face of the earth": that God would indeed make them a peculiar people.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, AUGUST 30

Read Exodus 30: 1-10

JEHOVAH, THE ARCHITECT.—For the making of the Tabernacle and its furnishings, the Lord gave explicit instructions to Moses. Every plan was given in detail. God was the designer and the architect. The kinds of materials to be used were specified. The exact measurements of every piece were given. God's wisdom was needed to inaugurate a style of architecture the like of which had never before existed. Man had no precedents or models and could not initiate an architecture which would be fitting the worship of God. It was to be unlike houthen temples. It was to be different. Therefore the builders should follow God's plans and specifications. The purpose was also expressly stated and laid down. Aaron was to offer daily incense therein. The official was named and his duties defined. That which is made by God's plans and used as he directs can be employed for his glory.

May our lives be framed according to God's plan and used according to his purpose; an altar whereon there is offered a daily sacrifice of sweet incense unto the Lord.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 31

Read Exodus 31: 1-11

SKILL AND DEVOTION.—Jehovah's specifications for the making of the sanctuary, its altars and its furnishings, could be executed in a fitting and adequate manner only by skilled workmen. So Bezalel, who was both an expert engraver and a devout man, was chosen to take charge of and conduct the construction of everything according to God's plans. God has need for certain individuals to be both consecrated and skillful, equipped both with a heart to will and a hand to perform. Those who are adept and learned in the works of the Lord can perform the more intricate and difficult forms of labor for him. He wants special workers for special tasks. Out of the number of noble and efficient Christians at Antioch in Syria, the Holy Spirit chose two and said to the church, "Separate (unto) me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I

have called them." It is he who calls men, as it is he who gives them instructions what to do. The call is from God; the skill is a matter of dexterity and training on the part of the worker.

May the best and most promising ones among us be drafted for definite service for the Lord.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

Read Exodus 33: 7-16

THE TENT OF MEETING.—Worship is necessarily associated in our minds with a place. Bethel and Beersheba were favorite spots for the erection of altars and the worship of God by the Hebrew fathers. Moses realized the need of having a specially prepared and set-apart place where God might make his presence especially known and felt among the people. So he consecrated a tent for that purpose and set it outside the camp where, however, it was in view of all the tents in which the Israelites dwelt. It was the place to which all should look to behold and contemplate God, the center of their community life and the tie of spiritual and national brotherhood among them. It was the site of a congregational worship, each man standing in his own tent-door looking toward the Tent of Meeting at the appointed time of worship. Around a common meeting place, where God was visible, they would develop a common faith and a national unity and uniqueness which would distinguish them from all other people.

May the doors of all our homes be always open toward the house of God.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Read Exodus 40: 34-38

JEHOVAH'S GLORY FILLS THE TABERNACLE.

—As God wanted the people to move forward the cloud lifted from the door of the Tent of Meeting, or Tabernacle, but as it settled down upon it, they were to stop. Even Moses might not enter through the cloud into the Tent but could go in when it rose above the door. God's very presence sometimes seems to shut us out. To close the way is God's signal to stop! There is a stationary as well as a moving glory of God. When God wants us to go on, the

cloud lifts and the way is clear. To open the way is God's signal to go onward and to follow as he directs. Throughout our days of pilgrimage this is true. The sign of his presence is always in contrast with our condition—a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. When it is day and all is bright with us, God is a dense shadow. But when night falls and darkness hovers over us like the pall of death, God is a transcendent light. But he is glorified in both alike, and we are to perceive his presence in the one as in the other.

May the glory of the Lord fill our lives all our days.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Read Haggai 1: 3-11

GIVING GOD THE BEST.—The prophet Haggai speaks in strong terms to Zerubbabel, governor of Judea, concerning the house of the Lord which was still a mass of ruins after the exiles had been back for some time from Babylonian captivity. The people had erected splendid homes for themselves. But the Lord's house was still desolate. They are reminded of the fact that although they had sown much they had gathered little; that they did not have enough to satisfy their hunger. It was because they had thought of themselves more than they had thought of God. The remedy for their condition was evident. Let them go now and gather the materials with their own hands and build the Lord's house. Let them make personal sacrifices to do as much for the glory of the Lord as they had done for their own comfort. Then the Lord will take pleasure in them and in their work for him; then he will bless them in field and fruits. Otherwise the heavens will be stayed from dew and the earth from its products.

Let us honor God by attending to his business first; then with his co-operation we may attend to our own affairs more profitably.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

Read Psalm 122: 1-9

JOY IN GOD'S HOUSE.—The Psalmist expresses supreme delight in every privilege of entering the House of the Lord, the Temple at Jerusalem. It was the center of a compact city—the nucleus around which gathered all the civic and religious life of the people.

