

over the exhortation, "Look"—"Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn;" "Look unto Abraham your Father." Why should your eyes forever ache over desolations? Probably you have seen as much in the wilderness as you are ever likely to see there. It does not take long to discover all the treasures and comfort of the burning sand; you have probably discovered them all by now. As for the discomforts and the wants of the desert, you are perhaps as well acquainted with them as you need to be. Gaze no longer at the thirsty land and the burning sky; turn your eye where the finger of the Lord points by His word. If we inquire what it is that the Lord would have us observe, He answers, "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you;" for there we may find comfort. O for the presence of the Holy Spirit, that the word may be full of the dew of heaven to refresh our souls.

PRACTICAL, WEEK DAY FAITH.

Let us begin to believe God, and then let us act in daily life as if we believed Him. The just shall live by faith. Some people have a faith which is for show, a Sunday faith, a faith that cannot bear the wear and tear of everyday life; varnished and gilded, but with no pure metal in it. The faith of Abraham could lead strings of camels and flocks of sheep away from Haran to Canaan. His was the faith which could drive the tent-pier into the foreign soil, or roll up the canvas and seek another unknown halting-place. The faith of Abraham is a faith that saith to wayfaring men, "Turn in, and I will get you a little water and wash your feet." It is a practical, active, living, week-day, everyday faith. I will speak very broadly and plainly, and say we need a bread-and-cheese faith, that is to say, a faith which believes that God who feeds the ravens will send us our daily bread; a faith which believes that the Heavenly Father who clothes the lilies will much more clothe His children; the faith that can believe God about the things that are actually around it, and that does not live in the region of fiction. See how God blessed Abraham with flocks and herds, and everything temporal as well as spiritual, because he walked in reference to these things along the line of faith; gave Lot his choice of pasture, refused the offer of the king of Sodom, and resolutely paid the children of Heth the full price for the cave and the field. If we walk by faith in business life, God may not in every case bless us with abundance of temporal mercies, but assuredly we shall be blessed. He may send us adversity and poverty, but in these things faith is more than conqueror, glorying in tribulations also.

In the Lord's work of evangelizing the world you must have a downright, practical faith; not a faith that will sing when the organ begins to play, and then be so busy tumbling the hymn paper as to forget the collection; not the faith of those who boast of Carey, and Marshman, and Knibb, but whose names never appear in the subscription list for a single shilling, not a faith which sings—

"Fly abroad, thou mighty Gospel,"

but never lends a bit of down to make a feather for its wings.

Let us hear the Scripture, as it says, "Hearken!" If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, "Hearken!" for you may hear the Sabbath bells ringing in the everlasting peace, and angel songs welcoming the reign of grace over all nations. Let the ears of deaf unbelief be unstopped, for the whole earth echoes with the praises of the Lord. Say not that the day is distant, Hearken! Let faith be the listener, and she will hear across the ages which divide us from the gladsome period. Then shall you listen all day and all night long for many a year, but never hear the roll of drum or

roar of cannon. Hearken! Ye shall hear from the islands of the sea, and from the once benighted continents, psalms and hymns, and holy songs, ascending unto the one Jehovah and to His Christ. Hearken! for ears were never gladdened with sweeter music.

Then look! till you see the temples of false gods crumbling into dust. See how the shrines are tottering, and the idols breaking as though smitten with a rod of iron, Mohammed's crescent wanes, never to wax again; and she of the Seven Hills is hated of the kings, and they burn her with fire. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth!" Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. They fall! They are as the slain. The day breaketh, and the shadows flee away, O ye watchers that look after the dawning; fall not asleep through sorrowful weariness. The morning cometh. It shall not tarry. Do you doubt it? Know ye not that the Lord reigneth? Is He not the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." If you doubt it, dissolve your Missionary Society, and do not pretend to do a work in which you have no faith; but if you believe in the triumph of God's work, and that you are called to it, behave worthily to so divine an enterprise. God do so to you as you deal with Him in this matter.

INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON.

Sunday, Aug. 21.

The Manna, Ex. xiv. 1-8. B. C. 1491.

GOLDEN TEXT, John vi. 32.—Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

Commit vs. 4, 5.

