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LABAT'S Store and Bar Room B. LABAT, Proprietor, Covington, La. Just received a fresh stock of—

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ELIEZER OF DAMASCUS

OUR SERMON STORY by the "Highway and Byway" Preacher. (A Vision Between the Lines of God's Inspired Word.)

Scripture Authority:—"After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, O Lord Jehovah, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and that shall be possessor of my house? And the Lord said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed; and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him saying, This man shall not be thine heir; but that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness.—Gen. 12:1-4.

ROMISES from God and God's own time and way in bringing those promises to pass. It is not so hard sometimes to believe in the ultimate blessing which is to come to us from God, as it is to wait patiently for the working out of the perfect will of God in our lives so that the blessing promised may be received.

When God said to Abraham, "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." Abraham doubted not, but he wondered how it was to be brought to pass, and as the years sped by he sought by human wisdom and planning to obtain the promise. Mistakes were thus made, and trouble for himself and others caused. And the mercy, love and patience of God are no more strikingly manifest than in the way in which the mistakes were overruled and the promised blessings at last given in God's own good time and way.

The experiences of Abraham are common, in kind if not in degree, to every Christian. May we not as we consider the life and the mistakes of this patriarch of old learn lessons and gain wisdom which will help us to wait on God for the time and manner of fulfillment of His promises and purposes for us? "For ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise."

"But didst thou not agree with thy master for so much?" questioned Eliezer, sharply, as he turned from his weighing of the silver and gold and waited for the man standing at his side to speak. Mamre, in whose country Abraham dwelt, had come that day to receive the annual tribute (or as we would call it to-day, the rent money) which had been agreed upon when Abraham had settled with his flocks and herds in the beautiful valley. In the true spirit of hospitality of the east Abraham had entertained his guest, and after they had broken bread together, thereby pledging to each other undying fealty and friendship, Abraham directed Eliezer, his confidential servant and steward of all his household and possessions, to make settlement with Mamre. Accordingly the two men had withdrawn, and were thus busily engaged when the dispute as to terms arose.

The wily Mamre sought to escape direct answer to Eliezer's question by recalling the unusual prosperity of Abraham since his coming thither. As he lifted his eyes and looked down the valley and towards the hillsides, he exclaimed: "See his splendid flocks and herds all the valley, and there (with a sweep of his hand in the direction of the little village of tents where Abraham's men and their families were sheltered) his numerous followers dwell in contentment, for there is plenty for all. Is it not little enough which I ask for all this? It is my land and my friendship that are making Abraham rich. Should I not be treated fairly?" And as he ceased speaking he let his eyes fall greedily upon the chests of treasure which Eliezer guarded in his tent, and from which he had just taken the silver and gold for payment to him.

Had Eliezer not been too modest to speak for himself, he might have told how it was his care and devotion to Abraham's interests more than the special favor of the country which had enriched and prospered his master. He might have told how by his skill and management he had made flocks and soil yield abundant returns. He might have told how by precept and example he had inspired in Abraham's men the same spirit of devotion and faithfulness to duty which marked his administration. But he said not a word. Instead he pushed the bags of gold and silver, which by this time had been filled and tied up, towards the other with an air of decision, and Mamre, seeing that further effort to exact a larger tribute was vain, took the proffered treasure and departed.

In the meantime in the tent of Abraham master and wife were holding important conference. The coming of Mamre had stirred strange memories, for the year before, just previous to coming to Hebron and settling, God had appeared to him and promised him not only the land, but a seed to occupy it as numerous as the dust of the earth. But as yet no heir had come, and the realization of the promise seemed as far off as ever. Abraham was the first to speak: "I am minded to make Eliezer my son and heir. May it not be that God's promise is to be realized in him?"

"Surely he hath been more than a son to you since first he met you at Damascus, when a mere stripling, and insisted in following you whither you went," replied Sarah, in evident sympathy with Abraham's plan, for she had long since ceased to hope that she herself would be the mother of Abraham's heir, and her bitterness and grief seemed to find relief in the thought that in Eliezer was to be realized God's promise.

