



LESSON,—SUNDAY AUGUST 2, 1908.

David Anointed at Bethlehem

I. Sam. xvi., 1-13. Memory verses 11, 12. Read I. Sam. xvi.

Golden Text.

Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. I. Sam. xvi., 17.

Home Readings.

Monday, July 27.—I. Sam. xvi., 1-13.
 Tuesday, July 28.—I. Sam. xvi., 14-23.
 Wednesday, July 29.—Ruth i., 1-22.
 Thursday, July 30.—Ruth iv., 1-22.
 Friday, July 31.—Acts xiii., 16-31.
 Saturday, August 1.—Ps. lxxxix., 1-26.
 Sunday, August 2.—Ps. lxxxix., 27-52.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Who can tell me the name of the little town in Palestine where Christ was born? Bethlehem, of course. Although Bethlehem was only a little town, it was very old even when Jesus was born there, and in our lesson to-day we learn about something that happened there and some people that lived there a thousand years before Christ came to earth. All of you, of course, have heard about the great tercentenary celebration at Quebec in honor of the city's being three hundred years old. That seems a long time, but more than three times three hundred go to make a thousand. Why, even a half of a thousand years ago people did not know anything about America. All this continent was undiscovered then, so a thousand years is a long time, and lots of things can happen in that time. Nothing much had happened to make Bethlehem very different, though. It was a little town when Jesus was born there, and the shepherds used to take care of their sheep on the hills around, as we all know, and a thousand years before that, as our lesson for to-day shows, it was just a little town where shepherds lived and cared for their sheep on the hills around. One of these shepherds was a young boy named David. His father was not poor, but he had a big family of boys, eight sons, and David was the youngest, so perhaps that was why he was looking after the sheep. His three eldest brothers were soldiers (Chap. xvii., 13), and belonged to Saul's army, but they were all at home one day when Samuel came to visit Bethlehem. Samuel had come on a very important errand. You know how we have learnt that Saul was made king and did not obey God, so God told Samuel to anoint another king over Israel, and told him that he would find this other king in the little town of Bethlehem.

FOR THE SENIORS.

To-day's lesson, following evidently at some short lapse of time on last Sunday's, starts out with one of the incidents that cause some little difficulty to some Bible students. Samuel with one object paramount in his own mind makes a visit to Bethlehem, announcing only a secondary object as his reason. That is, he told no untruth, but he did not tell the whole truth, as that would have been unwise. It was a custom for him to regularly visit the towns in a certain circuit from Ramah (Chap. vii., 16) before the days of the kingdom, but, apparently, he had drawn much into seclusion after God's rejection of Saul, so that his coming appears to have caused the town elders some misgiving on account of its now unusual character, or perhaps, owing to Samuel's break with Saul, they

feared that to welcome him would displease the king. That might be the meaning of their question—'Does your coming mean peace to the town, or will it involve us in trouble?' However, their evident trepidation gives justification for Samuel's concealment of his real object. Further, we have no record that Samuel told anyone what the anointing really did mean, although Josephus records a tradition that he whispered it's purport to David, so that this is really a keeping of his own counsel rather than a deception in any sense of the word. It was enough that David should realize that God had a special purpose for him, that his life henceforth was devoted to God, in whatever way the future should reveal. This it was necessary to impress on him at once in order that he might live accordingly; any premature avowal of God's purpose could only have done harm. Not to tell what is in your thought and intention is not deception, and to volunteer the whole truth where other people's affairs are concerned has been often called by an ugly name. Had Samuel said, 'I have come to anoint a successor to Saul,' he would have involved the whole town in trouble, unless, as is very likely, the town elders had flatly refused to allow him to convene an assembly for any such treasonable purpose.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

There are impertinent inquiries made; your rule is, to leave the inquirer uninformed on that matter; not, if you can help it, misinformed, but precisely as dark as he was! He that cannot withhold keep his mind to himself cannot practice any considerable thing whatever. And we call it dissimulation, all this? What would you think of calling the general of an army a dissembler because he did not tell every corporal and private soldier who pleased to put the question, his thoughts about everything?—Thomas Carlyle, 'Heroes and Hero-Worship.'

