

He bent his head down upon the dog's head, talking to him and caressing him, while Nelly stood by him in an agony of terror for herself and him. Then he laid Jock down tenderly in the corner where he had found him, patting his head once more, though Jock was now shrinking from his touch, and was convulsed with the strong throes and agonies of madness.

"All I can do for you now is to put you out of your misery, Jock!" cried his master, in a voice of anguish. He came out of the shed and locked the door safely, his face white, and his lips set firmly, as if he could not trust himself to utter a word. Nelly followed him into the house in silence, and into the small lumber room where his fishing rods and guns were kept. She watched him load one of his guns, with a hard, resolute look on his face, but he took no notice of her.

"What are you going to do, Latimer?" she asked, when he had finished.

"I am going to shoot Jock," he answered, turning almost fiercely upon her; "there's no one else in the parish so sure to kill him instantly. Why did you not send for me before? I ought never to have gone away without forgiving him."

Nelly stole away upstairs, and threw herself, sick and faint, on the bed; but the sharp, cracking report of the gun reached her ears a few minutes later, and forced a shrill scream from her lips. Jock was dead, and his master's own hand had killed him.

Latimer could not return to the house. He hastened away, swiftly and impatiently, to the hot uplands, where he had never gone alone before since his "little girl" had brought Jock from her north-country home with her. All that short year of that married life had long seemed like a dream to him, a youthful dream, full of impossibilities. How far removed that memory had been of late! But it came back upon him with irresistible might in the long, unheeded hours of that summer's afternoon, as he wandered aimlessly about the purple heath, his nerves still tingling with the shock of destroying the creature he so dearly loved, Jock, whose short, joyous bark seemed to be ringing familiarly in his ears, and whose lithe, fleet form might any moment have sprung out upon him from the thicket of bracken and gorse without surprising him. Could it be true that the dog was gone, and gone forever? For seven years he had been at Latimer's beck and call. "The misery of keeping a dog is his dying so soon," says Sir Walter Scott; "but, to be sure, if he lived for fifty years, and then died, what would become of me?"

At length, as the evening shadows lengthened, Latimer heard the hurried sounds of a horse's hoofs thudding along the dry, rough road that crossed the uplands. It was his own horse, Jock's favorite friend among the lower animals, and the farmer living nearest to the vicarage was riding him in hot haste. On seeing him he drew bridle for an instant, and shouted at the top of his voice—

"Hurry home, parson. I'm going for the doctor. Th' missis is taken ill at the vicarage, and all the folks are frightened for her. They're thinking o' th' first young missis as died."

The words reached Latimer's ears plainly enough in the profound stillness of the uplands. He hastened home more swiftly than he had quitted it. The dread apprehension of a second sorrow like that he felt when he stood and gazed into the coffin of his young wife, with her new-born child on her arm, shut out all thought of poor Jock from his mind. It was a long night that followed, hope and fear trembling in the balance; but joy came in the morning. A son was born to him; and the mother was spared. Before church time came, he was allowed to step softly into the room and look for a moment upon Nelly's pale face and the little babe sleeping beside her.

"Can you forgive me, Latimer?" she asked in a faint, sad voice.

"Forgive you! what for?" he replied,

her white hand clasped in both of his.

"My darling, there's nothing to forgive."

"I've been so jealous," she murmured, "so jealous of her, your poor little girl, Latimer, who died, and never knew happiness like this. I thought you loved her best, and I took a dislike to poor Jock. I was not quite myself, I hope; but if God forgives me, and you—"

"Hush!" he interrupted. "I love you, Nelly, better than all the rest of the world beside."

Yet, though his grief was banished by an exceeding great joy, Jock was neither forgotten nor unlamented. Latimer, with his own hands, dug his grave in the glebe, on the other side of the hedge which separated it from the churchyard, and laid him as near as he could be laid to his young mistress, whose grave he had so faithfully visited. The shed where he had pined, banished and broken-hearted, and where he had died by his master's hand, was pulled down as a greivous memorial not to be endured. But no dog was ever like Jock in his master's eyes.

INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON.— Sunday, Nov. 7.

JOSEPH IN PRISON.—Gen. 39: 21-23; 40: 1-8. GOLDEN TEXT.—"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."—Psalm 137: 7.

To be learned 21 23. Time, not far from 1720 B. C.

INTRODUCTION AND CONNECTION.

The story of Joseph is resumed from the thirty-seventh chapter; and passes on without any interruption, to its conclusion. The first twenty verses of the present chapter give us, in brief, the story of Joseph's prosperity in his Master's house, the height of favor to which he was raised, the trial to which he was subjected, his noble conduct on that occasion, and his being cast into prison through the falsehood and spite of his unprincipled accuser. But this mysterious casting down, had in it a double purpose,—first, the fitting of Joseph through the hard discipline of adversity for a kingly position under Pharaoh; and, secondly, the placing of him in circumstances most readily to teach that position.

