

SOPHY'S STORY:

OR

Simple Scripture Lessons

FROM THE BOOKS OF

LEVITICUS, NUMBERS, AND DEUTERONOMY.

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME."

L O N D O N :

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In the Beginning was the Word.

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SOPHY'S STORY.

CHAPTER I.

LEVITICUS I. ii.

Mamma. Well Sophy, shall we go on with our talks about the Bible?

Sophy. Oh, please Mamma, I am longing to hear about the children of Israel getting into the beautiful land, and I am sure God was glad when His people were there, because He loved them so much.

M. True, Sophy, it is God's delight to see His people rejoicing in the place where His love puts them. But we shall find that the history of His people was always a sorrowful story—though the story of God's love to them was always bright and wonderful.

We have seen how God created man in His own likeness; and how man disobeyed God, and was driven out from His presence, and from the tree of life; and that man had this awful judgment written upon himself, and upon his children: "Thou shalt surely

die." Then we saw how God's grace came in, and gave a promise to the child of the woman, and God kept that promise always before Him, for He had planned long before He made the world, and long before Adam had sinned, that He would bring in eternal life, instead of the life that Adam lost by sin. And you remember how God taught Abel that another who had done no sin must die instead of him ; and Abel offered up a lamb to God. But all men had not faith like Abel, and they followed the advice of Satan, and kept far away from God.

Then God chose out one man;
who was he?

S. Abram—who left all his
own people, and his own country,
to go to the land that God told
him of.

M. Yes. And you have heard
all the wonderful works the
Lord did to Abraham and to his
children. How He kept them
separate from all the nations of
the earth, as He says; He led
them about, He instructed them,
and He kept them as the apple
of His eye! Then He taught
them, from the glory where He
dwelt, the pattern of the taber-

nacle they were to set up for Him on earth; and when it was finished He came down to sanctify it by His glory, and to dwell among His people in holiness. But SIN was not put away, so there was a veil to hide God's throne; and the priests, and mediator, and brazen altar, all told the sinner that God was a holy God. Yet God chose His people to know Him, and therefore He made a way for them to come to Him, by sacrifices and offerings; and it is about these that I shall have to tell you next; for when the Lord had come down

to the tabernacle, and filled it with His glory, He called to Moses, and spoke to him about the way the people might approach Him.

S. Were they going on to Canaan all the time ?

M. Yes ; but they were learning God by the way, and learning their own foolish hearts too—poor people !

But God knew what was in their hearts already, and what He was doing with them was to prove them, to see if there was any good in them or not. And now, God told Moses to tell the children of

Israel that, if any one wished to bring an offering to the Lord, he might bring one of his cattle, of his herd, or of his flock. If it was for a burnt-offering, it was to be a male without blemish, and he was to bring it to the door of the tabernacle, and to offer it to the Lord; then he was to put his hand upon its head, that it might be accepted for him, to make atonement for him. We may suppose a man wishing to bring an offering to the Lord; he goes out to his field and chooses a nice young bullock; he will not take one that has the least mark

on it, or that has had any hurt, it must be a perfect animal; and he brings it in through the court-gate, and up to the door of the tabernacle, then he puts his hands on its head, to show that it is put in his place before God, that God might accept him according to His pleasure in the offering—then he kills it before the Lord, and Aaron's sons come and take its blood, and sprinkle it upon the brazen altar—then the worshipper cuts it in pieces, and washes the inside parts and the legs in water, while the priests put fire upon the altar, and wood upon the

fire, and then they lay the parts of the bullock, its head and its fat, upon the fire, and it is all burnt, while a sweet savour goes up from it to God.

S. Why was it a sweet savour to God ?

M. Because the fire, which is a figure of God's judgment, had burnt up the offering, and God's holiness was satisfied. Do you remember that God smelled a sweet smell from Noah's offering ?

S. Oh, yes ; was that because God was satisfied ? But why did He like them to worship Him in that way ?

M. Because these offerings were meant to show what God required of man, if man was to come near God. And they explain to us what was fulfilled in the offering of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He offered Himself to God.

S. That is very wonderful! But what does the burnt-offering teach us about Jesus?

M. It teaches us that Jesus offered Himself entirely to God for a sweet savour; all His inward thoughts, His affections, His will, and even His life—His whole Person He offered to God; and as the whole bullock was burnt,

and its blood, its fat, its head, its inward parts, were all put upon the altar, so every part of the offering of the Lord Jesus went up as an offering of a sweet savour to God. He came to do God's will, and He was obedient, even to die, because it was God's will. He said, My Father loves me because I lay down my life; and in these offerings God explains to us His own delight in the perfect offering and holy obedience of His well-beloved Son.

S. But did the children of Israel know that God was thinking about the offering of Jesus ?

M. No. They only knew that a whole burnt-offering was well-pleasing to the Lord, and that He accepted the person who offered it according to His good pleasure in the offering.

If a man had not a bullock, he might bring a sheep, or a goat, for a burnt-offering; or if he were very poor, and had only fowls, he might bring two turtle doves, or two young pigeons. It was just what the Lord said to Cain: If you bring the right offering I will accept you.

S. But Cain would not offer the right offering, so he went

away from God, and was very unhappy, and very wicked.

M. Yes. The next offering the Lord told Moses about was called the food or meat-offering. It was to be of fine flour, and oil, and sweet incense—things that were pleasing to God and man. He who wished to offer a meat-offering brought it to the priests, and he took his handful of the flour, and the oil, and all the incense, and the priest burnt it on the brazen altar for a sweet savour to the Lord, and the rest of the meat-offering they were to eat.

S. Why did the priests eat part of the meat-offering ?

M. Because they were to have part with God in His pleasure in the meat-offering. This offering teaches us about the life of Jesus. He was so lovely and perfect in all His ways down here as a man, that He grew up in favour with God and man; and when He was only twelve years old He could say: I must be about my Father's business; and yet, when His mother came to look for Him, He went home with her, and obeyed her, in the same perfect grace; and before

He had done one of the wonderful works that God gave Him to do, Heaven opened upon Him, and a voice that He well knew, said—for men to hear—This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

S. Was God well pleased because Jesus was obedient?

M. Yes. The Son of God, the Creator of all things, who had a right to command every creature, took the place of a man, and learned to be obedient as a little child, and God delighted in Him. There never had been a child or man in this world before, on whom

God could look down and say, I am well pleased—not even Abraham, or Moses whom God loved so much. But Jesus was always like the precious meat-offering to God, from the time He was a little baby in the manger, until He went back to Heaven again, His whole life was like a sweet savour going up to God: and this is what the meat-offering was a figure of, and the priests were to enjoy it too, just as we, if we love Jesus, enjoy thinking of all His grace and perfectness.

S. I like to hear about Jesus when He was a little child.

M. It is wonderful to think of Him, who created everything, coming down so low to bring us to God.



CHAPTER II,

LEVITICUS III. IV.

M. The next offering the Lord told Moses about He called the peace-offering. It was to be taken out of the flock, or the herd ; and the offerer laid his hand upon its head, and killed it at the door of the tabernacle, and the priests sprinkled the blood round about the altar ; then all the fat was taken out of the animal, and the priests burnt it on the brazen

altar along with the burnt-offering, for a sweet savour, for all the fat was the Lord's.

S. Why was the fat God's part ?

M. The children of Israel were neither to eat fat nor blood, because the blood was the life, and the life belonged to God who gave it, and the fat was the health and strength of the animal, and was meant as a figure of the inward thoughts and affections. The Lord Jesus was the true peace-offering, and all His heart and mind were so holy and perfect before God, that they were like the fat that was burnt on the

altar, always a sweet savour to God.

No unclean person could eat any of the peace-offering, just as no Christian, who is not in the Spirit, can have communion with God now.

S. What is communion with God?

M. It is having His kind of delight in the Lord Jesus Christ. God invites us to share in His thoughts, and this is why He teaches us so much about His own beloved Son, that we may delight in Him now: and when we see Him in heaven, and know Him

perfectly, we shall think of Him as God does.

S. Must people have the Holy Spirit to delight in Jesus ?

M. Yes. God's Holy Spirit brings down God's love into our hearts, and makes us know Jesus, and understand His Word, and He searches out all the deep things that God has prepared for those who love Him. It is the Holy Spirit that makes us enjoy these little talks about God's Word, because He teaches our hearts to have confidence in the God we are talking about ; but we never enjoy God until

we know that He has saved us, and brought us as children to Himself.

Now after the Lord had told Moses about these three kinds of offerings by which His people were to worship Him, He told him of another kind of offering which was quite different from all the rest. It was not to be burnt on the brazen altar, and it was not for a sweet savour to the Lord.

S. Why mamma, was it not holy like the others?

M. It was quite as holy as any of the other offerings. It was to

be a young bullock without blemish. It was brought to the door of the tabernacle, and it was killed there; but it was to be offered for SIN; therefore God said it was to be carried outside the camp, away from the tabernacle, and from all the tents of the people, and burnt there by itself in a clean place.

S. Why would God not let the sin-offering be burnt on the altar?

M. Because He was too angry with sin to let it come near His dwelling-place, the offering was made sin, when it was offered for

the sin of the person, and God would have no sweet incense burnt with it—He sent it out from His tabernacle to be burnt all alone in a place by itself.

S. How was that like Jesus?

M. When Jesus took the sinner's place upon the cross, He was made sin, and He became the sin-offering, and then the holy God turned away His face from Him, so that Jesus cried out: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

S. But did God really forsake Jesus when He bore our sin?

M. For the time in which He

was bearing sin He did, but we know that God always delighted in Him, and it was only because He bore our sin that God turned away His face, to show His holy anger against sin. And even in the sin-offering, all the fat and the blood were brought to God, to show that what Jesus was in Himself God delighted in; and the blood was brought by the priest into the tabernacle, and sprinkled seven times before the Lord, before the beautiful vail; and he was to dip his finger in it, and put it on the horns of the altar of incense.

S. But why was that offering to be without blemish, when it was to be offered for sin ?

M. Because nothing showed the perfectness of the blessed Jesus-so much, as His being made sin for us. If He had had any sin of His own, He could not have borne our sin. The most holy man that ever lived could not do it, because he would have some of his own; and if he died, he could not live again; but God could say of Jesus, In Him is no sin; and when He rose up from the dead by the glory of the Father, He said, Now I will give

eternal life to as many as God has given me.

S. What a wonderful thing that God should choose the only good and holy man that ever lived, to die for all the wicked people!

M. This is the wonder of wonders—we could never have thought of such a thing, nor can the mind of man believe it—therefore God reveals it to us by His Spirit, and gives us a new mind that does believe it.

S. When did they offer a sin-offering?

M. Whenever any one sinned

through ignorance of any of the commandments of the Lord. If a priest sinned, he was to bring a young bullock; and if the whole congregation sinned, they were to bring the same; and the elders were to lay their hands upon its head. If it was one of the rulers, he was to bring a goat, and if it was one of the common people, he was to bring a kid of the goats.



CHAPTER III.

LEVITICUS v. viii.

S. Were the children of Israel to bring a sin-offering whenever they did anything wrong ?

M. Yes. Sometimes it was called a trespass-offering. If a man touched any unclean thing, such as the dead body of an animal, he was to bring a trespass-offering to the Lord, and to confess that he had sinned, and the priest should make atonement for him.

S. I do not quite know what you mean by atonement.

M. The meaning of the word is to cover, or to hide. The sinner is covered over by the work of another. Jesus made atonement for my sins by shedding His blood on the cross. He was the just One who suffered for the unjust.

S. What was the difference between a sin-offering and a trespass-offering?

M. The sin-offering was for the sin that is in us as children of Adam, every thought of our natural hearts is sin; but, besides

this, we do naughty things, we sin with our hands, and with our lips, very, very often. For a sin against any of the commandments of the Lord, the children of Israel were to offer a sin-offering; but if one said a wicked thing, or any one touched an unclean thing, then he was to offer a trespass-offering. And if any one trespassed against the Lord in any of the Lord's holy things, he was to bring a trespass-offering, and he was also to give something to the priest, to make amends for what he had done. If any one did anything wrong to his neigh-

bour, he was to give him something to make amends for it, and he was also to offer a trespass-offering to the Lord, and he should be forgiven his trespass.

S. What a great many offerings they must have brought to God every day.

M. Yes ; but it is very happy to think how much dearer to God was the one offering of Jesus than all the hundreds and hundreds of bullocks, and sheep, and goats, that could not put away sin. But Jesus, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down for ever on the right

hand of God. And He will sit there, until He comes to take His own people, who are saved by that one sacrifice, home to be with Himself, in the place that He has prepared for them.

S. Were they always offering something to God ?

M. Yes, The Lord said : The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar, it shall never go out. Every morning there was a burnt-offering and every evening a burnt-offering, besides all the offerings that the children of Israel brought, whenever they wished to worship the Lord, so

that it was always burning; all day and all night long the-sweet savour of the offerings was going up to God, and thus His people were kept in the assurance of His favour.

After Moses was told all about the offerings of the Lord, we get the description of the consecration of Aaron and his sons.

S. You told me something about that before. God said they were to have a basket with unleavened bread, and cakes and oil in it, and a bullock and two rams.

M. You are quite right, and in this eighth chapter of Leviticus

we read that Moses took Aaron and his sons, and their garments and the anointing oil, and the bullock for the sin-offering, and the two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread. And Moses gathered all the people together to the door of the tabernacle, that they might see what the Lord had commanded to be done.

Then Moses washed Aaron and his sons with water, and put on Aaron's* coat and girdle, and clothed him with the beautiful blue robe, and put the ephod upon

* For a description of the garments of Aaron and his sons see vol. ii., chapter xviii.

him, and fastened it on him by the curious girdle of the ephod, and he put the breastplate on him, and in the breastplate he put the Urim and the Thummim, and Moses put the mitre upon Aaron's head, and the holy crown above his forehead. Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the Tabernacle and everything that was in it, and sanctified it: and he sprinkled it upon the altar seven times, and also anointed all the vessels of the altar and the laver. Then Moses poured the anointing oil on Aaron's head to anoint him.

S. Why did Moses dress Aaron first, and anoint him by himself?

M. Because Aaron was a type of Christ, who was alone and separate from all others as God's anointed Man. We read in the New Testament that John saw the Spirit of God coming down and remaining on Jesus. And Jesus was the One to give the Holy Spirit to other men. The oil that Moses poured upon Aaron's head was a figure of God's Holy Spirit.

Afterwards, Moses dressed the sons of Aaron, and brought the bullock for the sin offering.

Aaron and his sons put their hands on the head of the bullock, to show that it was going to be offered for their sin, and it was all burnt outside the camp, because it was a sin-offering, and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar; then the ram for a burnt-offering was offered for a sweet savour to the Lord, and the ram of consecration and part of what was in the basket, Moses put into the hands of Aaron and his sons, and they waved it for a wave-offering before the Lord. And Moses took it out of their hands, and burnt it on the altar.

And Moses took the anointing oil, and the blood that was on the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon his sons and upon their garments, so that he sanctified Aaron, and his sons with him. This was a figure of the way Christians are anointed along with Christ; because we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, saying, Abba, Father. We can call God Father when we have got the Spirit of His Son.

S. Why did they not offer the burnt-offering first, when God

told Moses about it before the sin-offering?

M. Because no one can draw near to God until his sin is put away—so that man has always to learn about the sin-offering first of all. But do you remember when we were talking about the tabernacle, how we found that God spoke first about whatever was most pleasing to Himself.

S. Oh, yes; God spoke about the ark and the most holy place before any thing else. Was the burnt-offering the best of all the offerings?

M. Yes; the whole burnt-offering typified, more than any other, God's entire satisfaction in the person and work of Jesus. God always told out what was in His own heart first, and then He spoke of what suited the sinner's need. What He delighted in were the offerings of sweet savour; but what met the sinner's need was the sin offering outside the camp. God, in His grace, has given us both in Jesus—He has made Him the one to put away sin—and He has made Him our righteousness, and our joy and delight in His own

presence, high up above all the sin.

S. Oh I think I understand it all now. I will tell you what I think it is like—a long chart, and God writes His own thoughts on it—and He begins at the top, and then rolls it up and lets poor sinners read it;—it is all about Jesus; but they unroll one little bit and begin to read at the bottom; but if they were to read on to the top, could they read down the right way do you think?

M. You mean, that when we know the sin-offering, and what

Jesus did for us on the cross, we ought to read on until we get up to God's delight in Himself, that is the top of your chart—the burnt-offering—and then we see, that it was what Jesus was in Himself, that made what He did for us on the cross so perfect and so wonderful,—yes; I do not think we shall ever know God's great salvation until we read quite up to the top, and see how He presents first, what suits Himself, and then He tells the sinner what he needs.

When Aaron and his sons waved the wave-offering before

God, they were satisfied in what in figure satisfied God; and they ate the food of the offerings at the door of the Tabernacle; and remained in the tabernacle for seven days; those were the days of their consecration.



CHAPTER IV.

LEVITICUS IX. X.

S. When the seven days were over did they begin to do the priests' work?

M. Yes; for on the eighth day Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel, and said to Aaron, Take a sin-offering and a burnt-offering for yourself, and tell the children of Israel to take a sin-offering, and burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and meat-offerings, for to-day the Lord will

appear to you. And they brought their offerings to the door of the tabernacle, and all the congregation came near and stood before the Lord. Then Aaron killed the sin-offering and burnt-offering first for himself, and then he killed those for the people. And his sons presented the blood to him, and he sprinkled it upon the altar. And Aaron waved a wave-offering before the Lord and lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them. Then he came down from offering the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings

and Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle, and came out and blessed the people, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them, and fire came out from before the Lord and burnt up the burnt-offering, and the fat that was on the altar, and when the people saw it they shouted and fell on their faces.

S. Were the people glad when they saw the fire ?

M. Yes; it was a sign that God accepted their offerings ; and the presence of His glory among them showed his favour to His people. But oh sad thought ! The folly

and wickedness of man soon spoiled it all; for Nadab and Abihu, two of the sons of Aaron, took censers in their hands, and they put fire in their censers and incense, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had told them not to do.