INTRODUCTION AND CONNECTION.

Our last lesson was on the passage of the Red Sea. Then followed the song of triumph with which the Israelites celebrated their deliverance from bondage; after which Moses led them three days' journey into the wilderness to Marah, so called from the bitterness of the water found there. Here the people murmured against Moses, because there was no water that they could drink; and in answer to his prayer, God showed him a tree which, being cast into the bitter fountain, made the water sweet. Thence they passed to Elim, a place of palm-trees and wells of water, where they rested. Our present lesson treats of their next journey.

LESSON NOTES.

(1.) *And they took their journey from Elim.* At Marah God had given the people miraculous proof of His power and faithfulness; and then (ch. xv. 26), for the purpose of putting them to proof, had, upon condition of obedience on their part, placed Himself under covenant obligation to them. Thus, their relations to God and His to them were defined; and after a brief season of rest at Elim, they went forward into the wilderness of Sin—a region lying between the western branch of the Red Sea and the Sinaitic range of mountains toward which they were travelling. *On the fifteenth day of the second month, &c.*—they set out on the fifteenth day of the first month,—thus they had been journeying one month.

(2.) *The whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron.* This murmuring, though directed against Moses and Aaron, was in reality against God, whose representatives they were. The Bible makes no apology or excuse for the unbelief of Israel; and if they were inexcusable, what shall be said of us! They were ignorant and degraded by long servitude in the midst of heathens; we are intelligent, and instructed in regard to God; so them, the proofs of God's faithfulness were now;—to us they are old as God's word; and yet unbelief is just as characteristic and obstinate in us as it was in them, only, perhaps, less violent and out-spoken.

(3.) *And the children of Israel said unto them, &c.* This language shows how weak and debased this people had become under slavery. Instead of grasping the thought of the high destiny toward which God was

leading them, they looked back with childish cravings for the sensual gratifications that had been theirs in Egypt. They even called in question the motives of Moses and Aaron, and accused them of a design to kill them in the wilderness.

But God, who pities man's weakness while abhorring their sin, instead of visiting them with judgment, sent them assurances of help.

(4.) *Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you.* God was about to give them fresh proof of His ability to supply their need—literally, *to rain bread from heaven.* As the sweetening tree in the bitter waters of Marah typifies Christ, who is His people's peace, so the bread God was about to send typified Christ, the living bread—that by which their spiritual life is sustained and perpetuated. In thus meeting the demands of their lower natures, God was revealing Christ both to them and to us. *They shall go out, and gather a certain rate every day.* They were not to lay up a hoard, and then rest and enjoy it; but it was to be sought for and obtained day by day. So it is with Christ, the True Bread from heaven: His people must feed upon Him daily, if at all. *That I may prove (test) them, whether they will walk in my law or no.* God was subjecting His people to a test, not that He might know whether or not they would walk in His way, for He knew all about that beforehand; but in order that, after having experienced His goodness, their obedience or disobedience, their faith or unbelief, might be manifest to themselves and to others.

(5.) *On the sixth day they shall prepare that which they shall bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.* This was preparatory to the Sabbath. To what extent the Sabbath had been neglected, or forgotten by the Israelites, we have no means of knowing; but the day is referred to here as something that was not unknown; and it seems probable that the knowledge of the original institution of the day (Ex. ii. 3) had not been lost, otherwise something explanatory would have been said in connection with the re-enforcing of its observance.

(6.) *At even (v. 12) ye shall know (shall have most convincing proof) that the Lord (not Moses and Aaron) hath brought you out from the land of Egypt.* The evidence of the Lord's presence in their midst should be such as not to admit of the least doubt, for how, except by Him, should flesh sufficient to feed such a multitude of human beings be supplied at once, and in such a place?

(7.) *And in the morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord, &c.*—that is, see the glorious manifestation of His power in the miraculous supply of bread which He would send. Thus they should have indisputable evidence that the Lord was with them; *at even they should know,—in the morning they should see*—there need be no more question or dispute, the evidence should be convincing.

