

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON II.

JANUARY 14, 1864. THE BIRTH OF MOSES. (Exodus ii. 1-10)

COMMENT TO MONGER, vs. 9, 10. PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Num. xxvii. 59; Ieb. xi. 23.

With v. 1, read Ex. vi. 16, 18, 20; with v. 2, Acts vii. 20; with v. 3 and 4, Ex. xv. 10; with v. 5, Acts vii. 21; with v. 6-10, Ex. xviii. 7, 8.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The providence of God over all.

LEADING TEXT.—And the child grew, and grew strong in spirit, till he was weaned: and the grace of God was upon him.—Ex. ii. 26.

The circumstances of Moses' infancy would have been uninteresting to us, but for the record of ch. i. Why should a mother hide her infant boy? Why fear to keep him? Why expose him in the river? These questions are answered by ch. i. 22. "Pharaoh had charged all his people" etc.; the third plea for keeping down Israel. When the oppression is most severe, Moses is born, according to a Jewish proverb. It is the preparation for deliverance.

Any one who wishes to consider here the parentage, birth, preservation, and education of Moses. The pupils, however, will perhaps better remember such a division as (1) a distressed family, (2) a weeping babe, and (3) a pitying princess.

I. We visit a distressed family. Amram, the father; Jochebed, the mother; a young girl grown up; one other child, at least, an infant, three months old. Both parents are of the tribe of Levi. (For their relationship see "Illustration.") We are told nothing of their means or circumstances. Probably they were comfortable and happy until the cruel oppression came, and then the event which ought to have made all glad (John xvi. 21)—the birth of a boy—fills them with grief. And this child is not only their own, he is very beautiful, as Stephen calls him "beautiful before God" (Acts vii. 20). They cannot bear to drown him. They conceal his birth, and hide him three months; all the time in nervous fear of detection, and perhaps punishment, as well as his destruction; for no doubt officers were charged to see that the king's command was obeyed.

But it is not easy for common people, with near neighbours, to hide a healthy child, three months old. The family begin to feel that it cannot be done longer, and they set to work to obey the order, in fact, and yet to gain a chance (so to speak) of saving the beautiful babe. We see a mother's and a sister's love, and faith in God; not very clear, as to the way, but hoping that somehow deliverance would come from above. So it is written, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months; they dared, so far, to disobey the king's order."

Their plan (v. 9), after many a consultation, is to put the babe in a little cradle, box, or ark, made of the great rushes, ten or twelve feet high, that grow in the shallows of the Nile, the root of which was used as fuel, the stem as wood for boats, for example, and the bark for shoes, corals, and paper, such as is found in the mummy-cases. The slime (or asphalt), or perhaps mud of the river, was put in the spaces between the reeds, and the pitch rendered the ark water-proof. The little vessel was placed among the low rushes on the edge of the river. It was as if she said, "The God of Noah can preserve my babe." Faith and hope do not despise means. The sister of the babe is put to watch, and act according to circumstances (v. 4). The habits, and perhaps character of the princess, may have been counted upon by them. This is the best a mother's love can do. This one family may show us the misery of the people.

II. The weeping babe. This is to be the deliverer of Israel; the great law-giver; the true Hebrew, with all the advantage of a mother's care, and yet, in due time to be trained as an adopted child of a princess. The first who saw the child found him weeping. He is the type of millions of weeping children—sick, weak, hungry, neglected, motherless, fatherless, exposed, dying? Why is this? Their own acts have not brought them to it. How can it be explained, except by the fact that the race is one; that it has fallen; that sin and misery have gone together.

Let us, first of all, thank God for the kindly aspect the Scriptures wear to the dying children. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Man's sin and cruelty, God can over-rule; saving in heaven those whom men destroy on earth; glorifying them not because of their being without sin, but on the ground of the infinite merit of Christ's death.