Long they sat and talked over their plans, and then as the twilight deepened into the darkness of night, Abraham withdrew for his favorite walk and meditation alone in the starlight. Ere he realized whither his steps were bearing him he found himself beside the altar which he had builded when he first came to Hebron. Falling prone upon the ground, he lifted his heart to God in prayer, for he was singularly oppressed and troubled in spirit. The way had seemed all so clear while he had talked with Sarah, but now he seemed in greater doubt than ever. How long he remained bowed to the ground he knew not, but at last he realized that he was not alone, but that Jehovah stood by his side, and he heard Him say: "Fear not, Abraham! I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

"What wilt thou give me, oh Lord, seeing I go childless? Shall not this Eliezer of Damascus become my son and heir?" I beseech Thee that Thou wilt look with favor upon him," pleaded Abraham earnestly, as he unfolded the plan of his own heart and that of Sarah. A deep and long silence followed, one of those pauses which come at times when the heart is waiting before God and He would have it search for and long to know the Divine will. Then came the message: "This man shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. Come! I have somewhat to show thee," and leading him forth God brought him to the mountain top and said: "Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them."

In obedience to God's word, Abraham lifted his eyes to the vast stretch of heavens, and as his gaze swept from horizon to zenith and from zenith to the horizon in every direction, each one of the countless hosts of heaven seemed to be flashing forth a challenge for him to number them. Bewildered and abashed at the impossible task, he bowed his head, and God said, in measured tones: "So—shall—thou—see—me—be—!"

And Abraham believed God. It was with little step and buoyant heart that he descended the mountain and retraced his steps to his abode. Eagerly he sought his wife's side, and, arousing her from her slumbers, related all the wonderful experiences of the night. Descendants as the stars of heaven! Abraham's seed and not Eliezer! How could it be? Sarah doubted not God's promise, but she could not understand how it could be brought to pass. All night long she pondered the thought, and then fell into a fitful slumber, during which she thought she had fallen into some trouble, and saw Hagar, her Egyptian maid, coming to her help, but just before she reached her, she awoke.

Just before she reached her, she awoke. "And during the day her mind was filled with the story of Abraham, and strangely enough her dream kept recurring to her in connection therewith. Abraham was not near to confide in, for he had left early in the day for the mountain with the heifer and the goat and the ram, the turtle-dove and the young pigeon, as the Lord commanded him in response to his request for a sign. And while Abraham was thus occupied in that wonderful symbolic service and vision, Sarah planned how God's promise was to be realized. In accordance with the common custom of her country and people, she would give her bond slave, her maiden, to Abraham as wife, that by her the son and heir might be obtained.

Thus it came to pass on Abraham's return late that night that Sarah told him all that was in her heart. Ishmael was born, but how little joy and comfort it brought to Sarah's heart. He was the child of Sarah's planning, but not the child of God's promise, and how can there be real joy or comfort apart from the will and purpose of God? And the years which followed how barren of spiritual blessing. Thirteen years and no vision from God, no word from Him.

Have you ever stepped aside from God's chosen pathway for you and then gone on groping in the dark, week in and week out, month in and month out, until the weeks and months have lengthened into years, and still no real joy of fellowship with God or revelation from Him? All you could do was to cling in blind faith to Him and wait. Our missteps often delay God's plans, and we do have to wait in darkness and cheerlessness until God again comes to us. It is trying to faith, but "the trying of our faith worketh patience," and if we "let patience have her perfect work" we shall be entire and wanting nothing to make our Christian character complete. And thus out of mistakes may come blessing. It was so with Abraham. It may be so with you.

One day the faithful Eliezer came to Abraham and said: "My master, rememberest thou not that Ishmael is already 12 years of age and naught has been done towards preparing him as thine heir to take his place as the head of the house when thou art gone?" Sarah overheard the speech. The bitterness which had come with the birth of Ishmael had not yet left her heart, and without knowing why she spoke up sharply: "Ishmael shall not be thine heir!"

All effort to induce his wife to explain her strange speech were unavailing, and indicating to Eliezer that he would talk with him later, Abraham withdrew to his favorite retreat by God's altar, there to meditate. And the Lord appeared to him there, and said: "I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between thee and Me, and will multiply thee exceedingly." And Abraham fell on his face before the Lord. All the pent-up feelings of the years rushed forth, the darkness and doubt were fled away, and lifting his voice of pleading, he said: "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!"

"Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly; 12 princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee."

The voice ceased, and Abraham was alone, but as he returned home he felt that Eliezer had his answer and that his own heart echoed the words of Sarah: "Ishmael shall not be thine heir!"

FARMER AND PLANTER. STOCK AND PASTURE.

