

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the Westminster Question Book for 1880.)

THIRD QUARTER.

LESSON IV.

JULY 25.]

THE COVENANT WITH NOAH.

Gen. 9: 8-19.
[B. C. 2348-7.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 12-15.

8. And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9. And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you.

10. And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

11. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

15. And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

18. And the sons of Noah that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.

19. These are the sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."—Gen 9: 13.

HELPS TO STUDY.

INTERMEDIATE.—Genealogy from Seth to Noah. 5: 1-32. Wickedness prevalent. 6: 1-8. Line of Noah. 6: 9, 10. Flood threatened. 6: 11-13. Noah directed to build an ark. 6: 14-22. The flood; the ark. 7: 1-24. Subsiding of the flood. 8: 1-14. Departure from the ark. 8: 15-19. Noah's sacrifice. 8: 20-29. God's blessing upon Noah. 9: 1-7. In Seth, the third son of Adam, Abel's place is supplied, and from him we trace a pious ancestry to Noah. The world had become so full of wickedness that God, in order to preserve a people to serve him, sends a deluge and destroys all but eight persons—Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives. Noah erects an altar to God, and with its sacrificial offerings we have again the Church on earth, a people serving God.

V. 8. NOAH—the tenth in descent in the line of Seth, the son of Lamech and the grandson of Methuselah. HIS SONS—ch. 5: 32.

V. 9. COVENANT—an agreement between two parties; where one of the parties is infinitely superior to the other, as in a covenant between God and man, a covenant assumes the nature of a promise.

V. 10. EVERY LIVING CREATURE, etc.—this covenant extends to the animals who went out of the ark with Noah, and through them to every beast of the earth after them.

V. 11. ALL FLESH... THE EARTH—the flood was sent to destroy not only all flesh outside of the ark, but the earth also; so the promise refers to both: as he had included the inferior creatures in the curse, so he now includes them in the blessing.

V. 12. THIS IS THE TOKEN—God gives a sign of his fidelity to his word.

V. 13. I DO SET—give, appoint. MY BOW—God calls it his bow; it is his sign or token. TOKEN OF THE COVENANT—a sign that there would never be a second deluge.

V. 14. BOW SHALL BE SEEN—what the eye sees helps to confirm the faith in the heart.

V. 15. I WILL REMEMBER—we look and remember; he sees the sign, and knows what it reminds us of.

V. 16. THE BOW SHALL BE IN THE CLOUD—it is not said that this was the first appearance of a rainbow, but that it is now made the sign of a covenant on the part of God with man. THAT I MAY REMEMBER—whenever he stretches out his arch over the clouds, he is mindful of his covenant.

LESSON PLAN.

1. THE COVENANT PROMISE. 2. THE COVENANT TOKEN.

TEACHINGS.

THE COVENANT—The goodness of a covenant-making God... The faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God... Our duty to covenant to serve God and to keep that covenant. THE TOKEN—By this God wishes to drive away our fears... The thicker the cloud, the brighter the bow; so the more afflictions, the more encouragements... As we look upon this token we are to be reminded of the covenant with faith and thankfulness... It is the symbol of grace returning after wrath... It is the symbol of the Sun of Righteousness, reflected in his glorious attributes, upon the face of every dark and threatening dispensation toward his Church.

LESSON V.

AUG 1.]

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM.

Gen. 11: 31, 32; 12: 1-10.
[B. C. 1921.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 1-3.

31. And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the

son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

32. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

1. Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4. So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came.

6. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

8. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

9. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

10. And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12: 3.

INTRODUCTORY.

The world had again become exceedingly corrupt. To counteract the prevailing wickedness, God determined to select a man, and through him a nation, to be his witness upon the earth—to withdraw this nation from contact with the surrounding world, and out of it to bring, in the fulness of time (Gal. 4: 4), the promised Saviour. The man selected to be the father of a people, to exert so powerful an influence on the salvation of the world, was Abram, whose call to this great honor is the subject of this lesson.

HELPS TO STUDY.