S. What do you mean by strange fire?

M. It was not the fire off the altar; God had sent out fire from Himself upon the altar; but Nadab and Abihu got fire of their own, and God called it strange fire, and He was very angry with these two sons of

Aaron, and He sent out fire that destroyed them, and they died before the Lord!

S. Why was it a great sin to offer strange fire?

M. Because it was acting according to man's thoughts, and not according to God's thoughts, as He had just revealed them to Moses. God had anointed the sons of Aaron to be His priests, and to do holy service before Him, and what they did is a figure of the way man attempts to do service for God in the flesh instead of by the Spirit of God. Moses saw at once that they had

done what was dishonouring to the Lord, for he said to Aaron— This is what the Lord said, I will be sanctified in them that come near me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron said nothing, for he was greatly grieved at what his sons had done, for he knew that it was the priests who ought to take care that God was glorified.

Then Moses called two sons of Aaron's uncle, and told them to carry the dead bodies of Nadab and Abihu out of the camp, and they did so. What a sad sight it must have been to see two of

God's priests dressed in the coats that He had given them, and that Moses had only just put on them, lying dead, destroyed by the judgment of the Lord outside the camp of the children of Israel.

S. Were the people greatly shocked?

M. Yes; but Moses said to Aaron and his two sons who were left, You must not mourn, nor tear your clothes for what has happened, because the Lord's holy oil is upon you: you must stay in the tabernacle; but your brethren, the whole house of Israel, shall mourn for the fire

which the Lord has sent. And they obeyed the word of Moses.

But God does not give back what man has spoiled, though He acts in saving mercy, in spite of all man's sin. In the story of God's ways with man, we shall find that everything that God made at first was very good, but when God put it into man's hands, man spoiled it at once. We read how Adam lost his place in the garden of Eden how Noah lost his place in government in the world; how the children of Israel broke God's law; and how, when He

gave them priests, they sinned against Him. God was proving man's heart, and trying every thing that His goodness thought of to bless man. And now He spoke to Aaron, and said: Do not drink wine, nor strong drink, you nor your sons, when you go into the tabernacle, because I wish to put a difference between the holy and unholy, and that you may teach the children of Israel all that the Lord has spoken to them by Moses.

S. Why might they not drink wine ?

M. Because wine is that which

pleases and excites the flesh—I mean by the flesh, the evil heart of man—God was in the tabernacle, and when a priest came into God's presence, he was to lay aside the thoughts and desires of his own evil heart, and to be occupied with God. The Spirit of God always occupies us with God, and with God's thoughts. It was part of the business of the priests to choose between what was holy and what was unholy, and they could not do that unless they were holy in their own persons. Therefore God separated Aaron and his sons to Himself,

and they were to care for His people, and for His glory, and to keep themselves from everything that was unworthy of God.

And that day Aaron and his sons offered offerings to the Lord who loved His own people too well to let their sin go unpunished.



JESUS loves me—this I know,
For the Bible tells me so ;
Little ones to Him belong :
They are weak, but He is strong.

Jesus loves me—He who died,
Heaven's gate to open wide,
He who washed away my sin,
Lets His little child come in.

Jesus loved me—loves me still,
Tho' I may be weak and ill ;
From His shining throne on high
He will watch me where I lie.

Jesus loves me—He will stay
Close beside me all the way ;
Then His little child will take
Up to Heaven, for His dear sake.



CHAPTER V.

LEVITICUS xi. xv.

Sophy. Did God tell Aaron what was holy and what was not holy?

Mamma. Yes. He spoke to Moses and Aaron first about the food that the children of Israel were to eat. They were only to eat the flesh of clean beasts, and the unclean beasts were not to be eaten. Those which divide the hoof and chew the cud were the clean beasts. A cow was called

a clean animal, because the hoof of its foot has a division in it, which enables it to tread firmly on the ground, and because it also chews the cud—that is, it chews its food a second time. When a cow eats a good breakfast it lies down to chew the cud, as it is called.

S. Oh yes, I have often seen a cow lying down, moving its mouth as if it were talking to itself.

M. Well that is called chewing the cud. A horse is an unclean animal, because it has neither of these marks. Of fishes only those which had fins and scales might

be eaten. Birds of prey were also unclean. And if any one touched a dead animal it made him unclean, and he had to wash his clothes.

S. Why did God say they were only to eat the clean animals ?

M. To make a difference between His people and all the other people on the earth ; for He said : I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God ; therefore, you shall be holy because I am holy. Even sickness made God's people unclean ; for sickness is a mark of sin ; and God in His

mercy told Moses and Aaron what the people were to do when they were unclean, because if God was to dwell in the camp of His people they must be pure and fit for His presence.

For a small illness they were to bring a burnt offering and a sin offering; but when a man had the dreadful disease of leprosy, he was to tear his clothes and uncover his head, as a mark of his sorrow; and he was to put a covering on his upper lip, and cry, Unclean, unclean! so that if people met him they went away from him, lest they

should get it too. He was an unclean person, and was obliged to live alone, outside the camp.

S. Poor man! How did he know when it was leprosy?

M. When a spot appeared upon a man, he was brought to the priest, and Aaron or one of his sons had to judge whether it was leprosy or not. If it was, he said the man was unclean, and that he must go outside the camp; and if leprosy got upon their clothes, they were to burn them in the fire.

S. Did God ever make the leprosy well?

M. Yes. None but God could heal the leper, and he told Moses how to make the leper clean after the leprosy was healed. The priest was to go out of the camp to see him, and if the leprosy was healed, they were to take for him two clean birds alive, and cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop; and the priest was to command them to kill one of the birds over a vessel of running water, so that its blood would go into the water; then the other bird which was not killed, and the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop were to be dipped into the blood and water,

and the living bird was to be let fly away. The poor leper was to be sprinkled seven times with the blood and water, and then the priest was to pronounce him clean; and when he had shaved off all his hair, and washed his clothes, he might come into the camp.

S. But what did it all mean, Mamma?

M. Leprosy is used as a figure of the sin in our nature, which is discovered in the presence of God; and Jesus is the priest. He sees all the sin in our hearts; but, He says to the sinner who

comes to Him, now you are clean,—because He Himself was killed that the sinner might be washed in His blood; and Jesus has gone up to heaven—like the living bird which flew away towards the blue sky—to show us that sin is put quite away for ever.

S. Ought we to show our sins to Jesus as the leper showed his leprosy to the priest?

M. Yes, Sophy. If we do not tell Jesus of all the naughty things we do, and say and think, we do not hear Him say to us—
You are clean. What a happy

moment it must have been for the poor lonely leper, when God's priest looked at him and said— You are clean, you may leave everything of yourself behind, and go back into God's camp. The leper was not to go to his own house for seven days, and on the seventh day he was to shave his hair and wash himself again, —this was putting off all that belonged to his old self, and on the eighth day, after he had come into the camp, he was to bring offerings to the Lord; and the priest was to bring him to the door of the tabernacle, and to

present him to the Lord ; and the priest was to dip his finger in the blood of the sin-offering and to put it on the right ear of the leper, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the great toe of his right foot—as Moses did to the priest—and he was to do the same with the oil after he had sprinkled it seven times before the Lord.

S. Was the leper a priest when he was anointed ?

M. No; none but the sons of Levi were priests; but the cleansed leper was to be as separate to God as if he were a priest, and

instead of being too unclean for other people to come near him, he was to be anointed to God. Afterwards the priests offered a sin-offering, and a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering, upon the altar for him, and made atonement for him.

God also spoke of leprosy in a house, and said that when they came into the land of Canaan, if a man found he had leprosy in his house, he was to send for the priest to look at it, and he was to take out the stones and carry them away outside the city, and to put in new stones and now

mortar, and then the priest should cleanse the house in the same way that he cleansed the person, by the offering of two birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop. But if the leprosy was not healed, and spread all over the house, they were to pull it down, and carry all the stones and things that it was built of outside the city.

S. Why did they offer cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop?

M. Because those three things are named by God to express every thing that man naturally delights in. Cedar wood is the most costly and precious wood,

and hyssop is a tiny herb, so that everything of nature, from the greatest thing to the least thing, was to be dipped in the blood of the bird that was killed.



CHAPTER VI.

LEVITICUS XVI.

M. Now the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of Aaron's two sons, and said, "Speak to Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times inside the veil before the mercy-seat, for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat; but once a year Aaron shall come inside the veil to make atonement for himself and for all the people. He

shall come with a sin-offering and a burnt-offering, and he shall wash himself, and put on holy garments of white linen."

S. Was that because of what Nadab and Abihu had done ?

M. Yes. After their sin no one might go inside the veil except Aaron on the day of atonement.

S. Why did not Aaron wear his garments of glory and beauty ?

M. Because he went in to make atonement for sin. Aaron was to take two goats and to present them to the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle, and he cast lots

for them there, because one was to be killed for a sin-offering, and the other was to be presented alive. Then Aaron offered a young bullock for a sin-offering for himself and his house, and he took a censer full of burning coals of fire off the altar, and filled his hands with sweet incense, and brought it inside the vail up to the mercy-seat; there Aaron put the incense upon the fire, and the burning of the incense went up like a cloud, and covered the mercy-seat, so that Aaron did not die because of the presence of the Lord. And Aaron took

the blood of the sin-offering and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat, and he sprinkled it seven times before the mercy-seat. Then he came out and killed a sin-offering for all the people, and went in again alone, and brought some of the blood inside the vail, and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat and upon all the vessels of the tabernacle; then he went out and put some of the blood of his own sin-offering, and of the sin-offering for the people, upon the brazen altar, to make atonement for it, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

S. Why did Aaron make atonement for the tabernacle and the altar ?

M. Because whatever man has to do with is unclean in God's sight, and the tabernacle and the altar were to be holy to the Lord. Now when Aaron had made clean the holy place, he took the living goat, and put his hands upon its head and confessed over it all the sins of the children of Israel, putting them upon the head of the goat, and then he sent it away into the wilderness, into a land not inhabited, so that it bore all their sins away, never to be found

again. This was to show that God would not remember any more the sins that Aaron confessed over the head of the goat. It must have been a very solemn day to the people, for they were to do no work, it was to be a day of rest, and they were to mourn because of their sins. It was very gracious of the Lord to appoint this one day in every year, when His High Priest should go into the most holy place to make atonement for His people and for His holy things; so that God wiped out all the sins of that year, and said He would not remember them

any more, and this day was called the day of atonement. When Aaron had made atonement, he took off his linen clothes, and left them in the tabernacle, and when he had washed himself and put on his own garments he came out and offered a burnt-offering for himself and one for the people; and all the fat of the sin-offerings he burnt upon the altar with the burnt-offerings for a sweet savour to the Lord.

S. What did Jesus do like that, Mamma?

M. Jesus is God's Priest, and God's offering too. He offered

Himself for the sins of the people, and His blood was brought inside the veil. He was not like Aaron, who had to offer a sin-offering first for himself, because Aaron was a sinner, but Jesus gave His own holy perfect body to be broken for us, and His blood was shed for us, and, like the living goat, He took away the sins where they never could be found again; and when He came up out of the grave, instead of going into the tabernacle, which was only made like the things in heaven, Jesus went right up to heaven itself, up to the very throne of God,

there to appear in the presence of God for us—that is, for all those men and women and little children who believe in Him.

S. Could no one go inside the veil but Aaron?

M. No one but Aaron; or whoever was God's high priest after Aaron's death.

S. But, mamma, you said one day, that a little child might speak to God?

M. Yes; because now Jesus has made a new and living way into the most holy place, that is into heaven, where God is. And He says we may go boldly now to

the throne of grace, because He is there crowned with glory and honour. Jesus knows all about each one of us a great deal better than Aaron knew about the children of Israel; and there is not one sin that Jesus has not seen, and not one sin that He has not borne the judgment of.

S. Is there no vail in heaven to shut in the most holy place where God lives ?

M. No; Moses was told to put a vail in the tabernacle to show that the way into the mercy seat was not yet open, because there was sin in the camp of Israel.

But when Jesus died on the cross, and the sun was darkened, and the earth shook, the beautiful veil was torn in two from top to bottom.

S. Why did God let it be torn?

M. God did it; to show that He would no longer hide Himself behind a veil, because His own beloved Son had done His will.

It was not possible that the blood of bullocks and of goats could put away sin; therefore, Jesus said—I come to do Thy will, O God. And so He came out from God, and offered Him-

self to put away sin, and everything that offended against Him. And when He went back to God He left a new and open way into God's presence, for all who are washed in His precious blood, to go in after Him.

S. Is that why we do not have priests and a tabernacle now ?

M. It is one reason, but also because you and I are not children of Israel. But there is not a single thing that God ever taught His people about which He has not given to us in His Son ; and if we have got Him we do not want a priest or any one

else to come between us and Him. When you are walking in the sunshine you often see a lovely shadow lie across the road, and perhaps you say, That is the shadow of an oak tree, but if you turn round you see a real oak tree, and is not that much more beautiful than the shadow of it? Just so these offerings and these priests, called from among men, were shadows of what God meant to give us in Jesus: and if we know Him we delight to look back at the shadows, and we like to contrast with them the blessed Son of God who came down and be-

came a man, that He might make atonement for us, and that He might bring us nearer to God than Adam ever was in the Garden of Eden.

S. I am very glad that Jesus is the true great One, and that all the rest are shadows to teach us of Him. I will tell Arthur that, for he thinks there is only a little about Jesus just at the end of the Bible, and that all the rest is stories of other people. I will tell him that they are all like shadows of Jesus and of Heaven.

KNOW'ST thou, my child, that lowly One
Who came to do God's will—
Jesus, who left the throne above
His purpose to fulfil ?

Jesus, who came as Light and Love
To make His Father known ;
He bore the judgment due to thee—
He bore it all alone !

He had a secret, dear to Him,
Which no one else could tell—
The secret of His Father's love,
Which He knew, oh, so well !

From all eternity the Son
His Father's thoughts had shar'd,
And He knew all the plans that love
And mercy had prepar'd,—

Mercy for little ones like thee—
High, as the Heav'ns above ;
Eternal life e'en in Himself,
In boundless, endless Love !

CHAPTER VII.

LEVITICUS xvii.-xxiii.

M. God spoke to Moses about the people keeping themselves holy, and not touching anything that was wrong, or anything that would make them unclean ; and He said, they were to be respectful to their fathers and mothers, and to keep the Sabbath, which the Lord had given them, as a day of rest. And the Lord said they were to

be kind to one another, and when they reaped their corn, they were not to glean up all that dropped from their bundles, but to leave it on the field, for the poor and the stranger to pick up.

S. I have seen poor people gleaning in the corn-fields.

M. Yes, in England I think farmers generally leave the gleanings for the poor: but it shows us how God cares for the poor, when He thought of such little things as these. The Lord also said they were to stand up in the presence of an old man, and to be kind to strangers; and they were

to have just weights, so that they might not be unjust to one another. But when the Lord spoke of His priests, He said they were to be even more careful than others to keep themselves holy, because they were set apart for the Lord, the nearer they came to God, the more separate they must be. Even we, who are so unholy, like to be with people who suit our tastes and feelings; and God, who is so perfectly holy that He cannot look upon sin, says, If people come near me, they must be holy, because I am holy.

S. That is a beautiful reason.

M. It is a reason that shows how much God loves His people; and if they obeyed His word, they were to know how entirely they belonged to Him, who had separated them from all the other people in the earth, that they might know that He was their God. Do you remember what the Lord said to Moses, when he was in the mount those forty days, about the people resting from their work, while the corn was growing in their fields; and again, after the harvest was gathered in, that they might feast together, and rejoice before the Lord ?

S. Oh yes, and you told me about the feast of the Passover.

M. Yes, and now the Lord told Moses to speak to the children of Israel about these feasts, they were set times when He would gather them round Himself. First of all the Lord reminded them again about the Sabbath-day, which was always to be kept holy to the Lord; and the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, when they killed the lamb in the evening, and remembered the night that they came out of Egypt; the next day was the feast of un-

leavened bread, and for seven days they did not eat any bread with leaven in it.

S. What is leaven ?

M. It is any kind of yeast, or that which ferments. It is put into bread to make it rise up and swell into loaves. Leaven is always used in God's Word as a type of the evil in us which continually rises up into evil tempers and self-will; so this feast of unleavened bread was to be an expression of the holiness of God's people, that, for those seven days, they put away everything that was evil and wicked, and kept

the feast, remembering how the Lord had brought them out of Egypt to Himself.

There was also the feast of the first fruits. When they began to reap their corn in the promised land, they were to take the first sheaf that they reaped to the priest, and he was to wave it before the Lord on the eighth day, which was the day after the Sabbath; and on that day, they were to offer burnt-offerings and meat-offerings to the Lord, for a sweet savour. They were to eat nothing that grew in their land, until they had first brought an

offering of the first fruits to the Lord. All the men and boys were to appear before the Lord with their first fruits in their hands, and to tell how the Lord had made them rich, and how He had blessed them. Every one inside their gates was to rejoice.

S. When they heard all those things, they must have longed to get into the land.

M. No doubt they did; but they must have been very happy while learning all the loving purposes of God for them, as they were travelling along through the wilderness, and I am sure it

did make them desire the pleasant land. They were to count fifty days from the day they offered the first fruits, and then they were to offer a meat-offering. It was to be brought out of their houses, two loaves of bread baked with leaven—this was the first fruits of their bread, and with it they were to offer a sin-offering, because there was leaven in these first fruits. They were to be holy to the Lord, for food for the priests, and the people were to keep that day as a holy day in which they were to do no work.

S. Was it like a Sabbath-day?

M. Yes; and the next feast was to be on the first day of the seventh month—they were to have a Sabbath, a day of blowing of trumpets, when they were to do no work, but to offer an offering by fire to the Lord. This was called the feast of trumpets.