Then secondly, let us do all we can to help and deliver the weeping children; feed them, clothe them, love them, teach them, and bring them up to God. Thank God for all the "children's aids," may his blessing be on them!

III. The pitying princess. The king had no pity. He meant to destroy. God uses his child to save alive and nourish the instrument of Israel's deliverance and Egypt's overthrow. God sends the princess to bathe (v. 5) at the right time, at the right place, and in the right feeling, namely, of compassion, for the crying infant, whom she recognizes at once as one of the Hebrews' children (v. 6). He put the right words into the sister's mouth—"for thee" (v. 7) is thy care now, "a nurse of the Hebrew women—none so fitting—and the child's mother was brought, engaged, and rewarded even for her labour of love. For how many benighted had this kind-hearted princess given a text in v. 9!

She followed up her act by adopting the boy, whom she called by a name descriptive of his early escape, and which seems to imply that she spoke a language not differing greatly from Hebrew.

From the early writers we know many facts that fit into the history; e. g., the princesses of Egypt, instead of being kept like birds in gilt cages, as in the East at later times, were then free, and houses of

their own and sometimes ruled along with their brothers; that there are parts of the not infested with crocodiles then, or now; and would harmonize with the prisoners' living in Zann, on the boundary of the Israelites' district, and account for their connecting God's wonders with the "field of Zann" (Ps. lxxviii. 12, 13, 19).

See the benefits of this arrangement. Moses is saved; his mother brings him up, with no Hebrew tending (v. 11). Yet he has a royal education, which yet we shall see) was invaluable to him (Acts vii. 22).

ILLUSTRATION.

It will interest the boys to know, that from the records of ancient Egypt we can tell as exactly what Moses was taught as we could what was learnt by William Penn or even George Washington. Letters, spelling, grammar, letter-writing, making of vessels, geometry, with a great deal of religious edification such as the Egyptian values, were learnt by Moses. No one could get any civil employment until he became a scribe. We have the very autographs of some of the learned men of this time, and some of the colleges they pronounced upon learning. Two things we ought to think of, in this connection, namely, that the greatest of the Egyptian depended more on their thorough education for which all boys should strive, and secondly, in the Mosiac record had any untruth in it, or were a later forgery, the histories that have been disintegrated in our own time would give it the lie. But they do not—they confirm it at every point.

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

Condition of the Hebrews.—Pharaoh's cruel order—need of ch. i. to explain—tribe of Moses—father's name—mother's—education of parents—how on this subject affected—how long hid—why—how provided for—kind of ark—how made—how what motive—where placed—by whom watched—by whom found—why the princess there—her feeling—her understanding of the case—her engagement of a nurse—her adoption of the child—the name given him—why—the advantages of this arrangement—and the lesson it teaches, as to God's care, providence, and defeat of man's wicked counsels.

A Word for the Poor.

We commend the following, from *St. Nicholas*'s for January, to all our readers. It is full of practical good sense, if not practical piety. God's providence is continually making good Christ's word, "The poor ye have always with you," and giving us up to portunity to test our good will in the case to do the good.

The winter will be a hard one. Work will be scarce and money scarcer. Already the great manufacturing firms have discharged many of their hands, and those who have not dismissed employes have reduced wages so low that the effect of the two is not very different. To beg, to steal, or to starve seems the only solution to the problem of life for these enforced idlers. When there is scantiness of work, there is inevitably plenty of crime. It is stated that twenty thousand men and women, dependent on their daily earnings for support, were out of employment last winter in New York; and it is feared that the number this season may be doubled. Many of these must wander into the country in search of the labour they cannot find in town. When they ask at your doors for work, try to find something for them, if it be only for a few hours. Trust them, even if their appearance be uncanny. Give them work, and pay them for it. Money that comes without labour is generally the least charitable of gifts. To live upon pecuniary aid that has no equivalent, is to lose self-respect, is to lose the balance wheel of a healthy organization.

