



LESSON.—SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1908.

**God's Promise to David.**

I. Chron. xvii., 1-14. Memory verses 13, 14. Read I. Chron. xvii.; II. Sam. vii., Psa. lxxxix.

**Golden Text.**

There hath not failed one word of all his good promise. I. Kings viii., 56.

**Home Readings.**

- Monday, October 5.—I. Chr. xvii., 1-14.
- Tuesday, October 6.—I. Chr. xvii., 15-27.
- Wednesday, October 7.—II. Sam. vii., 1-17.
- Thursday, October 8.—II. Sam. vii., 18-29.
- Friday, October 9.—Psa. lxxxix., 1-18.
- Saturday, October 10.—Psa. lxxxix., 19-37.
- Sunday, October 11.—Psa. lxxxix., 38-52.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Do you know what is the name of the capital of Canada? Why do we call Ottawa the capital, and what would you see there if you went? That city is where the people meet together from all over Canada to talk about our country's affairs and to make our laws. The very first thing anybody would want to show you about the city if you went there would be the Parliament Buildings, great splendid looking buildings they are, too, in big grounds of their own. They were built strong and splendid because they represent the country, and here our representatives meet to work for the country's good. Does every country have a capital? Certainly, every country that has a civilized government has. These capitals are always made beautiful cities as much as possible, so that they may fittingly stand for the country. We have been studying about David lately, who was made king of Israel. Did the country he lived in have a capital? Of course it did, and the name of David's capital was Jerusalem. It was a beautiful city, and last Sunday we learned how David and all the people brought the ark to Jerusalem, how they rejoiced and how David made a great feast and gave everybody something to eat. In to-day's lesson we learn that David had built himself a beautiful palace in Jerusalem, and supposing you had been going through Jerusalem at that time and had asked a little boy what that great big palace was for, he would have been very proud to tell you, 'Why, that's where our king, David, lives.' But supposing you had gone along a little way further you would have seen a strange kind of a tent covered with skins and purple hangings, and what do you think the little boy would have told you that was? He would have been much more surprised to have you ask about that, because for hundreds of years there had been just such a tent known to all the Israelites, for that was the Tabernacle, the place where God's Ark was, the place where the priests sacrificed and held services, the place where every Jew had to come to sacrifice to God. David used to go there often, for he loved and served God, and as he came out of his great beautiful palace to go into this tent or Tabernacle, he began to think that surely it was wrong for him to have a strong, lovely house, while God's house was only a tent. So one day he told his friend, the prophet Nathan, that he planned to build a really beautiful house to be the Temple of God.

FOR THE SENIORS.

The prompt approval that Nathan gave to David's suggestion was the natural thing. He and David being contemporaries had very probably sat under Samuel's teaching together. At any rate Nathan would have

come from one of the schools founded by Samuel and would readily appreciate David's intentions. He had quite a hard part to play in David's life, but he did not shrink from any message God gave him, and when on this occasion he came back next day to rescind his authority and deliver the message of prohibition, we may be sure he did it with the greatest tact and gentleness. The spirit of thankfulness shown by David (verses 16-27), rather than any expression of hurt and resentment, is evidence how successfully Nathan urged God's love and mercy rather than the prohibition that was necessary. This view of God as anxious to bestow his blessing rather than limiting our plans and intentions is the truer. If we think of what God has bidden us do and enjoy rather than of what he has bidden us leave, the world wears a very different look. Even some of those plans we have made, as we thought, for God's glory, have been turned to bitterness by his prohibition because we could not rise to David's attitude and trust that God's way was best. We do not need a prophet to bring us the message of hope so long as we can believe in Rom. viii., 28. David does not seem at this time to have asked the reasons for the disturbance of his plan, leaving them simply with God, but later he learnt and accepted them (I. Chron. xxii., 7, 8; I. Kings v., 3). In spite of another's having the glory David did not neglect what he could do (I. Chron. xxii., 1-5).

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

Unfulfilled Desire and Unsuccessful Effort. How many of these there are even in honest and earnest lives! Yet the desire and the effort count. That is the lesson for us. The Lord accepts and honors them, that is a comfort. Spiritual and mental scheming, planning, dreaming, or castle-building are not the things which God accepts. Plans and schemes count for little. It was not what was in David's mind, but only what was in his heart, which God accepted and commended. We are so often prevented from doing what we had set our hearts upon doing that it is a blessed comfort to know that our Father considers our hearts more than our hands. We cannot all of us bear the pleasure and the pride of success. Defeats are less dangerous and are sometimes better, holier, and higher than successes. As Lowell says, 'Not failure, but low aim, is crime.' We are hampered and hindered and prevented as to what our hearts impel us to do. We do so little compared to what we mean to do. In reading the life of M. Angelo, the one thing which impressed me most was the largeness of his desires and plans compared with his actual accomplishments. There were so many things in his great heart which never got into buildings, marbles, or frescoes. It has been so with all great lives. Browning says, 'What hand and brain were ever paired?' and we might say, 'What heart and hand were ever paired?' Let us take comfort in the thought that God knows our hearts and counts our desires as more and better than our deeds.—Thomas S. Hastings, 'Union Seminary Addresses.'

