

Scripture Lessons.

THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

[BEREAN SERIES.]

SECOND QUARTER—STUDIES IN GENESIS.

SUNDAY, MAY 4, 1873.

LESSON V.—*Joseph Exalted.* Gen. xli.
37-49.

I. GENERAL STATEMENT.

Joseph, after remaining several years in prison, is now set at liberty. The king commends him for his wisdom, and makes him ruler over the land of Egypt. Joseph enters upon his royal trust with the utmost zeal and discretion.

II. NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Topic: From prison to palace.

1. THE PRISONER FREED, vers. 37, 38. THE THING. The proposition in verses 3-36. GOOD. Wise. Equal to the emergency. PHARAOH. Various explained: as *Ph' Ra*, "the Sun," from *Re*, *Ra*, or *Phrah*, the Egyptian "Sun-God," as *Ph' ouro*, "the King." But hieroglyphical scholars now regard it synonymous with the Egyptian *Peraa*, or *Perao*, "the great house," which is the regular title of the Egyptian kings. SERVANTS. The eminent counsellors whose priestly advice the King was wont to seek. CAN WE FIND SUCH A ONE? Men of wisdom and integrity are ever in demand. SPIRIT OF GOD. An admission that the highest wisdom is not of the earth. Job xxxii. 8; Exodus xxviii. 3; xxxi. 1, 6; xxxvi. 1, 2. Joseph, "hastily" brought "out of the dungeon" (ver. 14) to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, now stands before the King, freed from his fetters of iron. Psa. cv. 18.

Joseph's bow was like that of William the Conqueror, no man could bend it but Joseph himself. . . . His bow abode in strength; it did not snap, it did not start aside. His chastity was his bow, and he did not lose that; his faith was his bow, and that did not yield, it did not break; his courage was his bow, and that did not fail him; his character, his honesty was his bow; nor did he cast it away. . .

You know there is not a man that stands at all prominent but what any fool in the world can set afloat some bad tale against him. It is a great deal easier to set a story afloat than to stop it. If you want truth to go round the world you must hire an express train to pull it; but if you want a lie to go round the world, it will fly; it is as light as a feather, and a breath will carry it; . . . but if light as a feather it travels as fast; its effect is about as tremendous as the effect of down when it is blown against the walls of a castle; it produces no damage whatever. . . .

Fear not, Christian. Let slander fly; let envy send forth its forked tongue, let it hiss at you, your bow shall abide in strength. O, shielded warrior, remain quiet, fear no ill; but like the eagle in its lofty eyrie, look thou down upon the fowlers in the plain . . . and say: . . . "Waste your powder upon me if ye will, I am beyond your reach." Then clap your wings, mount to heaven, and there laugh them to scorn, for you have made your refuge God, and shall find a most secure abode.—*Spurgeon*.

2. THE WORD OF THE WISE, ver. 39. GOD HATH SHOWED THEE ALL THIS. God was the source of all Joseph's prosperity as "slave" and as "prisoner." (Lesson iv.) Joseph's wisdom was also from God. James i. 5; Prov. xvi. 1. Pharaoh, although a gross idolater, had knowledge of Joseph's God. Multitudes in our own land know who is the God, yet serve Mammon or Satan. NONE SO . . . WISE as Joseph in all Egypt, because none served the living God as he; and Joseph was a chosen instrument to show the glory of his Lord to these idolaters. Psa. cv. 1, 19-22. Pharaoh felt that before him stood one whom heaven delighted to honor. Prov. xxii. 29.

Like as if a man cast a precious stone into the dust, it will, notwithstanding, show forth the beauty of it again: even so the virtue of a holy and righteous man will show forth itself withersoever it be cast, either into bondage, or prison, or prosperity.

The price of wisdom is above rubies. It is reported of one of the kings of India that he wore a ruby of such bigness and splendor that he might be seen by it in the dark; but wisdom casts a more sparkling color than the ruby, it makes us shine as angels.—*Watson*.