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INTERNATIONAL SABBATH-SCHOOL QUARTERLY

Sabbath-School Lessons on

Studies in the Psalms

FOR SENIOR CLASSES

No. 31

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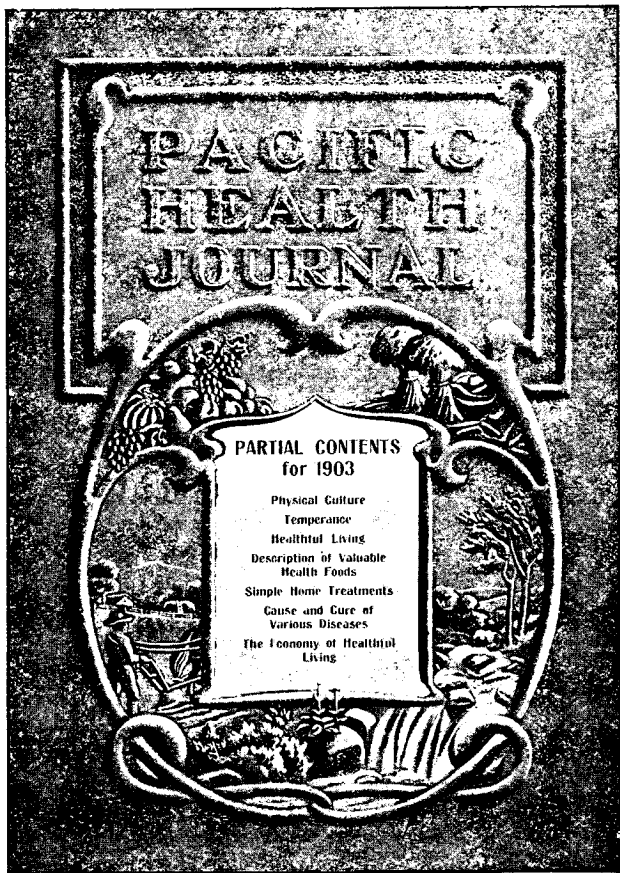
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SABBATH-SCHOOL LESSONS

Studies in the Psalms

For Senior Classes

FIRST QUARTER, ¹⁹¹⁹ 1903



LESSON I.—*The Greatness of Jehovah.*

JANUARY 3.

PSALM 104:1-12.

Bless Jehovah, O my soul.
O Jehovah my God, Thou art very great;
Thou art clothed with honor and majesty;
Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment;
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;
Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters;
Who maketh the clouds His chariot;
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind;
Who maketh winds His messengers;
Flames of fire His ministers;
Who laid the foundations of the earth,
That it should not be moved forever.
Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a vesture;
The waters stood above the mountains.
At Thy rebuke they fled;
At the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away
(The mountains rose, the valleys sank)
Unto the place which Thou hadst founded for them.
Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over;
That they turn not again to cover the earth.

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

He sendeth forth springs into the valleys;
 They run among the mountains;
 They give drink to every beast of the field;
 The wild asses quench their thirst.
 By them the birds of the heavens have their habitation;
 They sing among the branches.

Questions.

1. With what exhortation does this psalm open?
2. What general statement is then made concerning the being of Jehovah?
3. With what is Jehovah arrayed?
4. What serves as a robe for Him?
5. What has He done to the heavens?
6. Where has He built His chambers?
7. To what use does He put the clouds?
8. Upon what does He walk?
9. What does He use as His messengers?
10. What does He use as His ministers?
11. How permanently has He founded the earth?
12. With what was the earth at one time covered?
13. How high did the waters stand?
14. What caused the waters to recede?
15. For what reason did they speedily retire?
16. What changes took place in the surface of the earth?
17. What disposition was made of the waters?
18. How are they held in their appointed place?
19. What are they thus prevented from doing?
20. Where does Jehovah cause the waters to flow forth?

We expend sixty per cent of our efforts upon four per cent of our field.

21. Where do they wend their way?
22. What need of the animal kingdom is thus supplied?
23. What animals are thus able to quench their thirst?

Notes.

This psalm sets forth the greatness of Jehovah the Creator, the Provider, and the Ruler of the world. Its purpose is "to make man bow in lowly faith before God's boundless wisdom, believing that He, whose power created, and whose providence rules, the whole order of nature, is no less wonderful in His governance of the moral world. He never mistakes."

"The whole natural world is designed to be an interpreter of the things of God. . . . As the works of God are studied, the Holy Spirit flashes conviction into the mind. It is not the conviction which logical reasoning produces; but, unless the mind has become too dark to know God, the eye too dim to see Him, the ear too dull to hear His voice, a deeper meaning is grasped, and the sublime, spiritual truths of the written Word are impressed on the heart. . . . God has, in the natural world, placed in the hands of the children of men the key to unlock the treasure-house of His Word. The unseen is illustrated by the seen; divine wisdom, eternal truth, infinite grace, are understood by the things that God has made."

With verse 2 compare 1 John 1:5; Gen. 1:2, 3; 2 Cor. 4:6.

Observe the use made of versè 4 in Heb. 1:7.

There is undoubted reference to the flood in verses 6-9. Although the record states that "the fountains of the great deep [were] broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and that the waters were assuaged by a wind which passed over the earth, yet it was none the less directly the personal act of God which brought the flood, and it was at His rebuke that the waters fled. The so-called operations of nature are in truth the operations of God, and the so-called laws of nature

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

are but the habitual methods of God's working. By studying the things which God has made, and observing the working of His power in upholding and caring for them, we may become acquainted with that power which is the essential feature of the gospel. Rom. 1:16-20.