Because of the Lord's house, Jerusalem is the center of attraction among all the tribes of Israel scattered over the land of Canaan and beyond the Jordan. They "come up to the House of the Lord." It is "up" from any direction. It is exalted above every other place. There was within its sacred precincts fellowship among worshippers from various sections of the country. What joy it is to meet with the brethren from afar! Jerusalem was the established seat of righteousness and judgment. Law proceeds from God's house; legislation should begin with worship. The place where God is and where his people gather to meet him should be the place of authority as well as of prayer. Therefore, pray for the peace and prosperity of God's house; for the sake of the worshiper, for the sake of the brethren who assemble there and for its own sake.

May we cherish the place of worship as the source of our highest joys, and communion with God as the ground of our sweetest fellowship with one another.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

Read Psalm 5: 1-7

SAFETY IN THE LORD'S HOUSE.—The singer of Israel comes into the Lord's House with prayer in his heart, "unto thee will I pray." His first daily act is prayer to God, "In the morning." Before the dangers and tasks of the day are faced, let our supplication be made to God for protection and guidance. There is safety in the Lord's House where wicked people and those who would make us afraid are conspicuous for their absence. They do not frequent the place. In the quiet of the sanctuary, the soul of the worshiper can abandon itself to holy meditation and repose, for God's presence is a fright to the bloody and deceitful man. Because we have accepted the multitude of his mercies, we can be bold to come before God; for we could be timid in doing so only after we had spurned or rejected them. In communion with God and in the fellowship of his people there is safety against temptation and the power of evil over us. Those who neglect the Lord's house are in dangerous places.

In the means of grace which worship affords, may we be amply provided and abundantly rewarded with strength and comfort.

Lesson 11—September 12

Gifts for the Tabernacle

READ EXODUS 35: 4 to 36: 7

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 84: 1, 2, 8-12

GOLDEN TEXT—*Honor Jehovah with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.* Proverbs 3: 9.

It is the duty of all who receive God's blessings to acknowledge him as the giver, and to honor him for his goodness. By rendering to him some of that with which he has remembered us we make an acknowledgment which is his due and our duty. It honors him. The spirit of humility may be shown by the gift of our substance. But it must be of the best we have. The second or inferior fruits would not be honoring to God. It would be dishonorable in us to offer them. The firstfruits are required because they are his. We are God's renters, and the landlord's part must be set aside before we can rightly claim any part of what we have as our own. While it is nothing more than our duty to honor God with the firstfruits of our increase, he richly rewards us for so doing and increases the blessings of which we have made such acknowledgment to him. Him who honors God, God will honor; and he who honors God with his substance will be honored of God in his substance.

Lesson Text

Exodus 35: 20-29

- I. The Givers. 20 And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.
- II. The Gifts. 21 And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and brought Jehovah's offering, for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all the service thereof, and for the holy garments. 22 And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought brooches, and earrings, and signet rings, and armlets, all jewels of gold: even every man that offered an offering of gold unto Jehovah. 23 And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and assskins, brought them. 24 Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought Jehovah's offerings: and every man, with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it. 25 And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, the blue, and the purple, the scarlet, and the fine linen. 26 And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun the goats' hair. 27 And the rulers brought the onyx stones, and the stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate; 28 And the spices, and the oil; for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. III. The Giving.

29 The children of Israel brought a freewill offering unto Jehovah; every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all the work which Jehovah had commanded to be made by Moses.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Givers.* The congregation of Israel had just passed through severe ordeals in the awful punishment which Moses inflicted upon the idolaters for the worship of the golden calf, and in the terrible plague which had fallen upon all the people. Moses had renewed the covenant with God in the Mount and new tables of stone were given to take the place of those which had been broken by Moses in violent protestation against the idolatry of the calf-worshippers. They were in tender mood. Their spirits were yielding and pliable. They were ready for an extraordinary liberality.

2. *The Gifts.* Full instructions had been given Moses concerning the erection of the Tabernacle; and since all the specifications had been given, a list of materials was already supplied. The people were asked to donate such materials as were needed in the building and furnishing of the Lord's house. They were not assessed nor taxed. They were requested to make a free-will offering. They all gave something. According to what he had, each made his gift to the Lord. The men brought offerings of gold and furs of different sorts, besides various kinds of valuable woods. The women spun with their hands and made purple, blue and scarlet linens; while the poorer ones spun the coarse goat's hair into rugs for the house of the Lord. The rulers brought precious stones and spices and oils for the equipment of the high priest's holy place in the sanctuary. Thus every one, who had it in his heart to give, was granted the privilege of making whatever offering he could bring.

