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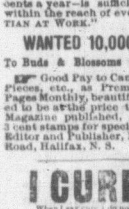

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Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.—GENESIS.

First Quarter.

Lesson XII. March 20. Gen. 32 : 9-12, 24-30.

JACOB'S NEW NAME.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.—Gen. 32 : 26.

THE HOUR OF NEED. Jacob left Laban at Haran, and with his wives, children, and wealth and flocks, sets out on his long journey of 450 miles. He has many reasons for anxiety. (1) He has left Laban secretly, fearing that he would refuse to let Rachel and Leah go with him, and that his flocks and herds would be detained. (2) His next trouble was from his brother Esau, who had become a wealthy chieftain, and whose territory lay between Jacob and his home. (3) Remorse and guilt intensified his anxiety and fear. He knew he had wronged his brother, and even 40 years of absence could not wash the fact away.

I. THE PRAYER FOR HELP. Note the combined beauty and power, humility, and boldness, simplicity and sublimity, brevity and comprehensiveness of this prayer.

(I.) TO THE COVENANT GOD. 9. *O God of my father Abraham.* He appeals to the Most High as the Covenant God, who had given promises to his fathers, of which promises he himself was the heir.

(II.) HE PLEADS THE FACT THAT HE IS IN THE PATH OF DUTY. *The Lord* (Jehovah) *which saidst unto me, Return*, etc. In ch. 31 : 3, before he left Haran. His courageous position had been reached in obedience to the divine command, and therefore he had reason to expect the divine protection.

(III.) CONFESSION OF UNWORTHINESS. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies.* It was the excellent George Herbert's motto, *less than the least of all God's mercies.* Those are the best prepared for the greatest mercies that see themselves unworthy of the least.

(IV.) PLEADING PAST MERCIES. *With my staff I passed over this Jordan.* He started with nothing, without servants, or property, or friends. *And now I am become two bands* (see vers. 7, 8). God had been so good to him in the past, he would not desert him now.

(V.) EARNEST ENTREATY. 11. *Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother.* He could not help himself. His brother was coming with an army. Jacob did not know how he felt toward him.

(VI.) PLEADING THE PROMISES. 12. *And thou saidst.* To remind God of his promises is one of the privileges of prayer. True prayer presupposes the promise of God, just as truly as it implies the consciousness of wants. Faith, which is the life of prayer, clings to the divine promises, and pleads them.

II. WORKING AS WELL AS PRAYING. Jacob did not rest in praying. He took every possible precaution. He had four sources of hope: (1) The angel's visit (32 : 1, 2). (2) His wealth, by which he might buy off his brother. (3) Skilful arrangement of his possessions. And (4) prayer.

III. WRESTLING IN PRAYER. 24. *And there wrestled a man with him.* This was no dream or vision, but reality. In Hos. 12 : 4, 5, the *man* who wrestled with him is called *the angel*, and the Lord of hosts; and in ver. 30 of this chapter Jacob calls him *God.* Who, then, is the God-man, the Angel of the Covenant, but the eternal Son of God? There was a spiritual conflict underneath the surface, no doubt, but the main story must be historical and literal. Whoever heard of a man getting lame in his limbs over the spiritual conflict of a dream?

Why is there need of *wrestling* with God for gifts he loves to give? The reason is not in God's giving, but in our want of fitness to receive. There must be a hungering, a longing for the best gifts, or they are of no use to us. Wrestling in prayer is thus the "open-sesame" to the treasures of heaven. *Until the breaking of the day.* Like Christ, he prayed all night. It is by the perseverance of saints that the blessing comes.

25. *When he* (the angel) *saw that he prevailed not.* He may be said "not to prevail" to cast him off, though possessed of far superior physical strength, because he yields to the kindly impulses of his nature. *Touched the hollow of his thigh.* The socket of his hip-joint. Jacob now finds that this mysterious wrestler has wrested from him, by one touch, all his might, and he can no longer stand alone. Without any support whatever from himself, he hangs upon the conqueror, and is that condition learns by experience the practice of sole reliance on One mightier than himself.