LESSON II.—The Great Provider.

JANUARY 10.

PSALM 104:13-24.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers;
 The earth is filled with the fruit of Thy works.
 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,
 And herb for the service of man;
 That He may bring forth food out of the earth,
 And wine that maketh glad the heart of man,
 And oil to make his face to shine,
 And bread that strengtheneth man's heart.
 The trees of Jehovah are filled with moisture,
 The cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted;
 Where the birds make their nests;
 As for the stork, the fir trees are her house.
 The high mountains are for the wild goats;
 The rocks are a refuge for the conies.
 He appointed the moon for seasons;
 The sun knoweth his going down.
 Thou makest darkness, and it is night,
 Wherein all the beasts of the forest creep forth.
 The young lions roar after their prey,
 And seek their food from God.
 The sun ariseth, they get them away,
 And lay them down in their dens.
 Man goeth forth unto his work
 And to his labor until the evening.
 O Jehovah, how manifold are Thy works!
 In wisdom hast Thou made them all;
 The earth is full of Thy riches.

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

Questions.

1. What part of the animal kingdom find a home near the streams?
2. How do they give expression to praise to Jehovah?
3. From what source do the mountains receive their supply of water?
4. How is the earth replenished?
5. How is the need of the cattle supplied?
6. What is made to grow for the benefit of man?
7. What purpose is carried out by this working?
8. What is thus supplied to gladden man?
9. How is the supply of strength continued to man?
10. What evidence is given of the Husbandman's care for the forests?
11. What specific case is mentioned?
12. What homes are found among these trees?
13. What instance of selecting a tree-house is mentioned?
14. For what kind of animals are the mountains adapted?
15. For what kind of animals do the rocks furnish a hiding-place?
16. To what use is the moon appointed in the economy of nature?
17. How is the close of the day marked?
18. What condition distinguishes the night from the day?
19. What creatures venture forth in the night?
20. From whom do the young lions ask their food? In what way?

The needs of the cause of God are world wide.

21. What do these animals do at the dawn of day?
22. For whom has the day been appointed as the season of labor?
23. What is said of the works of Jehovah? How have they been wrought?
24. With what is the earth filled?

Notes.

Although the ground was cursed on account of the sin of man (Gen. 3:17), yet the power of God is working through it to supply His creatures with food. This is a revelation of the power of the cross of Christ in overcoming the curse.

From verses 14, 15, we may learn that food, both for man and beast, is the gift of God. Read John 6:5-12, 27, 32-35, and note the explanation thus given of the annual miracle of multiplying the loaves to feed the world.

Before sin came into the world and brought so many artificial conditions, man was in much closer touch with his Maker. "The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them." "It was the work of Adam and Eve to train the branches of the vine to form bowers, thus making for themselves a dwelling from living trees covered with foliage and fruit." Although the animal creation has been involved in the suffering consequent upon sin, yet the trees still constitute a home for the birds, the mountains for the goats, and the rocks for the conies.

When the young lions roar after their prey, God regards it as a call upon Him for food. Work was not imposed upon man as a punishment for sin. The Father and the Son are both workers. John 5:17. The experience of weariness and of wearing out while working is, however, one of the results of sin.

With verse 24 compare Prov. 3:19, 20 and Jer. 10:12. There

The Son of God beggared Himself to enrich us.

is creative power in divine wisdom and true knowledge. "The true higher education is what makes students acquainted with God and His Word, and fits them for eternal life."



LESSON III.—God's Care for His Creatures.

JANUARY 17.

PSALM 104:25-35.

Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
 Wherein are things creeping [moving] innumerable,
 Both small and great beasts [living creatures].
 There go the ships;
 There is leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to play therein.
 These wait all for Thee,
 That Thou mayest give them their food in due season.
 Thou givest unto them, they gather;
 Thou openest Thy hand, they are satisfied with good.
 Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled;
 Thou takest away their breath, they die,
 And return to their dust.
 Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created;
 And Thou renewest the face of the ground.
 Let the glory of Jehovah endure forever;
 Let Jehovah rejoice in His works;
 Who looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;
 He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke.
 I will sing unto Jehovah as long as I live;
 I will sing praise to my God while I have any being.
 Let my meditation be sweet unto Him;
 I will rejoice in Jehovah.
 Let sinners be consumed out of the earth.
 And let the wicked be no more.
 Bless Jehovah, O my soul.
 Praise ye Jehovah.

Questions.

1. What description is given of the sea?
2. What are found in it?

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

3. In what way does the sea serve the purposes of commerce?
4. What sea-monster sports in the water?
5. What is the attitude of all these creatures toward their Creator?
6. What do they expect from Him?
7. What part does God act in the matter?
8. What part do these living creatures act?
9. How fully does God supply the needs of His creatures?
10. What brings His creatures into distress?
11. What causes their death? To what do they then return?
12. By what agency are they recreated?
13. What change is thus made in the condition of the earth?
14. What desire is expressed concerning the glory of Jehovah?
15. How much satisfaction is it desired that Jehovah shall take in His works?
16. How much power is there in a look of Jehovah?
17. How much power is there in His touch?
18. What vow does the psalmist make to Jehovah?
19. To what does he say that his whole life shall be devoted?
20. What desire does he express concerning his meditation?
21. What does he declare shall be the basis of his rejoicing?