Engage all the help this winter you can possibly afford. Have your sewing done, not by expensive mediocres, but by poor women who stitch by the day or job. Hire the chore-woman for an extra cleaning, now and then. Let the washerwoman's boy do the errands you have been in the habit of doing yourself. Compensate them for self-respecting toil, instead of making them the recipients of a mortifying charity. Do not save pennies, and call it economy, by performing the task which, by the law of mutual help, belongs to others. It is keeping from them that which is their right. Refrain from buying luxuries, if you will, but do not take from the needy, through a mistaken idea of thrift.

Absorbed in Grief.

The following passage from the novel, *A School for Wives*, powerfully describes a state of mind which not infrequently accompanies the most acute degree of suffering; the heroine, we must explain, is sitting by the coffin of an only and beloved brother, who has taken in a duel on her account: "It was strange, and she often thought of it in after years, when she recollects, with a shuddering and fearful disquietness, the sensations of that dreadful night—the indelible impression that had been made on her mind by the most trivial outward circumstances, which she had hardly seemed to notice at the time. The pattern of the carpet—she never forgot the peculiar shape of the rings that composed it—nor something resembling the profile of a countenance in one of the corners—nor the position of every separate piece of furniture around the rug—she saw straight, like erect human figures, and the middle—some bending forwards, some leaning towards each other—they were all as clearly pictured to her mind's eye, years afterwards, as though she saw them still. She remembered, too, tracing in fancy some faint marks on the wall, over and over again, and fixing her eyes upon a dark spot upon the cornice, and wondering how it came there, and what it was; and measuring mentally the different sizes of the panels on the mahogany doors. All this she remembered distinctly afterwards; but, at that time, she was conscious of none of them—she felt nothing but her grief."

Our Young Folks.

Our Own Bible.

Do you know, dear children, the pleasure of having a Bible all your own? There are people who would give a great deal to have a Bible. We have lately heard a story of a little girl who conceived a singular way to procure one. She lived in a village in the mountains of Aboeyon, and there they have not the happiness to see missionaries who bring Bibles to the inhabitants. She was told that, at Nomes, one could be bought for three francs.

The poor little girl had no money, but she had two rabbits of her own. She resolved to go on foot to Nomes, which is five miles from her home, and she carried her two rabbits with her. She went to a bookseller, and proposed to him to exchange her two rabbits for a Bible, which he consented. It joked with her by noon she returned to her mountain home, happy to have in her possession the precious book she had desired so long, and she made good use of it. She learned a verse every day, and how often they came into her mind many days after! They were a comfort to herself and to others whom she visited; for she often told them some of the precious words of the Lord Jesus. We wish all of our young readers would learn a text of Scripture every day, and say it to papa or mamma the next morning at the breakfast-table. Often a text of his dear little ones might be brought to papa's mind in his busy career in the course of the day, or into dear mamma's thoughts when engaged with her many household duties.

What Jim Wrote about Dolls.

Some dolls' heads are made of wood; these are called wood-dolls. Wood comes from trees, which are found in the countree. Trees have leaves also; they grow up, but they do not grow. Some trees are pine, some apple, some pine-apple and some mahogany—a hard wood to split. Their heads are very hard, and you can pound them without hurting.

Some dolls' heads are made of wax, and are called wax-dolls. The wax comes from a little animal called the bee, that has wings. Sometimes it is called the busy bee, because it buzzes. The bee does not make the dolls, but the wax. It goes in a straight line to a flower, and pokes the honey out with its sting. Then you feel glad you are not the flower, because the sting hurts—at once—that is the way it makes the wax. But it is not good to put these dolls in the sun or over a furnace.

Some dolls are made all over of India-rubber, and you can fling them about anyhow. They grow on a tree, the India-rubber tree, in India, where they make India-rubber boots. It is a good kind to have, because you can throw it about like a ball. But, then, the face is painted, and may rub off—some noses do.