26. *And he* (Jacob's antagonist) *said, Let me go, for the day breaketh.* It is time to close the contest; the day's business is now at hand. Stop praying and go to work. "He said this, not because expecting him to depart without blessing him, but because he meant the blessing to be prized and valued when it came. *And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.* It would seem not only that Jacob now clearly recognized who his antagonist was, but that he had come into the true spirit of prayer. The lessons are EARNESTNESS, PERSEVERANCE, SELF-SURRENDER.

IV. THE ANSWER TO HIS PRAYER. 27. *And he* (the Angel of the Covenant) *said unto him, What is thy name?* Not as if requiring to be informed, but as directing attention to it, as representing his character hitherto. *And he said, Jacob*, i. e., Heel-catcher, or Supplanter (*vide* chap. 25 : 26). Such had been his character, shrewd, tricky, crafty, self-seeking; too ready to take advantage of others.

28. *And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob.* Especially to the ancient Hebrews, names were not mere distinguishing appellations; they expressed the essential qualities of the character or being of the person or thing named. *But Israel.* That is, *a prince of God*, or *one powerful with God.* His name was changed, because he was an altered man.

29. *And Jacob . . . said, Tell me . . . thy name.* That is, reveal to me more fully, with the certainty of positive assertion, who and what thou art; what is thy character and nature. *Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?* seeing that (1) I have been revealing myself to you all the live-long night, and all through your life. (2) You would not understand, if I should express my name in words. (3) But I will reveal as fast as you are able. Only as you grow more like God can you comprehend God. And (4) I will give you all you can understand now, by giving you my blessing. His question was answered in the state of his soul. It was a new development of spiritual life, and a new capacity for bodily action.

V. MEMORIALS OF THE CONFLICT. *First Memorial*,—The change in his name. *Second Memorial*,—A change in his body. *Third Memorial*,—The change of name of the spot where the conflict took place.

30. *I have seen God . . . my life is preserved.* These words contain, perhaps, an allusion to the prevalent opinion that no man could see God and live.

How Books are Written.

W. D. Howells works from 9 a. m. to 1 p. m., dining at 2 p. m., and is a man of leisure for the rest of the day. He writes about a half a column of the *World* per diem. With this stint he can turn out two novels and a great deal of miscellaneous matter in the course of a year. He is not satisfied without a great deal of revising, and sometimes re-writes a whole chapter. The manuscript of "A Foregone Conclusion," one of his earlier books, was entirely re-written.

Henry James, immediately after a breakfast of coffee and rolls in his own room, sits down to his literary work, generally writing by the light of two candles, the London mornings being so dark. He composes slowly and painfully, rewriting and retouching his work continually, his artistic style being attained only at the expense of real toil. He works until noon, and then goes to his club for lunch. By regular application he manages to produce a good deal of manuscript.

Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) does not write in his library. His humorous fancies are evolved with more ease in the seclusion of his private billiard room. He makes it an invariable rule to do a certain amount of literary work each day, and his working hours are made continuous by omitting the formality of lunch. He is merciless towards his own productions and often destroys a whole day's writing without compunction. In this way he often does a piece of work over and over again, but at other times the first draft is satisfactory. He is very industrious, but the mountain sometimes labors to bring forth a mouse.

Mr. Edgar Fawcett, who writes for fame and for bread, has been wont to do his literary work in the fourth storey of a cheap tenement house, some distance from his residence in the fashionable section of the city. He evidently believes in the practical application of Aldrich's verses about the goddess and the garret. He is more painstaking about style than about subject matter.

Mr. J. T. Trowbridge never composes his poems with pen in hand or his prose without it. The former takes shape in his mind during strolls across the country and along the banks of the Hudson, or while floating in his boat on the river. He often carries fifty or one hundred lines in his mind in this way. His verses are revised a great deal. In his earlier days he was always methodical, but of late years works according to inclination.

George W. Cable is a very slow writer. He averages perhaps 1000 words per day, about a half column of the *World*, and some days he does nothing but revise and perfect his work. He goes to his desk at 9 a. m. and writes until 4 p. m., with only a slight break for a light lunch.