S. Who blew the trumpets?

M. The priests; they were silver trumpets used to call the people together. And on the tenth day of this same month was the day of atonement, when the high priest went inside the vail with the blood of the sin-offering, which he put upon the mercy-

seat, and he made atonement for himself, and for all the people. It was to be a Sabbath of rest, and a very solemn day to all, for the people were to mourn because of their sins.

S. And then Aaron confessed the sins of all the people over the head of the goat, and sent it away into a far country, where it could never be found any more; and God did not remember the sins that the goat carried away.

M. Yes. The next feast was a very joyful one, it was to begin on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and it lasted a whole

week; it was called the feast of tabernacles, because, when they had gathered in the fruit of their land, they were to get boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and willows from the brooks, and to make tents or tabernacles to live in for that week, for He said, you shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. They were to bring their gifts and offerings to God each day, for seven days, and to feast and rejoice in all the good things God had given them; and on the eighth day there was to be a solemn assembly.

S. Why did they make tents of the branches of the trees ?

M. Because the Lord wished them to remember, when they came into the land, how they had lived in tents in the wilderness, when He brought them out of Egypt; and, also, that they might teach their children the wonderful works of the Lord.



CHAPTER VIII.

LEVITICUS xxiv.-xxvii.

M. Now the Lord told Moses to command the children of Israel to bring him pure olive oil to burn in the seven lamps in the holy place, for he said, Aaron shall take care of the lamps from evening to morning, to keep them always burning—the priests were never to let the lights go out, all through the night, while the children of Israel were asleep,

the light was shining in the holy place.

The Lord told him also about making the shew bread, which was to be always on the table, He said, you must take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes or loaves, and set them in two rows on the table, six in each row. Every Sabbath-day Aaron was to put fresh loaves on the table in the holy place, and it was to be an everlasting covenant with the children of Israel.

S. Did they ever eat the shew-bread ?

M. Yes, it was the food of the

priests, like the other offerings; Aaron and his sons were to eat it in the holy place. But each loaf had some frankincense on the top, and this they were to burn as an offering of a sweet smell to the Lord.

S. Did Aaron and his sons get all the things the people brought to God?

M. Yes, that was their portion, as God's priests. But I must tell you a sad story of a man, whose mother was one of the children of Israel, and his father was an Egyptian. He had a quarrel with another man, and in his anger,

he spoke evil of the name of the Lord, and cursed. So they brought him to Moses, and Moses desired him to be shut up, until he should ask the Lord what should be done to him. And the Lord said, Whoever curses his God, shall bear his sin, and he shall surely be put to death, all the congregation shall certainly stone him. So they brought him outside the camp, and all who had heard the wicked words he said, put their hands upon his head, and all the congregation stoned him. What a solemn act ! It shows us the terrible holiness

of God, and that His Word must be obeyed ; if God was in His camp, He could not allow any one who spoke evil of Him to dwell there, and all the congregation were to help to put away the wicked person.

The Lord said, Whoever kills any man, shall surely be killed himself ; they shall give an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth ; if any body hurts another, the same shall be done to him. And they were to have the same law for themselves, and for the stranger that lived in their land.

S. Did God tell Moses anything else about the land that they were going to ?

M. Yes ; while Moses was yet in Mount Sinai, the Lord said to him, Tell the children of Israel, that, when they come into the land that I will give them, the land shall keep a Sabbath to the Lord. Six years you shall sow your fields, and prune your vineyards, but the seventh year the land shall rest, and keep a Sabbath to the Lord. That which grows of its own accord, you shall not reap, neither shall you gather the grapes off the vines.

S. Why did the Lord say the land should keep a Sabbath ?

M. Because the land was His, and all that belonged to God was to enter into His rest. He also taught His people, in the Sabbatical year, how He could feed them, and sustain them, though they did not sow their fields, nor plant their vineyards. And He said, If any of you say, what shall we eat in the seventh year, while the land is resting, and keeping Sabbath ? I will take care of you, for I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and your land shall bring

forth enough for three years, so that while the corn is growing in the eighth year, you shall have corn to eat until the ninth year.

S. What quantities they must have had the sixth year!

M. The Lord also said, You shall count seven Sabbaths of years, which would make forty-nine years, and in the fiftieth year—on the day of atonement—the trumpet shall sound through all the land, to proclaim liberty to all the inhabitants, and it shall be a jubilee, or year of liberty. If any man is away from his possession, or away from his

family, he shall come back when the trumpet sounds. And every slave shall be set free, and they shall not sow nor reap in all their land, because it shall be a year of jubilee, and it shall be holy to the Lord.

And He said, The land shall not be sold for ever, but in the year of jubilee every one shall have his own again.

S. Why did God give them a year of jubilee ?

M. That it might be a time of restoration of all things; and that they might not oppress one another. In the year of jubilee the

land came back to God. They could only buy or sell it until the year of jubilee, then it went back to its rightful owner, as if it were given back to him from God.

It was also a figure of the time of full restoration of this earth to God; when the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the rightful owner of it all, will come back as Lord and King. Then He will give liberty to the captives, and open the prisons to them that are bound; for He will reign till He has put all enemies under His feet; then God will be all in all, and Satan will have no more power, for he will be cast.

into the lake of fire; and all those men and women and little children, who have gone on distrusting God, will be with him there. Oh what a dreadful thought! To have Satan's company for ever, and not God's! And all because they would not believe God.

There is a place prepared for Satan and his angels, and there is another place prepared for Christ and His redeemed. In one place there will be endless, hopeless misery, for ever and ever—in the other place there will be everlasting joy and glad-

ness; for God will be there, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and those who enter there will cast their crowns before Him, and will never cease praising Him, who loved them, and washed them from their sins in His own blood.

S. Mamma, I wish everybody would read the Bible, and then they would not have wrong thoughts about God.

M. Yes, my child, God's Word reveals Himself, and is like precious seed, which grows up in our hearts, we know not how.

God said much more about keeping His laws, and He said,

I will give you rain in your land, and plenty of corn and fruits, and you shall dwell safely; and I will drive away the wild beasts from your land, and destroy your enemies, and I will walk among you, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. But if you do not keep my commandments, I will punish you for your sins, and I will scatter you among the Gentiles, and I will let your land be desolate; and when you are in your enemies' land, then the land I have given you shall rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths. But if you confess your sins, and

humble your hearts, I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and with Isaac and Abraham, and I will remember the land.

S. Did that mean that the Lord would bring them back again if they prayed to Him ?

M. Yes, and you will read how the Lord kept His word, and how He did all that He said He would, to the children of Israel ; and He told Moses when anybody wanted to give anything to the Lord, they were to bring it to the priest, and he was to value it, that is, to say how much it was worth. And nothing that was given to the

Lord could ever be taken back, it was to belong to the priests; for He said, Every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord.

These are the commandments which the Lord gave to Moses for the children of Israel, in Mount Sinai.

S. Why did God tell them all those things in the wilderness, when they had not got into the land yet?

M. That they might understand His ways, and that their hearts might be occupied with the land to which they were going.

And while they were learning about the feasts, they must have thought of the rich fields of harvest time, and of the vineyards and fruits of the plentiful land—of the time when they should offer their first fruits to the Lord, and praise Him for all His mercies.

So God's Spirit teaches His people now about heaven, while they are going through this world; the children of Israel had to wait till they got into Canaan to enjoy it, but those who know the Lord Jesus need not wait till they get to heaven to enjoy Him,

because they have got His love, and His ways, and His thoughts, and all that He has as theirs already; and the Holy Spirit brings down the joys of heaven into their hearts, so that they have got Christ in them, the Hope of glory.



CHAPTER IX.

NUMBERS I. IV.

Mamma. This evening we will begin a new book in the Bible. It is called Numbers. For the Lord spoke to Moses on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of Egypt—and He told Moses to number the people.

Sophy. Why did God say he was to number the people?

M. Because He wished Moses

to know how many were able to go out to war in Israel. He was only to count the men that were twenty years old or more, for they were not to go to war till they were twenty years old.

S. Who were they going to fight with ?

M. The Lord was going to bring them at once into the land, and there they would have enemies to fight against, for Canaan was full of wicked people, whom the Lord said He would drive out before them ; but the children of Israel were to fight as the Lord's army. He told

Moses to choose one man in every tribe, to be a prince in that tribe, and God told Moses whom to choose in each tribe. How many tribes were there ?

S. Twelve ; because Jacob had twelve sons.

M. Yes. So there were twelve princes called by God to be heads over the thousands in Israel. Then they called the tribe of Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, and they counted forty-six thousand and five hundred men in the tribe of Reuben that were able to go to war. Then they counted each one in the same way, and Judah

had more fighting men than any of the tribes.

S. I love Judah, the best of all Jacob's sons, because he said such beautiful things about little Benjamin and his poor old father.

M. Yes; the blessing that Jacob gave to Judah was a very great one. And he said, Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies. We see God's faithfulness to His promise in this numbering of the people; and the reward of His servant Abraham's faith. Abraham had only one son, Isaac, and here, in the wilderness, God counted

the thousands in Israel that were able to go to war; and there were a great many women and children besides.

S. Was Aaron one of the twelve princes?

M. No. Moses and Aaron belonged to the tribe of Levi, and it was not counted with the other tribes, because the Levites were specially given to the service of the tabernacle, they were to take care of it, and to pitch their tents all round it. And when the children of Israel went on their journey the Levites were to take down the tabernacle, and they

were to carry it, and they were to set it up again, and any stranger who came near it was to be put to death.

S. I think the Levites had the best part of all. But how were there twelve tribes if Moses did not count the tribe of Levi?

M. Do you not remember what Jacob said to Joseph when he was dying? That Joseph's two sons should be counted with his children, so that Ephraim and Manasseh made up the twelve tribes.

But now they were in the wilderness of Sinai, and the Lord

was speaking to Moses out of the tabernacle. He said the Levites were to pitch their tents close round Himself, just outside the court of the tabernacle; then He said where all the other tribes were to be afar off, but still all round the tabernacle, and they were all to pitch by their own standard, with the ensign of their father's house. Judah was to be on the east side, towards the sun-rising. Next to Judah were to be the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun. The camp of Reuben was to be on the south side, and beside him were to be Simeon

and Gad. On the west was Ephraim, with Manasseh and Benjamin by him; and on the north side Dan, with Asher and Naphtali by him. So they all pitched their tents as the Lord commanded Moses.

S. How nice it must have looked! The tabernacle in the middle—that was God's house—then the Levites all round it, and three tribes on every side of it.

M. Yes; and when you think what a multitude it was, thousands of people in each tribe, how great was the goodness of God to feed them day by day, and to

keep them around Himself by His own power, for in the wilderness they had nothing else but God. It was a dry and barren land. Everything had to come direct from Heaven—the Word that sent the manna, or the Word that made the water flow out of the rock.

And now the Lord told Moses to bring the tribe of Levi near, and to present them before Aaron, that they might minister to him; they were given to Aaron and his sons out of the children of Israel. Do you remember what the Lord said about

the first-born of Israel, when He destroyed all the first-born of Egypt ?

S. That the children of Israel were to give all their first-born to Him.

M. Yes. And now the Lord said that He would take the whole tribe of Levi instead of all the first-born. So He told Moses to count the Levites, and also to count the first-born, and Moses did so, and found that there were a great many more first-born than there were Levites, and these the Lord said were to be redeemed with money ; that is,

they were each to give five shekels of silver to Moses, and he gave it to Aaron and to his sons. Now Levi had three sons, and their names were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, so the Lord told Moses and Aaron to count the sons of Kohath by their families, and He called them Kohathites, and He told Moses what they were to do in the tabernacle. Only those Levites who were from thirty to fifty years old were appointed to this service. And the Lord said: When the camp is going to set forward, Aaron and his sons shall come

and take down the vail and cover the ark with it; and they shall put the covering of badgers' skins over it, and spread a cloth of blue over all, and put in the staves to carry it by. Then they shall spread a cloth of blue on the table of shewbread, and put all the dishes, and spoons, and bread upon it, and spread a cloth of scarlet over them, and then the covering of badgers' skins, and put in the staves. And they shall put a cloth of blue upon the candlestick, with all its vessels, and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins; and the golden

altar, and all the things belonging to the holy place, were to be covered in the same way. But the brazen altar was to have a purple cloth and a covering of badgers' skins.

S. How curious and wonderful the things must have looked with all their coverings on.

M. Then the sons of Kohath came and each received their charge from the hands of Aaron and his sons, and they carried all the things that were inside the tabernacle; and Eleazar, Aaron's son, was chief over these Levites, and he took care of the

oil and sweet incense, and of all the things that the Kohathites carried.

S. Did they see the beautiful things they carried ?

M. No ; they were not to go in to look while the holy things were being covered lest they die. Then Moses counted the sons of Gershon with their families, and he gave some work to do in the tabernacle to all the men that were from thirty to fifty years old. The Gershonites were to carry all the curtains and hangings of the tabernacle, and of the court, and all the cords and in-

struments belonging to it, and Ithamar, Aaron's son, was over the Gershonites. Then Moses counted the sons of Merari, and gave them charge of all the boards, and bars, and pillars, and sockets, of the tabernacle and of the court; and Moses counted all the things that none might be forgotten. And Ithamar was also chief over the Gershonites.

S. The Kohathites carried the most precious things.

M. Yes; and the Merarites carried the heaviest part of the tabernacle,

CHAPTER X.

NUMBERS V. VI.

Mamma. In our chapter tonight we read that the Lord commanded the children of Israel to put out of the camp every leper and every one that was unclean, for He said: You must not make your camps unclean, because I dwell in the midst of them. We have learned in the book of Leviticus how the people might approach God, who had His throne in the tabernacle.

Now we are going to learn how God was dwelling in the midst of His camp while it was travelling through the wilderness, and we shall see how God took notice of everything that did not suit His holiness. Every unclean person was to be put outside the camp, and any one who did any wrong or unkindness to another, was to make amends for it by giving him something. And if the wrong was hidden, so that other people did not know of it, God would bring it to light, and would judge the guilty person.

Sophy. I think the children of

Israel could never forget that God was with them in the wilderness, because He showed them that He saw every thing they did.

M. No; they could not forget that His presence went with them, according to Moses' prayer on the mount when he said: Let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin; and so the Lord was going with them as the merciful and long-suffering God; and now He spoke to Moses about those who wished to separ-

ate themselves to Him : if either men or women did so they were called Nazarites, which means separated or devoted ones.

S. Did some of the people separate themselves to God of their own accord ?

M. Yes. God does not command any one to be devoted to Him, but here He gave Moses a lovely description of what He considered devotedness to Him.

The Nazarite was to separate himself from wine and strong drink, and he was not to eat grapes or drink the juice of grapes, nor even to eat dried

grapes. All the days of his separation he was to eat nothing that was made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husks.

S. Was that for the same reason that God told Aaron not to drink wine when he went into the holy place ?

M. Yes. It was a figure of separation from the excitement of nature—the Nazarite was to find all his joy in God. The second mark of the devoted one was that he was to let his hair grow. This was to show that he was not thinking of himself, or of his appearance before men. He was

to be separated from everything to God. The third thing was that he was not to come near a dead body; he must not make himself unclean for his father or his mother, his brother, or his sister, if they died. He was to be separated from natural sorrow as well as from natural joy, for all the days of his separation he was holy to the Lord.

S. How long was he to be separated to God?

M. As long as he liked. It was entirely his own choice, and the Lord said, If a man or woman wishes to be separated to me,

these are the marks of a separated person. I daresay the people did not understand the Nazarite, and wondered why he never drank any wine, or shared in the things that they enjoyed. But God understood him, and took notice of his separation to Himself.

But God knew what an evil world His people had to pass through, and He knew that, however true to Him their hearts might be, yet that temptation and death might touch the Nazarite, and spoil his separation to God. So He told Moses what to do, if any one died very suddenly by

the Nazarite, and thus made him unclean.

S. What was he to do?

M. He was to begin all over again. He was to shave his head, and to bring an offering on the eighth day of two turtles or two young pigeons to the priest to the door of the tabernacle, and the priest should offer one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt-offering, to make atonement for him. And the days that went before were lost, because his separation was defiled.

S. It was very kind of God to let him be a Nazarite again.

M. Yes, it reminds us of the way that every child of God, if he goes wrong, must begin over again with God. Like Jacob, when he went back to Bethel, the place where he had seen God at first, and where he had vowed a vow to the Lord. But when the days of his separation were fulfilled, the Nazarite was brought to the door of the tabernacle, and he offered to the Lord a burnt-offering, a sin-offering and peace-offering, and meat-offering, and drink-offering, and the Nazarite shaved his head, and put his hair in the fire under the peace-offer-

ing, and the priest put a wave-offering into his hands, and then waved it before the Lord. And after that the Nazarite might drink wine.

S. Why did he put his hair under the peace offering?

M. Because his hair showed the strength and power of the Nazarite; and now that the days of his separation were over, he expressed his communion with God in the sacrifice, by thus burning with it that which was the mark of his own separation to God.

S. He would not cut his hair at all while he was a Nazarite,

and when the time was over he cut it all off.

M. Yes; in both cases it showed his devotedness.

And now the Lord gave Moses a blessing for His people, and said: Thus shall Aaron and his sons bless the children of Israel, saying to them: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee: The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And He said: They shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them,

CHAPTER XI.

NUMBERS VII., X. 10.

Mamma. Now, after Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and anointed it and everything belonging to it, the princes of Israel came with offerings to the Lord, and they brought them before the tabernacle. And the Lord said to Moses, Take the offerings of the princes, and give them to the Levites, for the use of the tabernacle.

Sophy. What did they offer ?

M. Each of the princes brought an ox, and every two of them brought a waggon between them ; so there were twelve oxen and six waggons. And Moses gave two waggons and four oxen to the sons of Gershon, that they might carry the curtains of the tabernacle in them. And to the sons of Marari he gave four waggons and eight oxen, because they had such heavy things to carry. But he gave none to the Kohathites, for the holy things were all to be carried on their shoulders.

