

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1891, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON XI.

SEPT. 11.]

IDOLATRY PUNISHED.

Exod. 32: 20-35.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 31, 32.

26. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me.

27. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.

28. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

29. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to-day to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.

30. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

31. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

32. Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if thou blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

33. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

34. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee; nevertheless, in the day when I visit I will visit theirs upon them.

35. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Little children, keep yourselves from idols.—1 JOHN 5: 21.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Idols are an abomination unto the Lord.

INTRODUCTORY.—The giving of the Ten Commandments was followed by the giving to Moses of ceremonial and judicial laws; directions concerning the Ark and the Tabernacle with its furniture; the priesthood, to which Aaron and his sons were to be consecrated; and the sacrifices to be offered to God. Our lesson occurs immediately after Moses had descended and led the people, with Aaron as their priest, worshipping the golden calf; whereupon he broke the stone tablets of the law, destroyed the image in great anger rebuked Aaron for the awful sin. These transactions occupied forty days, when God commanded Moses to go down; as the people had corrupted themselves, and were engaged in idolatry.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Notice that punishment invariably follows sin. Compare also Moses' words and work as mediator with those of our Mediator.

NOTES.—GATE OF THE CAMP, the entrance to the camp, which it is supposed was surrounded by earthworks; in which there might be one or more openings or gates. Perhaps the term is taken from the gates of cities, which were places of public resort. Gen. 19: 1, and as courts of justice. Deut. 21: 19.—CHILDREN OF LEVI, Moses was of this tribe; 23: 1. Their allegiance to God at this time was noteworthy. They showed their readiness to fight on the Lord's side and to become his consecrated ministers, Num. 3: 5-12.—CALF, an idol made in imitation of Apis the sacred bull of the Egyptians. It was probably made of wood and thickly overlaid with gold.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) IDOLATORS' PUNISHMENT.—(II.) MOSES' INTERCESSION. (III.) GOD'S ANSWER.

I. IDOLATORS' PUNISHMENT.—(26-32.) GATE OF THE CAMP, see Notes; WHO, whosoever, a call to all; LET HIM COME UNTO ME, simply "unto me"; an impassioned call to allegiance; ALL THE SONS, not absolutely all, Deut. 33: 9, but the Levites as a whole; SONS OF LEVI, see Notes; THROUGHOUT THE CAMP, from one side of the camp to the other; HIS BROTHER, &c., i.e., they were not to spare even relatives and friends if among the guilty; FOR MOSES, literally "and Moses said"; the reason of the Levites' zeal; CONSECRATE, prove yourselves worthy servants of God; BLESSING, doing God's will in difficult circumstances brings a blessing; the Levites became a chosen priesthood.

II. MOSES' INTERCESSION.—(30-32.) YE HAVE SINNED, those that remained; probably only the ringleaders of the idolators had been slain; all had shared their sin; GO UP, up the mount; PERADVENTURE, implies doubt of the success of his attempt at atonement, on account of the greatness of their sin; ATONEMENT, atonement, reconciliation; by his intercession for them; GODS OF GOLD, "a god of gold"; IF, FORGIVE... SIN, Moses at this suggestion seems to doubt its possibility, and then offers to be destroyed himself rather than have his people perish, cf. Rom. 9: 3. What affection does Moses display? BLOT ME OUT OF THY BOOK, referring to the record or roll of the families of the tribes.

III. GOD'S ANSWER.—(33-35.) WHOEVER HATH SINNED, and such only, therefore not Moses. His prayer is not to be fulfilled; God's righteousness must be vindicated; GO, LEAD, his business to obey and fulfill his mission; THE PLACE OF WHICH, 23: 23; MINE ANGEL, not Jehovah himself, but some inferior guide—an angel merely, or some other special agent; but not God himself, cf. 33: 12-18; IN THE DAY, when judgment is inflicted; THEIR SIN, their sin of idolatry; PLAGUED, punished; they were punished in their future hardships; CALF, see Notes.

TEACHINGS:

(1.) To take a bold and decided stand for the Lord is your duty?

(2.) Obey God implicitly regardless of consequences.

(3.) In proportion to our allegiance will be our blessing.

(4.) Imitate Moses' courage against evil.

(5.) We have a greater than Moses constantly interceding for us.

(6.) Mercy and love go hand in hand with judgment.

(7.) Punishment may be delayed, but it will come some time.

LESSON XII.

SEPT. 18.]

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He brought forth his people with joy.—Ps. 105: 43.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The bondage and the deliverance.

INTRODUCTORY.—No dates are given at the head of the lessons this Quarter; they were omitted in our lessons from Genesis; there is such a variety of opinions; and so little possibility of certainty in the matter, that such dates might only mislead the scholar. Let us, therefore, study the more earnestly the events and their teachings about which there are no doubts, but which all unerringly guide us to a true knowledge of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We may profitably study the Quarter's lessons on the line of the following scheme, and impress them on our minds as a whole.

ISRAEL

Slavery and Oppression. Forward through the Red Sea. Liberator Prepared. Receiving Manna from Heaven. Appointment of Moses. Everyone's Duty to God. Visit of Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh. Everyone's Duty to Man. Egypt's Magicians Baffled. Everyone's Duty to Man. Destruction of Idolators. Sacrifice of the Passover.

IN EGYPT. IN SINAI.

In order to fix the leading facts of the Quarter's study, and thus fill out the details of this Review Outline, a good plan is to recall in order what we have learned concerning the different

(and their connection with the several) PERSONS AND PLACES. EVENTS.