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

22. What experience awaits the sinners?
23. What will become of the wicked?
24. What exhortation is now repeated?
25. What significant word closes the psalm?

Notes.

Still the psalmist sings of the eternal mercies of God and His wonderful providence. Now he shows that divine care is over even the innumerable forms of life beneath the broad expanse of the ocean. All wait upon God, and not one is forgotten. Luke 12:6, 7, 24. But that which is given, "they gather." Busy activity is the law of life for all creatures.

"The Lord shall rejoice in His works." See Ps. 147:11; Zeph. 3:16, 17. The earth itself is represented as responding to a look from the Creator. This sensitiveness of all creation to the touch of God leads the psalmist to declare his purpose to meditate on God's care and glory continually. The advent idea pervades the psalms. Here is the divinely-inspired prayer for the blotting out of sin, which mars creation. It is the same prayer that closes the book of Revelation. Rev. 22:20.



*LESSON IV.—An Exhortation to Make Known the
Wondrous Works of God.*

JANUARY 24.

PSALM 105:1-13.

Oh give thanks unto Jehovah, call upon His name;
 Make known among the peoples His doings.
 Sing unto Him, sing praises unto Him;
 Talk ye of all His marvelous works.
 Glory ye in His holy name;

*"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send
 forth laborers into His harvest."*

Let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah.
 Seek ye Jehovah and His strength;
 Seek His face evermore.
 Remember His marvelous works that He hath done,
 His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,
 O ye seed of Abraham His servant,
 Ye children of Jacob, His chosen ones.
 He is Jehovah our God;
 His judgments are in all the earth.
 He hath remembered His covenant forever,
 The word which He commanded to a thousand generations,
 The covenant which He made with Abraham,
 And His oath unto Isaac,
 And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a statute,
 To Israel for an everlasting covenant,
 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan,
 The lot of your inheritance;
 When they were but a few men in number,
 Yea, very few, and sojourners in it.
 And they went about from nation to nation,
 From one kingdom to another people.

Questions.

1. With what urgent appeal does this psalm open?
2. What are we asked to make known?
3. How is praise to Jehovah to be expressed?
4. What is to be kept before the mind?
5. In what is all boasting to be done?
6. What brings rejoicing to the heart?
7. What are to be always sought?
8. What are to be called to mind?
9. How are these works specially mentioned?
10. Who are first called upon to do this?
11. How are they further designated?
12. What relationship is declared between us and God?
13. Where are His judgments to be found?

"The advent message to the world in this generation"—our watchword.

14. What has God never forgotten?
15. How is this covenant defined?
16. With whom did He make this covenant?
17. What is it called as renewed to Isaac?
18. How was it renewed to Jacob?
19. What is it next declared to be?
20. What gift was promised in this covenant?
21. How is this gift defined?
22. Under what circumstances was this promise made?
23. What experience did the people have even after this promise was made?

Notes.

Continuing the subject of the previous lesson, the psalmist exhorts us to call upon the name of the Lord, giving thanks to Him. He would have this done intelligently, and so suggests that the deeds of the Most High be made known among the people, both in song and in conversation with our associates. This, followed out, would work reform in many ways.

We in these last days are especially to consider the dealing of God with His children in olden times. Isa. 51:9-11; Ps. 44:1-3.

Notice the promise to Abraham (Gen. 13:14-17), oath confirmed to Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5), and then to Jacob (Gen. 35:10-12). It is the promise of the inheritance and everlasting life through faith. Gal. 3:29.



LESSON V.—God's Care for His People.

JANUARY 31.

PSALM 105:14-25.

He suffered no man to do them wrong;
Yea, He reprov'd kings for their sakes,

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

Saying, Touch not Mine anointed ones,
 And do My prophets no harm.
 And He called for a famine upon the land;
 He brake the whole staff of bread.
 He sent a man before them;
 Joseph was sold for a servant;
 His feet they hurt with fetters;
 He was laid in chains of iron,
 Until the time that his word came to pass,
 The word of Jehovah tried him.
 The king sent and loosed him;
 Even the ruler of peoples, and let him go free.
 He made him lord of his house,
 And ruler of all his substance;
 To bind his princes at his pleasure,
 And teach his elders wisdom.
 Israel also came into Egypt;
 And Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
 And He increased His people greatly,
 And made them stronger than their adversaries.
 He turned their heart to hate His people,
 To deal subtly with His servants.

Questions.

1. To what extent did God protect His people in their journeyings?
2. Did He show respect of persons in this matter?
3. What warning did He give to the enemies of His people?
4. What experience did He bring upon the sojourners in the land of promise?
5. What support did He remove from them?
6. How did He provide for their deliverance?
7. In what way did the deliverer enter the land of Egypt?
8. Through what experience did Joseph pass?

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

9. To what test was He subjected? For how long a time?
10. At whose command was he released?
11. On whose authority was he restored to freedom?
12. To what position was Joseph now elevated?
13. What control did he have over the king's property?
14. What power did he have over other persons of high rank?
15. What was his standing as a teacher?
16. Who then came into the land of the Pharaohs?
17. Where did he become a sojourner?
18. What did God then do for His people?
19. How great did their power become as compared with their enemies?
20. What change did God make in the feelings of their adversaries toward them?
21. What did He lead their adversaries to do?

Notes.

The Lord promises to care for those who do the right and trust Him. See Gen: 35:5; Ps. 34:7; Exodus 24.