S. That was what the staves were for.

M. Exactly; now, when the altar was anointed, the princes brought offerings to dedicate it. On the first day the prince of the tribe of Judah offered; and his offering was a silver charger and a silver bowl, both of them full of fine flower mixed with oil for a meat offering; a golden spoon full of incense, and one bullock, one ram, one lamb, for a burnt-offering; a kid for a sin-offering; and for peace-offerings he brought two oxen, five rams, five goats, and five lambs,

S. That was a great many!

M. On the second day the prince of the tribe of Issachar offered, and his was exactly the same. On the third day another prince offered, and so on for twelve days: so that all the tribes shared in the dedication of the altar.

And Moses went into the tabernacle to speak to the Lord, and he heard the voice of One speaking to him off the mercy-seat, from between the cherubim.

S. What did the voice of God speak to Moses about?

M. The candlestick. The Lord

said Aaron was to light the lamps, that they might throw light upon the candlestick, that its beauty might be seen. And then Moses was to take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and to cleanse them. The Lord said, You must sprinkle some water upon them, and let them shave off all their hair, and wash their clothes; and let them take a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering, and a sin-offering. Then Moses brought the Levites to the door of the tabernacle, and called all the children of Israel together. And they put their hands upon

the Levites, and Aaron offered the Levites before the Lord, as an offering from all the children of Israel. Then the Levites put their hands upon the heads of the bullocks; and Aaron offered a sin-offering and a burnt-offering, and made atonement for the Levites. And the Lord said, They are given to me from among the children of Israel; instead of all the first-born have I taken them.

The Levites were to be given to the service of the tabernacle, from the time they were twenty-five years old until they were fifty.

S. But the priests were to serve

God all their lives, were they not, mamma ?

M. Yes; there was no particular age given for a priest. The descendants of Aaron were always priests.

When the first month of the second year arrived, the Lord reminded Moses about keeping the passover, and they kept it in the wilderness of Sinai. But there were some men who came to Moses and Aaron, and said, We are defiled by the dead body of a man, what shall we do, for we may not eat the passover? So Moses told them to wait until he

had asked the Lord. And the Lord said, If any man is unclean from having touched a dead body, or if any one is away on a journey, so that he can not eat the passover in the first month, then he may eat it in the second month. But any one who did not eat the passover should be cut off from among his people, because he had despised the goodness of the Lord.

It was very gracious of the Lord to make this provision for any one who might be hindered from eating the passover in the first month, because the whole

congregation were to do it together, as they had done on the night that they came out of Egypt.

S. How many things God taught them in that one year! I cannot think of them all. He gave them the law on the tablets of stone, and He taught them about the offerings, and about the tabernacle, which was the most wonderful of all, because it was made like things which God had up in heaven, and because there were so many shadows in it of what Jesus is to us.

M. Yes, Sophy; and the day that the tabernacle was set up the

cloud covered it, and remained on it always, but at night it looked like fire until the morning, and when the cloud was taken up they went on their journey, and wherever the cloud rested there they pitched their tents, so that it was at the commandment of the Lord they stopped, and they went on. It might be a few days, or it might be a great many, but it was whenever the cloud moved they moved, whether it was in the day or in the night, and when the cloud rested they rested; so that they were really travelling with God, just as His

people do now, who are looking to God to guide them. He shows just as plainly where He would have us go, and where we shall have His presence with us, and that is where He will feed us, as with manna, that good thing that came down from heaven every day.

S. If any one stayed behind, I suppose he could not find any manna on the ground next morning?

M. Just so. If they had not gone with the cloud they must have missed their daily bread.

Now, the Lord told Moses to

make two silver trumpets; of one whole piece they were to be made. They were used to call the assembly together, and to tell them when they were to set out on their journey. When the priests blew the trumpets they came to the door of the tabernacle. If only one trumpet sounded, all the princes came; if an alarm sounded, the camps that were on the east side of the tabernacle were to go forward; and when they sounded an alarm a second time, those on the south side were to set out on their journey.

S. How glad they must have

been when they heard the trumpets sound !

M. The silver trumpets were used in the wilderness to call the people together, and to tell them when to set out on their journeys; but they were also to be used in the land, for the Lord said, If you go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresses you, and you blow an alarm with the trumpets, I will remember you, and I will save you from your enemies. And also in the days of your gladness, in your feasts and solemn days, you shall blow with the trumpets over your

burnt-offerings and your peace-offerings, that they may be a memorial to you before God.

S. Will the Lord Jesus have a silver trumpet when He comes to call His people up ?

M. He will have the trump of God, for the Bible says, He will come with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and He will call all His people together, the dead and the living; not then to the door of the earthly tabernacle, but to Himself in His Father's house.

CHAPTER XII.

NUMBERS X. 11, XI.

Mamma. Now the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle in the second year, on the twentieth day of the second month; and the children of Israel took their journey out of the wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud rested in the-wilderness of Paran.

When the silver trumpet sounded an alarm, the camp of Judah set forward, with Issachar and Zebulun, then followed the

sons of Gershon and Marari with the tabernacle; next came the camps of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad; and then the Kohathites carrying the holy things on their shoulders; and the Gershonites and Merarites, with Ithamar the priest, set up the boards and pillars and hangings of the tabernacle, before the Kohathites arrived.

S. So that it was quite ready to put all the things in their right places.

M. Yes; Eleazar the priest had charge of the things belonging to the holy place, and the most holy

place, and it was the business of Aaron and his sons to cover and uncover them ; no one else was allowed to look at them. After the Kohathites followed the camps of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin ; and last of all, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

Now there was a man named Hobab, son of Moses' father-in-law, and Moses said to him, Come with us to the land the Lord has promised us ; and he said, I will not go, I will go back to my own land, and to my own people ; but Moses said, Do come, and you will be to us instead of eyes.

S. Did Moses want Hobab to shew him the way ?

M. Moses seems to have forgotten for a moment that God was going with them. But the Lord would not allow His people to be guided by Hobab, or by any one else but Himself; therefore, instead of the ark going in the midst of the camp, as He had said, it now went on before them, to search out a resting-place for them. And when the ark set forward, Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee. And

when the Ark rested, and the Lord took up His abode in the midst of His people, Moses said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.

S. How beautiful that was, mamma!

M. It is beautiful : this is God's side, and it is the bright and blessed part of our story ; but man's side was a dark, sad picture of unbelief and sin, for we read : 'The people complained, and it displeased the Lord, and He sent fire among them, and consumed a great many ; and the people cried to Moses, and when he

prayed to the Lord, the fire was quenched ; but Moses called that place Taberah, which means a burning. It shows us how near God was to His people when He heard them murmuring in their tents, but He took notice of it in mercy, because He would not allow sin to go unpunished in the camp.

S. How dreadful of them to complain, just when God was sending the ark on before to find a resting-place for them.

M. Yes ; their hearts were not satisfied with God, and there was a mixed multitude with them of

people who had come up with them from Egypt, and they began to wish for the things of Egypt. And the children of Israel wept, and said, Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish we had in Egypt, and the cucumbers, melons, and onions we used to eat there, and now there is nothing but this manna before our eyes. They were really, in heart, looking back into Egypt.

S. It was like Lot's wife to look back.

M. Yes; like her, too, they forgot the Lord's judgment upon Egypt, and their hard bondage,

and sufferings there; and when the people wept, the Lord was very angry, and Moses also was displeased. And he went to the Lord and said, Why has thou afflicted thy servant? I am not able to bear the burden of this people alone, it is too heavy for me.

S. But Moses was not alone, because God did everything Himself for His people?

M. Yes; but the evil of this rebellious people oppressed the heart of God's dear servant, and he felt how utterly powerless he was to keep them in subjection to God. But the Lord did not

rebuke Moses. He only said, Gather to me seventy men whom you know to be elders of the people, and bring them to the door of the tabernacle, that they may stand there with you; and I will come down and talk with you there, and I will take of the spirit that is upon you, and I will put it upon the seventy men, and they shall bear the burden with you.

S. Did not that take away some honour from Moses ?

M. Yes; it was failure in Moses to suppose that seventy men could help him ; they only took away

some of the honour that God had put upon him. Still Moses was God's most favoured servant, and God soon showed that there was none so faithful as he. And the Lord said, Say to the people sanctify yourselves against tomorrow, and you shall eat meat. You shall not eat for one day, or two days, but for a whole month, till you are sick of it, because you have despised the Lord, and have wept before Him, and said, Why did we come out of Egypt? But Moses answered, The people are six hundred thousand footmen, and Thou hast said, I will give

them meat for a whole month. Shall all the flocks and herds be killed to satisfy them? Or shall all the fishes in the sea be caught for them? This was sad unbelief in Moses, who ought to have said, He that gives us bread from heaven every day can easily give us meat too, if He pleases.

S. Did the Lord rebuke Moses for his unbelief?

M. Yes; He said, Is Jehovah's hand shortened? You shall see whether my words will come true to you or not.

Then Moses went out and called the seventy men, and the

Lord took of the spirit that was upon Moses and gave it to them, and they prophesied.

S. What do you mean by "prophesied?"

M. When God gave these men His Holy Spirit, they saw things according to God's mind; and when they spoke what they saw it was called prophesying. And two of the men stayed in the camp and prophesied; but Joshua, Moses' servant, was jealous for his master, because he thought that no one had any right to prophesy but his master. So he said, My lord, Moses, forbid them.

S. Did Moses tell them not to prophesy ?

M. Oh no; Moses was delighted to see the work of God's Spirit in His people, and He said, Are you jealous for me? I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that He would put His Spirit upon them all? Then Moses went into the camp, and all the elders with him.

S. Did God send the people meat to eat ?

M. Yes ; He sent a wind which brought quails from the sea, and they fell in thick heaps all round the camp, and the people gathered

them greedily all day and all night, and all the next day. They forgot the warning of the Lord,—and while they were greedily eating the meat, but forgetting the mighty One who sent it, the Lord struck them with a very great plague, so that they died. And Moses called the place Kibroth-hattavah, which means—The graves of lust; because there they buried the people who lusted, that is, who wished for the meat and melons of Egypt. And they left this place of their sin and sorrow, and travelled on to Hazeroth,

CHAPTER XIII.

NUMBERS xii.-xiv.

Sophy. Did the Lord speak to the seventy elders as He spoke to Moses?

Mamma. No. An occasion soon came, in which the Lord showed that the one that honoured Him, He would honour; for Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, because he had married an Ethiopian woman. They said, Has the Lord spoken only by Moses? Has

He not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it, and He spoke suddenly to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, and said, Come to the tabernacle. And all three came out to the Lord, and He came down in the pillar of cloud, and called Aaron and Miriam to Him, and said: Hear now my words. If there be a prophet among you, I will make myself known to him in a vision, and I will speak to him in a dream; but my servant Moses is faithful in all my house, I will not speak to him by visions and dreams, but I will speak to him mouth

to mouth, and he shall see me. Why, then, were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the Lord was very angry with them, and He went away in the cloud.

S. Were they frightened and sorry for what they had said?

M. They were silent in the presence of the Lord; but when the cloud was departed, Aaron looked at his sister, and she was covered with leprosy, as white as snow!

S. Oh, how dreadful! Had she to go away outside the camp?

M. Yes. Miriam was not sub-

ject to the Lord, whose ways of grace she could not understand; but He has said, Do my prophets no harm; and it is a solemn warning to us of how God hears a word of reproach or unkindness against any of His servants, and that He will surely judge it. Now, Aaron turned to Moses, to intercede for his sister. Aaron ought to have been the one to check her evil thought, but he did not, so now he confessed it, and said, We have done foolishly; we have sinned: my lord, I beseech thee, lay not this sin upon us. Then Moses cried to the Lord, and said,

Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

S. Was not Moses angry with Miriam for speaking in that wicked way ?

M. No. Moses was the meekest man in all the earth. He did not utter one word of rebuke or complaint; he did not even tell the Lord what they said. But the Lord heard it and He took notice of it, and gave Moses a place of still greater honour; for He allowed Moses to intercede for the one who had injured him; and when Moses prayed for Miriam, the Lord healed her; but He

said she should be shut out of the camp for seven days, and then she might be received in again. And the people did not go on their journey until Miriam was brought in again; then they moved from Hazeroth, and pitched their tents in the wilderness of Paran.

S. Were they very near Canaan then?

M. Yes; and the Lord said to Moses, Send men on before to search out the land of Canaan, that they may come back and bring you word about it. Take a man out of every tribe. So

Moses chose twelve men. I will tell you the names of two of them. The man that was chosen of the tribe of Judah was Caleb, and the man of the tribe of Ephraim was Joshua, Moses' servant; and these twelve men were called spies.

S. That was what Joseph called his brethren.

M. Yes. Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and told them to bring back word about the land, and about the people that lived there; and he said, Bring some of the fruits of the land. For it was the time of the first ripe grapes.

S. How delighted they must have been!

M. They went up the mountain and searched the land, and came to a city called Hebron, where four giants, the children of Anak, were.

Do you remember my telling you about Abraham buying a piece of land for a possession, when he was a stranger in the land of Canaan?

S. Oh, yes; it was a burying place, where he buried Sarah, his wife.

M. You are quite right; this piece of ground was called He-

bron, and it was the very same place that the spies came to, and where they saw the giants. I shall have more to tell you about Hebron by-and-by.

S. Did they get some fruit?

M. Yes; there was a rich valley, full of the first ripe grapes, and they cut one branch, and it weighed so heavy that they put it upon a staff, and two men carried it between them!

S. What a magnificent bunch **it** must have been!

M. They called the place where **they** plucked it Eshcol, which means the valley of a cluster of

grapes. They also brought pomegranates and figs, and after forty days they came back to Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel, and they showed them the fruit they had brought, and said, Surely it is a land flowing with milk and honey, and here is the fruit of it. But the people are very strong, and the cities have high walls, and we saw giants there. And when Caleb saw that the spies were frightening the people, he tried to quiet them, and said, Let us go up at once; we are quite able to overcome it. But the other spies brought a

bad report of the land, and said, We are not able, for the people are much stronger than we are ; for we are like little grasshoppers before them.

S. I hope the children of Israel did not listen to those naughty men.

M. Indeed they did ! When people do not trust God, He lets Satan blind their eyes, and even though they saw the delicious fruit and heard how these twelve men had gone all through the land, and had spent forty days there, they would not believe ; but all the people lifted up their

voices and cried, and they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, We wish that God had let us die in Egypt, or in the wilderness; and now all our wives and our children will be killed. And they said, Let us choose a captain, and go back to Egypt.

S. Oh, how dreadfully wicked! Was Moses greatly grieved?

M. Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before them, and Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes; they were the two good spies, who wished to go into the land at once. And they were dreadfully grieved, and shocked

at the words of the people, and they said, The land which we passed through is exceeding good. If the Lord delights in us, He will bring us into it. Only do not rebel against the Lord, and you need not be afraid of the giants, for their strength is all gone, because the Lord is with us, and He is not with them. But the people would not listen, and wanted to kill them with stones. Then the glory of the Lord appeared !

S. Was the Lord very angry with the people ?

M. He said to Moses, How long

will this people provoke me? How long will it be before they believe me? I will destroy them, and make of you a greater nation than they are.

But Moses had not a thought for himself. His first thought was:—The Egyptians will hear it, and what will they say about this great Jehovah, who has done such wonderful things for His people? And Moses told his sorrow to the Lord, and said, They will tell the people of the land: for they have heard that thou, Lord, art among this people, and that thy cloud stands over

them day and night. And now, if thou wilt kill all this people, they will say, The Lord was not able to bring them up. So now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great; for thou hast said, The Lord is longsuffering and of great mercy, and will by no means clear the guilty. And pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, as thou hast forgiven them from Egypt even until now.

S. What a wonderful prayer!

M. Wonderful, indeed, to hear Moses thus taking God at His word, telling Him that, accord-

ing to the character God had given of Himself, He must act in mercy and longsuffering. It is very beautiful to see how Moses always comforts himself by what is in God. Moses knew God, and he loved and trusted Him with his whole heart. And the Lord answered him, I have pardoned according to thy word. I will show mercy, but I will by no means clear the guilty: for those men who have seen my glory and my miracles, and have tempted me these ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, they shall not see the land. Every one that

was numbered from twenty years old shall die in the wilderness. But my servant Caleb shall live, and he shall go in and possess the good land, because he has followed me fully. And now, to-morrow, turn back into the wilderness, by the way of the Red Sea.

S. Was God going to send them back to Egypt?

M. No; but He called Moses and Aaron, and said that what the people in their unbelief had said, should come true of them: for every one that murmured against Him should die in the wilderness, and their little chil-

dren, that they said would be killed if they went up, God would bring into the land; but they should wander about the wilderness for forty years, until all the grown-up people were dead, except Caleb and Joshua. But the ten wicked spies the Lord killed that day by a plague.

S. Did Caleb and Joshua suffer for the other people?

M. Yes; and the little children too, had to suffer for the sins of their parents, and had to wait for forty years. And when Moses told these things to the children of Israel, they mourned greatly;

and they got up early in the morning, and said, We will go up; for we have sinned. But they were not really humbled before the Lord, or sorry for dishonouring Him. And Moses said: No; you must not go up now, for the Lord is not with you; you will be destroyed before your enemies: it is quite true that they are stronger and greater than you are.

S. But they were not stronger when God was with them?

M. No. The wretched unbelieving people left God out both times; when they talked

of their strength, as much as when they talked of their weakness; and they did go up, and presumed to fight in their own strength, and the Canaanites came down upon them and destroyed them; for the Lord was not with them, and the ark and Moses remained still in the camp.



CHAPTER XIV.

NUMBERS xv. xvi.

