

* The Sunday School *

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubeta's Notes.

Third Quarter, 1901.

JULY TO SEPTEMBER.

GOD CALLS ABRAHAM.

Lesson IV. July 28. Genesis 12: 1-9.
GOLDEN TEXT.

I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.—Gen. 12: 2.

EXPLANATORY.

ABRAHAM AND HIS EARLY LIFE.—1. His name, "Abram," in Hebrew means "exalted father" or "Ram" (the lofty one) "is father." Afterwards changed to Abraham, "Father of a multitude." "The name 'Abram,' Abu-ramu, 'the exalted father,' is found in early Babylonian contracts."

2. His father's name was Terah, a descendant of Shem. Abraham was the tenth generation from Noah.

3. He was born in Ur of the Chaldees (see Place) B. C. 1996, two years after the death of Noah.

4. He had two brothers, Nahor and Haran. He married his half sister Sarai, at Ur. Abraham had no children before he entered Canaan, but he adopted his nephew Lot, after the death of his father Haran.

5. He lived in Ur till he was 70 years old.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.—Vs. 1-3. NOW THE LORD (Jehovah) HAD SAID. (Omit "had" with R. V.) The passage is a general statement of the reasons why Abraham emigrated to another country. GET THEE OUT OF THY COUNTRY . . . UNTO A LAND THAT I WILL SHOW THEE. He did not tell him just where he wanted him to go, but would guide him, and show him the way as he went along.

There was danger that the truth would again be lost from the earth, and the race ruin itself through sin. Another method of redeeming man, from that of our last lesson, is now undertaken, whose beginnings are recorded in today's lesson. "The purpose of the Most High was to choose a man, and in him a family and a nation, to be his witness upon the earth, and the repository of ancient truths and of Messianic hopes, until the fulness of redeeming time should come." Through the training of this family and nation should come the redemption of the whole world.

Abraham had a hard duty before him, but God gave him all that was needed to uphold his faith and strengthen him to obey, while it increased his faith.

First promise. I WILL MAKE OF THEE A GREAT NATION. This will compensate for the loss of his country. It is a strong motive to be of immortal and wide-spread influence, not a pebble that remains only itself, but a seed that becomes a great fruitful tree. Not a cistern, but the head waters of a river. It was literally fulfilled in the glories of Israel; spiritually, and more largely in the spiritual sons of Abraham, the whole Christian church (Gal. 3: 29).

Second Promise. AND . . . BLESS THEE. No earthly good can be so great as the blessing of God. Others are single, individual good things, but he that has God's blessing has the source of all good; not a cupful of water from the river of life, but the river itself with its ceaseless flow. God himself is the best of all gifts to man.

Third Promise. AND MAKE THY NAME GREAT. Known, honored, loved through

all the centuries, and by multitudes of people. To one who is really worthy of it, it is a great blessing to be the hero, the example, the ideal of many people; Carlyle regards the personal influence of great men as the largest factor in making a people.

Fourth Promise. AND THOU SHALT BE A BLESSING. A blessing in thyself, and a source of blessing to others. It is more blessed to give than to receive. He should be famous, not for what he took from men, but for what he gave to men; not like Sesostris, Caesar, Alexander, for the victories of the sword, but for the greater victories of truth and love.

Fifth Promise. AND I WILL BLESS THEM THAT BLESS THEE. Abraham's cause was to be so identified with God's cause that whosoever favored Abraham favored God and his kingdom. So far as we are the true children of God, this is true also of us.

Sixth Promise. AND CURSE HIM THAT CURSETH THEE. This is the other side of the same promise. Abraham in character, works, and representative position as the founder of the church was so identified with God that whosoever hated and opposed him hated and opposed God. "The good man is not alone. Touch him, and you touch God."

Seventh Promise. AND IN THEE SHALL ALL FAMILIES. By "family" is meant here, and often elsewhere, a people, or nation, regarded as one great family descended from a common parent. ALL FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED. This promise was fulfilled (1) in the benefits which the world has received from the industry, wealth, genius, and morality of the Jewish people; (2) in the benefits which have come to the world through the Scriptures, the law, the literature, the religious spirit, and particularly the monotheism of the Hebrew people; and (3) in the blessings which have come to the world through the Messiah who was "Abraham's seed" (Gal. 3: 8-16).

SO ABRAHAM DEPARTED . . . OUT OF HARAN. After about five years' residence there. To this place his grandson Jacob came for his wife, the descendant of Nahor, Abraham's brother. Here, too, 2,000 years later, the Roman General Crassus was defeated and slain by the Parthians.

SARAI. My princess, afterwards changed to "Sarah," a "princess," i. e., for all nations, and no longer for Abraham alone. She was ten years younger than Abraham, and his half-sister, or possibly as some think, the same as Isaac, Haran's daughter, and therefore Abraham's niece, and sister of Lot. LOT HIS BROTHER'S (Haran's) SON. These were, doubtless, worshippers of the one true God with Abraham. AND ALL THEIR SUBSTANCE PROPERTY OF ALL KINDS. The blessing on Abraham had begun while he was in Haran. AND THE SOULS . . . THEY HAD GOTTEN IN HARAN. Sarai's or adherents, for Abraham was a sheik, or head of a family. Some who had accepted the truth about God may have joined his family company. A few years later there were 318 armed men in Abraham's establishment (Gen. 14: 14), which implies at least 1,000 souls. INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN THEY CAME. A distance of 300 miles. CANAAN is named after the son of Ham, a portion of whose descendants settled in Palestine.

VARIED EXPERIENCES.—Vs. 6-9. PASSED THROUGH. He entered on the north and went toward the south. SICHEM. Between Mt. Ebal and Gerizim. PLAIN OF MOREH, rather the "oak (or oak grove) of Moreh," in Shechem.