How much greater, farther reaching, more wonderful were the blessings granted than the blessings asked for! 'God refuses his immediate request only to grant to him far above all that he was able to ask or think,' says Dr. Blaikie. 'And how often does God do so! How often, when His people are worrying and perplexing themselves about their prayers not being answered, is God answering them in a far richer way! Glimpses of this we see occasionally, but the full revelation of it remains for the future. Oh for the faith that does not make haste, but waits patiently for the Lord—waits for the explanation that shall come in the end, at the revelation of Jesus Christ!'

There is no happiness in having and getting, but only in giving: half the world is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness.—Henry Drummond.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

Verse 1. How does this apply to us in our day? A church or a Sunday School can be very successful in a barn, or cave, or log hut, if that is the best place they can have; but not if men put every convenience in their homes and use them in their business, and then leave their church work to be done

amid the greatest disadvantages. Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander conquered the world with arrows and spears. But any civilized nation that should undertake to go to war in that way now would be a nation of idiots. Those conquerors used the best they had. The wise man to-day uses the best he can find.

It was 'a moral anomaly, if not a species of dishonesty, that he should look so well after his own personal comfort and regal dignity, while yet the house of God was but a tent. In proportion as we increase our expenditure upon ourselves for the comforts and the elegancies of life, we ought to increase our offerings to God for the carrying on of works of faith and labors of love among our fellowmen.'

God does not blame David for his cedar palace. He does not wish us to go back to the cold, bare, comfortless houses of a century ago. He rejoices in our comfort, but he does want us to give proportionately more for others, and for the progress of the gospel. Every new thing for ourselves is a new call to do more for him.—Condensed from W. M. Taylor.

Quote Ruskin's powerful words. Ruskin rightly argues that in a true Christian community, the public buildings for the use of all should be the noblest, the most expensive, most commanding in the town or city. This idea is growing in our modern towns. The capitols, the courthouses, the churches, the schoolhouses, the libraries, the hospitals, are the noblest. Still his words are needed to-day. 'The question is not between God's house and his poor. It is between God's house and ours. . . . I do not understand the feeling which would arch our own gates and pave our own thresholds, and leave the church with its narrow door and foot-worn sill; the feeling which enriches our own chambers with all manner of costliness, and endures the bare wall and mean compass of the temple. . . . I am no advocate for meanness of private habitation. . . . but I say this emphatically, that a tent! a part of the expense which is sacrificed in domestic vanities would, if collectively offered and wisely employed, build a marble church for every town in England, such a church as would be a joy and a blessing even to pass near.'—'Seven Lamps of Architecture,' 'Lamp of Sacrifice.'

Verse 2.—God approves of our desire for the conversion of men, for the unity of the church, for the reformation of the land from certain evils, but that does not necessarily carry with it his approval of every method and saying of revivalists and reformers.

Verse 14. Soon after Christ's death, authority and almost existence as a separate nation was taken away from the Jews, at the destruction of Jerusalem. But before this time Christ set up his kingdom, which was David's kingdom, in another form, for David's kingdom was in his time the visible kingdom of God in the world. And thus David's kingdom, through his descendant and heir, still continues, and will abide forever, bringing all nations and peoples under its sway, and more than realizing all the visions of glory which filled the Jewish heart.

**Bible References.**

Haggai i., 4; Prov. iii., 9; I. Chron. xxix., 16; Isa. ix., 7; Luke i., 32, 33.

**Junior C. E. Topic.**

Sunday, October 11.—Topic—Commending our Society. III. By diligent committee work. Rom. xii., 1-11.

**C. E. Topic.**

Monday, October 5.—We must be as children. Matt. xviii., 1-3.

Tuesday, October 6.—Humble as children. Matt. xviii., 4.

Wednesday, October 7.—Receiving them in His name. Matt. xviii., 5.

Thursday, October 8.—Despise not the little ones. Matt. xviii., 10.

Friday, October 9.—God cares for children. Matt. xviii., 14.

Saturday, October 10.—How to enter the kingdom. Luke xviii., 17.

Sunday, October 11.—Topic—How Jesus welcomes children. Mark x., 13-16.