Over and over, in the story of reform and missionary effort, God's invisible hand has restrained, and His voice said to savage hearts, "Touch not Mine anointed." In the story of his life among the South Sea cannibals, John G. Paton says of one occasion:—

"A club was raised to follow the blow of the 'killing-stone,' but God baffled the aim. They encircled us in a deadly ring, and one kept urging another to strike the first blow, or fire the first shot. . . . The host of armed men also ran along on each side with their weapons ready; but, leaving everything to Jesus, I ran on as if they were my escort. If any reader

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

wonders how they were restrained, much more would I, unless I believed the same Hand that restrained the lions from touching Daniel held back these savages from hurting me."

The Lord sent Joseph into Egypt, overruling the evil purpose of his brethren. God uses even the wrath of men to praise Him, and, whatever men do to us, we are in His hands. That which Jacob thought against him (Gen. 42:36) was being worked for him by God.

Notice that it was the blessings God gave Israel in Egypt that turned against them the hatred of the people of the land.



LESSON VI.—God's Power Manifested in Deliverance.

FEBRUARY 7.

PSALM 105:26-38.

He sent Moses His servant,
 And Aaron whom He had chosen.
 They set among them His signs,
 And wonders in the land of Ham.
 He sent darkness, and made it dark;
 And they rebelled not against His words.
 He turned their waters into blood,
 And slew their fish.
 Their land swarmed with frogs
 In the chambers of their kings.
 He spake, and there came swarms of flies,
 And lice in all their borders.
 He gave them hail for rain,
 And flaming fire in their land.
 He smote their vines also and their fig trees,
 And brake the trees of their borders.
 He spake, and the locust came,
 And the grasshopper, and that without number,
 And did eat up every herb in their land,
 And did eat up the fruit of their ground.

We expend sixty per cent of our efforts upon four per cent of our field.

He smote also all the first-born in their land,
 The chief of all their strength.
 And He brought them forth with silver and gold;
 And there was not one feeble person among His tribes.
 Egypt was glad when they departed;
 For the fear of them had fallen upon them.

Questions.

1. Whom did God send to lead out His people?
2. Who was associated with him in the work?
3. In what power did they bring their message of deliverance?
4. What was the first sign wrought by Jehovah?
5. What effect did this have?
6. What change was wrought in the water of the Nile?
7. What was thus accomplished?
8. What was then brought upon the land? Did royalty escape?
9. In what two marked ways was the power of God's word then shown?
10. What kind of storm was then brought upon the land?
11. What effect did this have upon the vegetation? To what extent?
12. What two plagues did His word then bring upon the land?
13. How completely did they consume that which grew out of the earth?
14. What was the last plague? What was thus cut off?

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

15. Did God's people depart empty-handed from the land of bondage?
16. What was their physical condition?
17. How did their oppressors feel about their departure?
18. What led to this changed condition of things?

Notes.

Read also Ps. 78:43-52.

Moses' preparation for service deserves more than casual study. That decree which brought sadness and gloom into the homes of the Hebrews was used by the Lord to fit the man whom He had chosen to lead His people out of Egypt when thefulness of the time should come.

The circumstances which would not permit Moses' parents to rear him in their own home led to his being placed where he could receive the training and education that would fit him to be Israel's future leader.

Note Moses' fidelity to God when the crisis came in his life (Heb. 11:23-26); read also Ps. 84:11; and the hope which buoyed him up in these trying hours (Heb. 11:26, 39, 40).

But Moses' preparation was not complete when he had served in the Egyptian court. Forty years were spent in the solitude of the mountains, where he could become acquainted with God. Read "Patriarchs and Prophets," page 251.

Do not fail to observe the practical lessons in the life of Moses.

A study of the plagues reveals the fact that they seemed to be designed to destroy the confidence of the Egyptians in the power and protection of their idols. Note 5 in the Appendix to "Patriarchs and Prophets" will throw some light on this subject. By reference to the history itself (Exodus 7 to 13), we find that some of the Egyptians did have their faith shaken in their idols, and saw in these things the finger of God. See also "Patriarchs and Prophets," page 279.

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

"The plagues upon Egypt were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people." Ps. 91:1, 10. Now, while Jesus still intercedes for us, the preparation must be made that will enable us to stand in the trying times before us.



LESSON VII.—God's Purpose in Deliverance.

FEBRUARY 14.

PSALM 105:39-45.

He spread a cloud for a covering,
 And fire to give light in the night.
 They asked, and He brought quails,
 And satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
 He opened the rock, and waters gushed out;
 They ran in the dry places like a river.
 For He remembered His holy word,
 And Abraham His servant.
 And He brought forth His people with joy,
 And His chosen with singing.
 And He gave them the lands of the nations;
 And they took the labor of the peoples in possession;
 That they might keep His statutes,
 And observe His laws.
 Praise ye Jehovah [Hallelujah].

PSALM 106:1-5.

Praise ye Jehovah.
 Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for He is good;
 For His loving-kindness endureth forever.
 Who can utter the mighty acts of Jehovah,
 Or show forth all His praise?
 Blessed are they that keep justice,
 And He that doeth righteousness at all times.
 Remember me, O Jehovah, with the favor that Thou bearest
 unto Thy people;
 Oh visit me with Thy salvation,
 That I may see the prosperity of Thy chosen,
 That I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation,
 That I may glory with Thine inheritance.

The needs of the cause of God are world wide.

Questions.

