

Improve Thy Time.

BY GRACE ELIZABETH COBB.

LIFE is passing, swiftly passing, Fritter not the time away; Lose not thou in idle dreaming All the bright and golden day. Fill the hours with something nobler, Deeper far than idle play.

Let a purpose, strong and noble Light thy path with rays divine, Opportunities are waiting, Take, improve them, they are thine; Let them each bear fruit eternal; Do ye dare e'en one resign?

Let an influence, pure and holy, Through thy life be shed abroad, Thus the sinful, far from heaven, May be pointed to thy God; Let them by thy holy living Be rebuked, convinced, and awed.

Walk not thou among transgressors, Follow in the good paths old; Shun the base, all things unholy, Leave the dross, keep but the gold; Will ye let thy soul eternal For this world's gilt toys be sold?

Time with thee v ill soon be ended, Swiftly pass the years away, All too soon the days are speeding, Then improve them while ye may, Earnestly, for night is coming; Up, be doing, while 'tis day!

When when comes to thee death's summons, Thou shalt go with heavens of gold Up to heaven's peaty portals; Wide-for thee will they unfold, Thou shalt have abundant entrance, And shalt know the "half ne'er told."

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

B.C. 1580] LESSON V. (May 1) Exod. 1. 6-14. Memory verses, 12-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies. Psa. 105. 24.

OUTLINE.

1. A Growing people. 2. A Cruel King. TIME.—1580-1571. A period longer or shorter down to Moses' birth.

PLACES.—The land of Goshen. Pithon. Raameses.

RULES.—In Egypt, Rameses II. or Amosis J.

CONNECTING LINKS.—There is a long jump in the history. Jacob and his children have long been dead. Joseph has been at rest for a half-century. The descendants of the patriarchs have remained in the land of Goshen, and their occupation as shepherds subjects them to the insult of the lordly Egyptians. Yet they are becoming a mighty people. Now comes our lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—A new king—Probably a king who came in by conquest.—A new not Joseph—Of course not; Joseph was dead. But it means, did not know of the wonderful service—Joseph had performed. Unto his people—These people were peculiarly his, for he represented the old Egyptian kings, after the aliens were expelled. More and mightier—That is, in that particular district. Get them up out of the land—They had received only permission to sojourn in Goshen. Now the royal policy of keeping them is announced. Task-masters—Chiefs of tribute, men of rank, who superintended the public works.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. A Growing People. How many direct descendants or relatives of Jacob came with him into Egypt? How many years passed from the presentation of Jacob before Pharaoh to the birth of Moses?

How many years from the descent into Egypt till the exodus?

Was it possible for the population to increase to a million or two millions in this time?

What was the purpose of this prosperity in God's plan?

Why was the life in Egypt necessary? Give probable reasons why they did not go directly back to Canaan when the famine was over.

What was the effect of trial upon these Israelites? What sort of life did they lead in the times of our lesson?

2. A Cruel King.

Who was this Pharaoh? What dynasty had preceded him? How was his cruelty shown? What settled purpose concerning the children of Israel did he announce? What place was this experience of cruelty to have in the memory of this people? Deut. 26. 8.

To understand it, read also v. 1-5. What is meant by the king not knowing Joseph?

What more serious defect was there in this king's knowledge?

What allusion to this bitter bondage is found in the opening of the Decalogue?

Do you see any resemblance between Pharaoh's course and that pursued by Satan toward the sinner?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Here is a proof that God's word fails not. This very affliction was long before foretold. Gen. 15. 13, 14.

Here is a proof that the Church cannot be destroyed by persecution.

Here is a picture of the life of a sinner held by his master to serve with rigour.

Pharaoh's wise dealing was the supremest folly.

So always the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Reckon out the chronology of this lesson. There are certain dates fixed, which we have had, which will lead to our conclusions.

