

TWO LESSONS.

BY MINNIE E. KENNEY.

"No, you cannot say anything to comfort me. I cannot feel that it is the act of a loving Father; it is too cruel and unjust. Why must I be stripped of all my worldly possessions, while others, no more worthy than I, can keep and enjoy their wealth?"

The friend did not essay any more words of comfort, as she listened to the words of rebellion, and for a time there was silence in the room.

Beside the window a childish head was bent over the pages of an open book, but though an hour had passed by since he began to con his task, it was not yet mastered. His eyes and thoughts wandered to a favorite toy that the little fingers clasped lovingly, and it was but divided attention that he bestowed upon his lesson.

"Charlie, have you learned your lesson yet?" the mother asked presently.

"It is so hard," pleaded the child. "I have been studying it so long, and yet I cannot say it. Need I learn it, mother?"

"Yes, dear, you must learn it," was the firm though loving answer. "You are thinking too much of your play; that is why it seems so hard. Let me take your top until your lesson is learned."

"No, no, please let me keep it," entreated the boy eagerly. "Oh, don't take it away, please don't, mamma," and swift tears filled the brown eyes as the mother's stronger hand loosened the childish grasp and took the toy away, despite his protestations.

"You don't love me, or you would not take my top away when I want it so," the little fellow sobbed, trying to shake off the loving hand that rested caressingly upon his shoulder. But the mother's arms only drew him to her in a closer embrace, as she answered tenderly, "It is because I do love you, darling, that I have taken away your toy. I took it away from you so that you might learn your lesson better and more quickly."

The swift April tears dried as quickly as they had come, and the child bent over his simple lesson with undisturbed thoughts, while the mother went back to her guest.

"Dear friend," said the latter gently, "can you not learn the lesson your child has just learned. You took away his toy though he pleaded for it with tears; yet it was not in anger you denied his entreaties; it was only that he might learn the lesson which you in your wiser love know was best for him to learn. Our Father has some sweet lesson of submission that he would fain have you learn, and because you could not learn it aright he has taken from you the glittering toy that you longed to keep. Can you not trust his infinite wisdom and love as your child has trusted you, and learn the lesson he has placed before you?"

The look of passionate defiance left the sorrowful face, and the tears that fell were not those of anger, but of penitence for rebellion and distrust.

The child learned his task, but the mother's heart had learned a lesson of trust and submission to a loving Father's will. —Illustrated Christian Weekly.

A CHRISTIAN is never satisfied with himself; but this is no wonder, as he is not fully satisfied with any one but Christ.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON XI.—SEPTEMBER 9.

THE UNBELIEF OF THE PEOPLE.—Num.

14:1-10.

COMMIT VERSES 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.—Heb. 3:19.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Unbelief leads to weakness and failure, and sin; and shuts out of heaven.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Num. 11:1-19.

T. Num. 11:20-25.

W. Deut. 1:19-46.

Th. Joshua 14:6-14.

F. Heb. 3:7-19.

Sa. Ps. 106:1-13.

Su. Ps. 206:19-48.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—The children of Israel were on the borders of the promised land. They were commanded to go up and possess it, but were afraid and sent twelve spies. They all reported

sins. Internal wars, or danger of an attack from Egypt may have weakened them. 10. *The glory of the Lord appeared*: in unusual brilliance, in flashes of dangerous light in the pillar of cloud.

SUBJECT: THE EFFECTS OF UNBELIEF.

QUESTIONS.

I. FIRST EFFECT: MURMURING AND REBELLION (vs. 1-5).—How were the people affected by the report of the spies? Against whom did they complain? What wish did they express? Was their wish folly? Think of some of the dangers of the way between them and Egypt, and show how absurd was their wish to return. What did they actually attempt to do? (v. 4.) Did they go so far as to choose this leader? (Neh. 9:16, 17.) Was their murmuring really against God? Was this act rebellion against him? How were these sins the result of unbelief? What promise should they have trusted? (Deut. 1:30.)

II. SECOND EFFECT: INSENSIBILITY TO REASON (vs. 6-9).—What two men stood up against all the people? What did they do? Did it require great courage? How many arguments do you find in these verses to persuade the people to obey God? How had God shown that he was on their side? (Deut. 1:30, 31.) Was it reasonable to trust for the future a God who had done such

those who will not believe? (John 3:36.) What warning is given? (Heb. 3:12.)

LESSON XII.—SEPTEMBER 16.

COMMIT VERSES 7, 8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ.—1 Cor. 10:4.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Jesus Christ is the rock whence flows the living water for all the thirsts of the soul.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Num. 20:1-29.

T. Num. 21:1-9.

W. Num. 22:1-41.

Th. Num. 23:1-30.

F. Num. 21:1-25.

Sa. Ex. 17:1-7.

Su. Deut. 3:23-28.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—We have now come to the beginning of the 40th year after the exodus. Little is said of the intervening 37½ years. But it was a time of testing, of discipline, of preparation for the Promised Land.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. *Then came the whole congregation*: who had been dispersed over a wide region for support during the long years.