1. What shield did God provide for His people by day?
2. What furnished a light for them in the darkness?
3. What did God give them in response to their request?
 4. With what did He fill them?
 5. How did God provide water for His people?
 6. How abundant was the supply of water?
 7. What was thus being fulfilled?
 8. Whom did God still keep in mind?
 9. How did His people give expression to their thanksgiving for their deliverance?
 10. What were now given to them?
 11. What return did they now receive for their unrequited labor?
 12. For what purpose was this great deliverance wrought?
 13. What significant word closes the psalm?
 14. With what exhortation does Psalm 106 open?
 15. What exhortation follows? What reason is given?
 16. How enduring is His kindness?
 17. How is the number of the great deeds of Jehovah emphasized?
 18. How is the greatness of His praise set forth?
 19. What class are counted happy? Who is included in this class?
 20. How does the psalmist desire to be identified with God's people?

The Son of God beggared Himself to enrich us.

21. What personal request is made?

22. What is the first expected result of a favorable response to these petitions? The second? The third?

Notes.

Ps. 78:14; 1 Cor. 10:1, 2; Ps. 84:11 should be studied with verse 39.

"By day the cloud directed the journeyings, or spread as a canopy above the host. It served as a protection from the burning heat, and by its coolness and moisture afforded grateful refreshment in the parched, thirsty desert. By night it became a pillar of fire, illuminating their encampment, constantly assuring them of divine presence." Read Isa. 4:5, 6. "Here reference is made to the pillar of cloud and of fire to represent God's care for His people in the great final struggle with the power of evil."

The cloud that flooded the entire encampment of the Hebrews with the radiance of day was a wall of darkness to the Egyptians. Read with this Ps. 77:17, 18, R. V., and "Patriarchs and Prophets," page 287. The way that God marks out for His people will be flooded with light, although the unbelieving will not see it.

The manna was a type of Jesus, the Bread of life. John 6:48-51. Read also Rev. 2:17; 1 Cor. 10:3.

With verse 41 read Ps. 78:15, 16. "Moses smote the rock, but it was the Son of God who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, stood beside Moses, and caused the life-giving water to flow." Ps. 65:9; Rev. 22:1; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 4:13, 14; 7:37, 38.

Verse 42; Gen. 15:12-14, and Acts 7:6, 7, record the covenant with Abraham. For the blessing of this covenant to Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise, see Heb. 6:11-20.

Verse 43, with Ps. 116:12, 13; Psalm 33.

God brought forth His people that they might observe His statutes and keep His laws. The same is true in regard to His people to-day.

In all these experiences God designed to teach His people their utter dependence upon Him, and not merely on the man Moses, who was their leader.

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

LESSON VIII.—*Experiences of Israel for Our Learning.*

FEBRUARY 21.

PSALM 106:6-20.

We have sinned with our fathers,
We have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.
Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt;
They remembered not the multitude of Thy loving-kindnesses,
But were rebellious at the sea, even at the Red Sea.
Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake,
That He might make His mighty power to be known.
He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up;
So He led them through the depths, as through a wilderness.
And He saved them from the hand of him that hated them,
And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.
And the waters covered their adversaries;
There was not one of them left.
Then believed they His words;
They sang His praise.
They soon forgot His works;
They waited not for His counsel,
But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness,
And tempted God in the desert.
And He gave them their request,
But sent leanness into their soul.
They envied Moses also in the camp,
And Aaron the saint of Jehovah.
The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
And covered the company of Abiram.
And a fire was kindled in their company;
The flame burned up the wicked.
They made a calf in Horeb,
And worshiped a molten image.
Thus they changed their glory
For the likeness of an ox that eateth grass.

*"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world
for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."*

Questions.

1. In what respect did the psalmist say that their descendants were like the fathers?
2. What specific confession was made?
3. What did the fathers fail to understand?
4. What did they forget?
5. Where did their rebellious spirit break forth?
6. What did God do for them? Why?
7. What was His purpose in all this?
8. What did God do to the Red Sea? What was the result?
9. How easily were they then brought through the sea?
10. From what were they thus saved?
11. From whom were they redeemed?
12. With what experience did their enemies meet?
13. How complete was their destruction?
14. What influence did this have upon the faith of God's people?
15. How did they give expression to their feelings?
16. How long did they maintain this attitude toward God?
17. What shows their headstrong impatience?
18. What did they say?
19. How is their conduct characterized in its relation to God?
20. What response did God make to their demands?
21. What experience came upon them as a consequence?

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

22. How did the people treat Moses and Aaron?
23. What judgment came upon Dathan?
24. What happened to Abiram and his friends?
25. What other judgment came upon the people?
26. What was the result of this judgment?
27. How did they show that their hearts had not been converted from the idolatrous practises of Egypt?
28. In what way did they express their estimate of their Deliverer?

Notes.

This psalm opens with an exhortation to praise and thanksgiving and the acknowledgment that God's people to-day are repeating the history of His chosen people in the wilderness.

Verse 7. Observe how extensively this experience is being repeated in the lives of the majority of professed Christians. How rarely the multitude of God's mercies are recounted! This is the source of strength, the means by which Satan will always be defeated.

Verse 8. God is now gathering out a people for His name. Acts 15:14. We may not only be among that people, but we may share in gathering them, with this closing message, from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Through this people God will make known His mighty power; for He will vindicate His righteous character before the universe. This is the highest reason that can be assigned for God's great love in pardoning and saving sinners. Compare Eze. 36:22, 32; Isa. 43:25; 48:9; Jer. 14:7; Ps. 6:4; 23:3; 25:11; 31:16.