Then there's China dolls, made of what tea sets are, but they don't come from China where they make the fireworks, though they do make the tea. These might smash, if pounded with a hammer. There's another kind that I don't know about, that Elsie's made of. It don't matter, any way. My aunt helped me about the spelling, except mahogany—that I knew. I shall write another volume, telling more about trees and bees, and why dolls should take care of themselves. This is enough for once.—*St. Nicholas*.

How Long Will It Do to Wait

Dr. Nettleton had come from the evening service in some country town, to his home for the night. The good lady of the house, rather an elderly person, after bustling about to provide her guest with refreshment, said, directly before her daughter, who was in the room:

"Doctor Nettleton I do wish you would talk to Caroline; she don't care nothing about going to meeting, nor about the salvation of her soul. I've talked and talked, and go to our minister to talk, but it don't seem to do good. I wish you would talk to her, Doctor Nettleton."

Saying which, she went out of the room. Doctor Nettleton continued quietly taking his repast, when he turned round to the young girl, and said:

"Now, just tell me, Miss Caroline, don't they bother you amazingly about this thing?"

She, taken by surprise at an address so unexpected, answered at once:

"Yes, sir they do; they keep talking to me all the time, till I am sick of it."

"So I thought," said Dr. N. "Let's see, how old are you?"

"Eighteen, sir."

"Good health?"

"Yes, sir."

"The fact is," said Dr. N., "religion is a good thing in itself, but the idea of all the time troubling a young creature like you with it! And you're in good health, you say. Religion is a good thing. It will hardly do to do without it. I wonder how long it would do for you to wait?"

"That's just what I have been thinking myself," said Caroline.

"Well," said Dr. N., "suppose you say till you are fifty? No, that won't do; I attended the funeral of a lady fifteen year younger than that. Thirty? How will that do?"

"I'm not sure it would do to wait quite so long," said Caroline.

"No, I don't think so, either; something might happen. Say, now, twenty-five, or even twenty, if we could be sure that you would live so long. A year from now; how would that do?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Neither do I. The fact is, my dear young lady, the more I think of it, and of how many young people, as well, apparently, as you are, do die suddenly, I am afraid to have you put it off a moment longer. Besides, the Bible says, 'we are as accepted time.' We must take the time. What shall we do? Had we better not

knelt down here, and ask God for mercy, through his Son, Jesus Christ?"

The young lady, perfectly overcome by her feelings, knelt on the spot. In a day or two, she, by grace, came out rejoicing in hope, finding she had far from lost all enjoyment in this life.—*Christian at Work*.

About Toads.