DIFFICULTIES AND THE CANAANITE WAS . . . IN THE LAND. Another race, that of Ham, and still more idolatrous than the people of Ur, who were descendants of Shem.

ENCOURAGEMENTS AND THE LORD APPEARED UNTO ABRAHAM. With a promise so much against all appearances. This land was to be the home and inheritance of his descendants (Acts 7: 5) AND THERE (in Shechem) BUILT HE AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD. As Jacob did afterward (28: 18, 20).

BETHEL. Twelve miles north of Jerusalem. AND HAI ON THE EAST. His encampment was between "Bethel" and "Hai." Hai means "the Al." It was five miles east of Bethel and was the scene of the first Israelish defeat under Joshua (Josh. 7: 2) AND CALLED UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD. Showing that the sacrifices on the altars were accompanied with prayer. The altars were for both visible and vocal worship.

THE SOUTH (with a capital S.) The Negeb, "the dry region," the southern district of Palestine, on the road toward Egypt.

Mrs. Newbridge (who has been baking)—I wonder who first invented angel cake? Mr. Newbridge (who had to sample the baking)—I don't know, but I fancy it was one of the fallen angels.—Philadelphia Record.

ROBERTS BABY BROTHER.

Several months ago little Robert who had at various times made pathetic references to the fact that he had neither a brother nor a pony, was asked by his fond parents which of the missing prizes he would take if he could have his choice. Robert deliberated, and at last decided that up to the whole he believed he would rather have a brother.

"Because, you see," he explained, "a pony costs so much to keep. We would have to build a stable for him, wouldn't we, papa?"

"Yes," his father answered, "and really there is no room in our back yard for a stable."

"No," the child agreed, "and we'd have to buy hay for him, too, wouldn't we?"

"Yes,"

"Well, then, I'd rather have the little brother because we would have to pay for a pony, and the pony might kick or bite, you know, and the little brother wouldn't would he?"

"No—not for a while, anyway."

So the matter was left in the abeyance until a month ago, when little Robert was told one morning, that a little brother had come to him.

He was delighted. He danced around in the halls and made such a racket on the stairs that the nurse threatened to have him sent away, and he went into ecstasies over the baby when they permitted him to see it.

He asked forty-seven thousand questions in a given time concerning the little one and the inducements that God had considered before deciding to send it down from heaven. He wanted to kiss the baby and hold it in his arms, and he insisted on knowing why it had no teeth and why, if it had been an angel, it had wanted to come down here from heaven to have the stomach-ache anyway.

But Robert's enthusiasm began to wear off after the lapse of a week or two. It was always "Sh-sh! You'll wake your little baby brother," or "Robert, you must be quiet! You will make your baby brother ill."

In fact, the baby brother seemed to be interfering with little Robert's fun to an extent that had been wholly unexpected, and the other evening when he was sitting on his father's knees down in the library the boy said:

"Papa, I don't believe I want my little baby brother, after all. I can't have any fun with him. I'll tell you what let's do. Let's trade him for a pony."

"Oh, we couldn't do that."

Little Robert kicked his heels against his father's shins for a moment and thought. Then he said:

"Well, I don't suppose we could find anybody that would want to trade a pony for him, but don't you think you could trade him for a goat.—Record-Herald.

ASSISTANT FARMERS.

"Onions, turnips, beets, tomatoes, peas, celery—my! I guess I'll have as grown up a garden as grandfather's is!" exclaimed Willie, happily as he named over this different seeds he was going to plant, so soon as he got his "corner lot ready for the beds."

Suddenly he stopped digging and began striking his hoe vigorously into the soil. "What's the matter, Willie?" called grandfather from the onion bed! "What, have you found?"

"One, two, ten, twenty—why, hundreds of them, grandfather, and they'll eat every seed I plant!" exclaimed Willie, excitedly, as he began to cut the soil with his hoe more vigorously than ever.

"Hundreds of what?" and grandfather raised himself slowly from his knees.

"Worms, grandfather! and I'll not have a single thing come up."

The little fellow's face looked a very picture of despair, as visions of early vegetables—a surprise for father—that he had planned to take back to his city home, suddenly disappeared.

"Why, I never call them worms,"

"Why, they are worms—angle-worms, grandfather."

"Yes, but I never call them so," laughed grandfather at the serious little face. "I call them farmers, my assistant farmers, and the more work I have for them the better I like it."

"Farmers! Worms, farmers—and work? Why, grandfather, all they do is to squirm and wiggle."

"Certainly, that's their work. Don't you see they angle their way through the soil, and so make it light and loose. They are regular little ploughs; fertilizing the soil, too, as they plough, so to speak."

"But, but, grandfather, don't they eat the seeds while they're resting?"

"No, indeed; my little assistants don't destroy; they only aid in my crop-raising."

"I—I didn't know I was going to have some hired help this summer when you gave me my little garden," laughed Willie.

"You're not going to," chuckled grandfather, as he returned to his onion bed; "they work for nothing!"—Sunbeam.

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The city of New Orleans has recovered possession of all wharves and landings within its boundaries. For more than a quarter of a century these wharves have been leased to private parties, who, it is stated, have made a mint of money out of them, and on account of which, it is further alleged, the commerce of the city had suffered. Some time ago the city made an attempt to purchase, but failed, and now that the leases have expired the municipal government has declined to renew them and has taken the whole matter under its control. One of the first steps under the new administration will be to reduce the wharfage dues nearly one-half.

George Pierce, an evangelist, was arrested at Toronto on a charge of kicking out the front teeth of David White during a row in front of his Gospel tent. When searched at the police station letters of a questionable nature were found on him, inviting young girls who had been in attendance at the camp meeting to take trips with him. He was sent to jail for sixty days on a charge of assault.