The song of Moses (Ex. 15:1-16) does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the final victory, when the Israel of God will sing not only the song of Moses, but the song of the Lamb (Rev. 15:2, 3). Those who will sing that song of triumph then must learn to sing it now.

"Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

Ps. 50:23; 67:5; 146:2.

"The history of the wilderness life of Israel was chronicled for the benefit of the Israel of God to the close of time. The varied experience of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people in these days review with a humble heart and teachable spirit the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan."

For significance of their idolatrous worship, see "Patriarchs and Prophets," Appendix, Note 7, page 758.



LESSON IX.—Experiences in the Wilderness.

FEBRUARY 28.

PSALM 106:21-33.

They forgot God their Saviour,
 Who had done great things in Egypt,
 Wondrous works in the land of Ham,
 And terrible things by the Red Sea.
 Therefore He said that He would destroy them,
 Had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breach,
 To turn away His wrath, lest He should destroy them.
 Yea, they despised the pleasant land,
 They believed not His word,
 But murmured in their tents,
 And harkened not unto the voice of Jehovah.
 Therefore He swore unto them,
 That He would overthrow them in the wilderness,
 And that He would overthrow their seed among the nations,
 And scatter them in the lands.
 They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor,
 And ate the sacrifices of the dead.
 Thus they provoked Him to anger with their doings;
 And the plague brake in upon them.

*"The advent message to the world in this generation"—our
 watchword.*

Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment;
 And so the plague was stayed.
 And that was reckoned unto him for righteousness,
 Unto all generations forevermore.
 They angered Him also at the waters of Meribah,
 So that it went ill with Moses for their sakes;
 Because they were rebellious against His Spirit,
 And he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

Questions.

1. How far did God's people neglect Him?
2. What reason had God given them for remembering Him?
3. What was the character of the works He had wrought for them?
4. In what other place had He shown His power in their behalf?
5. To what decision did this lead?
6. What attitude did Moses assume? For what purpose?
7. How did the people regard the promised land?
8. How did they show their lack of faith in God?
9. What was the climax of their rebellious course?
10. What did God declare that He would do unto them?
11. What would become of their seed?
12. How would He bring an end to their national existence?
13. In what way did they show their complete apostasy to idolatry?
14. What was stirred up by their wicked course?
15. What came upon them in consequence of this?

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

16. What course did Phinehas take?
17. What was the result of his action?
18. What permanent blessing did the mediation of Phinehas bring to him?
19. What course did the people pursue when the water failed?
20. What influence did this have upon the experience of Moses?
21. How did the people treat Moses?
22. What did this lead him to do?

Notes.

Unsanctified memory is a treacherous thing. Notice how continually the people forgot God and His deliverances, and remembered the trials and difficulties. They remembered the leeks and onions of Egypt, but forgot the bitterness of their bondage. Let us count the mercies, and forget not the Lord's benefits.

When Moses plead with God for the people, he based his plea for pardon upon the covenant with Abraham (Ex. 32:11-13), the promise of forgiveness and righteousness by faith in Christ.

Many of the people, as they journeyed, lost sight of the aim of the movement, and did not believe the promise of an inheritance, hence the murmuring by the way. Now, with the inheritance just before us, let no one murmur in his tent. There is where it usually begins,—in the home.

At Baal-peor they ate the sacrifices that had been offered to the dead, joined in the heathen rites of ancient Spiritualism. As ancient Israel had to contend with this delusion, so in these last days the deceptive doctrines of spiritualism, theosophy, and such like, are spreading abroad to ensnare souls. But the very increase of Satan's deceptions is evidence that the time is short.

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

LESSON X.—The Result of Disobedience.

MARCH 7.

PSALM 106:34-48.

They did not destroy the peoples,
 As Jehovah commanded them,
 But mingled themselves with the nations,
 And learned their works,
 And served their idols,
 Which became a snare unto them.
 Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto demons,
 And shed innocent blood,
 Even the blood of their sons and of their daughters,
 Whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan;
 And the land was polluted with blood.
 Thus were they defiled with their works,
 And played the harlot in their doings.
 Therefore was the wrath of Jehovah kindled against His people,
 And He abhorred His inheritance.
 And He gave them into the hand of the nations;
 And they that hated them ruled over them.
 Their enemies also oppressed them,
 And they were brought into subjection under their hand.
 Many times did He deliver them;
 But they were rebellious in their counsel,
 And were brought low in their iniquity.
 Nevertheless He regarded their distress,
 When He heard their cry;
 And He remembered for them His covenant,
 And repented according to the multitude of His loving-
 kindnesses.
 He made them also to be pitied
 Of all those that carried them captive.
 Save us, O Jehovah our God,
 And gather us from among the nations,
 To give thanks unto Thy holy name,
 And to triumph in Thy praise.
 Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
 From everlasting even to everlasting.
 And let all the people say, Amen.
 Praise ye Jehovah.

The offerings for this quarter go to the most needy fields.

Questions.