First month: of the 40th year of the exodus; Abib, including parts of our March and April, compare Num. 20:1; 33:38, and Deut. 2:1-7. *Kadesh*: in the edge of Zin on one side, and Paran on the other. *Miriam*: Moses' older sister, who watched him in the Nile. She must have been about 130 years old. 3. *Chode*: strove, reproached bitterly. 6. *The glory of the Lord appeared*: probably in terrific flashes from the cloud over the tabernacle. 8. *Take the rod*: with which the former miracles had been done. *Speak*: not strike. 10. *Hear now, ye rebels*: Moses is angry, and seems to have felt hard because God gave water to the unworthy people; as Jonah complained that Nineveh was not destroyed.

Must we: shall we. Is it right to bring water to those who have rebelled against us and insulted us. 11. *Smote the rock*: either in anger when commanded only to speak, or in unbelief, as if the word would not be enough. 12. *Because ye believed not*: the root of his sin was unbelief. A larger trust would have enabled him to hold his indignation. *To sanctify me*: to honor me as a holy being. Sin in one of God's best servants dishonors God. *Ye shall not bring this congregation, etc.* It was necessary for God to show that he abhorred all sin, by punishing it in his highest servant. 13. *Meribah*: strife.

Golden Text: Christ is the rock, is the source of living water. The Rock, Christ, was Jehovah, who led them all through the wilderness, and thus followed them. He, as the source of supply, never failed them.

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SUBJECT: CHRIST THE SOURCE OF THE LIVING WATER.

QUESTIONS.

I. THE DRY AND THIRSTY LAND (vs. 1-5).—In what place did the Israelites gather? At what time? Who died there? Give an account of her life? What great affliction came upon the people? How did they act under it? Was this any better than their fathers had acted? (Ex. 17:1-4.) Was it a great sin? What should they have done?

II. WATER FROM THE ROCK (vs. 6-11).—What did Moses do in this new trouble? How did God show that he heard his prayer? What was Moses told to do? In what respect did he act in a manner different from his orders? What rod did he take? (Ex. 14:16; 17:5.) What was the result?

III. THE SIN OF MOSES (vs. 12, 13).—What was Moses' sin on this occasion? (Ps. 106:33.) What is said to be its root, in vs. 12? How did it arise from unbelief? What was one of Moses' greatest virtues? (Num. 12:3.) What could have provoked him to sin in the line of his greatest virtue? Was he disappointed that 38 years had not made the people better? Did he feel as Jonah did when God did not destroy Nineveh? (Jonah 3:3-10; 4:1-11.) How was Moses punished for his failure? Why was so great a sorrow laid on so good a man?

IV. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—What is said of this event in 1 Cor. 10:4? How was Christ their Spiritual Rock? (John 7:37-39.) How did this rock follow them? Can this world satisfy our souls? What are some of the thirsts of the soul which the world leaves unsatisfied? How does Jesus satisfy them? What will keep us out of the promised land? (Heb. 3:18, 19.) What light is thrown upon Moses' punishment by Heb. 12:6, and Luke 12:48? Does God still do great good with imperfect men for instruments?

LESSON CALENDAR. (Third Quarter, 1888.)

11. Sept. 9.—The Unbelief of the People.—Num. 14:1-10.

12. Sept. 16.—The Smitten Rock.—Num. 20:1-13.

13. Sept. 23.—Death and Burial of Moses.—Deut. 34:1-12.

14. Sept. 30.—Review, Temperance, Deut. 21:18-21, and Missions.



"I INTEND TO GET THAT MILK."

an exceedingly good land, but defended by warriors, giants, and walled cities. Ten of the spies discouraged the people, forgetting God's power to overcome all enemies. The people were greatly disheartened, in spite of the efforts of the other two spies.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. *Lifted up their voice*: in loud wailing and crying. 2. *Murmured against Moses*: and thus against God who had appointed and guided them. *Would God that we had died*: death in the wilderness seemed better than the labors and dangers of conquest. 3. *Wherefore hath the Lord*: they complain now directly against God. 5. *Moses and Aaron fell on their faces*: in prayer. 6. *Rent their clothes*: in token of sorrow and of evil to which the people exposed themselves. 7. *An exceedingly good land*: this was their first argument. 8. *If the Lord*: this was their second argument. God would give the land to them. 9. *Only rebel not*: another argument. Refusal to go was rebellion. It was better to have the giants against them, than to have God against them. *They are bread for us*: we will eat them up as a hungry man eats bread. *Their defence is departed*: God was against them, condemning them to destruction for their

wonders in the past? Meaning of "They are bread for us?" Is it reasonable for us to trust God at all times?

III. THIRD EFFECT; PERSECUTION OF THE FAITHFUL (v. 10).—How were the faithful few treated? Why do people persecute others? Are there any persecutions in these days? Is it our duty to be martyrs if necessary, in order to stand up for the right? How did God defend his faithful ones? How did he rebuke the unbelieving ones?

IV. FOURTH EFFECT; LOSS OF THE PROMISED LAND.—What did God propose to do to the people? (vs. 11, 12.) What did he intend for them? (vs. 13-19.) Was this noble? Were the people pardoned? (v. 20.) What punishment was sent upon them? (vs. 28-34.) For what purpose? (Deut. 8:2.) In what new way did they show their unbelief? (vs. 40-45.)

V. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—What warning is given to us from the story of to-day's lesson? (Heb. 3:7, 8.) What is given as the cause of our conduct? (Heb. 3:18, 19.) Will unbelief keep us out of heaven? (Heb. 4:1, 11; Mark 16:16.) Of what sin does the Spirit convince men? (John 16:8, 9.) What does John say of