

in Christ. Our part is to trust in Jesus; God's part is to bring us to heaven. The Golden Text is as applicable to us as to his people in old times.

This lesson might appropriately close with some simple child's hymn of consecration, such as,

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child," etc.

Miscellaneous.

THEMES FOR BIBLE READINGS.

1. GOD A FAITHFUL PROMISER. Num. xiii. 19; Deut. vii. 9; Psa. cv. 8; 2 Pet. iii. 9; James i. 17.
2. GOD'S PRECIOUS PROMISES. 2 Pet. i. 4; Psa. cxxxix. 17, 18; cv. 42-44.
3. CONFIDENCE IN THE PROMISES. Heb. xiii. 5; Luke i. 45; 1 John v. 14, 15.
4. PROMISES TO THE PENITENT. Matt. xi. 28; v. 6; Isa. i. 18; 1 John i. 9.
5. PROMISES TO THE AFFLICTED. John xvi. 33; Prov. iii. 12; Heb. xii. 11; 2 Cor. i. 3-7.
6. PROMISES TO THE VALIANT. James i. 12; Gal. vi. 9; Matt. xxiv. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 58; Matt. xvi. 24, 25.
7. THE ALL-COMPREHENDING PROMISES. Rom. viii. 35-39; 1 Tim. iv. 8; Rom. viii. 28, 32; 2 Cor. vii. 1.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1874.

LESSON VI.—*The First Plague.* Exod. vii. 14-22.

GOLDEN TEXT: Heb. iii. 15.

Berean Notes.

I. GENERAL STATEMENT.

Time, B. C. 1491. Moses and Aaron work a miracle before Pharaoh. Exod. vii. 1-10. The sorcerers imitate them; Aaron's rod swallows up the magicians' rods, vers. 11, 12. Pharaoh's heart is hardened. God brings the plague of blood.

II. NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. A HEAVENLY WARNING, vers. 15-18. (1) *Given betimes.* Pharaoh had not heeded the miracle noted in vers. 12. Now leaving his palace IN THE MORNING he early meets the

warning. THE WATER. The Nile—the patron deity of Egypt—to which the king went to bathe or to offer his devotions. (2) *Given with divine emphasis.* THE ROD. Exod. iv. 2-4. In Egypt rods were carried by nobles and officials as symbols of authority or rank. Moses' rod was already deeply significant to Pharaoh, vers. 9-13. THE LORD HATH SENT ME. Highest claim of authority. THOU SHALT KNOW. God is willing to satisfy all reasonable doubts. Miracle upon miracle. "Line upon line." Isa. xxviii. 10-13. (3) *With fullness of detail,* vers. 17, 18. Thus to let Pharaoh know the full extent of his responsibility. So throughout the Scriptures the sinner is warned with awful minuteness.

Warn the boatman before he enters the current, and then if he is swept down the rapids he destroys himself. Warn the man before he drinks the cup of poison; tell him it is deadly; and then, if he drinks it, his death lies at his own door. And so let us warn you before you depart this life; let us preach to you while as yet your bones are full of marrow, and the sinews of your joints are not loosed.—*Spurgeon.*

2. A HORRIBLE PLAGUE, vers. 19-21. (1) *The human instrument.* AARON . . ROD . . HAND. One word from heaven would have sufficed; but God will ever work by human agency. 1 Cor. iii. 9. (2) *Divine power.* THE LORD COMMANDETH. The rod is nothing; but wielded by Divine authority it is the symbol of Omnipotence. "Meek things" "to confound the mighty." 1 Cor. i. 27. (2) *Wide extent of the plague.* WATERS . . STREAMS . . PONDS, etc.; that is, the Nile and its branches, and all bodies of water, large and small, and every drop of water everywhere in Egypt. BLOOD. Real blood, doubtless. Yet the miracle would be as great if the water had but the appearance of blood. Blood-thirsty Pharaoh had made the bloody decree to slay every male infant of Israel; now he, in turn, shall have blood in awful abundance. The Nile water—reckoned by the Egyptians preferable to all the water in the universe—shall now become a national abhorrence. FISH . . DIED. Double miracle. A chief article of food all destroyed. The Nile deity no longer an object of devotion; the plague of death is on it. Sin turns all blessings into curses. Mal. ii. 3. Sin would dethrone God himself.

As you have stood some stormy day upon a sea-cliff, and marked the giant billow rise from the deep to rush on with foaming crest, and throw itself thundering on the trembling shore, did you ever fancy that you could stay its course and hurl it back to the depths of the ocean? Did you ever stand beneath the leaden, lowering cloud and mark the lightning's leap as it shot and flashed, dazzling athwart the gloom, and think that you could grasp the bolt and change its path? Still more foolish and vain his thoughts who fancies