

For the Sabbath School.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON VI.—MAY 6.—GEN. I., 14-26.

(Joseph's Last Days.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—Prov. iv., 18.

JACOB RECEIVING THE NEWS ABOUT JOSEPH.—45: 17-28. At Hebron. Having made himself known to his brothers, Joseph told them to hasten back home and tell his father of all his glory, and bring him down without delay to see it. This glory would comfort the father, and assure him of the safety of going into this foreign country. Pharaoh joins in the invitation, and sends abundant means for their transportation. When they reached home the news was too good for Jacob to believe, and "his heart fainted;" but when he saw the Egyptian wagons, then he was convinced, and his spirits revived.

JACOB'S WAGONS.—The Egyptian wagons for carrying produce, as pictured on the monuments, were rather carts, having only two wheels. Such vehicles were used in Egypt where the country was level, but were probably then unknown in Palestine, which was rough and hilly. These carts were so peculiarly Egyptian, and not likely to be obtained except from some great land-owner, that they were visible assurances that the report of his sons must be true. They would not have bought such luxuries, and none but such a friend as Joseph among the rulers would have taken pains to send them.

This is an excellent illustration of the convincing proofs of Christianity. The religion of Jesus is not a mere theory, it is proved abundantly by facts. We would convince men of its truth by what it has done. The lives that have been made better, the fact that it does change for good all those who receive it into their hearts, that wherever it enters a community or a nation it elevates them,—these are facts, like Jacob's wagons, that should convince men.

THE JOURNEY INTO EGYPT.—46: 1-27. Immediately the whole family prepare to move to Egypt with their flocks and movable property. The journey was about 250 miles along the usual caravan route; but it was a long, hard journey for an old man, with women and children and flocks and herds. When they reached Beersheba, some twenty-five miles from Hebron, whence they started, they encamped at this old home of Isaac and Abraham. Here God sent Jacob a vision for his encouragement, confirming the ancient promises, and bidding him go on to Egypt. Little could Jacob see the real importance of this journey; but it was one of the links in the chain of divine Providence, through which the promises were to be fulfilled.

THE MEETING OF THE FATHER AND THE LONG-LOST SON. 46: 28-34. When Jacob drew near to Egypt, and had reached the land of Goshen, Joseph went forth in his regal chariot and met his father, and there was a true Oriental meeting of the two who had not seen one another for almost twenty-three years.

DREAMS FULFILLED.—Many years before, when but a boy, Joseph had dreamed that the sun and moon and eleven stars did obeisance to him (37: 9-11). And not only were his brothers indignant, but his father also, who rebuked him, saying, "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" Still his father "kept the saying in mind," and now he remembered it, when it had come to pass.

Of most interest in this series of blessings and prophecies are the prophecies concerning Judah.

THE FATHER'S CHILDREN SHALL BOW DOWN BEFORE THEE. Not only from the first was Judah a leading tribe, but after Solomon's time he became the centre and soul of the southern kingdom, giving his name to it. After the destruction of the northern kingdom, the name of Judah was applied to the Jews everywhere. Judea and Jew are but forms of Judah, and all that are left of the twelve tribes are included under this name.

THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH.—He is compared to the most royal and most powerful of animals. The form of this vision came from remembered sights and sounds in the far-away Syrian mountains, but its substance came from an energy, courage, and might that were to burst upon the world in still increasing splendor through successive generations. The leading kings among the descendants of Jacob were from Judah. He became the royal tribe. But his royalty was chiefly fulfilled in Jesus the son of the Judean David, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5: 5).

THE SCEPTRE TILL SHILOH COMES. "Shiloh" means either "One who brings peace," the Prince of Peace of Isaiah 9 ("almost everything is in favor of this interpretation," Gibson), or it means "He whose right it is," he to whom the kingdom belongs; a beautiful description of the Messiah." The word translated "sceptre" is the regular word for tribe, as in v. 28, "the twelve tribes (sceptres) of Israel." Within forty years after Shiloh, the Prince of Peace, came, the sceptre and the lawgiver were taken from Judea. A marvellous fulfillment of a marvelous prophecy.

THEY EMBALMED JOSEPH by means of spices and drugs of various kinds. According to the usual custom, Joseph's body, after it was embalmed, was put into a coffin. This coffin, or mummy-case, was probably made of wood; and on the lid of it there would perhaps be a representation of the deceased, whilst the whole of it would be decorated with various colors. Joseph's coffin was, no doubt, deposited in some sepulchral building and guarded by his own immediate descendants till the time of the exodus. Or it was placed in the house of Ephraim (the son whom Jacob had preferred); by whose family, in the line of the eldest, it was preserved. Mummies in ancient Egypt were heirlooms, highly valued.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.—(1) Thus Joseph being dead still spoke all through the long bondage to his people of the divine promises, and taught them lessons of faith. So the lives of good men are ever speaking to us. (2) We never understand God's dealings with us, except when we realize that with him a thousand years are as one day.

INTERNATIONAL SCHEME OF SABBATH-SCHOOL LESSONS

ADOPTED BY THE SABBATH-SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

1894

SECOND QUARTER.

1894

1894.		BIBLE LESSON		PROVE THAT		COMMIT TO MEMORY		
						PROOF.	GOLDEN TEXT.	CATECHISM.
								Question.
Apr.	1	Jacob's Prevailing Prayer	Gen. 35: 9-12 24-35	Earliest prayer prevails with God...		Jas. 5: 15	Gen. 35: 26	95
"	8	Discord in Jacob's Family	Gen. 37: 1-11	Brotherly love is a good thing.....		1 Pt. 133: 1	Gen. 45: 24	96
"	15	Joseph Sold into Egypt	Gen. 37: 23-36	Children's sins bring sorrow to parents		1 Sam. 18: 33	Gen. 50: 20	97
"	22	Joseph Ruler in Egypt	Gen. 41: 35-48	Trials are the path to honor.....		Rev. 3: 21	1 Sam. 2: 30	98, 99
"	29	Joseph Forgiving his Brethren	Gen. 45: 1-15	We should return good for evil. [ed.]		Matt. 5: 44	Luke 17: 3	100
May	6	Joseph's Last Days	Gen. 50: 14-26	The memory of the righteous is cherished.		Ps. 112: 6	Prov. 4: 18	101
"	13	Israel in Egypt	Ex. 1: 1-14	The cruel are punished with cruelty..		Isa. 19: 4	Ps. 124: 8	102
"	20	The Childhood of Moses	Ex. 2: 1-10	God's people are protected.....		Ps. 91: 7	Isa. 91: 15	103
"	27	Moses sent as a Deliverer	Ex. 3: 10-20	Christ is our deliverer.....		Acts 3: 23	Isa. 41: 10	104
June	3	The Passover Instituted	Ex. 12: 1-14	Heaven is opened by Christ's blood.		Heb. 9: 12	1 Cor. 5: 7	105
"	10	Passage of the Red Sea	Ex. 14: 19-29	God's presence means Deliverance...		Isa. 43: 2	Heb. 11: 29	106
"	17	The Woe of the Drunkard	Prov. 23: 29-35	God provides the best refreshment...		Isa. 25: 6	Prov. 23: 31	107
"	24	REVIEW		God works for our salvation.....		Phil. 2: 13	Leut. 35: 9	REVIEW

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