

3. *The solemn inspection which is connected with the Mission of the Pulpit is an assurance of Ultimate Success.*

(1) If our preaching is to be effective, we must preach the Law and the Gospel in their inseparable connection and practical harmony. We must preach the law in order to probe the conscience; we must preach the Gospel in order to heal it. The preaching of the law alone will lead to Pharisaism; the preaching of the Gospel alone will lead to Antinomianism; the preaching of both will, by God's blessing, issue in a pure and living Christianity. These two elements—the law and the Gospel—are blended throughout the entire Bible. There is Gospel in the Old Testament, and there is law in the Gospel.

(2.) We may gather from our text the perilous condition and awful doom of those who sit under the preaching of the Gospel but are indifferent to their responsibilities and neglectful of their privileges. The veil of prejudice, of worldliness, of unbelief, of insensibility, is gathering around you, and rendering you impervious to all that is searching in the light of God's truth, and softening in the tenderness of God's love. We pray you to wake up from the awful drowsiness which is creeping over your spirit and hurrying you into the darkness of an everlasting midnight. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." But awake now. While Sabbath suns shine upon you; while holy sanctuaries welcome you to their solemnities; while the Gospel of a free salvation is sounding in your ears; while the spirit of grace is striving with your conscience; while the great Intercessor is pleading with God on your behalf; and while the merciful Lord is asking, "Why will ye die?" We beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. But, whether you are saved or lost, we shall be pure of your blood, and unto God a sweet savour of Christ, if, by manifestation of the truth, we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

(The above is printed from a MS. given to us, some time since, by the beloved author. The original contained a fearless exhortation, under the heading, "The Mission of the Truth," which we are reluctantly compelled to omit, from want of space.)

## GOLDEN TRUTHS.

### SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE SUNDAYS OF 1877.

BY REV. THORNLEY SMITH.

**JULY 1. Morning. THE CAPTIVE ISRAELITES.** (Exod. i. 1-14.) We have here the names of the sons of Jacob, arranged according to their mothers, as in Gen. xxxv. 22-26, those of the two maid-servants standing last. Joseph is not in the list, for he was in Egypt, whilst the others came with their father. The number seventy, which includes Jacob, formed the seed out of which the whole house of Israel sprang. After the death of Joseph, etc. (ver. 6) the increase was almost miraculous. They were fruitful or literally swarmed, and the land, especially Goshen, was filled with them. Egypt was a very fruitful country, both in men and cattle; and the Divine promise added to the blessing of nature, (ver. 7.) The new king (ver. 8), means the king of a new dynasty, of which there had been many in Egypt. In all probability he was *Rameses II.*, of the nineteenth dynasty, the renowned *Sesostris* of the Greeks. He did not recognise the merits of Joseph, and being jealous of the Israelites, dealt harshly with them. There is no doubt that a long time had elapsed since Joseph's death. The king was afraid that the Israelites would multiply, ally themselves with his enemies, and then leave Egypt. He did not want to lose them as his subjects if he could keep them within certain bounds (ver. 10.) He therefore set taskmasters over them to make them bend down as serfs, hoping, by hard fendal labour, to prevent their too rapid increase (ver. 11). And they were compelled to build treasure-cities, or provision cities, as some render, for the storing of the harvest. But they were also places of defence, having fortifications round them. They were named *Pithom* and *Raameses* (to which the Septuagint adds *On*, which is *Heliopolis*), and were situated in Goshen;—*Pithom*,—or *Thoum* (Ei being the Egyptian article), was probably on the site of the present village *Abbaseh*, on the canal which connects the Nile with the Red Sea; and *Raameses* was probably *Heropolis*, now represented by some ruins called *Abu-Kesheb*. (See "History of Moses," pp. 27, 28.) Still the Israelites multiplied and grew, for God's blessing was upon them. And not in Goshen only, but in other parts of Egypt, even as far as Thebes in the south were

they employed on the quarries and in the temples (ver. 12-14.) Bricks of clay were used in many of the buildings of Egypt; and making them was a laborious process. But the sufferings of the Israelites were not so long as is generally supposed. They could not have existed above ninety years, if indeed they lasted so long. Learn Ps. cv. 24.