This note is intended as a contribution toward the psychology of the American toad, namely presenting some evidence of intelligence and of capacity for learning to which I have been witness. In the summer of 1873, an old toad used to sit under the door of a bed-room every fine evening, and dexterously pick up those beetles, overladen or tired, missed the door-step and fell to the ground. He lost, by some accident, an eye, and it was observed by several members of the family, as well as myself, that he had with it lost his ability to pick up a beetle at the first trial, his tongue struck the ground on one side of the beetle; but after several weeks' practice with one eye, he regained his certainty of aim. I have never seen another toad which had to crowd his food into his mouth, a European toad do, although he is a thirdly to wipe out of his mouth any inedible or disagreeable substance. When an toad gets into his mouth part of an insect too large for his tongue to thrust down his throat (and I have known of the toad attempting a wounded humming-bird, he resorts to the nearest stone or clod, and presses the protruding part of his mouthful against it, and thus crowds it down his throat. This can be observed at any time by placing a locust's hind-legs together, and throwing it before a small toad. On one occasion I gave a "yellow-striped" locust to a little toad in its second summer, when he was in the middle of a very wide gravel-walk. In a moment he had the locust's head down his throat, its hinder parts protruded. He looked around for a stone or clod; but finding none at hand in either direction, he bowed his head and kept along, placing the locust against the ground. But the angle with the ground was too small, and my walk too well rolled. To increase the angle he straightened his hind legs up, but in vain. At length he threw up his hind-quarters and actually stood on his head, or rather on the locust sticking out of his mouth, and after repeating this once or twice, succeeded in "getting himself outside of his dinner." But these instances of ingenious adaptation to the circumstances were exceeded by a four-year-old toad at Antioch College. I was tossing him earth worms while digging, and presently they him so large a specimen that he was obliged to attack one end only. That end was instantly transferred to his stomach, the other end whirled free in air, and coiled about the toad's head. He waited until its writhings gave him a chance, swallow'd half an inch, then taking a nip with his jaws was led for a chance to draw in another half inch. But there were so many half inches to dispose of, that at last his jaws grew tired, lost their firmness of grip, and the worm crawled out five-eighths of an inch between each half-inch swallowing. The toad perceived this brought his hind-foot to aid his jaws, grasping his abdomen with his foot; and by a little effort getting hold of the worm in his stomach from the outside, he thus by his hold fast to what he gained by each swallow, and presently succeeded in getting the worm entirely down. A garbur-nake was observed this summer in North-Conway, pushing a toad down his throat by running it against slabs and stones, just as the toad crowds down a locust. The amount which a toad can eat is surprising. On Tuesday morning I threw a squash-bug to a young toad. He snapped it up, but immediately rejected it, wiped his mouth with great energy, and then hopped away with extraordinary rapidity. I was so much amused that I gathered some more of the saw-bugs, and carried them to a favorite old toad at the northeast corner of the house. He ate them all without making any wry faces. I gathered all that I could find in my vines, and he ate them all, to the number of twenty-three. I then brought him some larvae of *pygmaea ministra*, three quarters grown, and succeeded in enticing him to put ninety-four of them on top of his squash-bugs. Finding that his virtue was not proof against the caterpillars when I put them on the end of a straw and tickled his nose with them, he at length turned and crept under the piazza, where he remained till Friday afternoon digesting his feast.—*Rev. Thomas Hill, D.D.*

Ten Good Rules.

These rules, respecting the management of scholars, given in the *National Normal*, will no doubt be helpful to Sunday schools, as well as day school teachers of the young:

1. Do not talk too much. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise."
2. Always speak kindly to an angry pupil. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir anger."
3. Never be sarcastic. "There is that speaketh like the piercing of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is health."
4. Some pupils expect you to scold them. By all means disappoint them. "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee."
5. Reprove and punish pupils privately, never publicly. "Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself, and discover not a secret to another."
6. See nothing, yet see everything. Take immediate action upon a very few misdemeanors. They are not half so bad as your imagination makes them. The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression."
7. At the same time do not hesitate to act promptly when necessary. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished."
8. Don't worry. Teach under "high pressure, Govern under "low pressure." "Fret not thyself because of evil men."
9. Never become discouraged, especially with serious difficulties. "If thou faint in the day of adversities, thy strength is small."
10. Withhold not good from them to whom it is due when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."

Scientific and Useful.

THE STOMACH.

We firmly believe that almost every individual of the human race is, either through ways or byways, connected with the stomach. The woes of every other member are founded on your belly-tubing; and we never see a dishonorable play-act mysteriously consisting the pulse of his patient but we find a desire to vomit. "Why not tell the poor gentleman at once, 'Sir, you have eaten too much; you've drunk too much; and you have not taken exercise enough?' The human frame was not created imperfect. It is we ourselves who have made it so."

BEYOND GLASS TUBES.

A. H. Galatan has communicated to the *Journal of the Franklin Institute* the following observations for bending glass tubes: "If the glass tube you desire to bend be filled with sand, and the ends be supported to prevent its escape, or holding over a basin of water, it will be found that the tube may be quite doubled, if desired, a perfect curve being produced. In this way accurate bends may be made, and may be produced in tubes of any bore, without any previous skill in glass working. Obviously the principle depends on a uniform distribution by the sand of the pressure exerted. A similar plan is resorted to by metal workers in bending up tubes of lead."