3. *The Giving.* It was intelligently done, because Moses had informed them of the Lord's instructions concerning the Tabernacle and of the various needs to be met in obeying his command. It was voluntary. Every gift was a freewill offering. No one was forced to give anything. No one was importunately entreated to give or do anything whatever. Since it was to be a place of worship, the spirit of worship should characterize its making. Only those whose hearts led them to give were real givers:

for "the gift without the giver is bare." Giving to God, to be acceptable, must be free and voluntary.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
Read Exodus 35: 20-29

GIFTS FOR THE TABERNACLE.—Concerning the gifts of the children of Israel for the Tabernacle and its furnishings, several things may be noted: (1) They were voluntary. The people were requested to give as their hearts stirred them to give. It was, first of all, in order that they might be benefited in giving that they were asked to give. No sort of liberality has the merit which belongs to that of a willing mind. (2) There were various gifts. Some of the people had money, others had jewels and jewelry of different kinds and values; all of which came to them as trophies of the victory which God gave them over Pharaoh when they left the land of Egypt. There were some who had more than others. Every one was asked to give according to his ability and out of the things he had or could do. Some who did not have jewels nor money could give their labor; and this they gladly did. (3) There were various givers. The men worked at the heavier tasks. The women did the lighter work, such as weaving and sewing, and making the curtains, rugs and robes for the priests. The rich men brought badgers' skins, rare and costly; the poor people brought camels' hair, coarse and cheap; but, for both there was need and one contribution was as necessary to the completion of the work as another. (4) The results were ample and sufficient. Response was general and generous. Contributions, according to every one's ability, from a great number of people made a large total. Varied resources were tapped, and the stream of benevolence from myriad sources made a mighty volume.

May we give of our substance to the Lord with willing hearts and ready hands; and may there be none who will not give him something.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7
Read Malachi 3: 7-12

ROBBING GOD.—According to the word of Malachi, the prophet, the people of Judah,

after the return of the exiles from captivity in Babylon, had seriously sinned against God in having forsaken his ordinances and in having renounced their obligations to him. They had repudiated their debt of gratitude and loyalty to Jehovah. The tithe was a requirement of the law. They recognized it as God's statute. Yet they had not given it. Therefore, they had robbed God. They had misappropriated his funds. In using for themselves that which had been given them in trust, they became embezzlers. Their offense was serious. And their first duty was to return to God; but to do so, it was necessary for them to make restitution. They could return to him by the same way in which they had departed from him. They were to reverse themselves and to take their back-track until they should come again to the place where they had left God: because he was there still—he had not gone anywhere. They could find him where they had deserted him. Restitution is the test of penitence for wrong done another. But happy indeed would be the outcome of their return to God in humble acknowledgment of their sins and in the faithful discharge of their obligations to him. Then, theirs would be a "delight-some land."

Let us acknowledge and meet our obligations to God with tithes and offerings, and with the firstfruits of all our increase.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Read Acts 4: 32-37

GIVING IN THE EARLY CHURCH.—The Christians at Jerusalem were not wealthy. Most of them were very poor. The spirit and practice of hospitality among them, therefore, became an expedient. A community of goods was formed, partly out of the stress of their economic and financial conditions, but chiefly because the disciples were all "of one heart and one soul." But it was entirely voluntary. No man considered any thing he had as his own. It seemed to have been unanimous, though there might have been some of the disciples who did not join in the community. If one was not disposed to surrender his claim upon his possessions for the benefit of the whole body of Christians, he was not bound to do so. It was a venture in faith which became

greatly fruitful for a while, for the work of the apostles was attended with great power and great grace. Spiritually, it was sound; economically, it was ideal; practically, it was unsound. During its existence no one lacked and none were surfeited. There was no dearth and no luxuries. Every one received his support out of the common treasury. Everything was converted into cash and then laid at the apostles' feet to be distributed by them to every man as he had need. A case worthy of special mention was that of Joses, or Barnabas, a Levite and a native of the island of Cyprus, who afterwards became a companion of Paul on the first missionary journey. Such an organization was too far in advance of the spiritual developments of its age to have been permanent. But its message of idealism abides. Yet it is not an economic impossibility to have such communities even now. There are some in existence which are said to be made up of a happy, prosperous and contented people.

May we remember the needs of others before our own, and honor the drafts which Jesus makes on us to supply his treasury.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Read Exodus 36: 1-7

GENEROUS GIVING.—Bezalel and Aholiab, who were appointed to superintend the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture, were also selected to receive the gifts of the children of Israel for that purpose. As they built, the people gave. It got to be hilarious giving. Freewill offerings were brought. Over and above what they had done or expected to do, the people gave gifts. It became a contagion and habit with them. Each day they brought an offering. So the gifts piled up. It was the sum of many people's gifts and of their regular giving. It amounted to more than enough for all the needs of the Tabernacle, and Moses had to make a proclamation urging the people not to give any more. He was thoroughly honest with them. They had been requested to give to a special cause, and when all that was necessary had been supplied, he was not going to think up some new plan for spending the people's donations to the Lord.

