

For the Sabbath School.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON IX.—MAY 27.—EX. III., 10-20

Moses Sent as a Deliverer.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Fear thou not; for I am with thee."—Isa. xli: 10.

EXPLANATORY—MOSES' BANISHMENT FOR FORTY YEARS IN ARABIA.—When Moses fled from Pharaoh in Egypt, he came to the borders of the Midianites, in the south-eastern part of the Arabian triangle, where was a well for the watering of the flocks. While Moses was sitting by the well the seven daughters of Raguel, or Reuel, also called Jethro, the priest and sheik of the Midianite tribe occupying that region, came to water their father's flocks. They had drawn considerable water, when some rude shepherds came up with their flocks, and drove them away, and took possession of the troughs. Upon this Moses gallantly came to the rescue, and compelled the shepherds to stand aside while he watered the flocks of the maidens. The result was that he entered the service of the sheik, and married his daughter Zipporah, and remained in the family of Raguel for forty years.

(1) In these years his own character would be disciplined and ripened, and every noble trait confirmed, his faith strengthened, and his knowledge of God, of religion, and of man, enlarged. The man surrounded with pride and autocratic power, whose first act in his new life was to smite an Egyptian,—was to become the meekest of men. (2) He had learned all he could in the school of Egypt, and needed to escape from all false influences that might mar his character and his work. Egyptian ideas must give place to divine ideas of government and religion. (3) In the wilderness he would hold communion with God. "No region more favorable to the attainment of a lofty conception of the Almighty could have been found." Here God would be his teacher. The absence of secret training and discipline will necessarily leave us barren, superficial and theoretic. Something more than mere *doing* is necessary on the part of the true servant. The servant must frequently stand in his Master's presence, in order that he may know what he has to do. (4) In those calm years every problem to be solved in the organization of a people would rise successively in his mind and find its solution. (5) His wanderings would make him acquainted with every valley, plain, gorge, hill, and mountain of the whole region; with its population; with every spring and well, and with all the resources of every kind offered by any spot; an education of supreme importance towards fitting him to guide his race, when rescued from Egypt. (6) The life, too, which he led was happily adapted to work within him that hardihood of constitution and character of which he would afterward stand so much in need, and of which the sequel of his story affords so many striking instances. (7) Every tie with Egypt, every embarrassment of his official position, in the way of perfect sympathy with and aid to the Hebrews, was broken. However much his heart had been theirs while he was living amid the splendors of

the palace at Tanis, yet "his flight must have first set him free from an embarrassing position, and left him wholly at their service."

When the forty years of preparation had done their work, when a new and weaker Pharaoh had gained possession of the throne instead of the fierce and warlike Rameses, and when the Israelites so felt the bitterness of their bondage, then God called Moses to his great work. Moses was wandering, doubtless in meditative mood, among the mountains of Sinai when God appeared to him by means of a burning bush, an acacia or thorn-bush so common in the desert.

FLAME is the best symbol of God. (1) It is immaterial. (2) It is ineffably glorious and inapproachable. (3) It is mysterious in its nature. (4) As light, it is everywhere,—omnipresent. (5) It is undefiled and undefilable, absolutely pure. (6) It is warming and cheering, life-giving healthful to those who are its friends.

THE NATURE OF THE PLAGUES.—The first miracle of the rod changed into a serpent, and swallowing the magician's serpents was directed against idolatry expressed in serpent worship.

The first plague, turning the waters of Egypt into blood, in June, for seven days, was directed against the Nile, which was worshipped by the Egyptians.

The second plague, of the frogs, assailed the worship of frogs. In the height of the inundation, the abounding moisture quickens inconceivable myriads of frogs and toads, which swarm everywhere even in ordinary years.

The third plague, of the lice. The word includes poisonous flies and insects. Sir Samuel Baker says that in Africa "there is a kind of tick which lives in hot sand and dust, and is the greatest enemy of man and beast." This plague struck at idolatry inasmuch as it came from the dust of the sacred soil.

The fourth plague, flies, appears to include winged pests of all kinds, stinging flies, cattle flies, cockroaches, and beetles. This was a blow at idolatry, since the most sacred symbol of the Egyptian religion was the scarabæus or common dung beetle of the country.

The fifth plague, the Murrain, still not uncommon in Egypt struck at "the worship of Isis and Osiris, to whom the cow and the ox were sacred, and of the great god Amon, of whom the ram was the living symbol."

The sixth plague, or boils, arose from a symbolic sprinkling of ashes from "furnaces," in the belief that they would avert evil, but ashes now brought boils instead of blessings.

The seventh plague was of hail from a storm of fearful thunder and lightning, in March, as we learn from the state of the crops destroyed.

The eighth plague, the locusts, brought a terrible devastation of the very supplies of life.

The ninth plague was of darkness. Other plagues were worse in some ways, but this tended most to humble and awe Pharaoh's heart with a ghastly foreboding.

THEIR DURATION.—They probably began in June, at the time of the Nile inundation, and continued till April, a period of nearly ten months. In the seventh, the barley was in the ear; this would fix its time at about the first of February.

INTERNATIONAL SCHEME OF SABBATH-SCHOOL LESSONS.

ADOPTED BY THE SABBATH-SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.

1894		SECOND QUARTER.				1894	
1894.	BIBLE LESSON	PROVE THAT	COMMIT TO MEMORY				
			PROOF.	GOLDEN TEXT.	CATECHISM.		
Apr. 1	Jacob's Prevailing Prayer	Gen. 38: 9-18 24-30	Earnest prayer prevails with God.	Isa. 57: 16	Gen. 38: 26	93	
" 8	Discord in Jacob's Family	Gen. 37: 1-11	Brotherly love is a good thing.	Ps. 133: 1	Gen. 43: 34	95	
" 15	Joseph Sold into Egypt	Gen. 37: 23-36	Children's sins bring sorrow to parents.	Isa. Sam. 18: 23	Gen. 50: 20	97	
" 22	Joseph Releas'd in Egypt	Gen. 41: 33-48	Trials are the path to honor.	Rev. 3: 21	Isa. Sam. 31: 30	98, 99	
" 29	Joseph Forgiving his Brethren	Gen. 45: 1-15	We should return good for evil. (ed.)	Matt. 5: 44	Luke 17: 3	100	
May 6	Joseph's Last Days	Gen. 50: 14-26	The memory of the righteous is cherished.	Ps. 119: 6	Prov. 4: 18	101	
" 13	Israel in Egypt	Ex. 1: 1-14	The cruel are punished with cruelty.	Isa. 19: 4	Ps. 124: 8	102	
" 20	The Childhood of Moses	Ex. 2: 1-10	God's people are protected.	Ps. 91: 7	Ps. 92: 15	103	
" 27	Moses sent as a Deliverer	Ex. 3: 10-20	Christ is our deliverer.	Acts 3: 26	Isa. 43: 10	104	
June 3	The Passover Instituted	Ex. 12: 1-14	Heaven is opened by Christ's blood.	Heb. 9: 14	1 Cor. 10: 7	105	
" 10	Passage of the Red Sea	Ex. 14: 19-29	God's presence means Deliverance.	Isa. 43: 2	Heb. 11: 29	106	
" 17	The Woe of the Drunkard	Prov. 23: 29-35	God provides the best refreshment.	Isa. 55: 2	Prov. 23: 31	107	
" 24	REVIEW		God works for our salvation.	Phil. 2: 23	Deut. 32: 9	REVIEW	