

Sabbath School Lessons.

November 23rd, 1862.

WATER FROM THE ROCK.—

EXOD. XVII. 1-16.

Connection.—Israel was now about sixty miles south of the place where they received the manna. The Arabs reverence a large isolated piece of granite as the rock from whence the water flowed.

I. THE PEOPLE MURMUR. VER. 1-4.

Rephidim, where there was no water. It must be remembered it was God, perhaps in the cloudy pillar, not Moses, that led Israel there. Well might Moses say, "*Wherefore do ye tempt God?*"

God had just stilled the murmurs of the people by giving them manna, and He now led them into a new trial to prove if they would trust him; Psal. lxxxi. 7. They did not. In the bitterness of their sufferings they turned fiercely against Moses. Moses knew to whom to go. He cries to the God to whom Israel should have gone. *Stone me.* So David at iZklag.

II. WATER FROM THE ROCK, VER. 5-7.

God at once answers. *The rock in Horeb.* Probably the rock was pointed out by the Shechinah resting on it. Twice water seems to have been brought from the rock—here and at Kadesh; Numb. xx. 10. It was at the latter occasion Moses sinned, losing both his faith and his temper. Israel's *actions* said, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Imagine the scene.—The worn, fevered eager crowd, rushing to the clear, sparkling water, as it poured through the camp. The mother dipping her empty pitcher, or laving the face of her feeble infant, ere she wet her own parched lips.—the strong rudely thrusting aside the weak to reach the water,—the very cattle at the scent of water breaking from their halters and furiously making for the stream.

III. ISRAEL FIGHTS WITH AMALEK, VER. 8-16.

Amalek was a nation dwelling to the south of Palestine. They were not permitted to attack Israel while suffering from thirst.—*Choose us out men.* The Hebrews were no warriors; slaves never are. This is the first time *Joshua* is mentioned. Moses was much too old to be a soldier. On the top of the hill, where he could see the battle, Moses stood with the *rod of God*—so called because God had used it as the instrument of many wonders, though, perhaps, it was originally only a shepherd's crook. It is not said Moses prayed;

doubtless he did so; but it was the outstretched hand that secured success. The position was one maintained with great bodily exertion.

This is the first time "*writing*" is mentioned; it is interesting that this should be on an occasion where man's efforts and God's blessing were both shown to be so necessary to success. *Jehovah Nissi*—a banner, concentrates the strength and feelings of an army.—Amalek's doom was fearful. See 1 Sam. xv. 2-8.

APPLICATION.

1. *Never distrust God.* Whatever your state, however many your sins, trust Him.—He pities, loves, and is most willing to save you. All sin begins with doubting God—all good by trusting Him. Eve doubted God—Judas perished because he despaired.

2. *To be discontented is to blame God.*—Those that are discontented never blame themselves; and in blaming their fellowmen they really blame God, forgetting that He chooses their lot for them. Not so Job, David or Joseph.

3. *When in the greatest difficulty go to God.* He will welcome and help you. Moses did so, ver. 4. David. Jonah. Hezekiah.

4. *That rock was Christ.* The Hebrews needed water much, but deserved it not; yet God brought it out of the rock. So with us, we required a Saviour much, but deserved none, yet out of Christ's smitten side flowed "blood and water" for us. Have you drunk of that "living water?" 1 Cor. x. 4. The woman of Samaria, John iv. 10; Rev. xxii. 17. How awful eternal thirst, Luke xxi. 24.

5. *Pilgrims to Canaan must fight their way.* There are many enemies, "Apollyon," Eph. vi. 10-18. Temptations without and sin within must be overcome. Christ from heaven watches the boy or girl who tries to be good and will help them. "To him that overcometh," Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26, &c.

6. *Work and pray.* Both were necessary here; Joshua must fight and Moses must stretch his hand to heaven for help, or Israel is beaten! So let us do all we can, every duty with all our might, and pray earnestly for God's help, and we will succeed. So the soldiers of Bruce knelt before they fought at Bannockburn. So David. Mordecai. Paul. The Jews; Neh. iv. 17, 18.

7. *Beware how you hinder any in the road to heaven.* By tempting them to sin; 1 Kings xiii. 21. How fearfully Amalek was cursed for hindering Israel's march! Boys and girls often tempt each other to do wrong.—*Edin. S.S. Lessons.*