

tery, he took an active part in any business that came before it, and of the value of his counsel as a member of Presbytery his brethren were sensible—always ready to undertake any duty assigned to him by the Presbytery and to fulfil it faithfully and promptly. The Presbytery follow Mr. Stewart and his family with their best wishes, and pray that the Lord may bless them abundantly in their new sphere of labour. The Presbytery express sympathy with the Arthur congregation in their present vacancy, praying that the Great Head of the Church will soon send them a pastor after His own heart." Mr. Fraser, on behalf of the committee appointed to visit Durham with a view, if possible, to effect a re-union of parties there, gave in a report to the effect that according to appointment they had met with the congregation and petitioners, and that "those present representing the congregation, almost without exception, expressed themselves as in favour of removing the organ with a view of effecting peace and re-union;" and that "a number of those present representing the petitioners expressed their willingness to fall in with this proposal." Parties representing the petitioners and congregation were heard. After lengthened reasoning, it was moved by Mr. Nicol, and seconded by Mr. Chas. Cameron, "That the prayer of the petitioners for a separate church organization at Durham be granted." It was moved in amendment by Mr. Fraser, and seconded by Mr. Campbell, "Whereas the Presbytery have failed to find a basis of reconciliation between parties in Durham; whereas a new congregation could only prosper in Durham by the ruin of the present one, and whereas the introduction of the organ is the grievance alleged in the petition, that the Presbytery decline to grant the prayer of the petitioners, enjoin the congregation to discontinue the use of the organ in the service of praise with the view of securing the return of the petitioners to the membership of the congregation; and if the removal of the organ produces the desired effect within twelve months, that the organ revert to the original donors, but if at the end of a year from date no reconciliation is effected the congregation be at liberty to resume the use of the instrument with leave of Presbytery without a new vote." The motion was carried by the casting vote of the Moderator, *pro tem* Messrs. Fraser, Campbell, Young and Straith, ministers, and Mr. Scott, elder, dissented from the finding of the Presbytery. Mr. Park and Mr. Weir protested and appealed to the Synod of Toronto and Kingston with reasons to be given in due time. Messrs. Nicol, Crow, and Macmillan were appointed to answer reasons of protest and appeal. — S. YOUNG, *Pres. Clerk*.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XLVI.

Nov. 14. } JOSEPH THE WISE RULER. { Gen. xli. 1880. } 41-57.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings."—Prov. xii. 29.

HOME READINGS.

M. Gen. xli. 1-23. Joseph in Prison.
Tu. Gen. xli. 1-24. Pharaoh's Dream.
W. Gen. xli. 25-40. Joseph's Interpretation.
Th. Gen. xli. 41-57. Joseph the Wise Ruler.
F. Prov. xxii. 16-29. A Man Diligent in Business.
S. Ps. cv. 8-22. God's Providence over Joseph.
Sab. Prov. xvi. 17-33. Ruling his Spirit.

HELPS TO STUDY.

Our last lesson left Joseph in prison; our present one finds him not only restored to freedom but exalted to the highest position, short of the throne, in the land of Egypt.

The steps which led to this wonderful change can be recalled in few words.

Joseph, having interpreted the chief butler's dream to mean that he should be restored to his office, requested him to make it known to Pharaoh that an innocent man was detained in jail on a false charge. The chief butler, however, ungratefully forgot Joseph, and probably would never have recalled him to mind, but "at the end of two full years" his memory was prompted by a fresh and urgent need for Joseph's services as an interpreter of dreams, he related his prison experiences to his master, who was now as much perplexed by inexplicable visions of the night as he himself had at one time been, and the long-forgotten Hebrew youth was hastily released and brought before the king.

Pharaoh had dreamed of seeing seven fat cows eaten up by seven lean ones, and seven full ears of corn (grain, probably wheat) devoured by seven ears that were "withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind."

Joseph, divinely inspired, interpreted these dreams as announcing the approach of seven years of great agricultural productiveness, to be followed by an equal period of failure in crops.

Along with this interpretation Joseph furnished advice by

following which the impending national calamity could be averted; and Pharaoh, perceiving at once the vital importance of the information and the soundness of the advice, raised Joseph to the second place in the kingdom, and gave him all the authority necessary to enable him to carry out his own scheme.

The following are the lesson topics. (1) *Joseph made Ruler*, (2) *The Seven Plenteous Years*, (3) *The Seven Years of Dearth*.

1. JOSEPH MADE RULER, vers. 41-46.—Under this head attention may be directed to such points as the following: (1) Sudden Elevation, (2) Absolute Authority, (3) Diligence in Business.