Line of Diversification That Should Find Favor in Many Parts of the South.

We have always loved and considered stock not only as a necessary part of the farm, but as the most attractive part. Where food is raised on the place, and judiciously fed to them, so that they are always kept in good condition, they certainly constitute one of the most remunerative products of the farm. We wish our readers could have heard a conversation we had this week with the largest individual buyer and feeder of cattle in Georgia. We asked him if he looked for much improvement in the cattle to be brought into market during the next few years as a result of the shorthorn blood introduced by recent purchases of males and heifers throughout this section. He replied "No. He had no hope or expectation from the southern farmer, except as a cotton raiser. That all the farmers' diverging from cotton growing was merely sporadic, and not to be counted upon as lasting. For just as soon as cotton went up again, away went everything else. And they returned to all cotton again." While there is much ground for his words and his pessimism, we are glad to say we do not agree with him fully, for we have more confidence in the ability of the southern farmer to progress and to prosper in other branches of agriculture, save cotton raising. To successfully raise stock, a farmer must go into it to vacillate with every rise and depression of the market, but should start out to raise good stock and to follow continuously his chosen course with an unswerving adherence, which should mark the career of all successful and worthy men. Steeking to his business prudently and in business way, the "downs" would find him not discouraged, and the "ups" would find him ready to avail himself of its advantages. Such a farmer would not only be crowned with final success, but he will develop into a better farmer and a much broader man. His children will rise up to call him "blessed," and not an all "cotton crank," and he better satisfied to remain at home and pursue a calling, which thus shows itself worthy of the best and highest efforts of any man. Stock raising is a higher form of farming than cotton raising. The breeders of the world are a more intelligent class than the tillers. We want to encourage every diversity in farming, because it not only gives us more money, but it awakens more intelligence. And brains on the farm is one of our greatest needs. Some say we can not successfully raise stock in the south because ours is not a limestone soil. But this is a mistake. Stock of all kinds are raised successfully in many parts of the world where they have not a limestone soil. There are scattered all over the south thousands of farms, which, by their location, are especially adapted to stock raising. Some on account of their hilly nature, some by being covered with Bermuda grass, some by their cane-brakes, etc. But whether these conditions naturally exist or not, "there is more in the man than there is in the land," and anyone can go intelligently to work and prepare for raising stock successfully if he desires. And we advise all who have faith enough in their ability "to hold fast to that which is good," to go into the business.—Southern Cultivator.

NEW FRUITS IN TEXAS. A Texas Farmer Who Has Developed Two New Varieties of Fruits.

Twenty-eight years ago, when I came here, a berry grew on upland and lowland alike, but as the country became settled it gradually became scarce, until it is almost extinct. Only a few vines or canes can now be found on fenced but uncultivated bottom lands. In its wild state its upright canes resemble the wild blackberry of the northern states. Some years ago I placed this berry in cultivation, digging trenches six feet apart and one foot deep. I filled these trenches with well-rotted manure mixed with surface soil. The second year after planting it took on the form and habits of the dewberry, no longer growing in upright canes, but running on the ground sometimes 20 feet, and taking root wherever covered. It was necessary, I found, to set stakes and stretch the necessary wires for it to twine upon. When the berries are ripe it would be hard to find anything in the fruit line more beautiful. They are very prolific, large and finely flavored, ripening two weeks ahead of the earliest time berry I can get. I sell them at 40 cents a gallon at home, and have found nothing in the fruit line that equals them as a money-maker. Why did those berries change from a blackberry to a dewberry habit when placed in cultivation? Two years ago I drafted twigs from the wild goose plum into the limbs of several large seedling peach trees. Most of them grew nicely. One among the many that fruited this year promises to be a freak. The plums are twice as large as those on the parent tree, and of a different shape, color and flavor, and ripen ten days earlier. And now I wonder if this plum will reproduce this character if grafted into another tree.—Will Robertson, in Orange Judd Farmer.

BETTER THAN ALL COTTON. Fruit and Truck Taking the Place of Cotton On Some of the Texas Farms.

