

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1880, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday School Union.)

LESSON II. OCT. 10.] JACOB AND ESAU. Gen. 27: 22-40.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 38-40.

22. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. 23. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. 24. And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

35. And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. 36. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? 37. And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

GOLDEN TEXT.

Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.—Prov. 4: 27.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God's providence witnesses against sin in His people.

NOTE.—JACOB, "heel-catcher, supplanter;" the son of Isaac and twin-brother of Esau: bought his brother's birthright for a "mess of pottage;" by suggestion of his mother Rebekah, he secured the blessing intended for Esau; fled to Padanaram; served seven years to gain Leah for his wife, and seven more for Rachel, daughters of Laban; had twelve sons; finally removed into Egypt after his son Joseph had become a ruler in that country, and there died.—E-SAU, "hairy;" eldest son of Isaac and twin-brother of Jacob; of wild, roving character, like the present Bedouin of the desert; sold his birthright; married against the wishes of his parents; lost the intended blessing of his father; his descendants were called Edomites.—THE SMELL OF A FIELD. Some suppose this refers to the fragrance produced by aromatic plants, flowers, fruit, and spices which grew in abundance, and with which the garments of Esau might have been perfumed by coming in contact with them, as a hunter would be very likely to do. When the Israelites desired leave to pass through the territory of Edom, the country abounded with fruitful fields and vineyards (Num. 20: 17). "All Arabia exhales fragrant odors."—Herodotus.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) A BLESSING OBTAINED BY DECEPTION. (II.) A BLESSING OBTAINED BY SUPPLICATION.

I. A BLESSING OBTAINED BY DECEPTION.—(22.) FELT HIM, for the voice was not like Esau's; and in Isaac's blindness, he must trust to his hearing and the sense of touch. (23.) HANDS WERE HAIRY, Esau was noted as a "hairy man." (24.) ART... VERY SON ESAU? Isaac, still in doubt, appealed to the honesty and sincerity of Jacob, who deceived him. (25.) DEW... CORN AND WINE, the copious fall of the dew, the multitudes of vineyards, and the variety of "corn,"—that is, grain; as wheat, barley, oats

and rye,—are things for which Palestine was famous. II. A BLESSING BY SUPPLICATION.—(32.) WHO ART THOU? Jacob's fraud soon discovered; his father alarmed; his brother angry. (33.) HE SHALL BE BLESSED, the blessing a prophetic act, and could not be recalled. (34.) EXCEEDING BITTER CRY, his repentance should have come when he sold his birthright; now the right was not his. (35.) FATNESS OF THE, great temporal prosperity. (40.) BY THY SWORD, a picture of the roving character of the Edomites and of the present Bedouins; BREAK HIS YOKE, this came to pass in the reign of Joram; up to that time the Edomites had usually paid tribute to the Israelites, after the latter entered Canaan.

ILLUSTRATION.—The event in this lesson is introduced by, "When Isaac was old" (v. 1.) Jewish interpreters say he was one hundred and thirty-seven years old—the age at which Ishmael had died fourteen years before, and perhaps the death of his brother had put Isaac in mind of his own death. The plan of Jacob's mother is introduced at verse 6. Rebekah loved Jacob, while Esau had led a wild life, having married a Canaanitish wife, to add to the grief of his parents. Probably Rebekah also knew that Jacob had purchased Esau's birthright, and believing that the father's benediction would surely bring blessings with it, she fears that her hopes for Jacob will fail. "She believed, but not with that faith which can patiently wait for God to work out His plans through His providence; so she attempted to force her wishes into an accomplished fact by unlawful means. Neither her course, nor that of Jacob in yielding to her deceitful plans, can be justified; and Jacob suffered for his part in the act by being made an exile from home for nearly a score of years."

Oh, what a tangled web we weave, When first we practise to deceive. —Walter Scott.

BLESSINGS.

- J Dew of heaven, A Fatness of earth, C Corn and wine, B RULE OVER NATIONS, BRETHREN. E Dew of heaven, S Fatness of earth, A Living by the sword, U Subject to Breaking yoke of HIS BROTHER.

LESSON III. OCT. 17.] JACOB AT BETHEL. Gen. 28: 10-22.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 12-16.

10. And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. 16. And Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place: and I knew it not.

17. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. 18. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. 20. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, 21. So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: 22. And this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

10. And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. 16. And Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place: and I knew it not.

17. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. 18. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. 20. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, 21. So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: 22. And this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

GOLDEN TEXT. Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.—Gen. 28: 15.

CENTRAL TRUTH. The Lord strengthens the souls of His people.

NOTES.—BEER-SHEBA, "well of oath," or "of seven," an ancient place in the extreme south of Palestine, twenty-five miles south of Hebron; first named by Abraham, and renamed by Isaac, and where the latter dug wells. There are now two wells with water, and five other smaller ones at that place. The larger wells have several ancient stone troughs around them to water

flocks and herds. Beersheba retains its ancient name Bir-es-sheba.—BETH-EL, "House of God." The comforting vision of the heavenly ladder shown to Jacob assured him of the providence of God. (Heb. 1: 14.) It was also an assurance that there was a way open from earth to heaven, as well as from heaven to earth. The town was twelve miles north of Jerusalem, and noted in later history for the worship of the golden calf set up by Jeroboam. It is now in ruins, and called Beitin.—LUZ and Bethel were two separate places; for Jacob had not slept in the city, but in the field or upon the mountain, in the open air. Generally, the whole region was called Luz, in the time of the Canaanites, but Bethel at the time of the Israelites.—LADDER. The ladder (or stairway) might only indicate that there was a way from God to man, and that men by God's help might mount up by it to heaven; that angels went up from man to God, and came down from God to man; and that there was a continual providence watching over the servants of God. ... But we cannot doubt that there was a deeper meaning in the vision thus vouchsafed to the heir of the promises. ... Our Lord Himself teaches that the ladder signified the Son of Man... who is the way to heaven, and who has now gone there to prepare a place for us.—Speaker's Commentary.—PILLAR, AND POURED OIL. This was probably the most ancient and simplest form of temple or place for religious worship: excepting the altar of stones or earth for a burnt sacrifice; whether this is the first example of such an erection, we cannot judge. It was a very natural and obvious way of marking the sanctity of a spot; as, in Christian times, wayside crosses and the like have been set up so frequently. The pouring of oil on it was a significant rite. St. Augustine says that it was not that he might sacrifice to the stone or worship it, but that as Christ is named from chrism, or unction, so there was a great mystery in this anointing of the stone with oil. The constant connection in religious thought between unction and sanctification seems a more probable solution of the question.—Speaker's Commentary.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE LADDER. (II.) THE PROMISES. (III.) A TENTH TO GOD. I. JACOB'S LADDER.—(10.) WENT OUT, his departure from home was a flight to escape his brother's anger; BEER-SHEBA... HARAN, (see Notes.) (11.) STONES... PILLOWS, a not unusual custom in the East, as the Japanese now use wooden pillows. (12.) A LADDER, or, as some suppose, "a gigantic mountain pile," or possibly a stairway; the purpose of the vision was to give Jacob assurance that heaven was near, even to a fugitive in heathen land. ANGELS, going on errands of mercy to earth. (13.) THE LORD STOOD, Jacob was further assured by the voice and presence of the Lord himself, dying Stephen saw Him standing on the right hand of God. "Faith is the ladder of Jacob reaching from earth to heaven."—Chrysostom. The shining staircase of prayer leads even from the humblest spot on earth to the throne of grace.—Schaff

11. THE PROMISES.—(17.) AFRAID, fear is used in two senses in Scripture: holy fear or reverence, such as the Christian feels when impressed with the majesty and glory of God; and fear, such as the sinner feels under a sense of his offences, here it means the former. Every true HOUSE OF GOD is also, as such, a gate of heaven, and these may be found by every saint; DREADFUL, awful; (see Ex 3: 5.) SET UP STONE, a common practice still in the East, to mark a spot where a vow is made, BETHEL... LUZ, (see Notes.)

III. A TENTH TO GOD.—(20.) JACOB VOWED A VOW (see Lev. 27: 30); giving is a part of worship as well as prayer; OF GOD, some regard this as distrust of God by Jacob; but let "Since" be put in place of "If," and it will be a proper expression of Jacob's faith in the promises just made; BE GOD'S HOUSE, mark a sacred spot for communion with God; GIVE THE TENTH, this afterward became a law to Israel.

GOD JACOB LAND, CHILDREN, BLESSINGS. PROMISES. JACOB GOD SERVICE, WORSHIP, TITHES.

TWO PATHS.