1. *Sudden Elevation*.—The unexpected advent of outward prosperity is sometimes as injurious to people as that of misfortune. The former makes them "lose their heads" much more frequently than the latter does. But we do not find Joseph "greatly moved" by the sudden change from a prison to a palace. And this indicates neither apathy nor extraordinary strength of mind, but that admirable balance of the faculties and feelings which result from the affections being turned to God as their supreme object. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee" (Isaiah xvi. 3).

I have set thee ruler over all the land of Egypt. Compare Mordecai's elevation in Persia, and that of Daniel in Babylon.

Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand. This ring was the signet ring, which is the symbol of authority in Eastern governments. See Esther iii. 10, 12; Dan. vi. 7.

Vestures of fine linen.—Correctly translated; not silk as in the margin of some Bibles. Egypt was celebrated for the finer products of flax. See Isaiah xix. 9; Ezekiel xxvii. 7.

2. *Absolute Authority*. Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot. This was a phrase employed to denote the unlimited control claimed by despotic rulers. The word translated bow the knee is by some linguists regarded as Egyptian, and they have been unsuccessfully searching for its meaning; but seeing that there is such a word in Hebrew, and that it means "bow the knee," why may we not suppose that Moses translated the Egyptian proclamation?

3. *Diligent in Business*. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccles. ix. 10) seems to have been Joseph's motto through life. As a slave in Potiphar's house, as turnkey in the prison, he was always diligent; and now, clothed in fine linen with a royal ring on his finger and a gold chain about his neck, with a nation at his bidding, and connected by marriage with one of the noblest families in the land, he seems to have entertained no thought of sitting down at his ease to enjoy the luxuries of his position; he was still "diligent in business," and without loss of time went throughout all the land of Egypt to build granaries, and establish agencies in preparation for the carrying out of his benevolent plan.

II. THE SEVEN PLENTHOUS YEARS.—Vers. 47-52. Under this head also we find three prominent topics: (1) Good Crops, (2) A Benevolent Monopolist, (3) Manasseh and Ephraim.

1. *Good Crops*. The country with which we have to do is Lower Egypt, the capital of which was On, called afterwards by the Greeks Heliothis (city of the sun). Watered by the Nile, which annually overflows its banks and floods the whole plain, leaving a sediment which serves all the purposes of manure, it was in ancient times (and still is where properly worked) an exceedingly fertile country. But during the seven plenteous years referred to in our lesson there was an unusual product even for the fertile valley of the Nile. It came not in single stalks, but by handfuls.

2. *A Benevolent Monopolist*. Besides the "fifth part" which was due to the Government, Joseph seems to have bought up and stored all the surplus grain of the country. He bought, but he refused to sell—he would not sell at any price until the famine came. This course undoubtedly kept up the price of grain, and some of the consumers would perhaps grumble, and call Joseph a monopolist; but those who believed that the famine would assuredly come would no doubt approve of his course. It was not in order to enrich himself or even to enrich the Egyptian Government that he bought up the grain and refused to sell it. Even self-interested monopolists, quite unintentionally on their part, serve a beneficent purpose in helping to equalize the distribution of food supplies, so that the abundance of one season, to some extent at least, makes up for the deficit of another. Joseph, however, was disinterested in the matter; his object was "to save much people alive;" in doing so he was the means of saving, among others, his father's family, the seed of the Church.

3. *Manasseh and Ephraim*. The name Manasseh means *causing to forget*. Joseph was happy in his domestic relations—so much so that he forgot all his toil and all his father's house, that is, all the persecutions he had suffered there. Ephraim means *doubly fruitful*. These two sons of Joseph afterwards took each his place among the patriarchs of Israel on a level with Jacob's sons, for their grandfather adopted them.

III. THE SEVEN YEARS OF DEARTH.—The following topics come under this head: (1) A Widespread Famine, (2) "Corn in Egypt," (3) Go unto Joseph.

1. *A Widespread Famine*. This famine, no doubt, had its secondary causes, and it is quite possible that those could be found among the mountains of equatorial Africa or in Lake Nyanza; God can place his finger, so to speak, on nature's processes at any point, and thus change or modify the result.

The dearth was in all lands—that is in all lands with which Egypt had communication, such as Syria, Arabia, and Ethiopia.

2. *"Corn in Egypt"*. Joseph's full granaries were now opened, and their contents dealt out to purchasers. When the people had expended all their money, food was still supplied to them in exchange for their cattle, and ultimately for their land and their personal service.

