

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1879, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON XV.

APRIL 13.]
PROSPERITY RESTORED.—Job 42: 1-10.—[About 1520 B. C.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY, VS. 4-6.

- 1 Then Job answered the Lord, and said,
2 I know that thou canst do every thing,
And that no thought can be withholden from thee.
3 Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?
Therefore have I uttered that I understood not;
Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
4 Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak:
I will demand of thee, and declare they unto me.
5 I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear;
But now mine eye seeth thee:
6 Wherefore I abhor myself,
And repent in dust and ashes.
- 7 And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.
- 8 Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to your servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.
- 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bilam the Shu'bite and Zophar the Na'amathite went, and did according as the Lord commanded them: the Lord also accepted Job.
- 10 And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Behold, we count them happy which endure.—James 5: 11.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Sanctified suffering is followed by blessing.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Elihu showed why deliverance from sorrow and suffering was sometimes delayed. Then the Lord speaks to Job. The lesson contains Job's confession, and the offering made by his friends as the Lord commanded. Verses 1-6 are Hebrew poetry; the rest of the chapter is in prose.

NOTES.—*Eliphaz*—whom God strengthens, the chief of the three friends of Job, and probably the oldest. He was from Teman, a district of Idumea, noted for the wisdom of its people, Jer. 49: 7. *Two friends* that is, Bildad the Shuhite, of Shuh, in the eastern part of northern Arabia, and Zophar of Naamah, a region of Syria.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) JOB'S SUBMISSION. (II.) JOB ACCEPTED.

I. JOB'S SUBMISSION. (2.) KNOW, from the Lord's word in the former chapter; WITHHOLDEN, kept back. (3.) WHO... KNOWLEDGE? See Job 33: 2; HIDE THOUGHTS, confuses rather than explains truth. (4.) DEMAND, see Job 33: 3. Job appears to repeat the things the Lord had said, and in verses 5 and 6 gives his answer to the Lord. (5.) I HAVE HEARD... BUT NOW, closer or better knowledge of God gives better knowledge of self. (6.) ABHOR MYSELF, Ps. 51: 17; IN DUST AND ASHES, so the deepest sorrow is expressed in the Past.

II. JOB ACCEPTED. (7.) WRATH IS KINDLED, Rev. 6: 16, 17; SPOKE OF ME, of my dealings with men; RIGHT, truly; AS... JOB, Job confessed his ignorance and sin, but he had better views of God, than his friends. (8.) SEVEN, a common, and regarded as a sacred, number; GO TO... JOB, this would imply that Job was a priest. See also Job 1: 5; PRAY FOR YOU, see James 5: 14. The head of the family was the priest in patriarchal times. (10.) CAPTIVITY, his misfortunes and sorrows; TWICE AS MUCH, comp. Job 1: 2, 3, with Job 42: 12-16.

What facts in the history of Job teach us—

1. That God desires us to be humble and penitent?
2. That prayer for others is proper?
3. That we should return good for evil?
4. The value of a godly life?

LESSON XVI.

APRIL 20.]
QUEEN ESTHER.—Esther 4: 10-17.—[About 474 B. C.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY, VS. 14.

10. Again Es'ther spake unto Ha'tach and gave him commandment unto Mor-de-cai:

11. All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king in the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

12. And they told to Mor-de-cai Es'ther's words.

13. Then Mor-de-cai commanded to answer Es'ther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

15. Then Es'ther bade them return Mor-de-cai this answer,
16. Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shu'shan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

17. So Mor-de-cai went his way, and did according to all that Es'ther had commanded him.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Ahasuerus, or Xerxes, became king of Persia in 485 B. C. About the third year of his reign he deposed Vashti, his favorite queen, for disobedience, and probably about four years later made Esther

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queen in Vashti's place. Some years later Haman secured an edict or order from the king, for all the Jews to be put to death. Mordecai prompted queen Esther, who was a Jew, to ask the king to prevent the destruction of her people. Her request was granted. Haman was hanged for his treachery, and Mordecai given his office.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.—Ps. 37: 5.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Prayer brings strength to the patriot.

NOTES.—*Es'ther*, the Persian name of Hadassah (Est. 2: 7.) and the name of the planet Venus. Her father having died, she was brought up by her cousin Mordecai, at Shushan. Though a Hebrew captive, her beauty and character raised her to the position of queen, and gave her the power to save her people. *Ha'tach*—verily, one of the royal persons that attended upon the king's household. *Mor-de-cai*—little man, or worshipper of Mars, cousin of Esther, chapter 2: 5, and a Hebrew captive, who held some inferior office in the Persian court. He took care of Esther when an orphan, and by her help, saved his people from the destruction planned by Haman. Mordecai rose to the second place of power in the kingdom. *Shu'shan*, capital of Persia, and residence of its kings, Esther 1: 5; Dan. 8: 2, on the river Ulai, in Elam. It was once an extensive and wealthy city; now but a heap of ruins.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) ESTHER'S DANGER. (II.) MORDECAI'S WARNING. (III.) ESTHER'S DECISION.

I. ESTHER'S DANGER. (10.) COMMANDMENT, or message in answer to Mordecai's request. (11.) INNER COURT, the king's apartment in the palace; ONE LAW, Herodotus tells us of this law prohibiting any one to be admitted to the king's presence; HOLD OUT THE SCEPTRE, Xenophon refers to the golden sceptre of Persian kings, and quotes a saying of Cyrus: "It is not the golden sceptre that saves the kingdom, but faithful friends." It was held out as a sign of favor.

II. MORDECAI'S WARNING. (13.) THOU... ESCAPE, death was decreed for all Jews; KING'S HOUSE, the palace, or perhaps his household. (14.) FOR IF, OR "EVEN IF," HOLDEST THY PEACE, to save thyself; ENLARGEMENT, or, literally, "respiration," that is, life; ANOTHER PLACE, some other way, which Mordecai trusts God to provide; THY FATHER'S HOUSE, family; WHO KNOWETH, it is probable, &c.; COME TO THIS KINGDOM, been made queen; TIME, of danger.

III. ESTHER'S DECISION. (16.) FAST, 2 Chron. 20: 3; MY MAIDENS, probably Jewish attendants allowed to her; NOT ACCORDING TO, OR "CONTRARY TO," I PERISH, for breaking the law (see v. 11); she accepted the result even if it should be death to her. (17.) WENT HIS WAY, at once to carry out her request.

What facts in this lesson teach us—

1. Not to shun danger when in the way of duty?
2. That we are to accept opportunities for good?
3. That God can carry out his plans without us?
4. That selfish fear is dangerous?
5. Submission to God's will is true bravery?

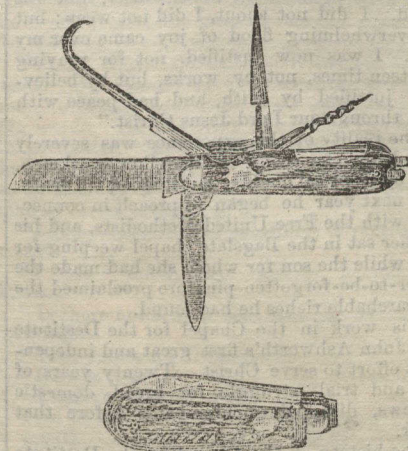
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AND
CAN DELIVER.**

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