(8.) *And Moses said this (this certain proof of God's presence and care) shall be (be conclusive) when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full. For the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against Him.* Here they are told plainly that it is the Lord against whom they have murmured; for, he adds, *Who are we?* As if he had said, We are only men like yourselves; we have no power in ourselves more than you. It is God who works through us in your behalf—God, whose servants we are, and against whom ye murmur. *And the Lord heareth it,—understands perfectly the nature of your sin—that it is not against us, but against Himself.* Notice: We cannot murmur against the instrumentalities God sees fit to use in disciplining us for His service without murmuring against Himself,—and this is a lesson which Christians are peculiarly slow to learn, but one which they have great need to bear in mind. **IN MURMURING AGAINST GOD'S INSTRUMENTALITIES THEY MURMUR AGAINST HIM.**

QUESTION SUMMARY.

(For the Children.)

(1.) From what place did the children of Israel journey? What can you tell about Elim (ch. xv. 27)? What wilderness did they come to? What is a wilderness? How long had they been travelling? (2.) Against whom did they murmur or complain? Why did they complain? (3.) What did they say? What did they say that Moses and Aaron had brought them into the wilderness for? Was that true? Who brought them there? (4.) What did the Lord promise He would do? What was that bread like

(v. 14)? What was it called (v. 15)? How often were they to gather it? Why was God going to give them food in this way? To prove them—that is, to test them, and see whether or not they would believe Him, and be good and obedient. (5.) On what day were they to gather *twice* as much as usual? Why? (See v. 26.) (6.) What was God going to make them *know* at evening? How? (See v. 12.) (7.) What was He going to make them *see* in the morning? How? (See v. 12.) What would all that make them quite certain of? (8.) Who had heard all their wicked murmuring? Whom does God say they were against? Why were they against God? Because God had told Moses and Aaron to say and do just as they did. Were those murmuring people very wicked? Do you not sometimes act in the same way?

POWER OF IMAGINATION.

The following incident is reproduced from "Doctors and Patients":

A man of science in Paris once prevailed on the Minister of Justice to experiment on a murderer who had been condemned to death. The criminal was of high rank, and he was informed that, in order to save the feelings of his family, he would not be put to death upon the scaffold, but bled to death within the precincts of the prison, also that his death should be free from pain. His eyes were bandaged, he was strapped to a table, and, at a preconcerted signal, four of his veins were gently pricked with a pin. At each corner of the table was a small fountain of water so contrived as to flow gently into basins placed to receive it. Believing that it was his blood he heard flowing, he gradually became weak; and the conversation of the doctors in an undertone confirmed him in his opinion. "What fine blood!" said one. "What a pity this man should be condemned to die! he would have lived a long time." "Hush!" said the other, then approaching the first, he asked him in a low voice, but so as to be heard by the criminal, "How many pounds of blood are there in the human body?" "Twenty-four, you see already about ten pounds extracted; that man is now in a hopeless state!" The physicians then receded by degrees, and continued to lower their voices. The stillness which reigned in the apartment, broken only by the dripping fountains, the sound of which was gradually lessened, so affected the brain of the poor patient that, although a man of very strong constitution, he fainted and died without having lost a drop of blood.

GARNERED.

"The harvest of a quiet eye."—Worlsworth.

Oh, unlined lives that pass away
In dark of night and light of day,
Whose dreamless hearts no music find
In southern breeze or northern wind;
Who know each bird and flower by name,
Yet find their language all the same;
Ye lose a sweet world ever nigh—
"The harvest of a quiet eye."

In spring's first smile, in summer's glow,
In autumn's rain, in winter's snow
That shrouds the dying year and gives
A cradle to the one that lives,
In simplest things is scattered round
A world of beauty, thought, and sound,
For those that reap in passing by
"The harvest of a quiet eye."

Ah, blessed friends that ne'er grow strange
And happy world that ne'er will change,
You seem to weep if we are sad,
And gaily laugh if we are glad;
Your language is in every tone,
You make a thousand dreams our own
If we can reap with smile or sigh
"The harvest of a quiet eye."

—From Cassell's Family Magazine

—To be covetous of applause discovers a slender merit, and self-conceit is the ordinary attendant of ignorance.

—The greatest friend of truth is time her greatest enemy is prejudice; and her constant companion humanity.