3. *"Go unto Joseph"*. Moses thus translated the words used by Pharaoh in replying to the famine-stricken people who cried to him for bread; but it is not unreasonable to suppose that Pharaoh told them to go to Zaphnath-paaneah, for that was the name that he gave him. It means according to various authorities, "Saviour of the world," "sustainer of life," "food of the living," "bread of life." With any of these significations it seems prophetic of Him whom Joseph in so many ways typified.

NOTES ON THE SYLLABUS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN S. S. TEACHER'S COURSE OF STUDY—1880.

LESSON VI.

I. THE NUMBERS THAT WERE LED OUT OF EGYPT.

(1) Six hundred thousand footmen capable of bearing arms.—Exod. xii. 37; Num. i. 45-46; xi. 21.
(2) The ordinary way of estimating would give the same number of males under age, also the same number of females as both added together.
(3) Twenty-three thousand Levites not numbered (Num. i. 47; xxvi. 62). Also a mixed multitude of Egyptian vagrants, convicts, and foreign captives, glad to get out of the house of slaves, giving in definite numbers the host of the exodus, two millions, four hundred and twenty-three thousand, well organized. "The 'I am' had burst their bonds."—Exod. xii. 51; xiii. 18.

II. THE TIME OF THE EXODUS.

(Read Exod. xii. 40-41.)

Taking an agreed point of departure we have:

Gen. xi. 27.—Birth of Abraham.....	2,211, B.C.
" xvii. 24.—Age of Abraham when Isaac is born.....	100
	2,111, B.C.
" xxv. 20, 34.—Age of Isaac when Jacob is born.....	60
	2,051, B.C.
" xlvii. 9.—Age of Jacob when he went into Egypt.....	130
	1,921, B.C.
Exod. xii. 40-41.—Time of the sojourn...	430

Date of the departure.. 1,491, B.C.

Another way of reaching the same result: Solomon's temple was built four hundred and eighty years after the exodus from Egypt.—1 Kings vi. 1.

The temple was built. 1,011, B.C.
Add the above fact..... 480

1,491

They took with them: Flocks of sheep and cattle, household goods, gold and silver, kneading troughs, the embalmed body of Joseph, preserved in the family of Ephraim.—Gen. l. 25; Exod. xiii. 19.

III.—GOD IS THE LEADER BY MOSES AND AARON.

(Ps. lxxvii. 15-20; Isa. lxiii. 11.)

(1) The journey to the Red Sea. The road along which they journeyed was not the direct but the circuitous route; and to human judgment the worst possible way.

Three Reasons Given for its Choice.

(a) Israel was unprepared for war with the Philistines.—Exod. xiii. 17.

(b) To lure Pharaoh to pursuit and overthrow.—Exod. xiv. 27.

(c) To prove the faith of Moses as a leader. He knew the direct route, having travelled it twice, but in calm and courageous faith he followed the Lord.

(2) It gave a signal lesson in faith and true progress, educating the emancipated and well ordered host.—Exod. xiv. 26-31.

(3) God shows how He can adapt the same agencies to the comfort and guidance of His people and the confusion and overthrow of His enemies.—Exod. xiv. 19-21.

(4) The wisdom of Divine guidance celebrated in the song. The key note of the song, "My Father's God."—Exod. xv. 1-2.

(5) The wilderness of Shur.—Exod. xv. 22.

(a) A tract of elevated desert which separates Egypt from Palestine, involving three days' journey without coming to water, the water reached was bitter, "marah" (Exod. xv. 23). Bitter water, reached in a bitter spirit.

(b) The triumphs of the sea are soon succeeded by the trials of the desert. The minstrels soon become murmurers. "It is the hard condition of authority that when the multitude fare well, they applaud themselves; when ill they reprove against their governors."

(c) The meekness of Moses exemplified. "He cried unto the Lord."

(d) God reveals His healing ministries of life to the devout spirit.—2 Kings ii. 21; iv. 41; Rev. xxii. 2.

This miraculous healing of the water is to be an ordinance and a memorial statute. By it their faith in God increased, and their trust in Him to heal and help deepened. The pathways of the sweetening ministries of life are obedience.—Exod. xv. 20.

(6) The journey to Elim. The place of trees and water.—Ps. xlii. 2.

(7) Between Elim and Sinai lies the desert of Sin.—Num. xxxiii. 6.

(a) Their bread is exhausted. Famine seemed inevitable, and death certain.

(b) The confident faith and calm courage of Moses.

"Bread from heaven.".....Exod. xvi. 4.

Regulations regarding the Manna.... xvi. 32-36.

Given six days every week for a period of forty years, and on the sixth day a double portion.—Deut. viii. 3. Read Jno. vi. 31-58.

JOHN McEWAN.