An English lady having been asked as to the propriety of attending on Sunday an exhibition of Bible pictures, replied with an illustration which illuminates a wide range of duties. She said:

Along the South Downs are two paths, one a very few inches from the edge of the cliff, another about two yards off. Many have walked, and walked safely, along the first path, but it was dangerous.

One step to the left, and they would have fallen, perhaps several hundred feet, to the sea below; or, if a piece of loosened rock suddenly separated from the other parts, it would have carried the person who chanced to be treading it down, down with it, into the abyss.

Many, too, and I among them, have trodden the path farther in; we had as pleasant a view, with this great distinction from the more danger-loving passengers, we were safe; if we took a step to the left, we were still on solid ground; if the edge were jagged, or even a huge mass of rock fell, we only saw unevenness, or felt a slight shock.

A gust of wind could not hurt us over, neither would sudden giddiness send us rolling down the precipice. Which path was best, was wisest, was safest?

"The last," you say? Yet both have been walked without accident.

I do not lay down a rule that every one would be doing wrong in going to see a collection of pictures illustrating the Bible on Sunday, but I do say there is a South Down called Sunday; it is high above the six miles of the country surrounding it; along the edge is written, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy."

There are two paths, one called "religious pleasure," the other, "hours for God alone." Which is the happiest, the safest, the wisest, the best?

WHAT TEN CENTS WILL BUY.

Scott's "Lady of the Lake," complete in six cantos, and his translation of Burger's "Will Huntsman." Wordsworth's "Hart Leap Well," "Pet Lamb," "We are Seven," "Alice Fell," and "Poor Susan." Tennyson's "May Queen," "Light Brigade," and "The Letters." Burns' "Cotter's Saturday Night," "A Man's a Man for a' That," and "John Anderson," "Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner." Byron's "Waterloo." Hood's "Song of the Shirt," "Reveries," and "Faithless Nelly Gray," "Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night." Gray's "Elegy." Poe's "Raven." "Cowper's "John Gilpin." "Mother's Picture," "Slavery," and "Immanuel's Land." Bishop Percy's "Friar of Orders" and "Moorish Victory." Bishop Ren's "Morning and Evening Hymns" in full. Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso." Mrs. Norton's "Bingen on the Rhine." Mrs. Browning's "Romaunt of the Page." Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," complete. Macaulay's "Battle of Ivry," "The Watch at the Sepulchre." Longfellow's "There is no Flock However Watched and Tended." Father Prout's "Bells of Shandon," and about fifty other minor poems, songs and hymns, part of them for children.

All the above are in the first six numbers of GEMS OF POETRY, a handsome eight-page weekly at 75c a year, or 10c for the first six numbers post-paid.

One dime remitted to JOHN DOUGALL & Co., No. 7 Frankfort street, New York, or to JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Montreal, will secure by return of mail the above described six numbers, post-paid. Probably there never was so much first-class poetry offered for so small a price before.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS IN UNITED STATES.

Our subscribers throughout the United States who cannot procure the International Post Office orders at their Post Office, can get instead a Post Office order, payable at Rouse's Point, N.Y., which will prevent much inconvenience both to ourselves and subscribers.

NOTICE.

Subscribers to this paper will find the date their subscription terminates printed after the name. Those whose subscriptions expire at the end of the present month will please have the remittances mailed in time.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE and TOBACCO PLEDGE cards will be sent to any address in Canada for \$3.00 a hundred. A sample sent on application to John Dougall & Son, Montreal, Q.

ANY PERSON INTERESTED in Manitoba would do well to buy a copy of "The Letters of Rusticus," with maps, for sale at the MESSENGER Office; 82 pages, price 30 cents. John Dougall & Son, Montreal, Q.

MONTREAL DAILY WITNESS, \$3.00 a year, post-paid. MONTREAL WEEKLY WITNESS, \$1.10 a year, post-paid.

JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Publishers, Montreal, Q.

THE CLUB RATES for the "MESSENGER," when sent to one address, are as follows:—1 copy, 30c; 10 copies, \$2.50; 25 copies, \$6; 50 copies, \$11.50; 100 copies, \$22; 1,000 copies, \$200. JOHN DOUGALL & SON, Publishers, Montreal.

THE NORTHERN MESSENGER is printed and published on the 1st and 15th of every month, at Nos. 35 and 37 Bonaventure street, Montreal, by John Dougall & Son, composed of John Dougall, of New York and John Redpath Dougall and J. D. Dougall, of Montreal.