Mamma. In our chapter to-night, we learn how God is above all the foolishness and unbelief of His people. Their wretchedness does not alter Him one bit. Like the sun in the heavens, which shines on, shedding its light and heat upon all around it; nothing can stop its shining—not all the rain or clouds or storms—they

may keep us from seeing and feeling its pleasant light and heat, but the sun is shining all the while, as bright and as powerful as ever—and God would have us believe it. Yesterday we read how the people He had chosen for Himself rebelled against Him, and despised the pleasant land, and lost it for themselves; but God said, I am not changed; my word is the same: the children of these very men shall possess the land, and Caleb and Joshua shall have it; and now He said to Moses, 'Tell the children of Israel something more about the time

when they shall have come into the land.

Sophy. Perhaps that was to make them quite sure that God had forgiven them, and that He would bring them in.

M. Yes. He spoke to Moses as if they were in the greatest favour; for He said, When any one brings me a free-will offering, he shall bring some wine for a drink-offering. Now wine, as we have seen before, was an expression of joy—there was to be joy in all their sacrifices of sweet savour. And there should be the same law for themselves and

for the stranger that dwelt in their land. And if they did any thing ignorantly, that is, when they did not know it was wrong, they were to offer sacrifices and their sin should be forgiven; but if any one sinned presumptuously, that is, wilfully, God did not say they might offer a sacrifice for him; that person was to be put to death, because he had despised the word of the Lord and broken His commandment. And one day they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, and they shut him up until the Lord said what should be done to him. And the

Lord said he must be put to death. Then all the congregation stoned him outside the camp.

S. Was that because he had broken God's commandment about doing no work on the Sabbath day?

M. Yes. He had wilfully broken God's law. God would not allow disobedience to Him to go unpunished in His camp. And now He said to Moses, Tell the children of Israel to make fringes in the borders of their garments, and on the fringe they are to put a ribband of blue. All the children of Israel were to wear it,

that they might look on it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, instead of following that which their own eyes admired, or what was in their foolish hearts to wish for. I told you before that blue was the heavenly colour, so God's people were to have heavenly ways, and the borders of their garments, which might trail upon the earth, were to have a fringe and ribband of blue.

S. That is a very pretty thought. It was too good for such naughty people.

M. But nothing could be too

good or too great for God to do for the people that He loved; even though they so often turned His grace into an excuse for their own evil. And so it was now: for Korah, one of those favoured Kohathites, and two men called Dathan and Abiram, with two hundred and fifty princes, rose up against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, You take too much upon you, for all the Lord's people are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why, then, do you set yourselves up above the rest? They thought they might do without Moses and Aaron, now

that God had allowed all to wear the ribband of blue. Korah, who had his own place as a Levite in the service of the tabernacle, was setting himself up against those whom God had appointed to stand before Him, as His priest and mediator. And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face.

S. How grieved he must have been !

M. Then Moses said to Korah and his company, To-morrow the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy: for the Lord will cause those whom He has chosen to come near to Him. And now,

do you all take censers, and put fire in them and incense before the Lord to-morrow; for you take too much upon you, you sons of Levi. And Moses said to Korah, Is it a small thing that the God of Israel has separated you, to bring you near Himself to do the service of the tabernacle—and do you want to be priests also? And this is the reason you are gathered together against the Lord. What is Aaron, that you murmur against him?

S. Did they do as Moses said next day?

M. Yes; and Korah gathered

all the people against Moses and Aaron, to the door of the tabernacle.

Then the glory of the Lord appeared, and the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, Separate yourselves from this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. And they fell on their faces, and said, O, God! shall one man sin, and wilt thou be angry with all? Then the Lord said, Tell them all to go quite away from those three wicked men. And Moses did so, and said, Do not touch any thing of theirs, or you will be destroyed in all their sins. And the people

obeyed, and the three wicked men were left alone, and Dathan and Abiram came out of their tents, and stood at the door with their wives and their children. And Moses said, Now, if the Lord does some new thing, you will believe that these men have displeased Him. And when Moses had done speaking, the ground opened under their feet, and swallowed them up, and their houses and their goods, and they went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed over them, and all Israel saw it, and heard the cry they gave as the earth closed over them, and

they were terrified and fled ; for they knew that they had sinned in listening to those wicked men. And the Lord sent a fire that destroyed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

S. How very, very dreadful ! But why did Moses tell the naughty men to offer incense ?

M. Because they presumed to despise the priesthood of Aaron, and dared to say that they were as holy as he, and God chose this way to show who was holy and whom He had chosen to come near Him. But after the men were dead, He said to Eleazar

the priest, Take up the two hundred and fifty censers and scatter the fire—for they are holy, because they were offered to the Lord—and let the censers be made into broad plates for a covering for the altar; and it became a sign in Israel, that they might remember that no stranger, who was not of the family of Aaron, might come near to offer incense to the Lord. But the next day all the people murmured against Moses and Aaron, and said, You have killed the people of the Lord; and as they looked towards the taber-

nacle, the cloud covered it, and the glory appeared. And the Lord again said He would destroy them; but Moses said to Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire in it off the altar, and put incense, and go quickly in to the congregation, and make atonement for them; for the Lord is very angry, and the plague is begun. And Aaron did so, and he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. But a great many of the people died of it. And Aaron came back to Moses, to the door of the tabernacle.

To-morrow we shall read how the Lord taught them that the priesthood which they wickedly despised was entirely of God.



CHAPTER XV.

NUMBERS xvii.—xix.

Mamma. Tell me, Sophy, why did God destroy Korah and his company?

Sophy. Because they despised God's priests, and thought they had as much right to be priests as Aaron had.

M. Yes; and God destroyed them in awful judgment; but then He taught His people that they must be destroyed too, un-

less Aaron made atonement for them. If he had not gone in quickly with his censer to make atonement for them, they would all have perished in the wilderness. But Aaron stood for God between the dead and the living, and the dreadful sickness ceased. And now God was going to show them that no one had any right at all, unless he was chosen by God. So He said to Moses, Tell all the princes of the twelve tribes to take a rod each, and to write the names of their tribes on each rod, and write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi. And the Lord

said, The man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom, and I will make to cease from me the murmurings that they murmur against you. So Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle; and the next day, when Moses went in, he saw that Aaron's rod for the house of Levi was covered with buds and blossoms and almond fruit.

S. Did they all grow in one night?

M. Yes; that was the wonderful thing that God did to make them believe. Aaron's rod was only a stick like the rest, but God

showed, that though the stick had no life or power in itself, yet that He could, if He chose, make blossoms and fruit come from it.

S. Was that to show that God chose Aaron and no one else ?

M. Yes. Aaron was a poor, weak man like the rest, but God had chosen him and given him the office of a priest, that he might lead His people into the promised land. And Moses brought out all the rods to show them to the children of Israel, and each one took his own rod. But the Lord told him to put Aaron's rod back again beside the ark, to be kept before

Him for a sign against the rebels. And when they saw what the Lord had done, they came to Moses, and said, We shall all die; whoever comes near the tabernacle of the Lord shall die.

God's grace and goodness seemed to frighten them more than His judgment, for they felt how unfit they were to have to do with Him.

S. Were they glad to have Aaron to go to God for them then?

M. Yes; and the Lord said to Aaron, You and your family shall bear the iniquity of the holy and place, the iniquity of your

priesthood, and the Levites shall be joined with you in the service of the tabernacle ; but you and your sons shall keep your priests' office for everything of the altar and within the veil. God gave it as a gift to Aaron and his sons ; and everything that the children of Israel offered to the Lord was to be given to the priests.

The Levites were to have no inheritance among the children of Israel, because the Lord was their inheritance. But the children of Israel were to give a tenth part of all their goods to them. These tenth parts were called tithes ;

and the Levites were to offer a tenth part of the best of the tithes to the Lord, and that was to belong to Aaron. The tithes were the reward of their service in the tabernacle.

Now the Lord told them how they were to be made clean if they met with any defilement in the wilderness. For they had many years still to wander there because of their unbelief; and the Lord knew that they must meet with many things that would make them unclean and unfit for His presence in the camp. So He said to Moses and

Aaron, Tell the children of Israel to bring a red heifer,—that is a young cow,—without a spot upon her, and give her to Eleazar, and he shall bring her outside the camp, and some one shall kill her there; and Eleazar shall take some of her blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven times before the tabernacle. And he shall burn the heifer before Eleazar's face; every part of her, even the blood shall be burnt; and while it is burning the priest shall throw in some cedar wood, scarlet wool, and hyssop. Can you tell me what these things meant?

S. All the things that people are proud of. When they made the leper clean, you told me they took some cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop, with the two birds that they offered.

M. I am glad to see you remember that; the cedar is a fine, beautiful tree, and hyssop is a tiny herb, and scarlet is the grandest colour man can make; so that these three things took in all human grandeur—the things that man might boast of—and all was thrown into the burning of the heifer. But all who had to do with the burning of the heifer

were unclean until the evening, and had to wash their clothes before they could come into the camp. And one was to gather up the ashes into a clean place outside the camp, and it was to be kept there for purification of sin.

S. What did they do with the ashes ?

M. They put some in water, and called it the water of separation. If any one became unclean by accident, if a man died in his tent or any where near him, he was to be sprinkled with the water of separation on the third day, and again on the seventh

day; and if he did not do so he remained unclean, and could not come near the tabernacle, but was cut off from Israel.

S. Is the red heifer a figure of the offering of Jesus?

M. Yes. The shedding of His blood, as we said when we talked about the sin-offering, completely put away sin; but saved people have to go through an evil world, and our hearts are careless, and we may forget what Christ has suffered for our sakes, and so we often get unclean by the things we have to pass through. His blood can never be shed again—that

could be done only once; but the Holy Spirit shows us how Christ suffered on the cross for us, and how all that we are so foolishly proud of was condemned in His death, just as the cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop were burnt with the offering; and it is a very bitter thing to our hearts to feel that we have touched something that caused our blessed Lord to suffer, and that even after we have been saved by His blood we let ourselves get unclean in the world; and then it is a great comfort to know that He has put away all the unclean-

ness too, as is shown in the running water, and the ashes of the heifer with which the children of Israel had to be sprinkled.

Sin was atoned for on the great day of atonement when the High Priest went inside the vail, but the water of separation was to separate them from the uncleanness of the wilderness.



CHAPTER XVI.

NUMBERS XX. XXI.

Sophy. Where were the children of Israel all the time that God was telling them all these things about wearing the blue ribbands, and about the red heifer?

Mamma. They were travelling about the wilderness, where in their unbelief they wished that they might die. You remember God said they should die there,

and that only their children should see the promised land, besides the two good spies, Caleb and Joshua.

And in the first month of the fortieth year they came again into the desert of Zin, and pitched their tents in Kadesh. And Miriam died and was buried there.

S. Oh, I am sorry she did not see the promised land!

M. In this place there was no water for the people to drink, and they rose up against Moses and Aaron, and said angry words to them as they did before, and

Moses and Aaron went away from them to the door of the tabernacle, and fell on their faces before the Lord, and His glory appeared to them. And the Lord said, Take the rod, and gather the people together, and you and Aaron shall speak to the rock before their eyes, and it shall give out its water for the thirsty people and for their beasts. And Moses took the rod, as the Lord told him, and called the people; but, alas! he was thinking of the naughty people, instead of thinking of the blessed God; so he said, Hear now, you rebels;

must we fetch water for you out of this rock ? Then Moses lifted up his hand, and with the rod he struck the rock twice ; and the water flowed out abundantly, and the people drank, and their beasts also.

S. Was it very wrong of Moses to strike the rock, instead of speaking to it, as God said ?

M. Yes ; it was the most sorrowful moment in the whole life of this dear servant of God. For God was above all the people's sin, and when He said, Take the rod, He meant them to understand how He would act in

grace, with that beautiful rod which He had made to blossom and bear fruit, as a sign of the priesthood He had set up. Moses had struck the rock before, as we read in the book of Exodus; and we learned how it was a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was smitten once, that all blessing might flow out from Him to us.

Moses ought to have been above the people's sin with God, and then he would have been able to act in the grace of God; but he was not, for no man was ever perfect in everything, but

Jesus, when He took the place of the servant of God down here.

S. Was the Lord displeased with Moses ?

M. Yes; and He said to Moses and Aaron, Because you did not believe me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, you shall not bring them into the land which I have given them. And again the Lord called the place Meribah, which means strife.

S. Oh, I am sorry ! I used to think how lovely it would be for Moses to see the land he had so often talked about.

M. So used I, Sophy. When

I was a little girl, I remember crying because Moses was not allowed to go into the land of Canaan. But God did not love Moses less than before. It was because He loved His servant that He punished him. And now they were getting very near the end of the wilderness, but there were enemies in their way. They were close to Edom, which was Esau's country, and Moses sent a message to the king to ask him if they might pass through his country. And Moses said, You know all that has happened to us; how we were in

Egypt, and how the Egyptians illtreated us, and the Lord delivered us, and now we are in Kadesh, which is very near your country: will you let us pass through it? We will not walk in the fields or in the vineyards, or drink your water; we will just pass through on the king's high road. And the king of Edom said, You shall not pass through my country. I will come out and fight against you. So Israel turned away from him, for Esau was Jacob's brother, and the Lord would not allow the children of Israel to destroy his

country. So they went round another way and came to Mount Hor.

And the Lord said: Aaron shall die in Mount Hor, because you rebelled against my word at Meribah; and now take Aaron and Eleazar his son to the top of the mountain, and take off Aaron's garments and put them on Eleazar; and the three men went up, while all Israel looked after them. And Moses took off Aaron's clothes and put them on his son, and Aaron died. And Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount, and all

Israel mourned for Aaron for thirty days.

S. How quiet they must have felt!

M. It was very solemn to see God's word fulfilled before their eyes, and to know that unbelief was the cause of all their sorrow.

And now another enemy came in their way, for one of the kings of Canaan had heard about the spies, and when he found that the children of Israel were coming the same way he went out to fight against them; and Israel made a vow, and said, if the Lord would give them victory

over these people they would quite destroy their cities. And the Lord heard what they said to Him and granted their request. Then they travelled on, going all round the land of Edom, and the people were much discouraged by the long way; and they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, There is no bread here, and no water, and we are tired of this manna; then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among them, which bit them dreadfully, so that many died. And they came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, pray for us. So

Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord told Moses to make a serpent of brass and to put it on a pole, and that whoever looked up at it should live, and Moses did so.

S. Why did looking up at a serpent on a pole make the people well?

M. Because it was simple faith in God's word. All who had lost the land, lost it by unbelief, and now God was only going to bring in those who "looked and lived;" all who did not look died of the deadly sting. We can fancy them in fearful

pain and misery turning round to where the pole was planted, and looking up at it, and immediately the pain and sickness ceased, and they were well; the look of faith had given them new life.

To us it is a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was lifted up on the Cross to make man well of the Serpent's deadly sting, and all who look to Him live. The children of Israel were made well in their bodies; but those who look to Jesus find that their souls are made alive for evermore, for it is eternal life Ho

gives, and it is Satan's power that He has destroyed.

Now, they travelled on to a great many places, and at last they came to a well, and the Lord said to Moses: Gather the people together and I will give them water. And these people who had received the blessing of faith were able to sing, instead of murmuring, for all Israel sang: Spring up, O well; sing ye to it. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves.

S. I am so glad they sang again!

M. Yes, they had entered the wilderness with the song of redemption; and now, in the fortieth year, they came out of it with a song. God had made the water to flow in dry places like a river. The journey was over. God had brought forth His people with joy and His chosen with gladness.

After this they travelled on to Mount Pisgah, and Moses sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived in that country, to ask him if they might pass through his land; but Sihon refused, and came out

to fight with Israel. But Israel defeated him, and destroyed his people, and took all his cities, and lived there. Next they came to Bashan, and Og the king of Bashan came out with his army to fight against them. But the Lord said: Do not be afraid of him, for I have given him into your hand, and all his people and his land. So Israel destroyed Og and all his people, and they possessed his land.



Look! look! the serpent's lifted up
On yonder pole so high;
What wonder is there in the sight
That catches every eye?

Wonder of wonders!—God has said
That he who looks shall live;
So each poor sufferer's eye is turned,
One feeble 'look' to give.

And as he looks, his pains depart,
The serpent's sting is gone;
And he can sing of sin forgiven,
Can tell what GOD has done.

Yet greater things than these we tell
Of Him who sent His Son—
Jesus was lifted up for us
God's own beloved One.

He bore the Cross—He went on high—
Saviour and Lord to be;
I 'look' to Him—in Him I 'live'
For all eternity.

CHAPTER XVII.

NUMBERS XXII.-XXV.

Mamma. Now when the children of Israel had destroyed Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan, they pitched their tents in the plains of Moab, which were close to the river Jordan, and Canaan was on the other side of Jordan. But there were enemies on every side. The people of Moab were greatly distressed at the sight of

this great people, conquering all before them, and they knew that there was a mighty God among them, whose hand was stretched out for them, full of blessing and power; so the king of Moab thought of a plan to injure the children of Israel, because he knew that he could not conquer them.

Sophy. What did the king of Moab do to Israel?

M. He sent for a man called Balaam; he was a false prophet, who knew all that God had done for Israel, and the king of Moab sent him a message and said:

“There is a people come out of Egypt, they are so many that they cover the earth, and are too strong for me to fight against, so I want you to come and curse them for me, and then perhaps I shall be able to destroy them.”

And the messengers took presents in their hands to reward Balaam for cursing God's people; and Balaam received the messengers of the king of Moab, and told them to stay with him that night and he would ask the Lord about it. And that night God came to Balaam and said: You must not go with these men, and you shall

not curse the people, for they are blessed. So he sent the men away next morning. But the king sent again, more honourable princes, who made great promises to Balaam of all the honours the king would give him if he would come and curse the people. But Balaam said : If the king would give me his house full of silver and gold, I must obey the word of the Lord my God. But stay here to-night, and I will see what more the Lord will say to me. And God came to him that night and told him if the men came to call him he might go with them,

but that he must only say what He told him.

