

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

Begin by showing that this Lesson naturally and logically follows the last and completes the story of the coming of sin. The last Lesson showed the first effect of sin, separation from God. This Lesson shows its effect in society by separating man from man. Let the class discussion gather round :

1. *The picture of the first home.* Emphasize : (a) The first dawning of hope to Adam and Eve in the birth of Cain. Note Eve's expression (v. 1) as a hope that Cain would be free from sin, possibly the one who would crush the power of the serpent. Further note that Abel means "breath" or "exaltation," a further hope. (b) The early promise being fulfilled as the boys began to work and worship. In order to get the force of the first death, press home the hopes and fears of the first family ties.

2. *The story of their independent worship.* Impress the truth that the first social grievance sprang out of failure to approach and live in fellowship with God. The basal idea is that mere formal worship is not acceptable to God, and that temptation comes to man in his worship as well as in his work. Bring out : (a) The nature of their offerings. Question about the kind of offering. Was there something wrong with Cain's? If so, what? (b) The motive or quality of spirit of the brothers. Show that Cain was an irreligious man (refusing to bring the sin-offering), a murderer, a liar, was angry with God. Bring out Abel's ideal, an obedient worshiper, who came in faith. Discuss the light given by Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12. Emphasize the necessity of a proper spirit in worship.

3. *The first murder, and the effect upon the murderer.* Discuss the moral element in Cain's life, v. 7. If he would reflect and repent, all would be well, but if not, sin would dominate him. Show that in the light of this he refused to repent. Dwell upon the principle that great crimes are only possible when life is debased by lesser sins. Go on to show how hatred and jealousy led

to murder. Bring out : (a) That Cain slew his brother by deception, v. 8. (b) That murder led to falsehood. Show how anti-social sin is, repudiating all responsibility for others. (c) God's declaration that responsibility cannot be evaded, and that the sinner must bear his full penalty. Draw out Cain's punishment, as bitter toil, a homeless wanderer, an accusing conscience, the knowledge of God's judgment against his sin.

4. *God's emphasis upon social responsibility.* The lesson to apply and enforce is, that social sin springs from spiritual rebellion.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Remind the class that last Sabbath we left Adam and Eve in the thorn and thistle wastes outside of the Garden of Eden, a guilty couple, but with hope in their hearts, ch. 3:15. What can we learn from to-day's Lesson about their home? Is it true that we can tell a good deal about the home-life by the way the children act when away from home? What is there to indicate that there were good influences at work in that first home? The children were taught to work and they were taught to worship. Note that the influences were not all good, or we should not have to-day's Lesson.

1. *The Two Brothers*, vs. 1-8. Bring out by questioning how unlike they were in tastes and character, as illustrated by their choice of an avocation and by the spirit they manifested in worship,—the one mean in his offerings, giving as little as he could; the other generous, giving the very best he had. How can we account for differences of this kind in the same family? Is there anything unusual about this? Question out the events which led up to the tragedy, the envy and jealousy and anger (vs. 4, 5); the divine remonstrance and warning (vs. 6, 7); the murder, v. 8.

2. *The Murderer Found Out*, vs. 9, 10. Who found him out? Note how defiant Cain was when questioned by the Lord, how completely depraved his soul had become, to fail to realize that God knew all about it, to fail to realize that his brother had claims