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STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.—GENESIS.

First Quarter.

Lesson X. March 6. Gen. 22 : 1-14.

ABRAHAM OFFERING ISAAC.

GOLDEN TEXT.

God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.—Gen 22 : 8.

I. THE GREAT TRIAL. There is a double purpose in all trials. Life is both a probation and an education; a probation through the process, and an education through the probation. (1) The trials of life are to prove what we are, to see if, we are fitted for larger things. (2) The meaning of trial is not only to test worthiness, but to increase it, as the oak tree is not only tested by the storms, but toughened by them.

2. *Take now thy son, thine only son.* He was the only son by his wife Sarah; he was the only son of promise, and to whom the promises were given and assured. *Whom thou lovest.* For whom he had waited long, in whom his hopes had centered, who was the joy and comfort of his old age. *Get thee into the land of Moriah.* It is a general phrase for the mountainous district of Jerusalem. The distance was about 45 miles in a direct line. *And offer him there for a burnt offering.*

The severity of the trial.—This was the supreme trial of Abraham's life. (1) He was to give up his only son, the heir of his property and his name. (2) This was the son of his love, on whom his heart rested (see above). (3) This was the son of the promise, and to yield him seemed to render it impossible that the promise be fulfilled.

The righteousness of the trial.—(1) F. W. Robertson well says, "God *seems* to have required of Abraham what was *wrong*. He seems to have sanctioned human sacrifice. God did *not* require it. You must take the history as a whole, the conclusion as well as the commencement. The sacrifice of Isaac was commanded at first, and forbidden at the end. Had it ended in Abraham's accomplishing the sacrifice, it would have left on the page of Scripture a dark and painful blot. My reply to God's *seeming* to require human sacrifice is the conclusion of this chapter. God says, 'Lay not thine hand upon the lad.'"

(2) The act was a supreme test of obedience on the part of Abraham. It was ever to be an object-teaching for the ages of supreme and perfect consecration to God.

(3) The *principle* holds the same to-day. There are times and circumstances when we must give up our lives and the lives of our children. We let them go as physicians or nurses into the most infected regions. We give them up to be missionaries, even in lands where life may be short; we give them our benediction when they go forth to defend, and perhaps die for, their country.

(4) Abraham knew that there would be some way out of it, even though by a miracle; for only so could God's promises be fulfilled (Heb. 11 : 19).

II. THE JOURNEY TO MOUNT MORIAH. 3. *And Abraham rose up early.* The promptness and steadiness of Abraham's obedience are plainly marked in all the simple details of this verse.

4. *Saw the place afar off.* Calvin supposes that he saw with his eyes the place which he had before seen in mental vision. Or God indicated the place at the time.

5. *And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here.* For two reasons. (1) He would be alone in his agony and in his communion with God. (2) "If Abraham had allowed the servants to go with him, they might have interfered, to prevent his obedience to the divine command." *And I and the lad will go yonder,... and come again to you.* Some think that Abraham told a falsehood here, to prevent any suspicion of his real design; but in this instance we have good authority for believing that Abraham meant what he said, feeling sure that God would provide some deliverance for Isaac, even if it were through resurrection from the dead (Heb. 11 : 19). The confidence of Abraham was based upon the repeated and explicit divine promises (chap. 17 : 21; 21 : 12): and it is here that we find the explanation of his ready obedience.

6. *And he took the fire in his hand.* That is, carrying in his hand the vessel containing the coals of fire.

7. *But where is the Lamb for a burnt offering.* Only the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary surpass this; and the antitype is more than the type.

9. *And Abraham built an altar there.* An altar of earth or of loose stones would be very quickly raised. *And bound Isaac, and laid him on the altar.* The Jews agree that Isaac yielded submissively to his father's will, and consented to be bound and sacrificed (Joseph. "A. J." 1 : 13). It was not merely filial affection and pious obedience to the parent; it was implicit trust in God.

III. THE SUBSTITUTE SACRIFICE. 10. *And Abraham ... took the knife.* Abraham, so far as his heart and his intent are concerned, has shown the deed virtually done. Paul shows that it was so regarded by God (Heb. 11 : 17).

11. *And the angel of the Lord.* Doubtless the Angel of the Covenant (Mal. 3 : 1).