S. Why did God tell Balaam to go with the men?

M. Because he was not content with God's word, when He said: You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed. He wanted God to say more to him, so God said: If they call you, go. Balaam wanted to go; he wished for the king's gold and silver, and he did not care whether God's people were cursed or not. So he got up in the morning and saddled his ass and went with the princes of Moab. And God

was angry with Balaam for going, and He sent His angel to stand in the way; and the ass that Balaam was riding saw the angel, with a sword drawn in his hand, and the ass turned out of the way and went into a field; and Balaam was angry, and he beat the ass and tried to make her go into the road again; but the angel stood in the path, and there was a wall on each side, and when the ass saw the angel, she thrust herself against the wall and hurt Balaam's foot, and he beat her again. But the angel stood in a still narrower

part, where there was no way to escape, and the ass fell down under Balaam, which made him very angry, and he beat the poor ass again. But the Lord opened the mouth of the ass and gave her power to speak, and she said to Balaam: What have I done to you, that you have beaten me these three times? And he answered: Because you mocked me. I wish I had a sword in my hand to kill you. And the ass said: Am I not your ass, upon which you have ridden ever since I was yours to this day; did I ever do this to you before?

And he said : No. Then the Lord opened his eyes, and he saw the angel standing in the way with his sword drawn in his hand : and Balaam bowed his head, and fell flat on his face. And the angel of the Lord said : Why have you beaten your ass three times ? I went out to meet you, because I see your self-will. That poor ass has more wisdom than you have, for she saw me and turned back three times : and if she had not turned from me, I would have killed you, and saved the ass alive. And Balaam said : I have sinned ; for I did not know you

stood in the way to stop me : but now, if it displease thee, I will go back.

S. Did Balaam love God ?

M. No ; he was afraid of God, as sinful man always is, when he only knows His holiness and power. Balaam knew nothing of God's love and grace ; he could not understand that God chose to bless those poor, faithless, murmuring people, whom He had brought out of Egypt, and Balaam's own heart was set on getting the wicked king's reward. So God let him go on, but He said that he should only speak tho

word God gave him. And Balaam went with the princes. And the king of Moab came out to meet him, and offered oxen and sheep. And he took Balaam up to the high places where they worshipped their idols, that he might look down upon all the children of Israel, who had pitched their tents in the valley. And Balaam said: Build me here seven altars, and get seven oxen and seven rams. And he said he would go and ask the Lord what he should say, and God met him and told him what to say. And he went back and stood by the

burnt sacrifice, with the king of Moab and all his princes. And Balaam looked from the hills upon Israel, and uttered the blessing God had put into his mouth. And the king said: I asked you to curse my enemies, and you have altogether blessed them. And he said: Must I not speak the words the Lord puts into my mouth? And the king said: Come to another place where you can see them. And he went, and this time God gave him a still fuller blessing. He said: I have received commandment to bless; and He has

blessed ; and I cannot change it. For God has not seen iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel ; . . . and it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel : What has God done ?

S. Why did he say God had not seen iniquity in the people ?

M. That was the way God Himself spoke of His people. It is very wonderful to us, because we have read in this very book God's own account of their sins and iniquities, for He saw every one of them. But here He spoke as the God of redemption, who had cast all their sins behind His back. He did deal with sin,

and He spoke to the sinner as One who knew all about his sins ; but He would not allow Satan to accuse His people, nor allow the servant of Satan to curse them.

S. Was Balaam Satan's servant ?

M. Yes ; he went to do Satan's work for the sake of the world's reward. But God made him do His will, for He made him bless the people whom he wished to curse. And the king of Moab was angry with Balaam and said : Do not curse them at all, nor bless them at all, Yet he thought

he would try him once more ; so he brought him to another place. And Balaam looked towards the wilderness, and when he saw the wonderfully lovely sight of Israel, arranged by the word of God, according to their tribes, God allowed His Spirit to come upon him, and he said : The man whose eyes are opened, and who has heard the words of God, says : How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob. And then he uttered a long prophecy (which I will read to you), in which he told God's thoughts about His people, and repeated God's promise to

Abram : Blessed is he that blesses thee, and cursed is he that curses thee. And the king was exceedingly angry, and clapped his hands, and said to Balaam : Fly away to your own place. I thought to promote you to honour; but the Lord has kept you back from honour. And Balaam said he could only speak what the Lord told him, and said to the king : Come and I will tell you what these people will do to your people in the latter days. And he prophesied that a Star should come out of Jacob, who should destroy Moab, and

Edom, and all the countries around. This Star of Jacob meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who will yet reign on this earth till all His enemies are put under His feet.

S. That is a very wonderful story, Mamma, because Balaam was a very wicked man, and yet God told him all those things.

M. Yes ; God always has His way, and He makes even wicked people do His will. It was also a message from God to the Gentiles, who did not know Him. Then Balaam went home, and so did the king of Moab. And when

they found that God would not allow His people to be cursed, Balaam thought of another way to injure them; for he said to the king of Moab: If you can make the people sin, God is so holy that He will destroy them. So the king made friends with the children of Israel, and invited them to come to a feast, when they sacrificed to their idols, and the people went and ate with the Moabites, and bowed down before their idols, and took wives of the women of Midian. Thus Israel joined themselves to Baal-peor, and the Lord was

greatly displeased; and Moses said to the judges of Israel: Slay all those men who were joined to Baal-peor. And one of the children of Israel brought a Midianitish woman into the camp before Moses and all the people. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, saw it, he took a sword and rushed into the man's tent, and killed both him and the woman. So the plague was stopped. Phinehas was zealous for the honour of God, and grieved that an idolater should be brought into His camp; and God approved of what he

did, and He said to Moses: Phinehas has turned away my anger from the children of Israel, because he was zealous for my sake among them, and now I will give him my covenant of peace, and of an everlasting priesthood. And the Lord said to Moses: Vex the Midianites, and destroy them; for they vex you with their cunning ways, and they have made the children of Israel sin.



CHAPTER XVIII.

NUMBERS xxvi.—xxxi.

Mamma. In this chapter we read that God told Moses to number the people again,—all that were able to go to war, from twenty years old and more. And Moses and Eleazar counted the men of war in the plains of Moab, near Jordan. They also counted the Levites, all that were more than a month old, and among them there was not one man found of those that

were numbered in the wilderness by Moses and Aaron, except Caleb and Joshua.

Sophy. Had all the men of war died?

M. Yes, according to the word of the Lord, who said that they should die in the wilderness, because they had despised the land. This was now the fortieth year, and they were close to the land of promise—only the river Jordan flowed between them and it. And now they were numbered for their inheritance in the land. Already the people were thinking of what possession they would

have, and some women, whose father had died and left no sons, came to Moses and asked him if they might have the possession that God had promised their father, that his name might not be forgotten among his brethren. And Moses brought their cause before the Lord, and the Lord was pleased with them for counting on His goodness, and He said they should have a possession just the same as if they had been sons.

S. Does God like people to wish to have a great deal of what He gives them?

M. Yes, and He rewards those who have confidence in Him to ask for what it is His good pleasure to give. And He said that whenever a man died and left no sons, his daughters should have his possession, and if he left no daughter, then his nearest relation should have it. And now the Lord said to Moses: Go up this mountain and look at the land which I have given to the children of Israel, and when you have seen it from a distance you shall go down into the grave as Aaron did, because you dishonoured me at Meribah.

S. Was Moses very sorrowful?

M. His answer was: Let the Lord set a man over the congregation, to go in and out before them, and to lead them, that the people of the Lord may not be like sheep without a shepherd. This was his first thought.

S. How beautiful! He always thought of the people first of all.

M. Yes, because he always thought of them as God's people. No one knew their badness as well as Moses did, but he loved them because they belonged to the Lord. And the Lord chose his own servant Joshua, who had

been with him and ministered to him, and who had seen all his meek and lowly ways; and the Lord said: Take Joshua, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hands on him, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the people, and give him a charge in their sight, and put your honour upon him, that all may be obedient to him. And he shall stand before Eleazar, and Eleazar shall ask counsel of the Lord for him. At his word they shall go out and come in. And Moses did so.

S. Did God speak to Joshua as He did to Moses ?

M. No. The priest was to ask counsel for Joshua. Moses was God's mediator. God spoke to him face to face, and gave His law into his hands. Now God was going to take away the mediator who had kept them in the wilderness ; and they were to enter the land with a leader or captain who began his course by the conquest of Amalek, as we read in the Book of Exodus. The Lord taught Joshua to fight His battles, but the priest, in God's presence, gave Joshua the word of command. At his word Joshua was to go out or to come in.

S. I like the story of Moses better, because I would rather hear about God's wonderful thoughts, than about fighting battles.

M. The story of Joshua is very beautiful, too, and it is a figure, the way in which the Lord Jesus Christ has gone before His own people and conquered all the powers of evil for them.

Now we read that the Lord told Moses to remind the children of Israel about the continual burnt offering, the sweet savour of which was to be always going up to Him ; and on the Sabbath-day

they were to offer two lambs besides, with a meat offering and a drink offering. And the Lord said : If any man made a vow to the Lord he must not break his word, he must do whatever he has vowed to do. But if a woman made a vow, or promised to do anything to the Lord, if her father or her husband said he did not approve of her vow, the Lord would forgive her, because it was right for a woman to obey her father or her husband; but if a woman, who was a widow, made a vow, she must keep it. Also, they were to bring their

offerings in the beginning of their months, and at the Passover, and at the Feasts of the First-fruits ; and on the Day of the Blowing of Trumpets ; on the Day of Atonement ; and at the Feast of Tabernacles.

S. Did Moses go up the mountain to look at the land ?

M. We are not told of it here ; but before he died, the Lord allowed him to write all this wonderful history of God's ways, that we have been reading, from the very beginning of the world until the children of Israel got to the banks of the river Jordan ; there

this blessed servant of God left them, when their journey was over. And now the Lord said to him: Avenge the children of Israel of Midian before you die. And Moses turned to the people, and said: Come, avenge the LORD of Midian! This was putting great honour upon Moses. God allowed him to show, by his last act on earth, how entirely his heart desired to have God honoured. These Midianites, who had brought in such sorrow, were to be destroyed by him before he died. And Moses chose a thousand men out of each tribe,

that all might have a share in it. So twelve thousand men went to fight against the Midianites, and Phinehas, the priest, went with them, and blew the silver trumpets.

And the Lord gave them victory over the five kings of Midian, and they killed Balaam, the wicked prophet.

S. I am not a bit sorry for Balaam, because he did not love God, who spoke to him, and because he was cruel to his donkey.

M. Balaam is a solemn example of God's judgment upon men

who take His name, and His word upon their lips, but whose hearts have not known His salvation and never tasted His love. He was found with the enemies of the Lord, and he shared in their judgment. And they took the children, and cattle, and goods, but they burnt all their cities and destroyed their fine castles, and they returned with all their spoils to the camp, and Moses and Eleazar went out of the camp to meet them. And Eleazar said that none of the spoils might be brought into the camp until they had passed

through fire, and had been purified with the water of separation ; so they put the gold, and silver, and iron things into the fire, and washed their clothes in water before they came into the camp. Then they divided all the spoils into two parts, and gave one part to the people that remained behind, and the other part to those who had gone to battle. And Moses took a tribute for the Lord of the share of the men of war, and gave it to Eleazar for a heave offering to the Lord, and he took a tribute from the children of Israel's half, and

gave it to the Levites as their share.

And the officers who were over the men of war came to Moses and said: We have counted our men, and there is not a single one killed in the battle; so we have brought an offering to the Lord of that which we took for ourselves from the Midianites; and they gave gold and jewels, and Moses and Eleazar took their offering and brought it into the Tabernacle, and laid it up for a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord.

CHAPTER XIX.

NUMBERS xxxii.—xxxvi.

Mamma. In this chapter we read that the children of Reuben and Gad had a great many cattle, and when they saw that the land of Gilead was a good place for cattle, they came to Moses and Eleazar and asked if they might have the land of Gilead as their possession.

Sophy. Was that part of Canaan?

M. No; it was on this side of Jordan. And Moses was grieved because they asked to be allowed to have their possession on the side of Jordan that was nearest to the wilderness, and nearest to Egypt. And he spoke very gravely to them, and said: Why do you wish to settle here, and to let your brethren go over Jordan and have all the fighting? Take care that your example does not discourage the people of the Lord. You know what happened to your fathers at Kadesh-Barnea, and take care that your hearts are not turning

back from following the Lord; for if you do, He will surely leave you in this wilderness, and you will be the cause of destroying all these people. But they came near to Moses and said: We will build sheepfolds for our cattle, and cities for our wives and children, and then we will go over armed before the children of Israel, and we will fight like the rest, until all the tribes have got their possessions, and then we will come back here to our wives and children. So Moses gave them their possession on that side of Jordan.

S. I wish they had not left their little ones behind.

M. It was want of faith, and they suffered for it afterwards. But God allowed it to show how ready we are to be content with only half a blessing, and that what we choose for ourselves in our selfishness is nothing compared to what God has prepared for us. So Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, took possession of the countries that belonged to Sihon and Og, the two kings whom the Lord had given into their hands, and they built towns and sheepfolds there.

S. Were there nice fruits in Gilead, and milk and honey?

M. Yes. Gilead was a rich and beautiful country, but it was not protected by the river Jordan: there were enemies' countries not far off. Now the Lord went over the whole journey to Moses, and showed how He had kept account of it all, and of every step His people took, and He desired Moses to write it in a book, which he did, for our instruction and blessing. And the Lord said to him: Tell the children of Israel that when they go over Jordan into the land, they must destroy

all the pictures of those wicked people, and all their images, and the places where they worshipped their idols, and then they shall divide the land among their families—a large family shall have a large possession, and a small family shall have a small possession. But be sure to drive out all the wicked people, for if you leave any of them in your land they will be like thorns and briars, to vex you. Then the Lord pointed out to Moses the boundaries of the promised land, north, south, east, and west, and He said that Joshua and Eleazar,

with ten princes of the tribes, were to divide the land between the children of Israel. Reuben and Gad had no share in the dividing.

S. It was very good of the Lord to tell Moses all about the land, though he was not to see it.

M. Yes. God's mind about it was fully revealed to him. He made known His ways, that is Himself, to Moses, the people only saw His acts. One more command the Lord gave about the Levites. The children of Israel were to give them cities to dwell

in, so that the Levites were not to live all together in one spot, but to be spread over the different parts of the land. They were to have forty-eight cities—that was four from each tribe, and each city was to have two thousand cubits of land all round it, for a place to keep their cattle and their goods. But six of the cities that were given to the Levites were to be called cities of refuge ; there were to be three on one side of Jordan and three on the other side.

S. What were the cities of refuge for?

M. For a person to fly to, who had killed another. The law was, that if one man killed another he should be put to death. But God, in mercy, provided the cities of refuge, kept by His servants the Levites, as places where any one who killed another by accident, might escape and find safety. If a man threw a stone at another and killed him, he might fly to the nearest city of refuge, and the people were to judge whether he did it spitefully, or whether he meant to kill him. Two people were to bear witness that they saw it

done; one was not enough. If he did it on purpose he was to be put to death; but if he did not mean to kill him he was to be sent back to the city of refuge, to hide there until the death of the high priest. After that he might go back to his possession.

S. Was he never to leave the city of refuge till the high priest was dead?

M. No. If he was ever found outside of the city the person whose business it was to kill a murderer might take him and put him to death. God said they were not to defile the land by

shedding blood upon it; for He said: I, Jehovah, dwell among the children of Israel.

The cities of refuge are a figure to us of the Lord Jesus Christ.

All men are guilty of the death of God's Son; but whoever flies to Him for refuge, God will not judge.

And Jesus says: Whoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.



I WILL tell you about Jesus :

He is God's beloved Son—

He is living up in Heaven,
Sitting on His Father's throne,

Once He lived on earth amongst us,

Was a child, yet not like you—

He was never rude or selfish,

He was always good and true.

Children please themselves most often,

Jesus pleased His God alone —

God, His Father, who had bid Him

Make His love and glory known.

Jesus always cared for others,

Was a man like none beside —

God, who made the earth and heavens,

Was a man who lived and died.

Here He lived to tell poor sinners

Of His Father's love and grace,

How they might, with sins forgiven,

Look upon God's blessed face.

This is why He lived amongst us ;—

Can you tell me why he died ?

Why the Son of God Most Holy
Was condemned and crucified.

He was holy, He was harmless,
Like a lamb to die He came ;
Bears the punishment of sinners,
That the Lord might pardon them.

Jesus did not die for ever,
He rose living from His grave,
Now in Heaven He lives to help us
Lives to pardon and to save.



CHAPTER XX

DEUTERONOMY i. - iv.

Sophy. Mamma, did Moses write anything more before he died ?

Mamma. Yes ; he wrote a fifth book, which men have called Deuteronomy. It is chiefly telling us what he said to all Israel when they were encamped by the river Jordan.

It was the eleventh month of the fortieth year, and Moses knew that soon he would die, as God

said, and Israel would go over Jordan into the land; so that this book we are now going to read tells us his last words to the people who were so dear to his heart, because they were God's people. He first tells us that they ought to have taken only eleven days to come straight out of Egypt into Canaan, but that the children of Israel took forty years to get there.

S. Oh, but that was because they despised the beautiful country, and they were afraid of the giants, and they did not believe that God could make them

conquer them all; so God kept them in the wilderness all that time to punish them.

M. You are quite right; but it is a true picture of man's heart. For when God gives us any blessing we are very slow about taking possession of it, because we do not believe how good it is. The moment we see how very good it is, we forget all the things that frightened us before, and we think everything else is nothing compared to it, and we try how quickly we can get all we can of God's blessing. And when we know how good it is, we also find

out how God delights to give it to us; for it is joy to God Himself to bless us.

S. Were the children of Israel not afraid of the giants when they got into Canaan?

M. No. After they had destroyed Sihon and Og, the two kings, on this side of Jordan, we hear no more of their fears. They seemed to have proved how God would give them victory, as He said He would.

