

BIBLE TALKS.

BY M. R. LEMEERT
NUMBER XVII.

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the Son of man, that he should repent; hath he said and shall he not do? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

The investigation of the O. Testament Scriptures was commenced to learn from them what God is, with special reference to his veracity; and thus far it has been seen that he is a God of truth—keeping his promises and executing his threats—never forgetting either; and is greatly to be feared. The following will deepen and strengthen this conviction:

The Amalekites were descendants of Abraham and Isaac through Esau, Amalek being the grandson of Esau; while the Israelites descended from Abraham and Isaac through Jacob, Esau's brother. So the two were akin and should have sought each other's interests and prosperity. The Amalekites lived just east of Egypt and north of the wilderness of Sinai, while the Israelites were cruelly oppressed and in bitter bondage in Egypt. This was known by the Amalekites, who felt no sympathy for their suffering cousins; their cries which had gone up to heaven and moved to pity him who dwells therein had not in the least softened the heart of Amalek, and when the Lord was bringing them out of Egyptian bondage, after they had crossed the Red Sea, being then near Amalek, "Then came Amalek and fought with Israel at Rephedin" instead of rejoicing with them because of their deliverance. They met them by the way and smote the hindmost of them—all that were feeble behind, when they were faint and weary. Amalek feared not God.

This heartless—this barbarous treatment greatly displeased God, and caused him to swear that he would have war with Amalek from generation to generation, resulting in their entire extinction. "The Lord said unto Moses, write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." This is a terrible decision; but hath he spoken and shall he not make it good? Amalek was doomed, but as the Lord was to have war with him from generation to generation, his utter overthrow would not take place for some cen-

turies after Israel came into possession of the land of Canaan.

Passing down the stream of time about four centuries, Saul is king over Israel and Samuel is prophet. "Samuel said unto Saul, the Lord sent me to anoint thee king over my people; now therefore hearken thou unto the words of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

King Saul, upon receiving this command, accompanied by over two hundred thousand soldiers, went and utterly destroyed all of the Amalekites with the edge of the sword, except king Agag whom Samuel slew. Not one in whose veins the blood of Amalek coursed was left to bear his name. Thus was God's fierce vengeance against Amalek executed! How fearful to incur the displeasure of him who will in no wise acquit the guilty! "Amalek feared not God." This is at once the secret of their wickedness and of their utter destruction. Let us all walk in the fear of the Lord and do all in our power to indelibly impress his fear upon the minds and hearts of all under our care. The young are easily impressed. Dear parents, see to it that your children all fear God from a familiar knowledge of what he has done, and from what he has threatened, as revealed in the Book he has given us.

We have another lesson in close connection with this, worthy of our serious consideration. King Saul, in receiving his charge to destroy Amalek, was also charged to destroy all the live stock belonging to them.

"But Saul and the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, and of the fatlings and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but all that was vile and refuse, that they utterly destroyed. Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, it repenteth me that I have set up Saul king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." This grieved Samuel, and he cried unto the Lord all night, and rose early to meet Saul the next morning. Upon meeting him Saul exclaimed;

"Blessed art thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And Samuel said, what meaneth then the bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul replied, "I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God. And Samuel said, hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." For this act of disobedience Saul lost the favor of God, and his kingdom. In vain he tried to justify himself as having obeyed the most important part of the commandment, and to throw the blame of the failure upon the people. He was king, and the Lord held him responsible. As king, he had no right to yield to the wishes of the people, to leave undone any thing the Lord had commanded. Nor would any pious excuse be taken in justification of disobedience. Animals which the Lord had devoted to destruction would not be acceptable to him for sacrifice. Obedience was better than sacrifice. From this we should learn strict obedience. We may not modify, change, nor in any way alter a command or ordinance of the Lord. Supreme authority is in every command and ordinance of his; and to leave undone, or modify, is to reject the word of the Lord, and to turn away from following him—set at naught his authority. Let us fear to do this.

Hebron, O., July 17, 1883.

FOREIGN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Since the organization of this Society, in 1875, nine missions have been established. Two more will be established in a few months. The present membership is about 1,300. Its property is worth \$79,000. Two or three of the nine will be self-supporting very soon. The receipts for the past year were \$25,000. We started out this year to raise \$50,000. This would be less than 10 cents apiece. We can do this easily with the cooperation of all. Thus far, however, we have

not raised half this sum. Our treasury is now empty. We have some special funds, but nothing that we can use for our general work. We will need at least \$10,000 in addition to what is pledged, to carry us through the year out of debt. We employ no financial agent, that we may keep the expenses as low as possible. We expect the friends of missions to act as agents for us. Can you not give us something yourself? Can you not get your friends to give something? Can you not get the church and school with which you are connected to aid us in this great work? Remember that our current expenses have never exceeded six per cent. of the gross receipts. Almost every cent you give will reach the men in the field. This work is not ours, but God's, and it must go on. We can not stop now without disgrace. We can not disregard the cries of the perishing, without guilt. We must go on till the whole world is redeemed. Please remit to the undersigned.

By order of the Board,
A. MCLEAN, Cor Sec'y.
Cincinnati, O., July 24, 1883.
P. O. Box 570.

State Evangelist.

The letter published in another column will explain. We cannot express our disappointment at receiving from Bro. Sherman a similar letter declining to come. Now we hardly know what to say. This, however, we will say, We have written again with the hopes of being able to secure a suitable person by the time or before the State Coöperation convenes at Salem. This is all. However, the work will not stop. Bros. Burnett, Morrison and Edmunds are now engaged a small portion of their time and we expect to have other home forces at work before long, of which notice will be given in due time.

COR. SEC.

He that will not permit his wealth to do any good to others while he is alive, prevents it from doing any good to himself when he is dead; and by an egotism that is suicidal, and has a double edge, cuts himself off from the truest pleasure and the highest happiness hereafter.—*Colton.*

Mrs. Comstock, of Michigan, who has visited 115,000 prisoners, finds that 100,000 were brought to the prison through strong drink.