

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Begin with a little lesson on geography. Turn to the map on page 185, and find the V marking a place on the south side of the Jabbok. Remind the class, that, for twenty years since last Lesson, Jacob had been living with his uncle Laban, far, far to the north of this place, and was now on his way back to Canaan, with his wives and children and a great company of servants and cattle and sheep. At this place near the Jabbok, he met Esau, now a powerful chief, with four hundred soldiers. Let the Lesson conversation gather round four points, as follows :

I. THE TWO COMPANIES, vs. 1-3. Question about what Jacob saw, and the feelings awakened in him by the sight, his arrangement of his wives and their handmaids and the children into four companies, and his reverent approach to Esau.

II. THE TWO BROTHERS, vs. 4-7. The manner of Esau's greeting Jacob, Esau's inquiry about the wives and children, how these approached the great and dreaded chief and how he received them, are the points to be brought out by questions. We have here a

most interesting scene, which should be made to live again before the scholars.

III. THE BARGAIN, vs. 8-11. Follow out the conversation between the two brothers,— Jacob urging upon Esau the present, which he hoped would purchase his safety ; and Esau, in true Eastern fashion protesting his unwillingness to take anything, but at last accepting the gift.

IV. THE PARTING, vs. 12-15. Discuss with the class Esau's offer of an escort to Jacob and Jacob's refusal. Was the reason which Jacob gave for refusing his real reason, or was it merely an excuse? If it was only an excuse, what was the real reason?

Question (vs. 16, 17) about the route taken by each of the brothers after their departure from one another.

An interesting close to the Lesson may be made by proposing for discussion the questions : Did Esau intend good or harm to Jacob when they met at the Jabbok? Was Jacob saved from harm by his own cleverness, or in answer to his prayer (see ch. 32 : 9-12)? How should we expect to be saved from danger?

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Notice where a small V marks a position beside the Jabbok, over in the east-of-Jordan country, near the region where Esau had become a powerful chief. Standing at the point of that V and looking north as the lines indicate, you see directly before you a bit of bare earth at the edge of a mountain stream thirty or forty feet wide. Except at this near spot and another opposite, the banks are thickly overgrown with bushes and small trees. Some travelers are about to ford the stream here, just as Jacob and his family did. The water is not ordinarily deep enough to be

dangerous for horses, cattle or camels, still it must have been an exciting experience for the children of the family when the animals went splashing across and servants with lighted torches ran about, guiding the flocks of sheep and herds of goats, to prevent any of the stock from being lost. Fords like this one were the ordinary means of crossing Palestine streams. It was not until the much later days of

Roman domination that bridges were built to take the place of the fords.

Use a stereograph entitled, The Brook Jabbok Near Where Jacob Met Esau.