David was the son of Jesse, the grandson of Obed, the great grandson of Boaz. From his great grandmother Ruth, the Moabitess, and his ancestress Rahab of Jericho, there was alien blood in his veins. 'It required three generations for the descendants of aliens to become members of Israel, and thus David could be reckoned a full Jew, though his father still stood in a measure outside the congregation,' says Dr. Geikie, 'the family seems to have been, as it were, the feudal lord of the village and the district round it, for the elders of the country appear at the yearly feast of Jesse's household, and David in after years gave a grant of land in the neighborhood, as if his own right, to the son of his friend Barzillai.'

Verse 7. When Lord John Russell was Prime Minister of England he went to a telegraph office in a small village to send a message. The clerk saw only a little, old man in a great coat and rudely flung his message back to him saying, 'Here, put your own name on it; it is a pity your master does not know how to send a telegram.' The telegraph operator's eye saw only the great coat which he took to be that of a servant: 'God's eye,' says Jean Muckrose, 'sees only the man inside o' the clathes.'

Size is not strength; reputation is not character; outward success is not God's gauge.—M. D. Babcock.

Verse 11. The great consecrations of life are apt to come suddenly without warning: while we are patiently and faithfully keeping sheep in the wilderness, the messenger is journeying toward us with the vial of sacred oil to make us kings.—Saxe Holm.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

Home Training. It was by a faithful use of all his home advantages that it was possible for David to fulfil his mission.

1. His psalms show that he studied the scriptures, and held close communion with God.

2. They also show that he was receptive and studious of the influences of nature.

3. It was by the strength and activity gained in doing his best as a shepherd that he was enabled to meet Goliath and do many

of the deeds of daring which gave him power as king.

4. He spent his leisure hours in practising music. This early faithfulness was one step by which he came to the court of Saul, and enabled him to organize orchestras and choirs for the service of God, and to become the author of a wonderful development of music as an aid to worship.

5. His culture of his poetic talent led to the first great hymn book; a new and original unfolding of the power of song in worship. Much of his usefulness in all ages would have been lost had he neglected this talent.

6. His practise with the sling, in order that he might be the best defender of his flock's against wild beasts and robbers, prepared him for his great battle with Goliath—a necessary step in his way to the throne.

7. All his faithfulness to his daily duties developed courage, skill, carefulness, business ability, power to govern, knowledge of daily life.

Bible References.

Psa. lxxviii., 70-72; I. Chron. xxviii., 9; Luke xvi., 15; Psa. cxlvii., 10, 11; Isa. lv., 8, 9; Psa. cxxxix., 23, 24; Jer. xvii., 10.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, August 2.—Topic—Songs of the Heart. VII. How can we serve the church? Ps. lxxxiv. (Consecration meeting.)

C. E. Topic.

Monday, July 27.—Jesus in Zaccheus's home. Luke xix., 1-10.

Tuesday, July 28.—Jesus in the Emmaus home. Luke xxiv., 28-32.

Wednesday, July 29.—Jesus in Peter's home. Matt. viii., 14, 15.

Thursday, July 30.—Jesus in Matthew's home. Mark ii., 14-17.

Friday, July 31.—Jesus in Simon's home. Luke vii., 36-50.

Saturday, August 1.—Jesus in Lazarus's home. John xii., 1-9.

Sunday, August 2.—Topic—A home that Jesus loved. Luke x., 38-42; John xi., 5. (Consecration meeting.)

Suggestions.

Praise children who come on hot and stormy days.

Dear superintendent, don't talk everlastingly.

Be a sermon in shoes to the members of your class.

A boy's choir can be made a valuable feature in any school.

Have a committee to look up the absentees, a live, working committee.

It takes a teacher with life and vigor to hold the attention of the boys.

The teachers' meeting is a great, big necessity with every successful school.

Mr. Superintendent, do not use ten minutes making your announcements.

Large movable screens set up between classes are a good substitute for needed classrooms.

Remember that the soft spot in a child is the feelings. You can win him by playing on that string.

Deal much in stories to illustrate the points in the lesson.

Normal work should be carefully conducted. A good way is to give half an hour at the teachers' meeting to it.

Long-winded, goody goody speeches after a long lesson make the children feel as if they were sitting on pins.

A few verses to learn will be a great blessing to your pupils. It is a good thing to have a good many of the Bible's golden nuggets hid in one's heart.—Epworth Herald.

Sunday School Offer.

Any school in Canada that does not take the 'Messenger' may have it supplied free on trial for three weeks on request of Superintendent, Secretary or Pastor, stating the number of copies required.

N.B.—Ask For Our Special Year End Offer.