The poet Whittier confesses to never having had any literary method. He writes when he feels like it, and has neither the health nor the patience to work his copy over afterwards, usually sending it to the publisher as originally completed.

Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps believes in the value of a workshop out of the house, and has an old barn near her father's residence at Andover, Mass., whither she often retires when in the mood for writing. Being an invalid, she is unable to maintain any regular system of work.

Miss Louisa May Alcott never had a study; any cozy corner answers to write in. She is not particular as to pens and paper, and an old atlas on her knee is all the desk she cares for. She has the power to carry a dozen plots in her head at a time, elaborating them whenever she is in the mood. Sometimes she keeps a plot by her in this way for years before it is put on paper. At times she lies awake at night and plans whole chapters, word for word, and when daylight comes she has only to write them off as if she were copying. In her hardest working days she used to write fourteen hours in the twenty-four, sitting steadily at her work and scarcely tasting food until the task was done. Very few of her stories have been written in Concord. She goes to Boston, hires a quiet room, shuts herself up and waits for "an east wind of inspiration, which never fails." In a month or so the book is done. She never copies and seldom corrects.

Mrs. Frances H. Burnett writes in a "den" at her Washington house. Early in the morning she seats herself at the table and writes until noon. The morning stint of pen labor is rigorously insisted on, mood and often not even ill-health being consulted. If she is in a happy mental frame the hours are not heeded, and the sentences flow freely from her pen, dusk sometimes coming before her manuscript is laid aside. If, however, the spirit does not exert itself in a particularly prolific fashion, she devotes the afternoon to recreation, drives, walks and social engagements. "That Lass o' Lowrie's," "Pretty Polly Pemberton," "The Fire at Grantley Mills" and "The Fortunes of Phillippa Fairfax," were all written in about fifteen months.—*New York World.*

The Two Bills.

A FABLE.

Two bills were waiting in the bank for their turn to go out into the world. One was a little bill, only one dollar; the other was a big bill, a thousand dollar bill.

While lying there side by side, they fell a-talking about their usefulness. The dollar bill murmured out:

"Ah, if I were as big as you, what good I would do! I could move in such high places, and people would be so careful of me wherever I would go! Everybody would admire me, and want to take me home with them; but small as I am, what good can I do? Nobody cares much for me. I am too little to be of any use."

"Ah, yes! that is so," said the thousand dollar bill, and it haughtily gathered up its well-trimmed edges that were lying next the little bill, in conscious superiority. "That is so," it repeated. "If you were as great as I am, a thousand times bigger than you are, then you might hope to do some good in the world. And its face smiled a wrinkle of contempt for the little dollar bill.

Just then the cashier comes, takes the little, murmuring bill, and kindly gives it to a poor widow.

"God bless you!" she cried, as with a smiling face she receives it. "My dear hungry children can now have some bread."

A thrill of joy ran through the little bill as it was folded up in the widow's hand, and it whispered, "I may do some good, if I am small." And when it saw the bright faces of her fatherless children, it was very glad that it could do a little good.

Then the little dollar bill began its journey of usefulness. It went first to the baker's for bread, then to the miller's, then to the farmer's, then to the laborer's, then to the doctor's, then to the minister's; and wherever it went it gave pleasure, adding something to their comfort and joy.

At last, after a long, long pilgrimage of usefulness among every sort of people, it came back to the bank again, crumpled, defaced, ragged, softened by its daily use. Seeing the thousand dollar bill lying there, with scarcely a wrinkle or a finger-mark upon it, it exclaimed:

"Pray, sir, and what has been your mission of usefulness?"

The big bill sadly replied. "I have been from safe to safe among the rich where few could see me, and they were afraid to let me go out far, lest I should be lost. Few indeed are they whom I have made happy by my mission." The little dollar bill said: "It is better to be small and go among the multitudes doing good, than to be so great as to be imprisoned in the safes of the few. And it rested satisfied with its lot.

Moral.—The doing well of little everyday duties makes one the most useful and happy.—*Well Spring.*

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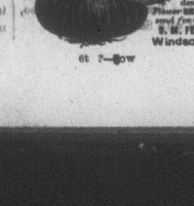

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J. M. COURTNEY,
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Finance Dept.,
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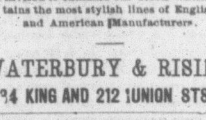

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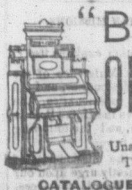

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NOTICE OF SALE.