Let our offerings to the Lord be regular, systematic and be joyfully brought into the Lord's treasury.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Read Acts 5: 1-11

MISERLY GIVING.—What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, members of the church at Jerusalem, because of which they both died suddenly before the Lord in the presence of Peter and the other apostles? (1) There was pride in their hearts, in that they wanted a reputation for beneficence, as members of the Christian community, which they did not deserve and to which they had made a false claim. (2) There was secret distrust of the apostles as distributors, because they did not seem to be willing to put all into their hands. (3) Avarice in keeping back for themselves a part, notwithstanding they were to share with others the supply of their necessities out of a common treasury. (4) Lying, in that they laid at the apostles' feet a sum of money which was supposed to have been the entire proceeds from the sale of their property. (5) It was a sin against the Holy Spirit, in that it was a deliberate plot to cheat the Lord's treasury; to accept their whole living out of it when they had other resources. They did not have to give anything unless they desired to do so. As long as the property was in their hands, they had the right to do with it as they pleased; but when, by an act of theirs, even though it was falsely made, it became consecrated to the Lord, they did not have the right to hold back anything.

In all our giving to the Lord, let us be sincere and honest with ourselves and with God.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Read 2 Corinthians 8: 7-15

OUR EXAMPLE IN GIVING.—Titus was appointed to raise money at Corinth for the needy saints at Jerusalem. Paul urges upon them the duty of responding liberally to this appeal. He declares that giving is a grace. Some people have other graces who do not have this; while some have this who do not possess other graces to a marked

degree. But many who have it do not have it fully developed. Let all who have other graces, abound in this grace also. We should imitate the example of Jesus who, though he was rich, yet became poor for our sake. Let us have his spirit. Also let us perform the doing of it. So many people are liberal with their promises who are not sufficiently anxious to pay what they promise. The special liberality of the more able members can supply a deficit which must otherwise exist by reason of the necessary falling off of others. In the support of a common cause for the glory of Christ in the world, Christian people and churches may have a spiritual fellowship in service, and what one does may be supplemented by the contributions of others.

May we abound in the grace of liberality and realize that it can be developed only by an intelligent and conscientious practice of it.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Read Psalm 84: 1-12

GIFTS FOR THE CHURCH.—The Psalmist identifies the Tabernacle of the Lord with the house of God—the place or institution for the regular worship of God. His first gift to it is that of a heart-hunger and yearning for its courts. He would, if he might, have his abode there as the little birds do that build their nests under the eaves of the sanctuary. He would give it his strength—"blessed is he whose strength is in thee," for it will be increased and shall go "from strength unto strength." In it he finds his delights above a thousand other joys. He gives it his service in whatever way it may be needed. To be even a door-keeper there is a more exalted position than to be chief among the tented dwellers of iniquity.

May we be assured that the Lord will give grace and glory and that no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly.

Lesson 12—September 19

Obedience to Law

(Temperance Lesson)

READ LEVITICUS 26

DEVOTIONAL READING—Proverbs 23: 29-35

GOLDEN TEXT—*Drink no wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee.* Leviticus 10: 9.

In the book of Leviticus we have the manual of worship for the instruction of the Levites in the conduct of sanctuary services, and for such legislation among the people of Israel as might be given mainly from the Tabernacle. The use of strong drink was forbidden by the very laws of the Lord's house. Indulgence was, therefore, a transgression of a rule of the Tabernacle and was considered a sin against the God of the sanctuary. The evils of strong drink were displayed in the light of its moral consequences. The fact that a man oftentimes indulges and is not apparently harmed by it argues nothing at all in its favor. Though it may be attended by no physical ill in any particular case, it is a sin against God and against one's own spiritual nature. Reform, therefore, should begin with legislation in the house of the Lord where conviction for sin can be wrought upon the conscience by the direct application of God's word and law by the Holy Spirit. Intemperance will continue, and even grow worse and worse, unless it becomes generally regarded as a moral and spiritual evil.

