

Sabbath School Lessons.*May 24th. 1863.***AARON'S DEATH.**

Numb. xx. 14-29.

I.—EDOM REFUSES A PASSAGE.

Idumea, the country of Edom, lay to the south west of the Dead Sea, directly in the way of the Israelites to Judea. *Moses sent.* In this message, Moses pleaded the common relationship of Israel and Edom; they were the descendants of the twin-brothers, Jacob and Esau. He pleaded their long and sore travel; their sufferings in Egypt; their Divine guidance; and promises if they be allowed a passage not to injure the country, to keep the highways, and to pay even for the water they might drink. Edom refused, and opposed their entrance with an army. He perhaps feared that so great a host could not be restrained from committing depredations; probably, too, the refusal of the King of Edom—was owing to a revival of the old enmity concerning the loss of the birthright. *Israel turned away from him*—they might have forced a passage, but showed brotherly forbearance.

2. AARON'S DEATH.

In Mount Hor. This was a mountain on the southern border of Idumea. Here Aaron receives a message from God, that he must die on account of his disobedience at Meribah.—He submits without a murmur.

Learn 1. *How careful we should be to do just what God commands.* Because they had not acted in strict conformity with God's command, Moses and Aaron were not to enter Canaan. How many dishonour God by adding to his word things of their own devising!

2. *How base it is to refuse to help a brother.* "A brother is born for adversity."—God has set us in families that we may love and help each other.

3. *That brothers are often unkind.* From Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph's brethren we see how sin blights brotherly love. Instead of loving and helping each other, brothers often hate and persecute each other.—How delightful the assurance that Christ is our Brother! Upon his generous, infinite, unchangeable love, we can always rely.

4. *To be always prepared for death.*—How would such a message as Aaron received sound to you? Could you lay aside your body as calmly as he did his priestly garments, and meet your God? If "gathered to your people," would you be "gathered" with the bad or with the good?

5. *Our great High Priest abideth forever.* The transference of Aaron's office, in this manner, to Eleazar, implied the truth, that as Israel ever required, so should they ever have, a high priest.

*May 31st.***THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.**

MATT. xvi. 4. 12.

1. THE WARNING.

Our Lord had been conversing with the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Pharisees affected extraordinary sanctity. They paid strict attention to external, but quite neglected internal religion; they sought the praise of man instead of the praise of God; John v. 44; in a word, they were hypocrites. The Sadducees, like modern infidels, made great pretensions to be impartial enquirers after truth. Against these two classes of men, the disciples had more need to be on their guard than against the openly profane; and therefore our Lord repeats the warning, "Take heed and beware."

2. THE DISCIPLES' MISTAKE.

Putting a literal construction upon Christ's words, the disciples supposed, that he meant to upbraid them for want of prudence and foresight, in neglecting to take with them their daily bread. They understood him to mean, that they should have no familiarity with the Pharisees and Sadducees, not even so much as to eat of their bread; that he wished not that his disciples should be indebted to them for anything, nor that they should incur the danger of partaking of the food of such bitter and unscrupulous enemies.

3. THEIR REPROOF.

Oh ye of little faith. Jesus thought it a far greater sin to mistrust him than to forget bread. Their former experiences of his power and goodness aggravated their sin.—Though they had forgotten to take with them bread. They had Him with them who could supply it. *But of the doctrine,* like leaven it was insinuating, pervading, corrupting.

Learn 1. *To be on your guard against the temptations of the wicked.* If you associate with them, though they are rich and clever, you will soon become like them. Seek the society of the good, for though they may be poor and despised by the world, they possess the true riches and honour, and will make you like themselves.

2. *To be spiritually-minded.* Too much care about earthly things, keeps us from understanding Christ; Matt. vi. 19-22.