LESSON NOTES.

(39: 21). The Lord was with Joseph. Joseph had feared and honored God and His commandments under circumstances of great trial, and God stood by him in the trouble that followed. God showed him mercy, or, "extended kindness unto him." God invariably stands by His true servants.

Men are sometimes permitted to kill them, it is true; but God is with them, and takes care of them all the same. Gave him favor, &c. God caused that Joseph's piety and goodness should commend him, and secure him friends even in prison. The keeper of the prison,—he to whose care the state criminals were entrusted until the time of their trial.

This man would not be long in discovering that Joseph was no ordinary man; his heart would warm towards one so generous and noble; he would naturally inquire into the reason of his being there; and, hearing Joseph's story, would believe it, and the more readily, too, since God gave Joseph favor,—that is, ability and grace to win favor.

(22). This favor into which Joseph was received, was soon manifested,—he was raised to a position of trust—his fellow-prisoners were put under his charge, and soon it could be said that whatever they did, he was the doer of it,—that is, he permitted or sanctioned it.

(23). The keeper looked not to any thing that was under his (Joseph's) hand. Why? Because the Lord was with him, and what he did the Lord made it to prosper.

(40: 1). The butler of the King of Egypt. This man was not only the King's cup-bearer, but he was overseer of the royal vineyards and cellars, and had many servants under him. Nebemiah held a similar office under the King of Persia—(Neb. 2: 1). His baker, or cook—the one who superintended the providing, and preparation of meats for the King's table. The rank of both the chief butler and the chief baker was very high. They had free access to the King's presence, and were sometimes men of royal birth. Had offended. What their offence was, we are not told; it need no necessarily, however, have been anything very great, as eastern Kings were jealous and exacting, and often put their servants to death on very frivolous charges.

(2, 3). Pharaoh was wroth. From this, it would seem that their crime may have been very serious—possibly an attempt to poison the King. And he put them in ward in the house of the Captain of the guard, (Potiphar), into the prison where Joseph was bound,—not fettered, as we may see by the connection, but kept, confined. These men were State criminals, and, like Joseph, waiting to be tried for their offences.

(4). The Captain of the guard—Potiphar. This man was, doubtless, convinced that Joseph was innocent of any wrong-doing. This we may infer by his putting those two illustrious prisoners under his charge; yet, for reasons of his own, he kept

him in a still confinement. A season—or days—in ward,—probably until the King's birthday. (v. 20.) when they were to be either acquitted and reinstated in office, or condemned and put to death.

And they dreamed... each man his dream. the butler and the baker of the King of Egypt. Dreams, in early times, were much observed;—indeed, it was by dreams that God communicated to men some of the most important matters regarding both nations and individuals.

(6). Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and beheld they were sad. We have here the key to Joseph's singular power over iron,—he was sympathetic. He brought into the cell of his fellow prisoners a feeling heart that could be touched by the sadness of their countenances. He was moved by a tender solicitude in their behalf. They were sad, could he not alleviate their sadness? or if not alleviate it, might he not share it with them, and give them such comfort as he had to offer? God had comforted him many times in his deep loneliness and sorrow, he could tell them, perhaps, heathens though they were, of that great and loving God who had so comforted him.

(7). And he asked—wherefore look ye so sad to-day? Joseph's sympathy was not of that silent kind which wastes itself in kind thoughts with no corresponding acts; it was of the active kind that seeks to know another's trouble, in order to alleviate it.

(8). And they said—we have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. They were thinking, doubtless, of the wise men and the magicians to whom they had been accustomed to look for interpretations, but to whom they could then have no access. What could they do? They felt sure their dreams were extraordinary, that they had been sent either for warning or comfort, but there was no interpreter. Alas, they knew not Joseph's God, or they would have sought it from Him. They were poor heathens, longing to know—longing for something that heathenism could not give them. And Joseph said, do not interpretations belong to God? It is not likely this was the first time Joseph had spoken to his fellow prisoners of God; had it been so, his words would have sounded abrupt and strange. In this simple question he gently rebukes their craving for the help of blind heathens like themselves, and reminds them that there is One to whom the interpretation of mysteries properly belongs. Tell me your dreams. I pray you! Joseph, being known to be a servant of God, was doubtless understood to be holding out encouragement to these men that he could solve the meaning of their dreams; and had he not felt sure of being able to do so, his raising such a hope would have been both presumptuous and cruel. But he evidently had faith that God would give him the interpretation; and his faith was honored by God, so that, even in the prison and among heathens, God rewarded his faith by constituting him his own Prophet.

SUGGESTED THOUGHTS.

The path of uprightness, though it lead to prison and to death, is always a safe path. Joseph's led from a happy home to slavery, and from slavery to prison and probable death, but he kept it with steadfast faith in God, and God brought him out into a large place, and to a rich reward.