V. 31. TERAH—a descendant of Shem. (See Gen. 11: 11-26.) ABRAHAM HIS SON—born when Terah was 120 years old. LOT—Haran's son and Abram's nephew. SARAI—half-sister to Abram (ch. 20: 12), and also his wife. UR—probably the modern Orfeh, the classic Edessa, on the Euphrates, about 25 miles north of Haran, in Upper Mesopotamia. CHALDEES—inhabitants of Chaldea, a region bounded on the east by the Tigris and extending westward across the Euphrates to Arabia, and from the Persian gulf northward to the 34th degree of latitude, 400 miles in length, with an average breadth of 100 miles. CANAAN—the country west of the Jordan so called after one of the sons of Ham. HARAN—Acts 7: 4; Charan. It is called the city of Nahor. Gen. 24: 10; 27: 43. It was in north-western Mesopotamia, about two days' journey south-east from Ur. ch. 12: 1. THE LORD HAD SAID—this refers to a second call to leave Haran, and not the one to leave Ur, of which Stephen speaks. Acts 7: 2. COUNTRY... KINDRED... FATHER'S HOUSE—three ties to be severed—country, kindred and home; he was to go by faith into a land of promise, a land that God would show him.

V. 2. A GREAT NATION—Abram was now childless, and 75 years old. I WILL BLESS THEE—God's benediction always brings good. THY NAME GREAT—as the father of a renowned people.

V. 3. BLESS THEM THAT BLESS THEE—God will share his friendships and treat his enemies as his own. IN THEE—by the benefit of redemption through Christ, the seed of Abraham.

V. 4. ABRAHAM DEPARTED—influenced by faith. Heb. 11: 8-10. LOT WENT WITH HIM—probably, as Abram was childless, he intended Lot to be his heir.

V. 5. SUBSTANCE—brought from Ur, and acquired at Haran.

V. 6. SICHEM—Sechem; called Sychar in the New Testament. The present town of Nablous; a town of Samaria, between Gerizim and Ebal, 34 miles north of Jerusalem and 7 south of Samaria. MOREH (Sichem)—the name of an oak or grove of oaks near Sechem. CANAANITE WAS IN THE LAND—another reason for the exercise of faith; these heathen possessors of the land would dispute his claim.

V. 7. UNTO THY SEED—this promise was to be fulfilled in Abram's posterity, and not to him in person—another trial of his faith. BUILD AN ALTAR—in token of his faith and gratitude.

V. 8. EAST OF BETHEL ("house of God")—about 12 miles north of Jerusalem; now a mass of ruins known by the name of Beitin. HAI—an elevated place not far from Bethel. BUILD AN ALTAR—made open profession of his religion, established the worship of the true God, and declared his faith in the promise.

V. 9. TOWARD THE SOUTH—the southern part of Canaan, toward the wilderness, a rich pasture-ground.

V. 10. FAMINE—another trial of his faith—WENT DOWN INTO EGYPT—Egypt, being annually watered by the overflow of the Nile, was the great grain-growing region. TO SOJOURN THERE—while the famine continued.

LESSON PLAN.

1. THE CALL OF ABRAHAM. 2. HIS OBEEDIENCE. TEACHINGS.

God's followers must obey his commands and trust his promises... They must separate themselves from the world and its wickedness... Wherever they go, they must carry their religion with them... They must never be ashamed of their God, or neglect his worship... Where they pitch their tent they should erect his altar... He will ever lead them by the right way... In Christ the blessing of Abram has come upon all nations.

SOLDIER ANTS.

In the proceedings of the Linnæan Society for 1861 is a communication from a Mrs. Hutton, of Sydney (I quote now from manuscript of the late Mr. F. Smith, which he most generously placed at my disposal), in which are details of a most remarkable character attributed to an ant, there called the Soldier Ant. The communication is in substance as follows:

