

Teachers' Preparation Leaflet

LESSON 2.

APRIL 8th, 1894.

2nd QUARTER.

Discord in Jacob's Family. Gen. 37: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "See that ye fall not out by the way." Gen. 45: 24.

COMMIT TO MEMORY verses 3, 4. CHILDREN'S HYMNAL, 76, 12, 166, 118.

PROVE THAT—Brotherly love is a good thing. Ps. 133: 1.

SHORTER CATECHISM—Quest. 96. What is the Lord's Supper?

DAILY PORTIONS.

(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)

MONDAY.	TUESDAY.	WEDNESDAY.	THURSDAY.	FRIDAY.	SATURDAY.	SABBATH.
Gen. 37: 1-11	Prov. 6: 12-19	Jas. 8: 10-18	Jas. 4: 5-12	Ps. 133	1 John 2: 1-11	1 John 4: 12-21

INTRODUCTORY DRILL.—THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS.

JACOB.

LEAH	Rachel	ZILPAH	BILHAH
Reuben Simeon Levi Judah Issachar Zebulun	Joseph Manasseh Ephraim Benjamin	Gad Asher	Dan Naphtali

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Eleven years have passed away since the return of Jacob from Haran. Reconciled to his brother Esau, he excused himself from accepting his proffered escort, and settled for a time in the valley of the Jordan, at Succoth. From thence he shortly removed to the breezy uplands where Abraham had at first set up the altar of God, and purchased a homestead from the Sechemites. He had been commanded to return to Bethel, but he lingered on the way. So God aroused him to a sense of his duty by a very sad experience. His sons were embroiled in a quarrel with the people of the place, and it was unsafe to remain there longer. Jacob again receives the command to repair to Bethel, and at once sets his household in order for the journey, by a new consecration and purification from the super-

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stition and idolatry which had crept in amongst them. At Bethel Deborah, his mother's nurse, on whose breast in infancy he had slumbered, died, and the depth of his grief may be seen in the name he gave to the oak under which she was buried. Then at Bethlehem, or near it, the greatest sorrow of his life befel him—Rachel died. For four years he had made his home at Hebron, among the friendly Hittites, near the grave of Abraham and Isaac. His older sons, who grew up in Padanaram, amid the worldly surroundings of his uncle's home, and in the days of his own unfaith, now caused him grief by their lawless excesses. The society of his two younger sons was therefore the more grateful. They were the children of his beloved Rachel. The noble qualities of Joseph, already beginning to shew themselves, would fill him with hopes of a worthy successor in the covenant line, for as he himself had supplanted an older brother, why should not Joseph supplant those who preceded him? Most unwisely, he shews the wish of his heart and the result is discord in the home. The three causes of this unhappiness furnishes us with our

LESSON PLAN. I Wickedness Reported vs 1, 2. II. Partiality Displayed, vs. 3, 4. III. Greatness Predicted. vs 5-11.

I. WICKEDNESS REPORTED. 1. The land of his father's sojournings. (R. V.) —Esau on the other hand made a permanent home for himself in Mount Seir (ch. 36: 6-8), thus giving up all claim to the blessings attached to the possession of the "promised land." The fact that the patriarchs were only sojourners is frequently referred to: Gen. 17: 8; 23: 4; 28: 4; 36: 7; Ps. 105: 11, 12. All life is but a "pilgrimage" during which the Christian lives in expectancy, waiting for the home of which Canaan was a type. See Gen. 47: 9; 1 Chr. 29: 15; Ps. 39: 12; 119: 9; 1 Pet. 1: 17; 2: 11; Heb. 11: 9, 13. 2. The generations—This phrase closes the narrative of Jacob as the similar expression, in ch. 25; 19, did that of Isaac, and introduces the history of the next central character, Joseph, Seventeen years old—i. e. in his seventeenth year. He was born in B. C. 1745, and was seven years of age when Jacob returned to Canaan, where he had now resided for ten years. In ch. 41: 6 he was 30 when he stood before Pharaoh, so he had thirteen years of suffering. Was feeding—"as was his custom" is implied. With his brethren—lit. "was tending his brethren in the flock (Bib. Mus.)" "Oversight or superintendence is evidently implied. This post of chief shepherd in the party might be assigned to him either from his being the son of a principal wife, or from his own superior qualities of character," (Jamieson). The lad—"and a mere lad, as he was, was with, &c." (Dods). The sons of Bilhah—Dan and Naphtali. The sons of Zilpah—Gad and Asher. Their mothers were probably Syrians and of an idolatrous and less civilized race. The evil report of them—(R. V.) Their fierce natures would lead them into excesses, and their inferior birth would deprive them of the restraint of self-respect and regard for the honor of the family name. They could never rival Joseph in authority and so would tolerate his over-ship, yet, being so much younger, he was unable to exercise much influence over them. His only course, if he would be faithful to his trust, was to report them.