S. What did Moses say to the people by the river Jordan?

M. He began by going over their history, showing us how

the Spirit of God kept account of every step of their way. He showed how God had told them to go straight to the mountain of the Amorites, for that was the first bit of possession He meant to give them. But, alas! when they got there, we know what happened.

S. They sent out spies to spy out the country.

M. Yes; and here Moses tells them that it was unbelief in them that made them wish to send spies instead of going straight in themselves; but God showed His patience with His people when

He said to Moses: "Send the spies." And it was the spies that brought all the trouble upon them, because they brought an evil report of the land. And Moses told them that Jehovah, their God, had carried them as a man would carry his son all the way that they had come. In the wilderness, where there was no way, He had made a way for them, for He had gone before them to search out a place where they might rest. Still they had rebelled against Him; so that only Joshua and Caleb should see the good land. But

the Lord said Caleb should see it, and the land that he had trodden on God would give to him and to his children, because he said: "Let us go up at once and possess this good land.

And Moses reminded them how they had turned back into the wilderness, but the Lord had been with them there. He knew their walking through that great wilderness; all those forty years He had been with them, they had not wanted anything. But they took thirty-eight years to come back to the mountain of the Amorite, and when they were

there again God said to them: There is the spot I promised you before; go now and take possession of it.

S. And they obeyed God this time, and they killed the king!

M. Yes: they killed Sihon the king, and took possession of his country. And the Lord said to them: Begin to possess, and this day I will begin to make all the nations afraid of you, so that they shall tremble when they hear of you. The king of Bashan was a great giant, and he had a great iron bed, which was four and a half yards long! And when

Moses saw what the Lord had done to these two kings he said: Oh, Lord, thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness; and now I pray Thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, and that beautiful mountain, and Lebanon. But the Lord said: No; speak no more to me of this matter. But go up to the top of Pisgah, and look to the west, and to the north, to the south, and to the east, for you shall see it with your eyes; but you shall not go over Jordan. But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen

him, for he shall go over before this people, and he shall make them inherit the land which you shall see.

S. I am glad Moses saw the good land. Tell me what more he said.

M. He spoke about the blessing of keeping the word of God. He said: Listen, O Israel, to the word that I teach you; and do it, that you may live and possess the land. You must not add anything to God's word, or take anything from it. And he reminded them of the sorrow of disobeying the commandments of

the Lord, and of the blessing of keeping them. And he said: This is your wisdom in the sight of the nations; if they see you doing every thing in obedience to God they will say: Surely this, is a wise and understanding people.

And Moses reminded them of the day the Lord spoke out of the fire on the top of the mountain, when they saw nothing, but only heard a voice.

S. Why did they not see anything?

M. Because the word of God was enough. If they had seen

anything in the Mount they might try to make something like it. But God said: You shall not make the likeness of any thing you have ever seen, for if you do you will be tempted to worship it; and if my people make an image, or likeness of anything that I have forbidden them, I will scatter them among the nations, and I will leave them to worship idols which men's hands have made, which cannot see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. But God said: Even then, if they seek me, they shall find me; and if they are obedient to my word

I will not forsake them, nor destroy them, and I will not forget the covenant I made with their fathers. Thus Moses encouraged them to obey the Lord their God. Then he set apart three cities of refuge on that side of Jordan, to show that God took possession of the land he had given to Reuben, and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

S. Were the cities of refuge God's cities?

M. Yes. And the Levites lived there.

CHAPTER XXI.

DEUTERONOMY v.—xi.

Mamma. In this chapter Moses tells them about the covenants of law that God made with them on Mount Sinai. And he said to them: This covenant was not made with your fathers only, who died in the wilderness, but with us who are alive to-day. Moses spoke to them as if the Ten Commandments, and all that we read of in the book of Exodus, had been said to them.

Sophy. Were they very little children when Moses went up the mountain, and when there was great thunder, and lightning, and God spoke, and the people heard a great voice?

M. Yes. The oldest of them was not twenty years old, and a great many were not born then. But God means every single person to listen to His words, as if they were all said to himself. So Moses repeated to them all that God had taught their fathers in the wilderness, and told them, if they wanted to be blessed, and to live long in the land, they

were to keep all the commandments of the Lord. And when Moses told them about the Sabbath-day, the reason he gave was not because God rested on the Seventh day, but because God had brought them out of Egypt.

S. Why was that a reason for resting on the Sabbath-day ?

M. Because now God has no rest in His people except by redemption. When He made everything at first He looked round on it all and said: It is all very good. But man sinned, and spoiled everything that God gave him. Even the beautiful earth was cursed

for man's sake, so that it ran wild with thorns and briars. God could not rest in that creation. Then He said: I will choose a people for myself, and I will call them out from all the rest, and I will redeem them.

S. What does "redeem" mean?

M. It means to buy back. God bought a people with blood. That was the price He paid for them. Israel was redeemed out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb, which was a figure—a shadow of a much more precious thing, the blood of Jesus. And now God was going to have no rest except in redemp-

tion. So He said: You must rest on the Sabbath-day, because I have redeemed you out of Egypt. And Moses said: The Lord spoke all the words of the law to every one of you, but the tablets of stone He gave to me, for I stood between the Lord and you that day.

S. Did God bless them when they obeyed His word?

M. Yes; all their blessings depended upon obedience—their life, their health, the fruit of their land, their flocks, and herds, and vineyards, and all that they had. And the Lord said they were to love

Him with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might, and to keep all His words in their hearts, and to teach them to their children, and to talk of them, as we are now, when they were sitting in their houses, and when they walked about, when they lay down, and when they got up. They were to be as signs upon their hands to guide them what to do, and before their eyes to guide their thoughts and feelings. And they were to write them upon the posts of their doors, and on their gates, so that they could never go in or out without

seeing God's laws on every side of them.

S. Did God wish them to be always thinking of Him?

M. Yes. He knew that nothing else would make them so happy, or so blessed. And He said: Take care that when you get very rich, with fine cities, and houses, and vineyards, that you do not forget the Lord who brought you out of the place of bondage; for the Lord is a jealous God; and He commands you to fear Him for your good always, that He may preserve you alive. And if you obey Him it shall be your righteousness.

They were not to make any covenant with the wicked nations, nor to allow their children to marry any of their children; but they were to break down their idols and destroy them. And when they were tempted to feel afraid of the people of the land, they were to think of what the Lord did to Pharaoh, and to remember that He would do the same to any one who made them afraid. But God said He would not drive out all the people at once, for fear the wild beasts might get too many for them. This showed how God thought of every single thing.

And He said they must not bring any thing belonging to an idol into their houses, but they were to hate it, because God hated it.

S. If they loved God with their whole hearts, they could not like idols. Could they, mamma?

M. No; truly. An idol is as something horrible to a heart that knows the living and true God; the God who knows us, and loves us, and speaks to us, and hears us, which an idol cannot do. And He told the children of Israel that they were to remember all the way by which He had led

them. For God had a reason for leading them about those forty years in the wilderness. God wanted to prove what was in their hearts, whether they would keep His commandments or not. And God let them get hungry, and then He fed them with a strange food, so that when they saw it they said: What is it? And all that they might learn one great lesson which God gives to every child of His to learn.

S. What is that lesson?

M. That man does not live only by the bread that he eats, but he lives by every word that

comes out of the mouth of the Lord. Just as bread feeds the body, and keeps it alive, so the word which God speaks gives life to the soul of man. The children of Israel proved this in the wilderness, for the word of God was all they had. If they wanted food, they had to wait till God spoke the word for it to come; if they wanted water, God spoke the word for it to flow out of the rock for them. There was nothing in the wilderness for them, not even a road to walk on. The word of the Lord made a way for them, for He said: Go this way,

when the cloud moved, and He Himself went before them to find a place for them to rest at.

S. Oh, yes; and God made them well again when they were ill, and told them everything they were to do.

M. Yes; God had cared for them in every way. He even kept their clothes from wearing out all those forty years, and He told them to consider in their hearts that as a man teaches his son, and corrects him when he does wrong, so God had done to them, and for this reason they were to walk in His ways and to fear Him always,

to do all God's ways with them were to do them good in the end. But if they became disobedient, like the other nations, God would treat them as He treated those nations. For their God was a consuming fire for His people. If they walked with Him, they would find how He destroyed their enemies; but if they were disobedient to Him, He was a consuming fire to destroy themselves.

S. Did Moses think of the burning bush when he said that?

M. Perhaps he did. God showed Himself first to Moses in a flame of fire, and He taught Moses

what it was to stand on holy ground with God. Moses never forgot that. And it is very touching to see in his last words to the people how he intreats them to be obedient to God, and to remember how holy God is. And he said to them : Do not think that it is because you have been righteous, or faithful to God, that He gives you this good land, for you have been a very wicked and disobedient people ; but it is because God chose to perform His word which He spoke to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob. And also, God chose to destroy the wicked

nations who do not believe in Him. And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you? To fear Him, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, and to serve Him with all your heart, and with all your soul—and it is for your own good. For you have seen what great and terrible things He has done for you; how your fathers were only seventy people when they went down into Egypt; and see now what a multitude you are, like the stars of heaven!

S. God promised Abraham they should be as many as the stars.

M. Yes. And now Moses was reminding them of all God's love to them, to encourage them to love Him, and to obey Him, and he said: The land that you are going to is not like Egypt, where you had to work hard, and after you sowed your seed you had to water it; for there is no rain in Egypt, and it is very hot there; and even the large fields have to be watered just as we water our garden. Think what trouble that must have been! But Moses said : The land of Canaan is full of hills and valleys, and the ground drinks in the rain that comes from heaven. It is a land

the Lord your God cares for, for His eyes are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. And if you obey God, He will send the rain just at the right time to make your corn and your vines grow, and grass for your cattle, and every bit of the land where your feet tread upon shall be yours for ever.

S. I should have walked over the whole land if I might have all that my feet trod on.

M. But they had to fight every step of the way ; and if their feet trod on a rich field, or a vineyard, it was a proof that they had put

out the enemy that used to live there!

And now Moses said: I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing if you obey, and a curse if you disobey. And in the land, on the other side of Jordan, there are two mountains: one is called Gerizim, and the other is called Ebal, and when you go into the land you shall put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and you shall put the curse upon Mount Ebal. And you shall go in and possess the land, and you shall dwell in it; and you shall do all that I have told you this day.

CHAPTER XXII.

DEUT. XII. to XXV.

Mamma. Now, Moses taught the people how they were to behave in the land, that they might be blessed. In all their actions they were to show that they were God's people, and that He was their God; and as a proof of this, God would choose a place in one of their tribes, where He would put His name, and there they were to bring their offerings and

their tithes, and they were to eat there before the Lord and to rejoice in all the good things that God had given them.

Sophy. Could they not rejoice as well in their own tents?

M. No. God chose to surround Himself with joy, and it was joy to Him, who was the mighty giver of all good things, to see His people rejoicing before Him. All were to rejoice, their sons and their daughters, their servants, and the Levites that were inside their gates; no one was to be left out.

S. Were they to bring every animal that they killed to God?

M. No; the animals that they wanted for their common daily food they might kill inside their gates, but all the blood was to be poured out upon the earth. It was only the things they offered to the Lord that they were to bring to the place which God should choose, and then the blood was to be poured upon the altar. And when they were come into the land they were to be very careful not to have anything to do with the false gods of the nations that God had destroyed; they must not even ask about them, for their ways were very

hateful to God. And if any one came and asked them to go after any other god they were not to listen to him, but all the people were to put him to death. If it was their nearest relation, or their dearest friend, they were not to pity him, or to try to hide him; they were to be the very first to cast a stone at him, because he had tried to draw them away from the one true God, who had brought them out of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

S. Was that to show that they loved God more than their dearest friend ?

M. Yes. It was sin even to listen to the temptation, and we know that it was by listening to the serpent that Adam and Eve got away from God at first. And any one who tempts God's people to dishonour Him is doing Satan's work; and even if it is our nearest relation, or our very dearest friend, we must take God's part against him, and treat him as a guilty one.

S. That would be great sorrow, mamma.

M. True, Sophy; but if we loved God with all our heart, and with all our soul, it would be

greater sorrow to hear Him dishonoured. The children of Israel were to be so zealous for God in this matter, that if they heard that the inhabitants of one of their own cities had gone after other gods, they were to search carefully whether it were true; and if it were they were to destroy the whole city, and to burn it with fire, and it should never be built again. They were to be in every thing a holy people, because they were the children of the Lord their God. God showed how He cared for them, and they were to care for one

another. He said, if the way was too long for them to carry their offerings they might bring money instead, and when they came to the place the Lord had chosen, they might buy oxen or sheep, or whatever they wished, and they might eat them before the Lord, and rejoice with their families, and with the Levite that lived in their city. They were never to forget the Levite, but every three years they were to lay up the tenth part of all they had, especially for the Levite, and for any stranger, or orphan, or widow, who might

be in their city, that all might come up before the Lord, and eat, and be satisfied. God would not have one poor beggar left out or forgotten when His people rejoiced before Him.

S. Does God like His people to be generous?

M. Yes; because it is like Himself. He gave liberally to them, and they were to give liberally to each other. After seven years every one who was owed anything by another was to forgive him the debt, and they were to help every poor man in their tribes. And if they had a slave

of their own people they were to set him free in the seventh year, and to give him plenty of food to take away with him; but if he wished to stay with them, they were to put a hole in his ear as a proof that he was their servant for ever, to listen and to obey.

The first-born of their cattle they were to keep for the Lord, and they must not shear the wool off the first-born of their sheep. All the feasts they were to keep in the place the Lord should choose. Three times in the year they were to appear before the Lord.

S. You said they kept the Passover in their own houses ?

M. So they did the night they came out of Egypt. But when they were come into the land, they were to go up to the place where God should put His name, and eat it in the night, and go home next morning. God's throne was to be with His people, and they were to come up to worship Him, not empty, but with the best of all the good things He had given them.

They were to set up judges in all their cities, who were to judge the people truly and justly; and

if they had a very hard case they were to go up to the place that God should choose, and the priest and the judge that were there should give judgment about it. And Moses said: When you are come into the land, and wish to have a king like the other nations, you shall not have a stranger for your king, but you shall have one whom the Lord your God shall choose for you out of your own tribes. And your king must not get a great many horses, or go down into Egypt, because the the Lord has said: You shall never return that way any more. And

your king must not have many wives, and he must not save up for himself silver and gold, but he must write a copy of this law in a book, and he must read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear God, and to obey His word.

S. Why should the king write out the law?

M. Because he ought to be the person who was most careful of God's honour in all the kingdom. The king who ruled over the people ought to have been God's servant, keeping His law, and showing an example to all

his subjects. But Moses knew that this faithless people would not always continue to walk with God as he had told them. So he said: The Lord your God will raise up a Prophet out of your brethren like unto me, and you will listen to him.

S. Did he mean Jesus?

M. Yes. Moses reminded them that they had been afraid of the voice of God speaking out of the fire on the mountain, and that they had wished not to hear it any more. But he said that the Lord Jesus Christ should come with the words of God in His

mouth, not with thunder and lightning, but full of grace and truth. He should speak to them in God's name, and any one who did not listen to Him, God would judge.

Moses also told them what to do if a person was found killed in their land. They were to kill a heifer, and the elders of the city should wash their hands over the heifer, and say: Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it; and so God would not punish them for the innocent blood shed in their land. Moses also gave them

a great many laws about being thoughtful and kind to one another, and treating even the animals with the gentleness with which God treated them. God would not allow any kind of mixture; they must not sow different kinds of seeds together, nor put a cow and a donkey to plough together. The fringes of blue upon their dress were to show the kind of people they were to be. An Ammonite or Moabite they were never to receive into the congregation of the Lord, because of what they had done to Israel in the

wilderness. They were not to hate an Edomite, because Esau was their brother, and they were not to hate an Egyptian, because they had once been strangers in his land. But they were never to spare an Amalekite.



CHAPTER XXIII.

DEUT. xxvi. to xxix.

Mamma. In this chapter Moses tells them, that when they had possessed the land, and were dwelling in it, and enjoying its good things, they should come with their firstfruits to God. They were to put all in a basket, and take it to the priest, and say: I profess this day to the Lord thy God, that I am come into the country which the Lord

promised our fathers to give us. And the priest was to take the basket and set it down before the altar of the Lord. Then the worshipper was to say before the Lord his God: A Syrian, ready to perish, was my father, and he went down into Egypt with a few, and became a great nation; but the Egyptians laid upon us hard bondage, and we cried to the Lord God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice, and brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with great signs and wonders; and He has brought us here and

given us this land, flowing with milk and honey; and now I have brought these firstfruits of the land which thou, O Lord, hast given me.

Sophy. Was that a prayer, mamma?

M. It was worship. It was telling God what He had done for one who was ready to perish. He came with the firstfruits in his hands, and his heart told out his joy and thanksgiving in the presence of God, and this was worship that God would accept—just as any poor sinner now might come to God and say: I

was a sinner perishing in my sins; I was trying hard to do right, but it was like the hard bondage of Egypt. But Jesus sent a message to me, that He had died for me, and I believed His message, because I knew that no one else but God could have thought of such a thing, and I told Him so, and He heard me; for He took away the pain and hard bondage that was in my heart, and He brought me into a large and wealthy place, where I knew that I was washed quite clean in His precious blood, and that God loved me. And I pro-

fess to-day that I am in that happy place with God, that I have Jesus for my Saviour, and that Jesus' Father is my Father, and His God is my God. This would be the sinner's sacrifice of praise and worship.

S. Then we have to praise God for Jesus now, as the children of Israel used to praise Him for the good land?

M. Yes; in both it is praise for redemption. They were a people redeemed out of Egypt into Canaan. We are a people redeemed out of a world, which crucified God's Son into heaven

which has received God's Son. If we love Him we are glad to have our home in the only place where He has one. They could not bring their firstfruits unless they were living in the land ; and so we cannot worship God in the name of Jesus unless we are really enjoying what God has given us in Him. They were to confess that day that the Lord was their God, and He would own that they were His peculiar people.