1. What command of Jehovah did His people fail to execute?
2. How did they relate themselves to the nations about them?
3. What was the result of this association with the heathen?
4. To what extent was the idea of the sacrificial offerings perverted?
5. Whose blood was shed in their idolatrous worship?
6. What effect did this have upon the land?
7. What effect did their wrong course have upon themselves?
8. What statement shows that they violated their vows to Jehovah?
9. How did their apostasy influence the attitude of Jehovah toward them?
10. How did He regard His own inheritance?
11. Under whose power did He bring them?
12. Who thus gained the dominion over them?
13. What was their experience with their enemies?
14. How merciful was Jehovah in His dealing with them?
15. How did they repay His kindness?
16. What was the result of this course?
17. Did the Lord reject them after they had turned from Him?
18. What did the Lord keep in mind? What did He do?

We expend sixty per cent of our efforts upon four per cent of our field.

19. How did He lead the captors of His people to feel toward them?

20. What petitions are now put into the mouth of the true Israel?

21. For what purpose is Israel to be gathered out from the nations?

22. In what ascription is Jehovah adored?

23. What response are the people to make?

24. What significant word closes the psalm?

Notes.

The book of Judges is the story of repeated apostasy and rebellion and deliverances. The second chapter shows how compromise with the world caused the troubles of the people. A precious lesson for times of distress is that in Judges 6:12-14.

The prayer of the psalmist in verse 47 is especially appropriate for these days, when God is gathering out His people from among the nations to triumph in His praise. There is triumph in praise, as there is defeat in murmuring. In the gathering of His people in these last days, we are to see again His power to deliver and save as in ancient days. Jer. 16:14, 15; Isa. 11:10-12. Review the whole psalm, and see how much murmuring and apostasy would have been saved had people but trusted God. The psalm begins and ends with the same cry, "Hallelujah." It is the battle-cry of Christian warfare.



LESSON XI.—Deliverance from Sin.

MARCH 14.

PSALM 107:1-16.

O give thanks unto Jehovah; for He is good;
For His loving-kindness endureth forever.
Let the redeemed of Jehovah say so,

"One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period."

Whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the adversary,
 And gathered out of the lands,
 From the east and from the west,
 From the north and from the south.
 They wandered in the wilderness in a desert way;
 They found no city of habitation.
 Hungry and thirsty,
 Their soul fainted in them.
 Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble,
 And He delivered them out of their distresses,
 He led them also by a straight way,
 That they might go to a city of habitation.
 Oh that men would praise Jehovah for His loving-kindness,
 And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
 For He satisfieth the longing soul,
 And the hungry soul He filleth with good.
 Such as sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
 Being bound in affliction and iron,
 Because they rebelled against the words of God,
 And contemned the counsel of the Most High;
 Therefore He brought down their heart with labor;
 They fell down, and there was none to help.
 Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble,
 And He saved them out of their distresses.
 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,
 And brake their bonds in sunder.
 Oh that men would praise Jehovah for His loving-kindness,
 And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
 For He hath broken the gates of brass,
 And cut the bars of iron in sunder.

Questions.

1. With what exhortation does the psalm open?
2. What is the first reason given for this? The second?
3. What class is urged to bear this testimony?
4. From whom have they been redeemed?
5. Whence have they been gathered?
6. From what parts of the earth have they been brought?

Nine-tenths of the women of India never heard of a Saviour.

7. Where have the people wandered?
8. What were they unable to find?
9. What was their condition? How did this affect their courage?
10. Upon whom did they then call?
11. How did He answer their petition?
12. How did He save them from their wanderings?
13. For what purpose did He direct their course?
14. What are men exhorted to do? For what reasons?
15. How does He deal with the longing soul?
16. What does He do for the hungry soul?
17. What class of persons is next introduced?
18. How strongly is their bondage represented?
19. What has brought them into this condition?
20. How has Jehovah disciplined them?
21. What was their experience?
22. Upon whom did they then call?
23. How did He answer their petition?
24. From what did He deliver them?
25. How did He deliver them from their bondage?
26. What are men exhorted to do? For what reasons?
27. With what power has He wrought to deliver from captivity?

Notes.

We are not merely to think it, but to say it, that the Lord is good. The more the redeemed of the Lord say it, the deeper sense of His goodness will they have. It is wonderful how much help one may receive by the earnest effort to tell others how good the Lord is. Let us open our mouths and say it out. Heb. 13:15.

The needs of the cause of God are world wide.

God led the people forth "by the right way." The ways of the Lord are right. In Christ, the Way, we have deliverance from sin, from the power of the enemy. See the song of Zacharias. Luke 1:68-75. The record of the deliverances of a whole people is but the history of the work of God in our own hearts, the defeats, the victories, and the leadings in individual experiences.

Rebellion (verse 11) is the cause of our troubles. Jesus, our example, received teaching and discipline, and was not rebellious. Isa. 50:4-10.

When they fell down and there was none to help, then came deliverance, as they called on God. What assurance of victory in verses 12-14 of this psalm! Not a soul should pass this lesson, surely, without accepting deliverance; for every bond is loosed and every bar cut asunder.



LESSON XII.—A Saviour from Sin and Distress.

MARCH 21.

PSALM 107:17-32.

Fools because of their transgression,
 And because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
 Their soul abhorreth all manner of food;
 And they draw near unto the gates of death.
 Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble,
 And He saveth them out of their distresses.
 He sendeth His word, and healeth them,
 And delivereth them from their destructions.
 Oh that men would praise Jehovah for His loving-kindness,
 And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
 And let them offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
 And declare His works with singing.
 They that go down to the sea in ships,
 That do business in great waters;
 These see the works of Jehovah,
 And His wonders in the deep.

The Son of God beggared Himself to enrich us.

