

## Sabbath School Lessons.

### April 16. JOB'S APPEAL TO GOD.

Lesson Job 23 : 1-10.  
Memory vs. 8-10.

Gol. Text, John 13 : 7.  
Catechism Q. 55.

The time of Job was probably between 2000 and 1800 B. C., the time of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

"We should by review get clearly before us the progress of the poem up to the close of our last lesson. The good man is suddenly assailed by terrible disasters and affliction. Neither he nor his friends understand the meaning. The problem is too hard for them. But in so far as they attempt to give a solution or explanation, they differ widely. Job knows he is innocent and earnestly maintains it. But his friends declare that to say so is to blaspheme God as an unjust Being, for, they say, a just God *must* reward the righteous and punish the wicked. If, therefore, He punishes any one, that fact proves that are to be wicked. Such is their reasoning. They do not see that there may be other reasons for suffering."

Each of Job's friends argues the case and to each of them he replies in turn. This is repeated three times, except with Zophar. They get warm, excited, angry, because Job refuses to confess his crimes. They accuse him, urge him to confess and repent, that God will restore His favor if Job will only turn from his secret sins. But Job gradually makes progress toward the light, and though he cannot understand the reason of the present ills he still believes that he is innocent and that God is just, and that the time will come when both his own innocence and God's justice will be fully vindicated, and in the faith of that he will wait and suffer with patience till the change come.

I. *Longing to find God* vs. 1-4 His stroke was so sore that he felt sure if he could only find God and lay his cause before Him, He would give relief. Job's knowledge of God was dim but His faith in Him was strong. Study carefully each sentence.

II. *Confidence in God's Justice* vs. 5-7. "He would give heed unto me."

III. *Assurance of final blessing* vs. 8-10. Right and left I seek in vain for Him. I find Him not but He knows me, yea more, the time is coming when He will show Himself to me. The fire is sore but when the purifying is done I shall come forth as gold.

1. God's Providences often seem dark to us.  
2. The true seeker will diligently search after God even though all may seem dark.  
3. Sometimes for a time, He hides Himself from even the seeker.

4. His eye is ever upon them and He follows them with loving care.

5. In due time all true seekers will find all of Him that their hearts desired.

6. Those who bear trials in humble patient trust and hope, will come forth from them, purer, brighter, better.

7. Let us seek so to live that every trial, trouble, and disappointment will leave us more humble, more patient, more Christ like.

A Christian woman once wrote on the fly-leaf of her Bible the following words: "Lay any burden upon me; send me anywhere, only go with me; sever any tie but that one which binds me to thy service and to thy heart." This is true consecration.

### JOB'S CONFESSION AND RESTORATION.

April 23.

Lesson Job 42 : 1-10.

Gol. Text, James 5 : 11.

Memory vs. 5-6.

Catechism Q. 56.

The debate between Job and his three friends has ceased. This "greatest of all poems in ancient literature, perhaps in all literature reaches its close." The three "friends," with their theory that sin brings punishment and that therefore Job must be a great sinner, have brought forth all their arguments, and often in a very unkindly tone and spirit, but they have failed to move Job from his position.

Throughout the debate, they have grown more haughty, hard, bitter, and unfeelingly unjust, towards Job. Towards the end, Zophar, the most narrow minded of the three, dropped out of the argument altogether, and Eliphaz, the eldest and ablest of the three, in an utter loss of temper resorted to charges against Job for which he had not the slightest proof.

Then comes in a younger man, Elihu, who had hitherto been a listener. He saw the mistake of both Job and his friends. He could restrain himself no longer but broke forth into speech. "Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu..... against Job was his wrath kindled, because he had justified himself rather than God." "Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled because they had found no answer" (that is to Job) "And yet had condemned Job."

Elihu had seized the very root of the matter on both sides. He condenses into two brief sentences the pith of the elaborate discussion contained in twenty nine chapters.

"After Elihu had spoken and finished, then God Himself speaks to Job out of the whirlwind.

If he cannot penetrate the outer fringes of God's works, how can he presume to understand the deep mysteries." "Shall he that condescendeth with the Almighty, instruct Him."

At these words of the Lord Job bowed himself down in humility. "Behold I am vile what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hands upon my mouth. Once have I spoken but I will not answer; yea twice; but I will proceed no further?"

I. *Job's submission and repentance* vs. 1-6. Previous to this Job had justified himself, now he finds the God for whom he had longed, and he gets humble. "Mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." "When he listened to his three friends he knew he was not the monster they pictured him. He was as good as they. But when he saw God, he felt his unworthiness and longed for forgiveness."

II. *Job's friends condemned* vs. 7-10. "Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right" said God; in the discussion, "as my servant Job." *Burnt Offering*—They were to offer up a sacrifice for their sin in thus speaking of him and then Job would pray for them. "This was a bitter but wholesome lesson of humiliation for them."

III. *Job's restoration and reward* v. 10. "When he prayed for his friends." When he reached that Christ-likeness in Spirit that he could pray for those who had so censured and misjudged him as Christ prayed for his murderers, then his praying was complete and he was in a state to receive blessing.

1. "We know nothing aright of God or ourselves until he make it known to us.

2. "Self-loathing is the companion of true repentance. Ezek. 6: 9.

3. "The Lord is bountiful rewarder of his servants and a liberal repainer of their losses."