2. Examine carefully every sentence to be sure that you understand what each one means.

3. Study this lesson as you study a school lesson. Find all its facts, and commit them to memory in order.

4. Joseph had two sons. Find what must have become of them. They had a princess for a mother. Were they and their children of the royal house, or were they in Goshen?

5. Make a comparison between the bondage of sin and the bondage of Pharaoh.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—Bondage in sin.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

21. What is this sinfulness commonly called?

Original sin: being that from which all actual transgressions proceed.

[Romans v. 12.]

B.C. 1571] LESSON VI. (May 8)

THE CHILD MOSES.

Exod. 2. 1-10. Memory verses 7-10

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Lord is thy keeper. Psa. 121. 5.

OUTLINE.

1. The Mother. 2. The Child. 3. The Princess.

TIME.—1571 B.C.

PLACE.—Egypt. Zoan. (?)

RULES.—The name of the reigning Pharaoh is unknown.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The rapid increase of these people has alarmed Pharaoh. The order for the destruction of all male children has been given.

EXPLANATIONS.—The house of Levi—A descendant of Jacob's third son. The first mention of the growing tribe or clan. Could not longer hide him—Because he was growing rapidly, and could not, in the nature of things, be hidden. An ark of bulrushes—The same Hebrew word is used for Noah's ark. This was a little boat woven of papyrus, a reed three-cornered in shape, as large as

your finger, and ten feet long. Slime and with pitch—Perhaps clay, from which the bricks were made, and bitumen. His sister—Miriam. She and Aaron were both older than Moses. The daughter of Pharaoh came—Showing that the parents of Moses lived near the court of the king. He became her son—This refers to her formal adoption of the boy.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Mother.

Who was the mother of Moses? Can you give a reason why she is so particularly mentioned?

What traits of character are displayed by her in our lesson?

Is there any reason for supposing that she taught Moses the past history of his people?

What proof do the Scriptures afford that she was a religious woman?

2. The Child.

To what chance circumstance do we owe the life of the greatest man of Old Testament history?

To what chance circumstance do we owe his name?

Men call these occurrences chance. What does the servant of God call them?

What difference in education from the ordinary training of an Israelite did this adoption secure?

What saved this child from becoming an ordinary Egyptian priest?

Why should the circumstances of Moses' birth be so particularly told, when the births of Aaron and Miriam are unnoticed?

3. The Princess.

How many agents were employed in the preservation of Moses?

What motive led the princess to save the infant in the river?

Did she know that it was one of the prescribed male children?

What is suggested as to the influence or power at court of this woman, who thus dared to go contrary to the king's decree?

How is the working of God's providence shown in this story?

What traits of character did the princess show?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

The faith of this Hebrew mother ought to inspire us to trust God absolutely.

God's wonderful providence in raising up Moses ought to lead us to trust him without a question.

The watching sister is a pattern for us to follow. The open eye can always find some way in which to be useful.

Human sympathy was a chief factor in the solution of this problem.

Let us cultivate the divine gift of sympathy.

Moses was a slave at birth; a prince by education, and so was fit to be his people's saviour.

So was our Saviour. In form, a servant; but, in spirit Immanuel.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The great political question of that day was how to keep Israel in Egypt. Find all the traces of it that you can on both sides, Hebrew and Egyptian.

2. Find what you can in regard to the early life of Moses. Bible dictionary, Stanley's "Jewish Church," Josephus, etc.

3. Study between the lessons; between this and the next, to be able to comprehend what follows in Moses' life.

4. Notice the skip in time from v. 10 to 11. Modern history would have told every detail of these years. Why not done here?

5. Read this lesson. Read, read, read! Remember that it is a lesson to be learned, and that you are a student. Above all pray for light upon it.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—The word of faith.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

22. What is the misery of the state into which man fell?

All mankind, being born in sin, and following the desires of their own hearts, are liable to the miseries of this life, to bodily death, and to the pains of hell hereafter.

[Ephesians ii. 3; Galatians iii. 10; Romans vi. 23.]

THE real things are inside. The real world is the inside world. God is not up, nor down, but in the midst.

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