Lesson Text

Leviticus 26: 3-5, 14-20

I. Blessings on Obedience.

3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them:

4 Then I will give you rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

II. Threatenings on Disobedience.

14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

15 And if ye shall reject my statutes, and if your soul abhor mine ordinances, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but break my covenant:

16 I also will do this unto you: I will appoint terror over you, even consumption and fever, that shall consume the eyes, and make the soul to pine away; and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be smitten before your enemies: they that hate you shall rule over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

18 And if ye will not yet for these things hearken unto me, then I will chastise you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass;

20 And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.

Lesson Comment

1. **Blessings On Obedience.** The prosperity of a country is conditioned on its production. Bankers declare that the financial outlook in every direction "depends on the crops." The children of Israel could not have been assured of greater temporal blessings that to have had the promise of "rains in their seasons" and of an abundant increase in the yield of their fields and the fruits of their trees. But such a promise was given on condition they would walk in the statutes of God, and keep his commandments, "and do them." They were to observe the laws of the Lord, not keep them as a relic or a memorial; nor keep them to study only, but keep them and do them. They would then be protected against want, for they would have crops in so great an abundance that they would be kept busy the year round gathering them: "threshing would last till the grapes got ripe; and grape-gathering would continue till sowing time." And thus the cycle of the years would be filled by profitable and fruitful industry. They would also be protected against attack from foes political, civil and social, for they should "dwell safely in the land." Their piety, being the foundation of their wealth, would perpetuate itself and throw around them the bulwarks of defense sufficient to stand against all comers.

2. **Threatenings On Disobedience.**—But the people who will not heed the commandments of the Lord and who break their covenant with him, shall suffer dire consequences. They would be afflicted in body with "consumption and fever." They would sow their seed but their enemies would gather the grain and eat it. They would not be able to stand up against their foes in battle, for the Lord God would turn his face away from them: even those who hated them would rule them. And if one series of visitations is not enough to rebuke them for their disobedience and bring them back to God, other chastisements, "seven times more," would be inflicted upon them, and their land would be struck by drought so severe that the heaven would "be as iron and the earth as brass"; the fields would be barren and the trees fruitless. God's

chastisements become geometrically more terrible as their number increases. May the first visitation be enough! Let not God have to speak to us twice about the same thing.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Read Leviticus 26: 14-20

OBEDIENCE TO LAW.—Recognition of authority is the basis of law observance. To acknowledge the authority of God is fundamental in obedience to his laws. His commandments are his laws. His words and his instructions are all laws. To violate them is to spurn his mercy and defy his authority. God's judgments and wisdom are not to be despised but to be honored and accepted as the standards of life and conduct. His laws have not been concealed from our eyes. He is not a Draconic legislator who frowns with every utterance of a word, but is a loving Father whose rule is absolute because it is supremely right. It is possible for us to know what he requires. Ignorance of the common law of God excuses no one. "We must give an account not only for the knowledge we had and used not, but also for the knowledge we might have had and would not: not only for the light we have sinned against, but also for the light we have sinned away." The penalties attached to disobedience to God's laws, are: (1) physical diseases, violations of God's laws necessarily involve a disregard of the laws of health and bodily strength; (2) economic disasters will surely follow a disrespect for the divine specifications for our temporal prosperity and social welfare; (3) weakness of moral fiber and dearth of moral courage, so that the violators become a prey to those who hate them and even fugitives from their own conscience—they "flee when none pursueth"; (4) their pride will be broken—for disregard of God is self-esteem which is the invariable forerunner of a downfall, and (5) famine and distress will come—"the heavens will become as iron and the earth as brass."

May God keep our feet in paths of obedience to his holy and righteous will.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Read Leviticus 26: 21-26

WARNINGS AGAINST DISOBEDIENCE.—God directs and commands that attention be given to the penalties of disobedience as well as to the laws themselves. In fact, the penalty is part of the law. Otherwise law would not be law but good advice. God must be obeyed or else certain well-known consequences must follow. There are degrees of penalties, according to the nature and repetition of the offense. After the first offense they become more severe, because guilt is greater. He who does not regard the law itself should be wise enough to observe it after his first experience of the discomforts consequent upon its non-observance. Otherwise "seven times more plague" will be inflicted. The people who disobey God will weaken as a race and become few in number. Their wealth will wane correspondingly to the decrease in population. The prices of property continue to rise as long as there is an influx of people. But when population decreases, values go down. If the decimation of their numbers is not enough to warn them, then "seven times more plague" will be visited on them. They shall be huddled together in cities, unsanitary and filthy in their sins, where they shall die by thousands from pestilence; and where hunger shall be unappeased and shall take its heavy toll of life, and where even the bread they do get cannot satisfy them, nor stay the ravages of the destructive pestilence.

May we take God's first warning against disobedience; let not God have to speak to us a second time to do anything.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Read Leviticus 26: 27-33

WARNINGS AGAINST DISOBEDIENCE.—After the second admonition, God's penalties for disobedience become very severe. With each punishment chastisement must necessarily get heavier. How terrible is the doom pronounced upon the people of Israel in case they persist in a course of disobedience to the laws of God as given them by the hands of Moses! They would be reduced to such dire depravity and extreme distress that they would eat the flesh of their own children; whether they died of disease or were slaughtered for food or were

eaten as meat offered to idols. Their idols would be destroyed and their own bodies piled up in heaps on the ruins of their idolatrous shrines. Their cities would be laid waste. Centers of culture would become the scenes of cruel barbarism and dense ignorance. Their wealth would be destroyed and their palaces razed to the ground. Their land would be desolate and would be occupied by enemy hordes. They themselves would be scattered among the heathen who would not fear God nor regard them; at whose hands they would suffer the rebuke of Almighty God for their disobedience and sin. How terrible is the wrath of a sin-avenging God!