12. *Lay not thine hand upon the lad.* The sacrifice, the resignation of the will, in the father and the son, was accepted; the literal sacrifice of the act was repelled. *Now I know that thou fearest God.* Abraham had perfectly borne the test. The moral purpose of the trial was accomplished, and there was no need of going any further. The shortest and surest way out of trials is perfect submission to God's will.

13. *And beheld behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns.* Here occurs the wonderful substitution, in which God set forth as in a figure the plan of the Mosaic economy for the offering of animal victims instead of human sacrifices.

A type of Christ.—It is difficult for the most superficial reader not to be struck with the points of resemblance between the offering of Isaac and the offering of Jesus Christ, and not to be impressed with the idea which has been accepted by the whole Christian world, that the former was designed to be an acted prophecy and illustration of the latter.

14. *Called the name of that place, Jehovah-jireh, i. e.,* "the Lord will see," or "the Lord will provide." *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.* This became a proverb among the Hebrews, that if any should be in trouble, and should desire the help of the Lord they should say, "In the Mount the Lord will see."

Mother's Fort.

"Bother the old thing! I wish there wasn't a school book in the world!" Smith Brownley said, and he tossed his algebra into the corner of the room. His mother looked sad, but she said pleasantly, "That would be very hard for those who love to study and learn about the wonderful and interesting things in the world. Why, it was only yesterday that I read in a missionary paper how much they needed school books for some of their poor children, who were eager to learn."

"All right, they can have them for all I care, but I don't want them! I'd like to bombard every one, and send them flying to those who enjoy them!" It was not respectful to speak so in reply to his mother, and Smith knew it, but you know when boys once give a place in their hearts to the Evil Spirit, it is easy to go on doing the wrong things which he whispers to them. But the saddest thing was to see how quickly a younger brother followed the naughty example.

"There's a jolly snow now; we might make a fort, and bombard the lesson-books," said Arthur.

Smith smiled. The idea pleased him. "Every fellow in the class will want one shot. I'm sure of that!"

"What I want you to do now, my son, is to pick up your book, and go on with your studying," said mother. And the tone of her voice made her big boy feel ashamed. She took Arthur in another room.

So nothing more was said about forts until recess time, then one was begun in the vacant lot just back of the boy's home.

Mother knew the boys meant nothing wrong, so she thought to herself, "They are going to have a grand play, and perhaps I may join in it."

What! mothers join in their boy's play? Certainly.—The best and wisest mothers know how to do that. Ah! boys, you have no idea how much thought and care and self-denial and prayer your mothers use for you! Only God knows all about it.

After school they were at the fort again. "Isn't she fine? We'll have her ready for the fight to-morrow afternoon," Smith said looking at his mother a little doubtfully.

"And where will you put the poor books?" asked his mother.

"Oh! we'll make a fort for them, too, and stand them up to be shot at."

It was Friday night, and while the boys were talking merely after tea, mother asked, "Is there any boy in your class Smith who loves to study, and enjoys his lessons?"

"Yes, mother, there's Joe Brand. He never misses a word, and he's always asking Mr. Printer about something which the lessons put him in mind of. It's awfully dry, sometimes. But Joe's a first-rate fellow for all that."

"Will you run to Joe's with a note for me?" mother asked next, after she had sat at her desk a few moments.

"For you, mother? Why yes," replied Smith in great surprise. And he put on his coat and cap in a hurry.

"Wait for an answer, my son."

"Yes, mother."

Smith watched his schoolmate's face as he read the note.

Joe seemed greatly pleased, and said, "Wait a minute, Smith," as he sat down to write. It did not take him long, for Joe was fond of writing, and had practiced it a great deal.

"Thank you, Smith," for bringing the note," said Joe, as he handed the answer.

"That's all right," replied the puzzled boy.

He did not ask any questions, but he did wonder what surprise mother was getting up.

The next day as the boys were gathering for their sport, Joe Brand appeared with three or four other school-boys.

"I have come to see your mother, Smith," he said.

"Come in, then." And in went the whole troop of boys.

"Mrs Brownley, here are a few boys who will fight for the school-books," said Joe, taking off his cap, as did all the boys at his example.

"Ah! I'm glad some of you love the dear old studies. These boys of mine are going to bombard them, and I think if you try you can win the day, and show them all how badly off we should be without our school-books."

"We will try, ma'am," Joe's boys answered, and they started out in good earnest.

When the forts were all built and ready, Mrs. Brownley beckoned to Joe from her window, and when he came she asked him, "What are the names of those you must fight against?"