"One day a little boy of mine, about four years old, being tired of play, threw himself down on a grassy mound to rest. Shortly after I was startled by a sudden scream. My instant thought was that some serpent had stung him. I flew in horror to the child, but was at once re-assured on seeing him covered with Soldier Ants, on whose nest he had laid himself down. Numbers of the ants were still clinging to him with their forceps, and continued to sting the boy. My maid at once assisted me in killing them. At length, about twenty were thrown dead on the ground. We then carried the boy indoors. In about half-an-hour afterward I returned to the same spot, when I saw a large number of ants surrounding the dead ones. I determined to watch their proceedings closely. I followed four or five that started off from the rest toward a hillock a short distance off, in which was an ants' nest. This they entered, and in about five minutes they re-appeared, followed by others. All fell into rank, walking regularly and slowly two by two, until they arrived at the spot where lay the dead bodies of the Soldier Ants. In a few minutes two of the ants advanced and took up the dead body of one of their comrades; then two others, and so on, until all were ready to march. First walked two ants bearing a body, then two without a burden; then two others with another dead ant, and so on, until the line was extended to about forty pairs, and the procession now moved slowly onward followed by an irregular body of about 200 ants. Occasionally the two laden ants stopped, and laying down the dead ant, it was taken up by the two walking unburdened behind them, and thus, by occasionally relieving each other, they arrived at a sandy spot near the sea. The body of ants now commenced digging with their jaws a number of holes in the ground, into each of which a dead ant was laid, where they now labored on until they had filled up the ants' graves. This did not quite finish the remarkable circumstances attending this funeral of the ants. Some six or seven of the ants had attempted to run off without performing their share of the task of digging; these were caught and brought back, when they were at once attacked by the body of ants and killed upon the spot. A single grave was quickly dug, and they were all dropped into it." Now, says Mr. Smith, allowing something for the lady's imagination, there can be no doubt of the fact of ants having buried ants. The lady is well known to connections of the members of the Linnæan Society, and we may feel assured that unless perfect confidence was felt in the party communicating this wonderful account, the paper would not have been read before the Linnæan Society. I do not find it difficult to credit this extraordinary narrative after what I myself have witnessed.—*Leisure Hour.*

A THRILLING ESCAPE.

An overhanging rock just below Kanawha Falls was the scene of a remarkable adventure, which the Louisville *Courier-Journal* describes as follows:

The Indians were in hot pursuit of Van Bibber, a settler and man of distinction in those early times. He was hard pressed, and all access to the river below and above being cut off he was driven to this jutting rock, which proved to be the jumping-off place for him.

He stood on the rock, in full view of the enemy above and below, who yelled like demons at the certainty of his speedy capture.

He stood up boldly, and with his rifle kept them at bay. As he stood there he looked across the river—saw his friends—his wife with her babe in her arms, all helpless to render assistance. They stood as if petrified with terror and amazement.

She cried at the top of her voice, "Leap into the river and meet me!"

Laying her babe on the grass, she seized the oars and sprang into the skiff alone. As she neared the middle of the river, her

husband saw the Indians coming in full force and yelling like demons.

"Wife, wife," he screamed, "I'm coming; drop down a little lower."

With this he sprang from his crag and descended like an arrow into the water, feet foremost.

The wife rested on her oars a moment to see him rise to the surface, the little canoe floating like a cork, bobbing about on the boiling flood.

It was an awful moment; it seemed an age to her. Would he ever rise?

Her earnest gaze seemed to penetrate the depths of the water, and she darted her boat farther down the stream.

He rose near her; in a moment the canoe was alongside of him, and she helped him to scramble into it amid a shower of arrows and shot that the baffled Indians poured into them.

The daring wife did not speak a word, her husband was more dead than alive, and all depended on her strength being maintained until they could reach the bank.

This they did, just where she had started, right where the babe was still lying, cowering and laughing.

The men pulled the skiff high up on the sand, and the wife slowly arose and helped to lift Van Bibber to his feet.

He could not walk, but she laid him down by his babe, and then seating herself, she wept wildly just as any other woman would have done under the circumstances.

That babe is now a grandfather, and that rock is called "Van Bibber's Rock" to this day.—*Youth's Companion.*

TOO MUCH MEDICINE.

Infancy has many perils; but the greatest of its dangers is the ubiquitous medicine-bottle. How many nurses—how many loving mothers, even—resort to soothing syrups and other similar preparations to stop the babies' crying! unconscious of the fact that to stupefy a crying child with narcotics is about as sensible as to ply a hungry man with brandy. And when little Tommy progresses in months, and his coming teeth begin to torture him, or that Herod of diseases, summer complaint, lays its hand upon him, how quick the rush for drugs, how frantic the desire that some overt act of medicine should be done for his relief! It's very natural; but, oh! it's very pitiable.

Whatever can be assimilated by the system is food. Everything else is poison. In the great majority of infantile diseases, and notably in summer complaint, the trouble is that the little sufferer is unable to digest its food; and food which cannot be digested is poison. What should be the remedy? Surely not to administer more poison in the shape of drugs, but to change the diet for something which can be assimilated, as a mixture of milk and lime-water, or some similar simple preparation.

Mothers, when your babies fall sick in summer, if you can get the advice of a physician whom you know and trust, take it; but if you can't, then keep the doctors away, and trust in careful nursing, change of air, and close attention to diet.—*Ehrich's Fashion Quarterly.*

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