For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,
 Which lifteth up the waves thereof.
 They mount up to the heavens,
 They go down again to the depths;
 Their soul melteth away because of trouble.
 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,
 And are at their wits' end.
 Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble,
 And He bringeth them out of their distresses.
 He maketh the storm a calm,
 So that the waves thereof are still.
 Then are they glad because they are quiet;
 So He bringeth them unto their desired haven.
 Oh that men would praise Jehovah for His loving-kindness,
 And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
 Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people,
 And praise Him in the seat of the elders.

Questions.

1. What brings suffering upon foolish people?
2. How does this affect their desire for food?
3. To what extremity are they brought?
4. Upon whom do they then call?
5. How does He answer their petitions?
6. Through what instrumentality does He save them from disease?
7. To what extent does He save them?
8. What are men exhorted to do? For what reasons?
9. What sacrifice are they urged to offer?
10. How should they make known His deeds?
11. How is the life of seafaring men described?
12. What do they have the opportunity to observe?
13. What is the direct cause of the storm wind?
14. What effect does the wind have upon the water?
15. Through what trying experiences do the sailors pass?

Prayerfully consider the unentered fields.

16. What effect do these experiences have upon them?
17. How does the roughness of the sea affect their gait?
18. To what extremity of trouble are they reduced?
19. Upon whom do they then call?
20. How does He answer their petitions?
21. What change does He at once bring about?
22. What state of mind prevails among the sailors because of this?
23. How does their voyage end?
24. What are men exhorted to do? For what reasons?
25. How public should this acknowledgment of God's goodness be?
26. Where should praise be offered?

Notes.

With verse 19 many illustrations may be drawn from Old and New Testament history, showing God's speedy deliverance when His people sought Him. Jacob, the children of Israel before the Red Sea, Daniel, the three Hebrews in Babylon, Hezekiah, Peter, Paul, and many other instances, will suggest themselves.

The power of His Word (Ps. 33:6-9) heals the sick. With verse 30, read Matt. 8:8; Luke 7:7; Ps. 103:2-4; Isa. 53:4, R. V., margin.

The experience recorded in Mark 4:36-40 is an excellent comment on verses 23-30. He who created the sea can speak peace to its troubled waters. But still more precious is the promise of peace to the troubled soul that calls upon Him. John 14:27; 16:33; Rom. 5:1; Phil. 4:6, 7. There is power in His Word to perform that which He speaks. "All His biddings are enablings."

The last verse of the lesson makes clear the obligation to speak God's praise in the public congregation. Mal. 3:16-18. This is especially enjoined upon those who see the end approaching. Heb. 10:25.

"The advent message to the world in this generation"—our watchword.

LESSON XIII.—*The Wisdom of the Righteous.*

MARCH 28.

PSALM 107:33-43.

He turneth rivers into a wilderness,
 And water-springs into a thirsty ground;
 A fruitful land into a salt desert,
 For the wickedness of them that dwell therein.
 He turneth a wilderness into a pool of water,
 And a dry land into water-springs.
 And there He maketh the hungry to dwell,
 That they may prepare a city of habitation,
 And sow fields, and plant vineyards,
 And get them fruits of increase.
 He blesseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly;
 And He suffereth not their cattle to decrease.
 Again, they are diminished and bowed down
 Through oppression, trouble, and sorrow.
 He poureth contempt upon princes,
 And causeth them to wander in the waste, where there is no
 way.
 Yet setteth He the needy on high from affliction,
 And maketh him families like a flock.
 The upright shall see it, and be glad;
 And all iniquity shall stop her mouth.
 Whoso is wise will give heed to these things;
 And they will consider the loving-kindnesses of Jehovah.

Questions.

1. What change is God able to make in the flowing streams?
2. What change can He make in the springs?
3. Into what is He able to turn productive land?
4. What leads to such a reversal of the usual order of things?
5. What change can God make in the desert? In dry ground?

"There shall be delay no longer"—our confidence.

6. For whom is a dwelling-place thus provided?
7. What will they prepare?
8. What labor will they undertake? With what result?
9. What blessing is bestowed upon their homes?
10. What temporal blessing is also bestowed upon them?
11. What different experience is brought upon them? Through what means?
12. How is the vanity of human greatness made apparent?
13. How are men of high rank shown that their way is not in themselves?
14. What blessing is bestowed upon the needy?
15. What blessings come to them in their home life?
16. How will the righteous regard these experiences?
17. What effect will they have upon evil-disposed persons?
18. How will the wise treat these lessons?
19. What will they observe in these dealings of Jehovah with men?

Notes.

While verses 33 to 37 show God's marvelous power to provide for His people, even in solitary places, an experience which awaits every faithful child of God before the final triumph of His work, there is no doubt that they also refer to the wondrous provision He has made for His people in the new earth, when the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. Isaiah 35; also 65:17-25.

"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Verses 38 to 42 are a wonderful commentary on that familiar verse, Rom. 8:28. Everything is in the hands of God. If there is prosperity, it comes from Him; if there are reverses, He permits them. God deals with man in the best way that will cause him to recognize his Creator. The righteous see these things, and rejoice now, and the time is coming when even the mouth of the wicked will be led to acknowledge the wisdom of God. Then it will be too late to accept His mercy, which is still offered. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." "Behold, now is the day of salvation." This Sabbath should be the time when we submit our all to God, if we have not done so before, accepting everything that He sends as from the hand of a loving heavenly Father. The result, verse 43. See also I Cor. 13:12.

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