God has said—them that honor me I will honor. Joseph honored God among his brethren, in the house of Potiphar, and in the prison; and God honored him by giving him favor with all who knew him, and by standing by him throughout his entire life.

Joseph spoke for God to the chief butler and the chief baker in the prison, and God spoke through Joseph to him, by making him the interpreter of hidden mysteries, and endowing him with the gift of prophecy.

QUESTION SUMMARY.

(For the Children.)

(39:21) Who was with Joseph in the prison? Why did the Lord love Joseph so much? Whom does the Lord say He loves? (Prov. 8:17). Did his keeper like Joseph too? Why? What did he give Joseph to do? Who made Joseph so prosperous? (40:1, 2). Who offended the king of Egypt? Who was the chief butler? Who was the chief baker? (See the notes) Where did the king of Egypt send them? Who was the Captain of the Guard? (ch. 39:1).

(3) Whom had Potiphar put in the same prison some time before? What charge did Potiphar give Joseph in the prison? How does that show that Potiphar felt to care Joseph at that time? How was it that Joseph gained so many friends? (4) What happened to the chief butler and the chief baker? (6-8). What did Joseph notice when he came in in the morning? What did he ask them? Why were they sad? Whom had they been accustomed to have to interpret their dreams? See 4). Could those people have interpreted them if they had been there? No, unless God had enabled them to do so. Did Joseph tell them of any one to whom interpretations properly belong? Who is that One? Why did Joseph ask them to tell their dreams to him? Because he believed God would show him the dreams, so that he might tell it to them. What did Joseph have that made him feel so sure of this? He had FAITH. He knew he was God's servant, and that God loved him; and he believed God would give him the interpretation of the dreams. How then did Joseph honor God? By having faith in Him. Does God honor all those who honor Him?—(1 Sam. 2:30). Joseph was not ashamed to speak for God;—what is said of those who are ashamed of Him? (Mark 8:38). ARE YOU ASHAMED OF JESUS?

THE TENDERNESS OF CHRIST.

Here is the most bruised and broken of all; one who had imagined himself strong in faith, giving glory to God but who had ignominiously bent before the blast of temptation and had denied his Divine Master with oaths and curses. Can there be aught of tenderness manifested toward the renegade apostle? Surely he has placed himself by his heinous guilt and craven cowardice, beyond the pale of forgiveness. No; when we might have thought the heart he had ungenerously wounded was alienated from him forever, there was first a "look" of infinite love—a meeting glance which sent him forth to weep bitter tears over foul ingratitude; and subsequently a message entrusted to the angel guardian of the sepulchre and conveyed by him to the three women: "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter."—Mark xvi. 7. "Go, tell the most faithless of my followers that even for him there is still a place in my tender regard. Go, tell this wandering bird, with drooping wings and soiled plumage, that even for him there is a place of shelter still open in the clefts of the Rock." Nay, more; when Jesus met him subsequently on the shores of Gennesaret, instead of dragging afresh to light painful memories of abused kindness and broken vows, all now too deeply felt to need being recalled, no severer utterance for unworthy apostacy was pronounced than the gentle rebuke conveyed in the thrice repeated challenge, "Lovest thou Me?"

Indeed, when pronouncing some of his most impressive woes and threatenings Christ appears, at times, as if he dreaded lest any broken-hearted one might misinterpret his sayings, and construe his wrath against sin and hypocrisy as indicating a want of consideration to the penitent. Take as an example the occasion when he had been proclaiming stern words regarding the contemporary "sinful generation;" more especially rebuking them for their blind unbelief in the midst of light and privilege; declaring that for those cities which had scorned his message (Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum) it would be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them. He seemed suddenly to pause. The storm had exhausted itself. Possibly amid the crowd who had just listened to these vocables of wrath, his omniscient eye discerned some trembling outcast, some brittle reed or sapling bending beneath the hurricane. He will not suffer it to be broken. He will not permit the wind and earthquake and fire to pass, without being followed by a "still small voice"—and then it is that the words, (unparalleled in their tenderness and beauty among all he ever spake), come like a gleam after the tempest, or like a rainbow encircling with its lovely hues the angry skies, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Don't always be harping on one string, either in your prayers, or in your exhortation. Keep the wheels out of the old, deep rut. Some are always dwelling on a revival, as if there is nothing done, or to be prayed for, but this; whereas, there is the spirituality of the Church, there is the word, the seed sown: there is the Sabbath school: there is the liberality of the people of God; there is the soil preparing for the seed of the Word, and all these belong to the prayer meeting.—Dr. Todd.

FROM the bottom of my heart I despise an ignoble dependence upon things. Setting aside all the cant of philosophy, I declare I would rather not be rich. I believe that in my present condition I have more sympathy with men and things. In our unfurnished life, as the English would call it, there is more simplicity, more of the candour of truth, and there is more poetry. What an admirable receipt for happiness, to know how to do without things.—Victor Jacquemont.