A OVERSEER FISH.

The apparently exaggerated description of its size in the "Tales of the Sea," loses much of its impossibility in one's mind after an inspection of a huge ephalopod now being shown in a house near the temple at Asaka, Yeddo. It seems that a fisherman was seized by its tentacles while out of the village of Kusanabe, in the district of Kishu-no, and that the boatman killed the creature by repeated blows. Its length from the tail to the insertion of the tentacles is about sixteen feet; one of the arms is from its finet on with the body to the sucker at its tip nearly five feet. It must be born in mind that the polypus has a sunk since its death, so that living it would probably measure considerably more.

THE DANGER OF WET COAL.

People who prefer wotting the winter's store of coal to the dust occasioned on putting it into their cellars, do not, perhaps, generally know that they are laying up for themselves a store of sore throats and other evils consequent upon the practice. Even the fire-damp which escapes from coal mines arises from the slow decomposition of coal at temperatures of but little above that of the atmosphere, but under augmented pressure. By wetting a mass of freshly broken coal, and putting it into a cellar, the mass is heated to such a degree that carbonic acid and sulphurated hydrogen are given off for long periods of time, and pervade the whole house. The liability of wet coal to mischievous results under such circumstances may be appreciated from the fact that here are several instances on record of spontaneous combustion of wet coal when stored into the bunkers or holds of vessels. And from this cause, doubtless, many missing coal vessels have perished.

HEART ACTION.

Dr. Marcy says *Les Moelles*, has recently demonstrated that the heart acts like all mechanical motors in that the frequency of the pulsations varies according to the resistance which it meets in driving the blood through the vessels. When the resistance becomes greater, the throbs diminish; they accelerate, on the contrary, if the opposition becomes less. During life, the action of the nervous centres makes itself felt on the heart, of which it renders the pulsations slower or quicker, whatever may be the resistance experienced. Dr. Marcy eliminated this nervous influence by removing the heart of an animal, and causing it to work under purely mechanical conditions. The heart of a turtle was arranged with a system of rubber tubes representing veins and arteries. Call's blood, defibrinated, was caused to circulate, and a registering instrument noted the amplitude and frequency of the movements of the organ. When the tube containing the blood leaving the heart was compressed, the liquid accumulated in rear of the obstacle, and the heart emptied itself with greater difficulty, the pulsations weakening perceptibly. Overcoming the pressure, thus allowing free course to the blood, the throbs accelerated rapidly.

BABY BALANCES.

It has become the fashion in France (periodically) to weigh babies. In an official report to the Academy of Sciences on the Universal Exhibition at Vienna, M. Levasseur specially calls attention to the cradle of Dr. Goussin, which is so arranged as to indicate the weight of the body. The chief director of the Paris Hospital, M. Housson, gave details of other "balanced cradles" used in the hospitals of Paris, with the view of indicating the successive change in the weight of the baby. This instrument was very convenient, and furnished important indications to the "administrative surveillance." Every two or three weeks the weight of the nurse-child furnished indications of its treatment which, he considered, were not to be despised. Baby balances and administrative surveillance go perhaps, very well together; but there is something irresistibly and sadly comic in the notion of an "administrative officer" surveying the indication furnished by the register of the baby balances, and every two or three weeks thereupon, after a due amount of endorsing, docketing, and official mounting, ordering thereupon a change of treatment for the nursling. We have an invincible belief that a mother's eye is worth all the weighing cradles ever invented. Besides, it seems baby must be stripped, which, in cold weather, M. Housson gravely informed the academy, is "not without inconveniences."—*London Medical Record*.

It is said that a strong desire for religious liberty prevails in Persia, and many people show special interest in the study of the Bible.