

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1880, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday School Union.)

LESSON VIII.

Nov. 21]

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN. Gen. 44: 30-34; 45: 1-8.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 1-4.

30. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; 31. It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. 32. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father forever. 33. Now, therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. 34. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come upon my father.

XLV.

1. Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. 2. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. 3. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? and his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. 4. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. 5. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. 6. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. 7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.—Rom. 12: 21.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Love endures and conquers.

NOTES.—It is well to gain a clear view of the order of the events in connection with this visit of the sons of Jacob to Egypt.—I. Their trial by Joseph. 2. Their repentance and Joseph's forgiveness. 3. Judah a surety for Benjamin to his father. 4. The feast in honor of Benjamin. 5. Trial of the brethren's feelings toward Benjamin. 6. Judah's story. 7. Joseph makes himself known. 8. His message to his father. 9. The joyful tidings to Jacob. 10. Pharaoh's message. 11. Return of the brethren with waggons and presents.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) JUDAH'S PLEA. (II.) THE RULER A BROTHER. 1. JUDAH'S PLEA.—(30.) LAD.... NOT WITH US, Judah had become surety to his father for Benjamin's return; BOUND UP, Jacob had a special love for the son of his old age; the greater because of the supposed tragic death of Joseph. (31.) SORROW TO THE GRAVE, there is great pathetic power in the words of Judah, and they touched Joseph's heart. (32.) BEAR THE BLAME, I who caused my brother to be sold to save his life. (33.) LET ME ABIDE.... BONDMAN, Judah would now do more for Benjamin than he did for the lost Joseph. (34.) SEE THE EVIL, he offers his life for his brother.

II. THE RULER A BROTHER.—(1.) COULD NOT REFRAIN, the brethren had stood the trial; Judah's natural eloquence and noble offer had overpowered Joseph; EVERY MAN TO GO OUT, the Egyptians would despise a ruler if they saw him so moved by emotion. (2.) WEPT ALOUD, he had long restrained himself; now he gave way to his feelings. His house must have been near the palace, to be overheard by the royal family. (3.) JOSEPH.... MY FATHER YET LIVETH, this he had asked before, but now it springs out of his natural feelings almost unconsciously; TROUBLED, Joseph's strange excitement and tears terrified and amazed his brethren; perhaps, in a daze themselves, they feared the ruler was becoming crazy. (4.) COME NEAR, spoken, doubtless, in calmer tones, to reassure him. (5.) BE NOT GRIEVED, he had seen their sorrow over it; PRESERVE LIFE, not only here in Egypt, but your lives and all of our house (see verse 7.) (6.) TWO YEARS... FIVE YEARS, by this he is preparing them for the invitation to move into Egypt. (8.) NOT YOU... BUT GOD, you acted of your own will, but God used your act to save life.

LESSON IX

Nov. 28.]

JACOB AND PHARAOH. Gen. 47: 1-12.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 7-10.

1. Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks and their herds, and all that they have,

fire come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

2. And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. 3. And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. 4. They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come: for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. 5. And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee. 6. The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any man of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle. 7. And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? 9. And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. 10. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. 11. And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.—Prov. 16: 31.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Worldly rulers can aid God's people.

NOTES.—GOSHEN, "frontier?" a region lying in the north-east part of lower Egypt, and on the Mediterranean Sea, probably between the desert on the east and the Tanitic branch of the Nile on the west, and extending south to the head of the Red Sea. It was also called "the field of Zoan" or Tmis. Ps. 78: 12, 43, and "the land of Rameses," Gen. 47: 11, where the Israelites built the cities of Rameses and Pithom. Joseph placed his brethren in Goshen because it was a fertile region, "the best of the land," and also because it was nearest to Canaan, and likewise near to him at the royal capital. This district is still noted for its fertility.—SHEPHERD, To swineherds and goatherds the Egyptians had a special aversion, as their monuments plainly prove, (see also Gen. 46: 31). All shepherds were regarded as of a lower caste, and not proper associates for the true Egyptians.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE SONS AND THE KING. (II.) THE FATHER AND THE KING. (III.) THE NEW HOME. I. THE SONS AND THE KING.—(1.) ARE COME, as invited by the king. (2.) FIVE MEN, some suppose the oldest were chosen; why all were not introduced, it would be difficult to explain. (3.) PHARAOH SAID, the king condescended to converse with them, even though shepherds; SHEPHERDS, see NOTES. (4.) SOJOURN, to dwell. (5.) BEST OF THE LAND, as a special favor to his favorite minister, Joseph; RULERS OVER MY CATTLE, a position of value to both parties; Pharaoh found Joseph wise, why not his brothers also? II. THE FATHER AND THE KING.—(7.) SET HIM, in a place of honor, worthy of the king and his guest; BLESSED PHARAOH, it was more than a "salutation," as some hold; it was a blessing, also (see verse 10). (9.) PILGRIMAGE, Jacob's life had been one of wandering in foreign lands; FEW AND EVIL, full of sorrow, from Laban; his sons; famine; etc. III. THE NEW HOME.—(11.) POSSESSION, the land was all bought by Joseph for the crown (see verse 20), hence he could give it to his brethren; LAND OF RAMESSES, or Goshen (see Note). (12.) NOURISHED, cared for, furnished.

TRIFLES.

Straws show which way the wind blows, and trifles indicate the bent of character. I saw Hettie reading the other day in a borrowed book, and when her mother called her she laid it carelessly, open, face downward, on a chair. It happened that Hettie did not return immediately, and before she had done so the baby had pulled the book by one corner to the floor, and Artie, running hastily in, had trampled upon it. Its condition would certainly be unrepresentable when it should be sent back to its owner. My own impression of Hettie, who had seemed to be a very amiable young lady, was that she was unfaithful in small things. Had she closed the book and placed it on the table before leaving the room it would not have been injured. When I see a young girl with a torn dress, slippers down at heel, and a general lack of neatness in her home toilet, I am doubtful of her genuine love and respect for dear home friends. When, I know that Lucia is always late at church, I begin to wonder if she is not tardy everywhere else. When I hear Sara scolding Mattie for some

small fault, I consider her on the road to become a termagant. Don't neglect trifles, girls.—Christian at Work.

DON'T DAWDLE.

The word dawdle means to "waste time," to "trifle." When a boy does a thing in a "poky," lazy way, he "dawdles" over it. It is a bad thing to fall into a dawdling habit. It helps to make a boy unmanly, and a girl unwomanly. The dawdler's life is apt to be a failure. He does little for himself or for others. "In books, or work, or healthful play," he doesn't amount to much. Don't dawdle. Do things with a will, and do them well. You must not splutter or be "fussy" over your work. The fussy fellow can waste time in his haste as well as the dawdler in his slow trifling. Have a quick eye and a ready hand and a patient heart, always. If you have an hour in which to do a half-hour's task, do it in that half-hour. Get through on time, and then play with briskness and sparkling enjoyment. Do your errands promptly. Brush your hair with a lively hand. Sweep your room with decision in every motion of the broom. Take one "degree" in a useful line. D. D.'s—Don't dawdle.—S. S. Advocate.

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