II. PARTIALITY DISPLAYED. The first reason why the brothers hated Joseph was that he was of a higher moral character. The second was his father's unwise fondness for him. The third was his dreams, which uncomfortably harmonized with his manifest superiority to themselves. The son of his old age—This title is given to Benjamin ch. 44: 20, but Benjamin was at this time only about four years of age, and Joseph would occupy most of his father's attention. He was also the son of his beloved Rachel. The expression "a son of old age" may mean "a wise son," and refer to Joseph's winning disposition and intelligence. Goat of many colors—R. V. marg., "a long garment with sleeves." The word is obscure. It may mean (1) "a motley coat," embroidered in colors or of colored stripes sewed together; or (2) a robe with sleeves; or (3) a fringed garment. Possibly it had all three characteristics. Such festive attire is found on Egyptian mummies of Joseph's time. Its meaning made it offensive. It was a badge of superiority and implied chieftainship in the future. Similar costly apparel is referred to in Judges 5: 30; 2 Sam. 2: 19; Ps. 45: 14. compare also Hannah and Samuel, 1 Sam. 2: 19. 4. Could not speak peaceably—The ordinary salutation was "shalom" i. e. "peace be unto thee." The brothers could not even bid him "good day," or speak to him, without showing their resentment. The conduct of the brothers towards Joseph was just what might have been expected. It was the natural result of the father's sin in showing so decided a preference for Joseph and in giving a continual proof of it in the coat of many colors. One sin leads to another. Jacob's sin causes Joseph's brothers to sin.

III. GREATNESS PREDICTED. They hate him yet the more—"The third cause of envy was that Joseph dreamed and told his brothers how he saw their sheaves making obeisance to his sheaf, and their stars making obeisance to him. These dreams derived not

only their imagery but their substance from his waking thoughts. Dreams become significant when they embody in a picturesque form the concentrated essence of the general tenor of our thoughts or tendency of our character. And it was because the brothers felt that these dreams did so, and were no mere fanciful whimsicalities, that they hated him yet the more for his dreams. The fact that neither the princely dress nor the confident dreams excited their ridicule, but that both excited their hate, shows that they saw the appropriateness of the dress and already felt in Joseph a superiority which lent significance to his dreams."

6. "Dreams become significant when they are the concentrated essence of the main stream of our waking thoughts and picturesquely exhibit the tendency of the character." (Dods). "Our wishes are the forefeelings of our capabilities," and in dreams we attain the goal of our desires. Joseph told his dreams with the simplicity of a guileless mind, and with the natural proneness of members of a family to tell in the morning the dreams they have had. (Dods). 7. The brothers interpret the dream correctly, although it was to be realized in a way that they had no conception of. See ch. 42: 6; 43: 26; 44: 14. It is evident that tillage was practised to some extent by Jacob and his sons. 8. They hated him for his dreams and for his words. They would not give him credit for guileless simplicity, but believed that he exulted over them when he told it. 9. The second dream is plainer than the first and exalts Joseph still more. The sun and the moon—His father and mother. Rachel was dead and Leah did not live to go down to Egypt. (ch. 49: 31). They are introduced merely to complete the symbolism of the dream, and denote the whole family. 10, 11. Perhaps Joseph exhibited a little childish pride while telling this second dream and Jacob felt it necessary to reprove him for allowing himself to entertain such an unseemly ambition. Still, like Mary, he pondered these things in his heart. (Luke 2: 19, 51). "These dreams were probably intended to sustain Joseph during his thirteen years of wretchedness, and at the same time, to prepare him to be an interpreter." (Lange).