To William Garvin, of the City of Boston, in the United States of America, late of the City of Portland, in the City and County of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, laborer, and John McDermott, late of the City of Portland aforesaid, and Barbara McDermott, his wife, now residing in the City of Portland, and all others whom it may concern.

In pursuance of a power of sale given me in and by a certain indenture or agreement contained in a certain indenture of mortgage made between you, the said William Garvin, John McDermott and Barbara McDermott his wife, of the one part, and one Amos Melvin, of the City of Saint John, in the City and County of Saint John, and Province aforesaid, gentleman, of the other part, bearing date the thirtieth day of December A. D. 1885, and duly recorded in the office of the Registrar of Deeds in and for the City and County of Saint John, in Book 25, of Records, folio 121, 122, 123, 124 and 125:

I, Amos Melvin, do hereby give you and each of you notice that I will on MONDAY, the 28th day of MARCH next, at twelve o'clock, noon, at Chubb's Corner, so-called, in the City of Saint John, for default in payment of the interest due and secured and made payable in and by the said indenture of Mortgage, and also in default in payment of the premium on insurance, made payable in and by the said indenture of Mortgage, sell or cause to be sold at Public Auction the household goods and premises mentioned and described in the said indenture of Mortgage as follows, namely:

"All that certain lot, piece and parcel of land situate, lying and being in the town of Portland, in the City and County of Saint John aforesaid, on the northern side of that part of the city road called Lombard street, and bounded and described as follows, that is to say: Beginning on the said northern side of Lombard street (so called) at the southeastern corner of a lot heretofore leased by William Hazen and Sarah Elizabeth Hazen, executors of Robert F. Hazen, to John McDermott and the said Barbara McDermott; thence in a northerly direction along said McDermott's eastern line forty-four feet more or less, to the southern or rear line of a lot heretofore leased by Ward Chipman, since deceased, to John Millen, also since deceased; thence in an easterly direction along Millen's said southern line twenty-four feet; thence at right angles in a southerly direction forty-feet more or less to Lombard street aforesaid; and thence in a westwardly direction along the said northerly side of Lombard street twenty-five feet to the place of beginning;" which said lot of land was demised and leased by Thomas B. Prussle of Yalding, in Kent, England, and Susan Francis Prussle, his wife, in her own right, by Indenture of Lease bearing date the twenty-eighth day of January, A. D., 1882.

And also: "All that certain lot, piece and parcel of land situate, lying and being in the Town of Portland, in the City and County of Saint John aforesaid, on the northwestern side of that part of the road called Lombard street, and bounded and described as follows, that is to say: Beginning on the northwestern side of Lombard street (so called) at the eastern corner of a lot formerly leased to George H. Spence; thence in a northwesterly direction along Spence's northeastern line forty-seven feet more or less, to the southern corner of a lot heretofore leased to John Millen; thence in a northeasterly direction along Millen's rear line twenty-four feet; thence at right angles southeasterly forty feet more or less, to the said northwestern side of Lombard street; and thence Southwesterly along the said northwestern side line of Lombard street twenty-four feet three inches to the place of beginning;" which said last mentioned lot of land and premises was demised and leased by William Hazen, of the City of Saint John aforesaid, civil engineer, and Sarah Elizabeth Hazen of the same place, spinster, executors of the last will and testament of Robert F. Hazen, late of the City of Saint John aforesaid, deceased, to John McDermott, of Portland, of the Province aforesaid, ship carpenter, and Barbara his wife, by Indenture of Lease bearing date the first day of November A. D. 1878, together with all and singular the right, title, interest, terms of years right of renewals to the said William Garvin, John McDermott and Barbara his wife, belonging or in any wise appertaining.

Dated this 26th day of January A. D 1887.

AMOS MELVIN, Mortgagee.
W. A. LOCKHART, Auctioneer.
J. J. FORREST, Solicitor to Mortgagee.

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