



Fourth Quarter.

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 6.

Joseph Sold Into Egypt.

Genesis xxxvii., 12-36. Memory verses 26-28. Read Psalm cxxlii.

Golden Text.

'The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; but God was with him.'—Acts vii., 9.

Lesson Text.

(23) And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him; (24) And they took him, and cast him into a pit; and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. (25) And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. (26) And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? (27) Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. (28) Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt. (29) And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. (30) And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? (31) And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; (32) And they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. (33) And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

Suggestions.

Jacob had gone with his twelve sons to the old homestead at Hebron where Isaac his father still lived. Here Joseph, now a lad of seventeen and next to the youngest, was sent to feed the sheep with his ten elder brothers who led wicked lives when away from the restraint of their father's presence. Joseph felt that his father ought to know about the conduct of the brothers, but when he told Jacob the brothers were naturally very angry. They despised him all the more because his father made a favorite of him, Joseph and Benjamin being the only sons of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel.

Joseph dreamed one night that he and his brothers were out in the field binding sheaves when suddenly his sheaf rose and stood upright and all their sheaves bowed down to his. When he told this to his brothers they hated him all the more, specially as he soon dreamed again. Even his father rebuked him when he told how he had dreamed that the sun, moon, and eleven stars had bowed down to him. Nevertheless these dreams came true in Joseph's after life when not only his brothers but whole kingdoms bowed down to his God-given wisdom. But between the dreams and the reality there was a noble character to be built by resisting temptations, by trusting through trials, by enduring patiently the hard circumstances that shaped his life. It is natural to young people to dream of power and glory, but their dreams will come to nothing until they realize that the only true glory and power come to a life that is wholly given up to God to be moulded and fashioned and used by him.

Jacob's sons took the flocks to Shechem, and when they had been gone some time, Jacob sent Joseph to see how they were faring. They had moved from Shechem but Joseph met some one who told them where

they had gone. So he followed them to Dothan. But when his brothers saw him coming they began to plot his destruction, in their hatred they planned to kill him and to cast his dead body in a pit so that their sin might not be found out. But Reuben, the oldest brother, would not consent to Joseph's death, suggesting that they should merely put him alive in the deep empty pit. Reuben hoped in some way to get Joseph out alive and restore him to his father after the others had gone.

So they cast Joseph into the pit, a deep but empty cistern from which there seemed to be no escape. But God was watching over this precious young life, and when Joseph cried to him from the pit he heard and answered, though the answer was not such as Joseph expected. As his brothers were sitting at their dinner they saw a caravan coming along, Ishmaelites and Midianites on camels with merchandise of balm, spices and myrrh, on the way to Egypt. Then they thought that they might make a little money by selling their young brother Joseph to these traders who were going down to Egypt, the greatest slave market in the world. They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver, in value about ten or twelve dollars altogether.

Almost every sin involves falsehood. Joseph's brothers told a lie to their father, saying that Joseph had been destroyed by some wild animal, and showing his bloodstained coat as proof of his death. Jacob mourned long years for his lost son, and the ten brothers went many years with the black load of unconfessed sin on their hearts.

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, Oct. 6.—Topic.—'This grace also.' 2 Cor., viii., 7-9.

Junior C. E. Topic.

BE HAPPY.

Mon., Sept. 30.—We are in God's world.—Ps. xix., 1-4.

Tues., Oct. 1.—Happiness becomes us.—Ps. 97, 11-12.

Wed., Oct. 2.—The song of the redeemed.—Isa. xxxv., 10.

Thu., Oct. 3.—The cheerful face.—Prov. xv., 13.

Fri., Oct. 4.—Reasons for good cheer.—John xvi., 33.

Sat., Oct. 5.—The joy of Christ.—John xv., 9-11.

Sun., Oct. 6.—Topic.—Cheerfulness.—Prov. xvii., 22; John xiv., 1.

Parents and the Sabbath-School.

The work of the parents is certainly one of the most important factors in securing a successful Sabbath-school. Long before I had any children of my own to awaken an interest or anxiety on this subject, while engaged as a Sabbath-school teacher, I was brought to realize that my work was helped by some parents, and hindered by others.