S. Why did Moses talk to them so much about the land when they had not gone over Jordan yet ?

M. That they might desire the good land, and that they might love God, and honour Him in their hearts. In the Book of Numbers we read that he taught them how to behave in the wilderness; but in this Book Moses taught them how to behave in the land, and he earnestly desired that their hearts should be true to God, not only that they should obey the Ten Commandments, which told them what they must not do, but that they might think of the good ways of God to them, and delight in them as obedient children; that the law, instead of

been hidden in the ark, was to be in their hearts and in their mouths. For in this Book God called His people His children, which He had never done before. And He wished them to be like children to Him.

And Moses said : On the day that you pass over Jordan into the land, you shall take large stones, and plaster them with plaster upon Mount Ebal, and write the words of this law upon the stones. And you shall build an altar upon Mount Ebal—that was the mountain on which they were to put the curses—and you

shall offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings there ; and you must write the law on the stones very plainly.

And Moses said they should divide the people into two divisions; and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin should stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people; and Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali should stand upon Mount Ebal to curse. And the Levites should speak and say with a loud voice to all the men of Israel: Cursed shall be the man who makes any image and

hides it away secretly. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen. And there were twelve curses, and as the Levites spoke them, all the people were to say, Amen.

S. Why were the Levites to say all those curses before the children of Israel?

M. Because every one who did not continue in all things that were written in the law of the Lord was cursed. But any one who did keep the commandments of the Lord was blessed; his land, his children, and his cattle, and all that belonged to him were

blessed. And all nations should be afraid of them if they kept God's commandments, and they were to be the greatest of all nations, so that they might lend to other nations, but they must never borrow from them. And Moses prophesied what would happen to them if they turned away from God. Then all their blessings should become curses, because they had forsaken their God who had loved them so much. Moses told them all these things, besides the law he gave them on Mount Sinai, that they might remember, and do the command-

ments of the Lord, for they were given to them and to their children for ever. But the Lord had secret purposes of His own besides, as we shall see by and by.



CHAPTER XXIV.

DEUT. XXX.—XXXIV.

Sophy. What were the secrets of the Lord about?

Mamma. About His chosen people, and of how He would glorify Himself in them, notwithstanding all their disobedience and their unfaithfulness to Him. For the Lord told Moses that when His people were scattered among the other nations, if they turned to Him when they were in a far country, He would gather

them again into their own land, and if they loved Him with all their heart, and with all their soul, He would bless them and be their God. And Moses said: I call heaven and earth to witness against you to-day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore now choose life, that you and your children may live, that you may love the Lord, and obey His voice, and cling to Him, for He is your life, that you may dwell in the land that God promised to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob,

And when Moses had spoken these words to them, he said: I am a hundred and twenty years old to-day; and the Lord has said to me that I shall not go over Jordan. But you shall go over into the land, and the Lord will go over with you; be strong, and of good courage, and do not be afraid, for He will not fail you nor forsake you.

S. Did Moses make Joshua their captain then?

M. Yes; he called Joshua, and said to him before all the children of Israel: Be strong, and of good courage, for you must go with this

people into the land which the Lord has promised you. The Lord will go before you; do not be afraid.

Then Moses wrote the law in a book, and gave it to the elders and to the priests who carried the ark, and they were to put it beside the ark in the Tabernacle; and he told them to read it every seven years, when all the slaves and captives were set free. At the Feast of Tabernacles, all Israel, men, and women, and children, and the strangers in their cities, were to come up before the Lord; and the priests were to read out

the law before them, that they might know it and do it, and that they might fear the Lord always.

S. Were the little children to keep the law?

M. Yes. They are especially mentioned many times in this book; they were to be taught it when they were so young that they did not know anything else. Then the Lord told Moses to come with Joshua to the Tabernacle, and they came. And the Lord appeared in the Tabernacle in the pillar of the cloud. And the Lord said to Moses: You

will die, and this people will go after other gods, and they will break My covenant, and I will forsake them, and hide My face from them. Now, therefore, write this song and teach it to the children of Israel, that this song may be a witness for Me against them.

S. Did God tell Moses what to write?

M. Yes. By His Spirit God taught him what to write. I will read you this beautiful song in the thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy. The last thing Moses did on earth was to sing

of the goodness of God; and he taught the song to Joshua and to the children of Israel. And Moses called heaven and earth to witness that he spoke these words to them. And that day the Lord said to him: Come up the mountain, and die there, as Aaron died in Mount Hor; and you shall see the land which I give to the children of Israel.

Then Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death, and he said: The Lord came from Sinai, He shined forth from Mount Paran. He came with ten thousands of His

saints; from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people. Then Moses blessed the tribes by name, and exclaimed: Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto Thee, O people saved by the Lord And when he had said this he went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah.

S. Was Moses very sorrowful as he went up the mountain?

M. No. I think he had such joy in God that he did not think of himself at all. Moses had a bright and blessed faith in God

from the very beginning, when he endured all the trials and sufferings he had in Egypt, because he saw Him who is invisible. That is, he saw God by faith, and God gave his faith in Him a great reward.

S. Was the joy God gave him his reward?

M. Yes; Moses enjoyed more of the company of God than any other man that ever lived, for the Lord spoke to him as a man would speak to his friend. And even in his death the Lord attended him, for He met him upon Mount Pisgah, and showed him

all the land of promise. And the Lord showed him that here was Dan's possession, and there was Ephraim's, and there was Judah's, and so on. So that with his eyes he saw the good land, and by faith he saw the people of the Lord dwelling there according to His word. So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there, and the Lord buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, but no one knows to this day where his grave was. The Lord kept that a secret.

S. How much God must have loved him !

M. Yes; God loved him, and he knew it; and that is what makes the story of Moses' life such a very lovely one. He lived in this world for a hundred and twenty years, and from the moment he was born, a little helpless baby, God had watched over him. When his believing mother hid her little one in the ark of bulrushes, by the river side, God saved him from the cruel king. And God took care of him while he was in Pharaoh's daughter's house. And when he was forty years old God put it into his heart to visit his brethren, the

children of Israel; and Moses chose to suffer affliction with God's people, and to have the true God for his God, instead of having all the pleasures and riches of Egypt.

S. And when Moses was all alone in a strange country, God showed Himself to him in the burning bush.

M. Yes; Moses hid his face that day, for he was afraid of God; but God took the fear out of his heart by the revelation of Himself, and of His purpose to bless. Moses was never afraid of God again. And by and by we

shall read how God told Moses his secret thoughts about His own beloved Son. For Moses has been on this earth again—the disciples saw him talking to Jesus on the holy mount.

S. Was that really the same Moses ?

M. Yes; he was talking to Jesus when the voice came out of the cloud: This is my beloved Son; hear Him. And Moses will yet come again in glory with the Lord Jesus Christ, and then he will see how God fulfils all that He has said about His people Israel.

The people wept and mourned for Moses thirty days. And Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom, but there never was another prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.



In the palace-halls of Egypt,
One there was who walked apart,
Egypt's glory all around him,
Ceaseless sorrow in his heart.
For afar his heart was dwelling
Where the people of his God
Toiled amidst the bricks of Egypt,
Toiled midst sufferings, tears, and blood.
The adoption and the glory,
And the covenant their own;
And a land, where, in God's favour,
Israel should dwell alone.
Thither—who would lead them thither?
For they would not understand
That their God had heard their groaning,
And would save them by his hand.
Therefore in the lonely desert,
As a stranger would he dwell,
Egypt's glory cast behind him,
Scorned by those he loved so well;

There amidst the lonely desert.
God's untiring grace to learn,
And in his Almighty power.
Israel's Saviour to return.

Then again with cloud and fire,
With the Lord's own ransomed band;
Through the riven sea to journey,
From the desolated land,
From the place of Egypt's treasures,
Now to win the joy he prized;
Grief with God's beloved people,
And the blest reproach of Christ.

Learning ever deeper lessons
Of the grace that dwelt above;
Those dark clouds of awful thunder,
Vail that hid God's cloudless love;
Whilst beneath, amid the shadows,
Israel trod the desert road,
He above, in God's bright glory,
Learnt the wondrous heart of God.

Whither led that long strange journey?
To the hills so green and fair.
Where the vine and spreading fig-tree
Tell of God's unwearied care?
This the rest for Israel's children,
But to him no portion fell.
Barred by law from Canaan's pastures,
Brought by grace with God to dwell,



QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

CHAPTER I.

1. With what were the children of Israel to come to the Lord?
2. Name the four classes of offerings.
3. How was the Burnt Offering typical of Christ?

CHAPTER II.

1. How was the Meat Offering typical of Christ?

CHAPTER III.

1. How was the Peace Offering typical of Christ?
2. What offerings were to be for a sweet savour to the Lord?

CHAPTER IV.

1. Describe the Sin Offering.
2. Where was the blood to be put?

CHAPTER V.

1. What did they offer for a trespass against the Lord?
2. If a man were poor, what was he to bring?

CHAPTER VI.

1. What was a man to offer when he sinned against the Lord by trespassing against his neighbour?

CHAPTER VII.

1. What parts of the animal were they never to eat?

CHAPTER VIII.

1. Describe the setting apart of Aaron and his sons.

2. What garments did Moses put on them?

3. Why was Aaron anointed first by himself, and his sons afterwards?

CHAPTER IX.

1. What occurred on the eighth day?

2. As Aaron offered the Wave Offering, what did he do to the people?

CHAPTER X.

1. What immediately occurred to mar the glory of the priesthood?

2. Why must not Aaron and his sons mourn for Nadab and Abihu?

3. What command did the Lord give to Aaron in consequence of their sin?

CHAPTER XI.

1. What more did the Lord say about their food?

CHAPTER XIII.

1. To whom was a leper to go?
2. If he was pronounced unclean what was he to do?

CHAPTER XIV.

1. How was a leper to be cleansed?
2. What were cedar wood, scarlet wool, and hyssop typical of?
3. In what else besides a person, could the plague of leprosy be seen?
4. What was to be done to a house or clothes that had it?

CHAPTER XVI.

1. What solemn command did the Lord give after the death of Aaron's two sons?
2. How was Aaron to be dressed?
3. What was Aaron to do with the two goats?
4. For whom was he to make atonement first?
5. With what was he to go inside the vail lest he die?
6. Where was Aaron to sprinkle the blood?
7. For whom was he to make atonement?
8. What was Aaron to do with the live goat?
9. What was Aaron to do when he had put on his garments and come forth?
10. What were they always to do on the tenth day of the seventh month?

11. How often were they to have a day of atonement for sin?

12. When was the day of atonement for those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?

CHAPTER XVII.

1. Why were the children of Israel never to eat blood?

CHAPTER XIX.

1. Why were they to be a holy people?

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. Name the feasts of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1. What did the Lord command about the lamps?

2. How often was the shewbread to be put before the Lord?

3. What was done to the man who spoke evil of the Lord?

CHAPTER XXV.

1. How was the land to keep Sabbath?

2. What was every fiftieth year to be?

CHAPTER XXVI.

1. What would happen to them if they disobeyed the commandments of the Lord?

2. But if they confessed their sin, what would the Lord do?

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. Who was to say how much their offerings were worth?
2. Where did the Lord give these commandments to Moses?



NUMBERS.

CHAPTER I.

1. Why did the Lord tell Moses to number the people.
2. How many fighting men were there in Israel?
3. Why were the Levites not numbered with the men of war?

CHAPTER II.

1. Describe the order in which they were to encamp.

CHAPTER III.

1. Instead of whom were the Levites given to the Lord?
2. Name the three families of Levites.
3. What did Moses do with the firstborn who were more than the Levites?

CHAPTER IV.

1. What was the service of the Kohathites?
2. What was the service of the Gershonites?
3. What was the service of the Merarites?

CHAPTER V.

1. Where was every unclean person to be put?

CHAPTER VI.

1. What was the law of the Nazarite?
2. How was his Nazariteship restored if it were lost?
3. What was he to do when the days of his separation were over?

CHAPTER VII.

1. When the Tabernacle was set up, what did the princes do?
2. Who offered most?
3. From whence did the Lord speak to Moses?

CHAPTER VIII.

1. How were the Levites cleansed?
2. What happened when the tabernacle was set up?

CHAPTER IX.

1. How did they know when to travel and when to rest?

CHAPTER X.

1. What were the silver trumpets for?
2. Who used them?
3. Who went before the children of Israel?

CHAPTER XI.

1. Why did the Lord send fire among the people?
2. In what did Moses show failure at this time?
3. How did the Lord answer him?
4. How did the Lord punish the people?

CHAPTER XII.

1. Relate the solemn story of Miriam's sin.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. What were the spies sent for?
2. How long were they in the land of Canaan?

CHAPTER XIV.

1. What evil thing did the people propose to do?
2. What was the judgment of the Lord in consequence?
3. Name the ten times in which they had tempted the Lord from Egypt to this time.
4. What effect had the Lord's judgment on the people?

CHAPTER XV.

1. How did the Lord shew that He was as willing as ever to receive all who came to Him?

2. What difference were they to make between a person who sinned from ignorance and one who knew God's commandment and broke it?

3. How did the Lord show that He meant His people to have heavenly ways?

CHAPTER XVI.

1. What was the sin of Korah?

2. How did Moses prove him and his company?

3. How did the children of Israel sin yet more against the Lord?

4. Why did Aaron stand between the dead and the living?

CHAPTER XVII.

1. What was the meaning of what the Lord told Moses to do?

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. What were the tithes?

CHAPTER XIX.

1. What was the offering of the red heifer for?

CHAPTER XX.

1. Relate the sorrowful story of Meribah.

2. Who was made priest instead of Aaron?

CHAPTER XXI.

1. Why were fiery serpents sent?
2. Why did a look at the brazen serpent make them live?
3. Why did the people sing?
4. How did Sihon and Og treat Israel?

CHAPTER XXII.

1. What was Balaam's sin?

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. How did God make the wicked prophet do His will?

CHAPTER XXIV.

1. To whom was the prophecy of Balaam a message?

CHAPTER XXV.

1. Why was the Lord angry with Israel?
2. Why did God commend what Phinehas did?

CHAPTER XXVI.

1. Why were the children of Israel numbered again?
2. What solemn word of the Lord was fulfilled?

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. What request did the daughters of Zelophehad make?

2. What sort of person did the Lord choose to succeed Moses?

CHAPTER XXVIII,

1. How long was the burnt-offering to burn upon the altar?

CHAPTER XXIX.

1. Name the set days on which they were to bring offerings.

CHAPTER XXX.

1. What was the law concerning vows?

CHAPTER XXXI.

1. Whom did Moses wish to avenge of Midian?

2. Why was the Lord so wroth against Midian?

3. How many of the Israelites were killed in battle?

CHAPTER XXXII.

1. What did the children of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh do?

2. Why did Moses object to it?

3. What did they gain, and what did they lose by it?

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1. What does this account of their journeyings teach us?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1. Who set the bounds of their habitations?
2. Who were to divide the land?

CHAPTER XXXV.

1. For what were the cities of refuge?
2. Why must they not shed blood in their land?

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1. What law preserved the inheritance to each tribe?
2. Where were these commandments given to Moses?

DEUTERONOMY.

CHAPTER I.

1. Why did Moses remind the children of Israel of all that had occurred?

CHAPTER II.

2. When they began to possess, what did the Lord begin to do?

CHAPTER III.

1. What answer did the Lord give to Moses' request?

CHAPTER IV.

1. Why did the Children of Israel see no similitude on Mount Sinai?

CHAPTER V.

1. Why was the blessing attached to keeping these commandments of the Lord?

CHAPTER VI.

1. Where were the words of this law to be?
2. What was to be their righteousness?

CHAPTER VII.

1. How were they to deal with the idolatrous nations, and with their idols?

CHAPTER VIII.

1. What was the Lord's purpose in leading them through the wilderness?

CHAPTERS IX., X., XI.

1. How did Moses encourage the people to be obedient?

CHAPTER XII.

1. Where were they to bring their offerings, and for what purpose?

2. Why would the Lord choose a place?
3. What did He say about the Levite?

CHAPTER XIII.

1. What might faithfulness to the true God oblige them to do?

CHAPTER XIV.

1. For whom was the tithe of the third year?

CHAPTER XV.

1. What was to be the character of God's people in their ways to each other?

CHAPTER XVI.

1. What were they to do three times a year?

CHAPTER XVII.

1. Who was to decide in difficult cases of judgment?
2. How was the king to establish his throne?

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. What was to mark the Prophet whom the Lord would send?

CHAPTER XIX.

1. For whom were the cities of refuge?

CHAPTER XX.

1. What part was the priest to take in war?

CHAPTER XXI.

1. What was the law about one slain in the land?

2. What was the punishment of a rebellious son?

CHAPTER XXV.

1. Why were they never to spare an Amalekite?

CHAPTER XXVI.

1. What was the confession of the worshipper?

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. What were they to do the day they passed over Jordan?

2. Who uttered the curses?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

In what were they blessed?

CHAPTER XXIX.

1. What would be the consequence if they forsook the Lord?

CHAPTER XXX.

1. How would the Lord receive them if they returned to him?

CHAPTER XXXI.

1. Why were they to be strong and of good courage?

2. When were they to read the law before all Israel?

3. Why did the Lord tell Moses to write a song?

4. To whom did he teach it?

5. Where did the Levites put the book of the law?

6. What did Moses say they would do after his death?

CHAPTER XXXII.

1. To what did Moses compare the tender ways of Jehovah with His people?

2. What did Moses call the Lord to them? and why?

3. What did he say was their life?

4. Why must not Moses go into the land

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1. What were Moses' last words to the children of Israel?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1. Who met Moses on the top of Pisgah?

2. What did the Lord say to him?
3. What does the Lord always call Moses?
4. Who buried Moses? and where?
5. How long did the children of Israel mourn for Moses?
6. What sort of a person was Joshua?
7. In what was Moses above all the prophets that have been since in Israel?