On a farm near Jacksonville, Tex., nine years ago, a man who had found out that peaches could be grown with profit, began to experiment with vegetable and small fruits. His first investigation was with tomatoes. He realized that if that country was to prosper in an agricultural way, there must be some crop besides cotton. The first yield proved that the profits of an acre could be made to reach \$200, which is four times what can be realized from cotton. Notwithstanding the undoubted success of the experiment, people were incredulous. The next year he added potatoes to his line of experimental crops in diversification. That year, 1897, there were perhaps not more than fifty cars sent from the entire state, but from the experiments of Wesley Love and one or two others at Jacksonville, the fruit and truck industry in east Texas has grown until the shipments in 1904 amounted to nearly eight thousand cars. The immigration from the north and east exceeds anything probably that ever occurred in that remarkable movement twenty years ago, when the tide was to the northwest. Thousands and thousands of acres have been taken from the cultivation of cotton and turned to orchards and truck fields. Potatoes yield about 120 to 150 bushels an acre on a good average, and last year was 2,549,543 tons (2,349 pounds) sold at \$2 a bushel on the cars at Morrill, Jacksonville, Lufkin and Tyler. Often the ground grows two crops the same year. Many fruit growers have come from the north. Roland Morrill, Michigan, since the possibilities in fruit culture have become known, has bought up 12,500 acres on the Cotton Belt south of Tyler. Eleven hundred acres are already in peaches. Mr. Morrill will increase this to 2,500 acres in peaches. There are already several hundred acres in apples, plums and strawberries, and the acreage in trees will be increased as rapidly as possible. Mr. Morrill says that in the twenty months since he put out his first trees, he has grown five crops of potatoes. He probably will make his first profit for the land by the time his trees begin to produce a profit.—The Apple Specialist.

HERE AND THERE. —Bermuda grass will furnish some green picking for stock when all native grasses are dead from drought.

—An item in a report made by United States Consul-General Steinhart at Havana states the value of the Cuban tobacco crop of 1904 as over \$30,000,000. —Nothing illustrates the point of a subject so clearly and quickly as good object lessons. The use of object lessons is valued and appreciated by all educators.

—The consumption of all sugar, foreign and domestic, in the United States for the year 1904, was 2,767,162 tons (2,240 pounds) and for the year 1903 was 2,549,543 tons (2,349 pounds). —The practice of using a curry-comb has been abandoned in many stables and some authorities say that it should never be used on the skin of a horse. Use a stiff brush instead.

—When cows are pastured for short periods on rye and rape, the effect has been to strongly flavor the milk and cream, which has often proved an especially valuable soldier and pasture crop. —With the federal grand jury in session at Chicago investigating their methods, the beef trust, just to show how little it cares for such things have ordered an increase of two cents a pound to dealers, at least the dealers say they have.

—The cheapest item that can be used in the production of cotton is commercial fertilizers used liberally. With a liberal application of fertilizers the farmers can grow a bale of cotton where he has heretofore grown a half a bale, and do it with the same cost of labor. —There is not a happier life than his who lives upon the farm. There is not a more profitable occupation than farming, for the world-to-day depends on the farm. The successful farmer of the future must cultivate fewer acres and make those fewer acres produce more per acre than they have in the past.

OF OLD KENTUCKY STOCK. What a Woman Farmer Can Do If She Makes Up Her Mind to It.

Mary Jane Ulrich, aged 76 years, is in the successful conduct of a farm in Tipton county, Ind., and has reared a family of five children. She is as neat a housekeeper as she is an excellent

cultivator of the soil and a raiser of pork. In fact it is with swine that Mrs. Ulrich makes the greatest success. In the 13 years she has directed her attention to pork culture she has never purchased but one litter of hogs. She has never had her hogs afflicted with cholera. Her porkers were never sick but once, and that was the year she left their care to a farm hand, and he fed them too much salt. Mrs. Ulrich's methods of success are simple. She feeds a preventive of cholera regularly, and feeds and sleeps her hogs on different floors.

As a side issue Mrs. Ulrich sells annually 600 pounds of butter and 400 chickens, besides a quantity of small fruit with which her farm abounds. Mrs. Ulrich is of Kentucky descent, and delights in dainty hospitality toward those who visit her home. She is very modest about her achievements. Mrs. Ulrich has traveled considerably, despite her busy life. She is eligible for membership in the Daughters of American Revolution, her grandfather, Brown, having fought in the American revolution.

Often during the life time of her husband Mrs. Ulrich assumed the direction of the farm, while her husband worked at bricklaying. The remarkable thing about Mrs. Ulrich is her physical strength. She can climb over a reaper as easily and with the agility of a 16-year-old school girl.—Otis C. Pollard, in Farmers' Home Journal.

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