The duty of every parent is to see that the child studies the lesson at home. In order to study the lesson, the child must be interested in it. No parent can interest a child in a lesson unless interested herself. Monotony kills interest, therefore do not use the same method every week. If your child has grown tired of study, I would suggest something perhaps like the following:—Change places with her for a time. You be pupil, let her be teacher. Have a Bible, lesson leaf, and map always on hand. Monday morning, while your hands are in the suds, or you are working out your bread, you can say: 'Mary, do you know what the lesson is about for next Sunday? I did not have my lesson very well yesterday, and I was ashamed. I got so little time to study. I wish you would get that leaf and tell me what the title and Golden Text are, and I will try to learn them while I do this work, for I never want to be caught again as I was yesterday.' Thus you will impress upon the mind of the child that it is a disgrace to have a poor lesson. You will be surprised to see how ready she will be to help you, and you can get her to read the lesson, find the places on the map, etc., without knowing that she is doing anything but helping mother. If you have older children that you cannot reach in this way, try making the lesson a subject of table talk.

Fathers have their part. For in this, as

in every good work, there can be no perfect success unless both parents work together. No matter how pressing may be the work of the farm, the shop, or the store, the children must have time to eat, or they will not develop strong, healthy bodies. So also must they have time to digest the bread of life, or they will prove weakly Christians.

Then take time to talk over the lesson at the table, and the interest manifested by the parents will be imparted to the children. Make it a rule to review the lesson all together every Saturday night before beginning any other reading. This, again, will require some firmness, for the political papers are very inviting, but let us remember to put the Gospel first, and secular news afterward.

The lesson learned, the next thing of importance is promptness of attendance. I wish that I could impress every parent reading this with the importance of teaching their children to always be on time in Sabbath-school. Why can't we not realize that tardiness on the part of one pupil must invariably disturb and hinder the work of the whole school? Then, let us see to it Saturday night that the clocks are none too slow. When Sunday morning comes let us wake up, and calculate our time just as if we expected to take the 9.30 train, and see how we will improve the Sabbath-school and bless our children by training them to always be on time.

Once there the child needs confidence in the instructors, and for this he depends largely upon his parents. Especially is this true of the younger pupils. Let the parents talk at home that the superintendent or teacher is incompetent or inconsistent or unchristian, and the child will enlarge upon it, and perhaps misconstrue the statements in his own mind, until he comes to regard his instructor as a veritable hypocrite. How can the heart of such a child be reached? Lastly, pray for the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and bless our work.—Mrs. Hannah M. Raney, in 'Herald and Presbyter.'

Men Wanted.

It is said that the members of the official board of a leading Methodist church in Chicago not long ago pledged themselves to attend Sunday-school and to perform any service that the superintendent might request. This action was caused by a statement from the superintendent setting forth the difficulty of preventing boys from dropping out of the Sunday-school when they approached young manhood. The superintendent attributed this to the fact that there were so few men engaged in the work of the school. He thought that if there were more men in the Sunday-school it would have a tendency to disabuse the minds of young men of the impression that the Sunday-school was a place for only women and children, and that it was beneath the dignity of young men to remain in the Sunday-school after they had attained to the years of early manhood.

There are many superintendents who have the conviction, based on observation and experience, that it would add greatly to the strength and influence of the Sunday-school if more men would engage in the work of the school. There are many superintendents who believe that the older boys and young men of the Sunday-school would not 'drop out' if their fathers and brothers had not already 'dropped out.' Shall the study of the Bible be confined to the young only? If not, is there any better place for this study than the Sunday-school? The writer is convinced by reason of large experience in Sunday-school work, that many young men could be retained in the Sunday-school if earnest and consecrated and intelligent men teachers could be secured for them. There are more men wanted in the army of Sunday-school workers. Where are the volunteers?—'New Century Teachers' Quarterly.'

A large part of the small-boy problem would be solved by encouraging his self-respect by transferring him to a department where he would feel more in his own sphere. In a primary department where the mites are received as soon as they can toddle, and are kept with the others, this transfer should be at eight years of age. Where the tiny tots have a department of their own, he may remain until nine, but not later, unless it be in cases of exceptionally slow development.—Mrs. M. G. Kennedy.