Let us not presume on the mercy of God but remember that God who is love is also a consuming fire.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Read Deuteronomy 28: 1-6

BLESSINGS FOLLOWING OBEDIENCE.—Deuteronomy is Moses' comment on the laws of God. It contains the statutes of Israel, and is the compendium of law which distinguishes Moses as the greatest lawyer, or jurist, the most profound judicial mind, who ever lived. In this passage from the book, we have the blessings of obedience enumerated. Those who serve and obey God shall be exalted above their neighbors. They will be a superior people. There is no god like unto the only true and living God. Therefore his worshipers will excel in character the worshipers of all other divinities, on the principle of "like deity like devotee." They shall be overtaken by blessings—they shall be literally run down by them. Goodness and mercy shall pursue them all their days. They will prosper in their cities and in their centers of population and wealth. They will flourish in their fields and prosper in production. Their families would be blessed—happy, united and harmonious. Their flocks would increase and their temporal prosperity vouchsafed. In their personal interests, they would be made to abound—in basket and in store, plenty, both for immediate and for future use. They would win favorable recognition among their neighbors, as they went out and came in before them.

May we experience the joy and blessings of a perfect conformity to the will of God.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

Read Deuteronomy 28: 7-14

BLESSINGS FOLLOWING OBEDIENCE.—Here the Lord guarantees to his people collectively or as a nation, great rewards for obedience to his commands. He will fight for them; he will take their side—because they are already on his side. They are themselves good and obedient soldiers; therefore, the divine strategist can use them to "turn to flight the armies of the aliens." Their foes may come up against them one way—in orderly military line of attack; but they will flee seven ways—in utter confusion and rout. He will establish their holiness and integrity, and will set up their cause among all the people. Because of his championship of their interests, other nations would be made to fear them and, to that extent, revere their God. Immense wealth would be given them in the fertility of their soil, the fruits of their orchards, the products of their fields and the increase of their cattle. In the commerce of the world, they would have unbounded prosperity and become a "lender to many nations and a borrower from none."

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord and whom they obey with constant and sincere devotion.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Read Daniel 1: 8-21

DANIEL'S FEARLESS OBEDIENCE.—The young captive Daniel was granted extraordinary privileges as a prince in Babylon and given royal entertainment in the palaces of his new king. With his three friends, he was chosen to be trained in Babylonian learning in order to become a leading factor in developing among his people a loyalty to the government. It was not a bad policy on the part of the king. As a young man in the king's house, his loyalty to God was the dominant factor in his life. He purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat nor with his wine. He had scruples, or moral convictions, against them because they were not allowed by the laws of his God. He was brave to decline the delicacies of the king's table at which he sat by special privilege. But he was not a law unto himself. He did not arrogantly take things in his own hands, but requested

the warden that he might be excused. He was not trying to advertise his piety or his loyalty to the words of God. At his suggestion a vegetable diet was tried out and was proved far better than the highly seasoned viands which the other princes ate. The results were apparent. Obedience to God meant physical health and bodily vigor. His physical superiority was noticed by the king who observed that he and his friends were more intelligent and more adept of mind and hand than the rest.

Let us obey God from the heart, from conviction and because it is right, preferring his ways to those of the highest society into which we may be admitted.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Read Proverbs 23: 29-35

THE WOES OF THE DRUNKARD.—The wise man had observed the condition of the drunkard and had seen the effects of intemperance. His description of them is one of the most accurate and graphic in all literature. Who hath sorrow, contentions, babblings and wounds without a cause? Temperance means abstinence—"Look not on the wine." Refrain from it entirely. Moderation in the use of intoxicants is intemperance. To be a murderer one does not have to kill much—but just kill a little! The law of self-control enjoins total abstinence. Intemperance is venomous and vena; it is both poisonous and sinful. It is like a serpent's fang. It produces a moral perversion, so that the drunkard's eyes see strange women, with lustful passions inordinately inflamed and excited. It produces a physical insensibility, delirium, false ideas, notions and hallucinations. His head "swims" as one that lieth down in the midst of the sea where the swells rise and fall. The earth seems to move under him as one on the top of a mast of a ship which is tossed about by the waves. He is anaesthetized by strong drink so that he can be beaten and not feel it. But worst of all, he is robbed of his self-control and will-power, so that after a season of debauch, he will get up "and go to it again."