**Afternoon. PAUL IN CYPRUS.** (Acts xii. 1-16.) Antioch in Syria now becomes the centre of Church history. Certain teachers and prophets were here who spoke under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit (ver. 1.) As they worshipped or ministered to the Lord, the Spirit told them to separate Barnabas and Paul for special missionary work. This was not the work of the Christian ministry in general, for to that they had been appointed before, but to this peculiar work (ver. 2.) They (the whole Church) fasted and prayed, and then laid their hands on them, committing them to the grace of God, etc. (ver. 3.) They went down the Orontes to Seleucia, a distance of about three miles, and then took a vessel for Cyprus, and landed at Salamis, at the eastern end of it. This island was near, and was the native country of Barnabas (ch. iv. 36), so that it would be to him a great joy to go thither. Salamis had a convenient harbour, and at that time the island possessed several large and wealthy cities. John Mark was the subordinate minister, or messenger of the two evangelists (ch. xii. 12-25); and the three traversed the whole island until they reached Paphos, at its western extremity. They preached in the Jewish synagogue, and they encountered a sorcerer named *Barnes*, the son of *Jesus*, as the word means. But he gave himself the name of *Elymas*, which, like the Turkish title *Ulema*, signifies a wise man. But he was a false prophet, and had gained some influence over the pro-consul, or deputy of the country, *Sergius Paulus*, who was no doubt a Roman (ver. 6 and 7). He sent for the apostles, and wished to hear from them the Word of God; but this sorcerer withstood them, and tried to dissuade the deputy from accepting the faith of Christ. Saul at once perceived the character of the man, and, filled with the Holy Ghost, fixed his eyes on him, charged him with being full of all subtlety and wickedness, called him a son of the devil (in opposition to his name), and declared that he was an enemy of all righteousness (ver. 8-10). It was a terribly scathing address, and it was followed by a severe punishment. He was smitten with temporary blindness, and went about wrapt in a mist, which soon became complete darkness (ver. 9, 10). This led to the conversion of *Sergius Paulus*, who is described as "a prudent man." Here for the first time Saul is called Paul, some think after the name of the deputy, his distinguished convert; and henceforth he is spoken of by St. Luke as the principal person (see ver. 46-50, etc.). The name Paul, however, may have been his, as a Roman citizen from the first; whilst up to this time he had used only the Hebrew form of it—*Saul*. From Paphos they proceeded by sea to Parga, in Pamphylia, situated on the coast of Asia Minor; but here John Mark left them and went back to Jerusalem. He probably became home-sick, and somewhat faint-hearted (cf. Col. iv. 10, and Acts xv. 37, 38). From Parga the two proceeded to Antioch in Pisidia, a distance of about 108 miles; and on the Sabbath day went into the synagogue, and there preached (ver. 14-16). A portion of the law, *Thora*, was read, and then a section from the prophets (*Naftoroth*), when the chazzan or ruler, supposing they were rabbis, asked them if they had a word of exhortation (2 Cor. iv. 3, the memory text may be taken with reference to such men as *Elymas*).

**July 8. Morning. THE DELIVERER BORN.** (Exod. ii. 1-10.) A man named *Amram*, of the tribe of Levi, married a woman named *Jochebed*, of the same tribe (Exod. vi. 20) She was not, however, literally his father's sister, as that passage seems to imply. They had a son called *Aaron*, and a daughter called *Miriam*, and now another son was born; but in days of grief, owing to the decree of Pharaoh (ch. i. 15-17) *Jochebed* saw that he was a goodly or beautiful child, and she hid him at home for three months; but she could do so no longer with safety, perhaps, to his health (ver. 1-2). She, therefore, made an ark of bulrushes, or the *hibula papyrus*, which grew on the borders of the Nile, of which a kind of paper is made, and which also furnishes materials for boats, sails, and mats. She lined the inside of it with slime, or bitumen, to make it perfectly smooth, and the outside she covered with pitch, a valuable resin, to prevent the water penetrating. Then she put into it her precious boy, and laid the ark among the flags or rushes which grow on the margin of that river (ver. 3). The Nile was then low, and there was no danger from crocodiles;