Egypt. Increase of the Israelites. Their Oppression. Moses' Adoption by Pharaoh's Daughter. Moses Kills an Egyptian. Moses' Occupation in Midian. Called of God from the Burning Bush. First Visit to Pharaoh. Miracles and Magic. The Passover and Crossing the Sea. God gives Manna. The Law Delivered. Idolators Punished. Aaron. The Nile and the Red Sea. Wilderness of Sin. Mt. Sinai. The Levites.

POINTS FOR QUESTIONS.

ON PERSONS AND PLACES.—Jacob, who he was. Why and when he came to Egypt. His name Israel. Number and names of his sons; Joseph, his office and character. The Pharaoh who oppressed Israel. His reasons and methods. Where and what Pithom and Ramesses were. Parentage of Moses. Describe Egypt and the Nile. Why Moses was cast into the river. How and by whom saved. His forty years' stay in Egypt. Where Midian was. Name of his priest and his relation to Moses. Locate Horeb. Meaning of God's name Jehovah, and I Am. Who Aaron was. The Pharaoh who reigned when Moses returned to Egypt. What were Egyptian magicians. Describe the Red Sea, and the place where Israel crossed it. Name and locate the stations of the Israelites before entering the wilderness of Sin. Trace their course afterward to Mt. Sinai. Locate Mt. Sinai. Who the Levites were, when and how they consecrated themselves.

ON EVENTS.—How Israel was oppressed. Its effect on the Israelites. How Moses was found in the water. His position, education, etc., in Egypt. Whom he killed, and under what circumstances. Why he fled. How long he was in Midian, and doing what. How God appeared to him. What he revealed to and commanded him. Where Aaron met him. Why Aaron was associated with him in his work. What they asked of Pharaoh and the result. The wonders performed before Pharaoh. The plagues of Egypt. What was done at the Passover, and why. How the Red Sea was crossed and pursued cut off. What manna was, and how it was to be gathered, etc., and why. Repeat the Commandments. Describe where and how they were given. What and why was the Pillar of Fire. The idolatry into which Israel fell. How it was punished.

MANKIND'S

SLAVERY IN SIN. FREEDOM IN CHRIST.

QUESTIONS.

ON GOLDEN TEXTS AND CENTRAL TRUTHS.—From what seven books of the Bible are the Golden Texts of this Quarter taken? Repeat those from Exodus? The Central Truths of the lessons to which they belong? Give the Golden Texts from Matthew? Those from Psalms? What is the Central Truth of Lesson 11? Its Golden Text? The Golden Texts taken from two other Epistles? Their Central Truths? The Golden Text and Central Truth of the lesson about The Manna? The Review Golden Text?

LESSON XIII.

SEPT. 25.]

TEMPERANCE.

1 Cor. 9: 22-27.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 25-27.

22. To the weak became I as weak, that I

might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23. And thus I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

24. Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

GOLDEN TEXT.—To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.—Rev. 3: 21.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Self-denial and its rewards.

INTRODUCTORY.—The First Epistle to the Corinthians was written by Paul, toward the close of his three years' residence at Ephesus, probably in the spring of A. D. 57. It rebukes certain sins of the gay, fickle-minded and contentious Corinthians. Our lesson urges them to steadfastness, purity and temperance in all things, comparing the Christian life with the striving of the contestants for victory in the Grecian games.

NOTE.—RACE, this refers to the foot-races held at the Isthmian Games, near Corinth, as the "fighting" verse 26, does to the boxing matches at the same place. The racers ran nearly naked. They were trained for the occasion nearly the whole year before. To be the victor in such a game made a Greek a distinguished man. Only one could win the prize. The boxers wore nail-studded leather gloves, so that their contests were bloody and dangerous.—PRIZE, the prizes at the Isthmian Games were chaplets of pine twigs, which soon faded.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) FOR THE SAKE OF WEAK BRETHREN. (II.) FOR THE SAKE OF THE CROWN. (III.) FOR THE SAKE OF THE SOUL.

I. FOR THE SAKE OF WEAK BRETHREN.—(22, 23.) THE WEAK, spiritually weak and those not believers; AS WEAK, Paul adapted his teachings to the situation and prejudices of his hearers, yet he never swerved from principle; GAIN, for Christ; AM I MADE, i.e., make myself; ALL THINGS, except what is wrong; FOR THE GOSPEL'S SAKE, on account of the gospel, that they and he might together share in its blessings.

II. FOR THE SAKE OF THE CROWN.—(24, 25.) RACE, "race course," see Notes; ONE, only one of all who ran; THAT YE MAY, or as he that obtains the victory by striving every nerve, so struggle to obtain, grasp, seize; PRIZE, see Notes; STRIVETH FOR THE MASTERY, contendeth. The striving here refers rather to the preparatory training, which is an exercise of self-denial than to the contest itself; TEMPERATE, etc., the Greek athlete during 10 months before the games had to eat only the plainest food, drink nothing except water, and deny himself all the pleasures dear to the Grecian; CORRUPTIBLE CROWN, see Notes; AN INCORRUPTIBLE, see 2 Tim. 4: 8; Jas. 1: 12; Pet. 5: 4, the Christian should abstain from everything harmful, and exercise himself in every good work.

III. FOR THE SAKE OF THE SOUL.—(26, 27.) SO RUN, i.e., so live; NOT AS UNCERTAINLY, not waveringly, nor doubting the issue; SO FIGHT I, referring figuratively to the boxers at the games; BEATETH THE AIR, missing his aim and wasting his strength; KEEP UNDER, vanquish; MY BODY, the flesh, cf. Rom. 7: 14-25; BE A CASTAWAY, be rejected from further useful service.

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