Let us not be filled with wine wherein there is excess but let us be filled with the Holy Spirit wherein there is no surfeit.

Lesson 13—September 26

Religion in the State

(Special State Mission Lesson)

READ EXODUS 34: 1-10; DEUTERONOMY 4: 1-14; 5: 28 to 6: 5

DEVOTIONAL READING—Psalm 105: 1-8

GOLDEN TEXT—*Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our God is one Jehovah; and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5.

This being State Mission Day among the Sunday schools of the Southern Baptist Convention, we have a special lesson dealing with the religious foundations of the commonwealth. The religious state of a people indicates the strength and durability of their civic state. There must be a moral common weal before there can be a sound commonwealth. God is the founder of the state. He is to be worshipped therein.

Lesson Text

Deuteronomy 4: 1-10

1. The Message of God to Israel.

1 And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them; that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, giveth you.

2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you.

3 Your eyes have seen what Jehovah did because of Baalpeor; for all the men that followed Baalpeor, Jehovah thy God hath destroyed them from the midst of thee.

4 But ye that did cleave unto Jehovah your God are alive every one of you this day.

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, even as Jehovah my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the midst of the land whither ye go in to possess it.

6 Keep therefore and do them: for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

7 For what great nation is there, that hath a god so high unto them, as Jehovah thy God is whensoever we call upon him?

8 And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

II. The Duty of Israel to God.

9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but make them known unto thy children and thy children's children:

10 The day that thou stoodest before Jehovah the God in Horeb, when Jehovah said unto me, assemble me the people, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.

Lesson Comment

1. *The Message of God to Israel.* God is speaking to Israel as a nation and is instructing them as to the condition for their success and prosperity as a people. If they would follow his leading and do as he told them, they would go in and possess the land which Jehovah, the God of their fathers, gave them. His gift of it was conditional upon their winning it by the merit of their own obedience to his commands. Sin and wickedness is hostile to community life and to the welfare of the commonwealth. The Israelites were cited to an instance of unfaithfulness to God on the part of a great many of their number who sinned at Baalpeor in indulging in licentious idolatry with the Moabites, and how it was that all who sinned there were no longer alive. Therefore the perpetuity of their national, as well as individual, life depended upon their loyalty to Jehovah and their faithful observance of his words, which they were not authorized to change or annul. No nation has a god like unto Jehovah who is so close to them at all times that they can call upon him at any time. And his laws are the basis of the world's legislative enactments and judicial procedure.

2. *The Duty of Israel to God.* The fact that righteousness exalteth a nation should be taught and emphasized by the good people in it. The children's children should have it handed down to them. It should be worked into the social fabric and laid in the foundations of the civic structure. Our American civilization was laid in the wilderness by patriots who feared God, and sought to establish a nation on religious liberty and the worship of Almighty God. Shall we forget what God has done for us as a people? Shall we depart from the practice of that simple faith which made heroes of our forefathers and which alone can make a country great, and which only can enable us to keep the land which the Lord God has given us? The evangelization of the homeland is essential to its perpetuity, and is necessary to our place in it. Let the people recognize God as

the supreme law-giver, and let the honor of his name in the state be their watchword. Both their domestic and foreign relations ought to be worked out on the basis of absolute allegiance to him.

Daily Readings

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Read Exodus 2: 1-10

THE CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION OF MOSES—Moses was not "a child of destiny" except as the creature of a special Providence. Chance did not make him. God's election and grace were manifest in his birth and training. He escaped the fate of many of his contemporaries perhaps and was miraculously saved from death in infancy for a special purpose. In his early life, three women took part in his care. Great men usually arise out of great crises, and out of personal difficulties. First, there was his mother whose strategy matched her transcendent mother-love. There was Miriam, his sister, whose watchful eye never lost sight of the basket-boat as it floated among the rushes in the river. Then also was the princess whose kindness must be forever associated with the career of Israel's peerless leader, who threw around the helpless babe the protecting care of her position and power with the throne of Egypt.

"The bravest battle that e'er was fought; Shall I tell you where and when? On the maps of the world you will find it not,

'Twas fought by the mothers of men."

May God inspire all mothers to realize the golden opportunities afforded them for the shaping of the lives of their children in their early and tender age.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Read Exodus 12: 21-28

THE PASSOVER.—Concerning the passover, two things are to be noted: (1) its institution and (2) its observance. It was instituted at the time the Israelites were awaiting their departure, and as a preparation for their getting away from Egypt, following the visit of the death angel to every Egyptian home. It signalized their own safety from death and also their deliverance from bondage. It consisted of the slain lamb, the blood of which was sprinkled

on the door-posts and the flesh of which was eaten with bitter herbs by the assembled family or friends, with their shoes on and with their loins girded for the journey. It was ordained that the Passover should become a perpetual memorial among all the Hebrew generations afterwards. It pointed backward to the event that gave them a national and independent existence. It was a memorial and not a sacrament. The lamb did not save the people, but God whose instructions the people carried out when the paschal lamb was slain and eaten.