SUMMARY AND REVIEW.

(We have asked some of the experienced blackboard teachers in our Sabbath Schools to write the *Summary and Review* for the Teachers' leaflet. The first of these is given below, and is written by Mr. David Fotheringham, P. S. Inspector, and for some time Superintendent of Bloor St. Church S. School, To. We hope this feature will be acceptable as affording teachers an opportunity of comparing the methods of our best "Blackboardists." We shall take it as a great favor if anyone will send us the name of a minister, superintendent or teacher skilled in the use of chalk).

This lesson may well be studied and taught as illustrating the characteristics and consequences of Home Life, Lawless Life, and A Loving and Suffering Life.

The home influences of Jacob's early family life may, with little hesitation, be assigned as a controlling power in the formation of the character of the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah—two mothers of inferior social position and of probably heathenish proclivities. Jacob himself, having set his heart on material and selfish acquisition, could not have manifested the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial which should be most prominent in home life and discipline. His cunning and craft, so often manifest during his Haran life, could not but speak louder than words in his polygamous and no doubt often discordant household.

Very different must have been his spirit and life after his conflict, victory and transformation at Peniel and after the loss of his beloved Rachel. By these touches of God's hand and Spirit he had been humbled, quickened, uplifted, strengthened, not less for the sacred duties of husband and father, than for the exalted place he was to occupy in the noble line of patriarchs, and as progenitor of the Great Prince. Thus we may account for the gracious development in character of his youngest son, which has made the name of Joseph synonymous in all ages with whatever is pure, manly, filial and pious.

The nomadic life of these sons of Jacob's secondary wives, with much idle time on their hands; with no law but their own tastes and impulses, and often associated with vicious heathen tribes of the land, must have rapidly developed the selfish, the sensual, the corrupt within them. The grief of the pureminded, noble-spirited Joseph at such a state of matters in his father's family must have been intolerable. Not as a talebearer, but feeling a real responsibility for their character and conduct, he reluctantly, but courageously, carries to their father "their evil report."

Unsuspecting because of his tender years and own transparent honesty, after having incur-

red the hatred of these bad men, he fanned the accursed flame by relating the divine forecasts of his future superiority over them.

Jacob's now consecrated and chastened life did not save him from the error of many a Christian parent. His justifiable preference for the noble, pure-minded, affectionate son of his lost Rachel was marked by an invidious distinction in the gift of a sheik's robe of office. This brought to a head the hatred and jealousy which found vent in the unspeakably shameful treatment related in the next lesson.

HOME LIFE.

Secular.
Consecrated.

LAWLESS LIFE.

Vicious.
Vengeful.

LOVING LIFE.

Losing self.
Saving others.

NORMAL DRILL.

based on the text-book, *The Sabbath School Teacher's Handbook, or, The Principle and Practice of teaching, with special reference to the Sabbath School,* prepared by Principal Kirkland of the Toronto Normal School.

TELLING AND QUESTIONING. (CHAPTER VII).

II. Qualifications of the Questioner.

1. A thorough knowledge of the subject.
2. Power to think logically and clearly.
3. A knowledge of good models of the art of questioning.
4. Practice in the actual effort of questioning.

III. Tests of a Good Question.

1. The language of the question should be simple and familiar to the scholar.
2. The question should be definite and free from all ambiguity.
3. " " " " suited to the capacity of the scholar.
4. " " " " asked in the fewest possible words.
5. " " " " easy at first and gradually increase in difficulty.
6. " " " " in proportion to the importance of the subject.
7. " " " " admit of a definite answer.
8. " " " " should be given in such an order as to form a systematic and progressive development of the subject.
9. A good question must have the element of the unexpected in it. It should surprise the mind with some fresh and novel view of the subject.
10. Questions should be (1) On the words of the lesson, (2) To exercise the understanding, (3) To develop spiritual truths.