Joe thought a moment, then the lady helped him out. I think inside the other fort are Illiteracy, Ignorance, Carelessness, Give-up-Easily."

"Yes, ma'am, and Too-much-Play and Don't-think; aren't they two pretty bad fellows?"

"Yes, Joe. Tell the boys."

A great shouting was heard, as Joe repeated the names, but it did not come from Smith and his party. Somehow they seemed to be having a little disagreement, and did not bombard as fast as they had intended.

"Can't fight against a lady! 'tisn't honorable!" said one, as a shot from the School-Books knocked down the other flag-staff. Some snow balls went whizzling back, but somehow they all passed over without doing any harm. Pretty soon Mrs. Brownley saw her sons tying a white handkerchief to the broken flag-staff, and in a few minutes a flag of truce was raised on Smith's fort. The next thing, over marched the whole party from Fort Ignorance, and joined School-Books! What a shout of triumph and then, what a bombarding there was!

When not a remnant of the fort was left, the boys all went and stood by Mrs. Brownley's window, and gave "three cheers for the School-Books! We'll never give them up!" The lady waved her handkerchief, and invited them in. There was a table covered with good things to eat, and while the boys sat down to enjoy them, they explained to the lady how it was.

"You see, mother, a fellow couldn't fight with such soldiers as you and Joe put in our fort!"

"Cowards, not soldiers!" said somebody.

"Yes, that is just it. And I wanted my boys to see what unworthy enemies they were encouraging, for they are all enemies to your highest good, those who occupied your fort. Now, you are all true soldiers, and I am proud of you."

How happy that made Smith and Arthur feel. And Joe whispered, "Smith, your mother is just splendid!"

"Indeed she is."

And the boys never forgot that day. Whenever they were tempted to be careless or fretful over a difficult lesson, they remembered "mother's fort."—*N. Y. Observer.*

He Left a very Large Property.

This is the closing sentence of an obituary, and it suggests some reflections.

What a pity he was obliged to leave it! He had taken great delight in accumulating it. As he added field to field, and farm to farm, he had looked with pride upon his extended domain, conscious that he was the largest land-owner in his community. His cattle, if not wandering upon a thousand hills, ranged over thousands of rich pasturage. Stocks, notes, bonds, mortgages, crowded his safe. And it was all the fruit of his own industry, energy and good judgment. The rust of usury and the canker of extortion had not scarred any of his gold. It grieved him to leave this large property, to depart from the world as poor as he came into it, and to enter the other world utterly destitute of the wealth he so much loved in this. But he had to leave it, every cent of it.

He might have it with him. Rather, let us say, he might have sent it forward in advance of him. As the capitalist, who contemplates moving to a foreign country, converts his property into drafts and remits from time to time to the land of his future residence, he might have made remittances to that undiscovered country, so that on his arrival there, he would find abundant treasures laid up in heaven. Every dollar which he had given, consecrating it with sincere prayer, to assist in carrying the glad tidings of salvation to the ends of the earth—every contribution in aid of the many Christian enterprises for the glory of God, and the good of man; every cup of cold water given to a disciple; every tear of pious sympathy for the suffering; every gift of kindly charity to the needy, would have added to the store of his "durable riches." He might have been rich toward God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. If it was sad for him to leave that large property, how much sadder that he sent none of it before him.

It is much more pleasant to go to, than to leave a large property. The man who, poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith, closes his eyes upon this life, goes to take possession of a large property. He owned not a foot of land on earth, but for him "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood stand dressed in living green." His food here was coarse, perhaps scanty; but there he will eat freely from the tree of life, which yields twelve manner of fruits. His garments here were plain and poor, but there he shall be clothed in white robes, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. He associates here with those who are despised and rejected of men, but there his companions will be an innumerable company of angels, and the church of the first-born. Who would not rather go to a large property than to leave one?—*Western Recorder.*

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IN pursuance of a power of sale given me in and by a certain proviso 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 thirteenth day of December, A. D. 1885, and recorded in the office of the Registrar of Deeds in and for the City and County of Saint John, in Book XIX. 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 leasehold lands and premises mentioned and described in the said Indenting 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 southern 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 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. Prusse of Yalding, in Kent, England, and Susan Frances Prusse, his wife, in her own right, by Indenture of Lease bearing date the twentieth day of January, A. D., 1886.

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