May we ever keep in mind and in sacred observance what God has done, as a ground of hope and confidence in him for the future.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Read Exodus 16: 11-18

THE GIVING OF THE MANNA.—God's blessings are material as well as spiritual. They include our temporal as well as our eternal needs. In the wilderness, the Israelites had no food and no means of getting any. There were no markets and no harvest fields. It looked as if they would have to starve. Just when they had despaired and starvation seemed inevitable, God gave the supply. It was to be had fresh every day. It was not to be laid up or stored away "against a rainy day." It could not be bought nor sold; it was not subject to barter or exchange. The people were not to traffic in it. But every day they were to get it fresh from the hand of God and be led thereby to a daily dependence upon him and a daily acknowledgment of him as the giver. Furthermore, it was to be gathered and prepared for use by the recipients. God feeds us in the same way today. Each must gather for himself—"every man according to his eating."

Let us acknowledge every blessing as the direct gift of God and honor him as the giver by receiving his gifts gratefully.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Read Exodus 18: 13-24

JETHRO'S WISE COUNSEL.—There were peculiar hardships involved in the work of administration among the people of Israel when they had lately emerged from Egypt where they had lived under masters, and had come into the wilderness where their personal liberties were bounded only by a

common straitened circumstance and by their own racial and religious identity. They needed much teaching and guidance. There were numerous personal differences among them which needed to be adjusted. No courts had been established. Moses was therefore regarded as their solitary adviser. But among so many people there would necessarily be more cases than one man could hear and consider. He was taxed beyond the limit of his time and nervous energy to answer all the calls for his services. Jethro's plan of organizing a corps of subordinate judges was a wise one and immediately adopted by Moses. Thus the great lawyer received advice from the shepherd-priest of Midian as to the best methods of adjudication. It was organization solely for efficiency.

May our plans and organizations be subject to the divine will and may we adopt nothing for which God does not issue his commission.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Read Exodus 20: 1-21

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.—The circumstances as well as the text of the Ten Commandments were supernatural. The Decalogue was inspired. It was not original with Moses. The people themselves were witnesses to the incident of God's descent on Sinai to give the law into Moses' hands. Under the awe which it inspired in them they asked that God speak to Moses and through him to them, fearing lest a direct address of the divine voice to them would be more than they could bear. They recognized the presence of God. It was altogether unlike the mystery books of pagan devotees or the more modern tradition concerning the book of Mormon, the ready-made plates of which were said to have been revealed to Joseph Smith on a hillside near Palmyra, New York. The Ten Commandments are true not only because the history is authentic but because they contain that which is true to human conditions and needs everywhere and all the time. It is to be noted that they are not numerous. God did not make many rules by which he would govern mankind, but they were all simple, fundamental and readily understood by the people.

Let us accept the law of God as authentic, reliable and unchangeable, and the Bible as the revelation of his will to men.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Read Exodus 33: 7-16

THE TENT OF MEETING.—The Tent of Meeting was placed by Moses outside the camp of Israel, yet within view of all who stood in their tent doors. God is to be worshiped by withdrawing our thoughts from our worldly surroundings; even though we may be standing in our accustomed places. As Moses went into the Tent to officiate in the worship, he went for and in behalf of the people; and each worshiper, standing in his tent-door, was to look toward Moses as he went in that he might be brought representatively into the presence of God and into the fellowship of his house. They were not to worship Moses but God. Moses was merely their minister. The place of prayer is the mercy seat which is also the source of power and promise, the scene of divine guidance and instruction.

May we have that fellowship with each other which can be had from a common place of prayer and worship, a united and sincere communion with God.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Read Psalm 105: 1-8

JEHOVAH'S WONDERFUL WORKS.—Here is a call to praise God by making known his deeds. What he has done is honoring to him—it is worthy of the highest praise. He should be extolled for his very work's sake. Let his works praise him in the gates. Make them the subject of conversation; speak of them, rehearse them, let them have a chance to voice his praises. Make his strength the object of quest and inquiry; search and see that the Lord is good. Remember the judgments of his mouth which are as wonderful as the works of his hands. He has kept his covenants of old; he has been faithful to his promises with the fathers for a thousand generations. Therefore let his wonderful works and words be made known to all nations in order that his goodness and power may be acknowledged by all mankind.

May we witness to the power of the Holy Spirit in the miracle of our own regeneration and to his sustaining power in our preservation in grace unto holiness and complete redemption.

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