

mand been completely fulfilled? A. No; there are still many people in the world who have never heard of Jesus, and who worship idols.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques. 32. What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?* A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise: Memory Hymn—Primary, 509; Junior, 161, 46, 50, 235, 45.

Special Scripture Reading—Phil. 3: 1-16. * (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 1489, Abraham Giving Isaac to God. For Question on Missions, H.M. 1440, Lake of the Woods School. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—About B.C. 2100; in the land of Moriah.

Connecting Links—The promises of chs. 12: 2 and 13: 15 having apparently failed on account of Abram's childlessness, in ch. 15 he receives two special assurances (vs. 1-6, 7-21) that he will have a son and heir and that a nation sprung from him will inherit the promised land. Ch. 16 gives an account of the birth of Ishmael. Thirteen years later, God appears to Abram and the divine covenant is renewed. Circumcision is instituted as a sign of the covenant, while Abram's name is changed to Abraham ("Father of a multitude") and Sarai's to Sarah ("Princess"), ch. 17. The story of the visit of the angels to Abraham and Lot, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the origin of the nations of Moab and Ammon is told in chs. 18 and 19. This is followed by the narrative of Abraham's removal to Gerar, 6 miles southwest of Gaza, the birth of Isaac and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, and Abraham's covenant with Abimelech, after which Abraham settled at Beersheba, 25 miles northwest of Gerar and 27 miles southwest of Hebron, chs. 20, 21.

I. Faith Tested, 1, 2.

V. 1. *After these things*; some 25 years after the last lesson. *God did tempt* (Rev. Ver., "prove") *Abraham*; tested him to "know what was in his heart," Deut. 8: 2. God never tempts any one to evil (James 1: 13); he does test their attitude towards evil. Abraham had shown himself a hero of faith by many tests; he must now endure one last and supreme test. This opening sentence prepares the reader for a good ending to the story. *Said unto him*; likely in a dream or night vision, as may be inferred from v. 3.

V. 2. *Thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac* (Rev. Ver.). The repetition emphasizes the greatness of the sacrifice.

It is as if God would assure Abraham, that he has fully weighed the matter and knew right well how much he was asking. The name "Isaac" means "he laughs" (see ch. 21: 6), but now it looked as if his parents' joy in him was to be turned into blackest mourning. *Land of Moriah*. "All attempts to explain the name and identify the place have been futile" (International Critical Commentary). *Offer him . . . for a burnt offering*. Abraham was familiar with the Canaanite custom of sacrificing children to heathen gods. The question was a natural one for him to ask himself: "Would you do as much to please your God?" The temptation to refuse became in God's hands a test.

II. Faith Victorious, 3-10.

Vs. 3, 4. *Abraham rose up early*; to start, after the custom of the East, before the sun grew hot. Once convinced of what God required, he would not give his affection for Isaac any chance to move him to disobedience. He acted at once without debating the matter. *Saddled his ass*; girded the animal for carrying freight, not persons. *Clave the wood*. He allowed no hope that may have lingered in his breast to prevent his making full preparations for the sacrifice. There is no word in the story of the agonizing conflict which must have been taking place in the father's breast, —that is left to the reader's imagination. *Went unto the place*; the very spot which God had appointed. Abraham's obedience extended to the smallest details. *Saw the place afar off*. "We are left to imagine the pang that shot through the father's heart when he caught sight of it."

Vs. 5, 6. *Said unto . . . young men, Abide ye here*. Abraham will not let any one hinder him in his determination to obey God; but, at the same time, his tenderness will save