

Behind the Bars.

THE roses bloom in the garden ;
The bee comes wooing the flowers ;
The song-bird pipes to his nest-mate.
Through all the golden hours,
The breeze is freighted with fragrance
From forest, and field, and lea ;
But youth has fled,
And Hope lies dead,
So what is it all to me ?

The bluebird rocks in the tree-tops,
Free as the summer air,
Swings and sways and warbles,
With never a flutter of care ;
Memories never haunt him,
No thought of the morrow has he ;
But the guarded wall,
Like a sombre pall,
Overshadows it all for me.

I sit in the glowing twilight,
And gaze on the evening sky,
On the glorious sunset banners
That a-chwart the hill-tops fly,
Till the diamond eyes of heaven
Look down on the bond and the free ;
But I see the stars
Through the prison bars—
So what is it all to me ?

Ah ! the flowers have lost their perfume,
The summer breezes are chill,
The bees are naught but gluttons,
And harsh the song-bird's trill ;
For the mighty voices of nature,
Of earth, or heaven, or sea,
Have naught of cheer
For the convict's ear—
What—what are they ail to me ?

LESSON NOTES.

B.C. 1451] LESSON II. [Oct. 14

CROSSING THE JORDAN.

Josh. 3. 5-17, Memory verse, 5-6

GOLDEN TEXT.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. Isa. 43. 2.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Ark.
- 2. The River.

TIME.—1451 B.C.

PLACE.—The banks of the Jordan, near Jericho.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The first act of Joshua on assuming command was to give an order for preparing to cross the Jordan. While the host was making ready two spies were sent into Jericho, and after imminent peril returned with cheering words to the people. After the third day had passed came the order to advance ; and this brings us to our lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—Sanctify yourselves—By sacred washings and changes of raiment. Will do wonders—Will make some miraculous manifestation in your behalf. Magnify thee—To especially honour him before the people, that the people might know he was God's chosen servant. Brink of the water—Eastern brink of the Jordan, at the water's edge. The living God—That is, the true and only God, in opposition to lifeless idols. Shall stand upon a heap—Or shall be like a wall ; when the waters stop running down they shall pile up. The salt sea—The Dead Sea.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Ark.
What command had been given by the officers to the people concerning the ark ? Chap. 3. 3, 4.
What was the ark of the covenant ?
What was its usual place among the people ?
Was the pillar of cloud still the signal by which they moved ?
For what did God use the ark of the covenant that day ?
What was the ark designed to teach to Israel ?
What allusion is there in Hebrew literature to this occurrence ? Psa. 114. 3, 5.
To what does the Psalmist ascribe this ? Psa. 114. 7.

2. The River.

What is the river that is here made memorable ?
Where does this river rise, and what are its peculiarities ?
On which side of it were the people ?
What preparations were made for crossing it ?
How was the passage effected ?
Can this be explained from natural causes ?
If this was miraculous, was it contrary to nature ?
Did any others ever pass the Jordan dry-shod ? 2 Kings 2. 8, 14.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Through the Red Sea with Moses, through the Jordan with Joshua, through the "dark river" with Jesus. The waters always divide before the feet of him who follows the voice of God.

"To stand still in Jordan," was the command then. Very often now God's command is to the soul, "Stand still." He is the best servant who does exactly what he is told.

The reason why we do not oftener see God's wonders among us is because we are not "sanctified." All of God's acts are wonders : each new day is a wonder.

Here are three words to just sum up the foregoing : submission, obedience, purity.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Study carefully the history of the ark of the covenant.
2. See if any mention of it can be found in the book of revelation.
3. Is there any evidence of the time of year when this occurred ?
4. Learn all you can of the Jordan.
5. What evidences of the truthfulness of this narrative may be discovered in the text itself ?
6. Learn the facts of the lesson and the order of the narrative very thoroughly.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What was the next great event in Israel's history ? The passage of the Jordan.
2. How did they cross this river ? They all passed over on dry ground.
3. What was the apparent cause of this dry ground passage ? The ark in the river.
4. What was the real cause ? The presence of the eternal God.
5. What has been the voice of God to the world ever since ? "When thou passest," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—God's presence.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. Did our first parents continue in the state in which God created them ?
No ; they fell from that state into sin.

B.C. 1451] LESSON III. [Oct. 21

THE STONES OF MEMORIAL.

Josh. 4. 10-24. Memory verses, 20, 22

GOLDEN TEXT.

Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. Josh. 4. 22.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Leader Honoured.
- 2. The Lord Remembered.

TIME.—1451 B.C.

PLACE.—Same as in last lesson.

CONNECTING LINKS.—When the people had passed over Jordan Joshua chose twelve men from the tribes, one from each tribe, and ordered them to take from the river-bed each one a stone and carry it over into the land of Canaan. This was done. Then Joshua himself set up twelve stones in the bed of Jordan in the place where the priests bearing the ark stood, and then comes the story of the lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—Clean passed over—Entirely over, every one over. Waters . . . returned unto their place—That is, the streams began to flow again as usual. Over all his banks—That is, filled up to the full the whole bed and bottom of the river. Tenth day of the first month—Not quite forty years since the first passover. Pitch—(Ver. 20) Not paint or cover with pitch, but build up into a pile, or monument.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Leader Honoured.
What was the effect upon the Israelites of the scene at the Jordan ?
What was the effect upon the inhabitants of the land ? Josh. 5. 1.
What two acts did Joshua perform to commemorate the event ?

What had God promised Joshua he would do for him ? Chap. 3. 7.
What evidence do the forty thousand soldiers give of their confidence in Joshua ?
How does this show confidence ?
What evidence did the priests give that they honoured Joshua ?
To what point did the passage of the Jordan bring the people ?

2. The Lord Remembered.

Where was Gilgal ?
What memorial could be seen at Gilgal in after days ?
What was the purpose of this memorial ?
How would it effect its purpose ?
What traits of character does this act reveal in Joshua ?
Are monuments and memorials of any value nowadays ? Give an illustration.
What is meant by the fear of the Lord ?
What promises do the Scriptures give to those that fear God ? Psa. 103. 13 ; Acts 10. 35 ; Prov. 10. 27.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Fidelity, patriotism, and loyalty are shown in this lesson. Can you find them ?
God always honours the man who honours him.

The best education is that which leads up to a constant recognition of God.
It was not the priests, nor the forty thousand soldiers, nor Joshua, that led Israel over Jordan, but God.

The priests waited God's command. Let us. The people hastened to do his will. Let us. Joshua was unassuming, loyal, and earnest that God should be glorified. Let us be like him.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Read the first nine verses of this chapter.
2. Find five other instances in Scripture where God honoured those who tried to honour him.
3. Locate Gilgal on a map, and find how many years this place was their headquarters.
4. Search out the things that Moses had commanded Joshua.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. How long did the priests stay with the ark in the dry river bed ? Till all had passed over.
2. When only did they come forth ? When Joshua gave the command.
3. What did Joshua do with the twelve stones carried by the twelve men ? Built a memorial pillar.
4. What did he say this was for ? An object lesson for their children.
5. What were they to tell the children it meant ? "Then ye shall let," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Honouring God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

- What is sin ? Sin is disobedience to the law of God in will or deed.
Romans viii. 7. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be.
1 John v. 17. All unrighteousness is sin.
James iv. 17. To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.
[1 John iii. iv ; Isa'ah liii. vi ; James i. 14. 15.]

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