



LESSON,— SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1908.

David Made King Over Israel and Judah.

II. Sam. ii., 1-7; v., 1-5. Memory verses, II. Sam., v., 4, 5. Read II. Sam. ii.-v.

Golden Text.

David went on and grew great, and the Lord God of Hosts was with him. II. Sam. v. 10.

Home Readings.

- Monday, September 7.—II. Sam. ii., 1-17.
- Tuesday, September 8.—II. Sam. ii., 18-32.
- Wednesday, September 9.—II. Sam. iii., 1-21.
- Thursday, September 10.—II. Sam. iii., 22-39.
- Friday, September 11.—II. Sam. iv., 1-12.
- Saturday, September 12.—II. Sam. v., 1-25.
- Sunday, September 13.—I. Chr. xi., 1-25.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Who can remember what Saul was like, and what happened when he was made king of the Israelites? He was a young man who came straight from the farm to the throne, but before all the people accepted him as king he did a very brave deed in freeing the people of Jabesh Gilead. Then it was that everybody praised him and accepted him as king. How long do you think he reigned? About forty years, and at last, as we learned in last Sunday's lesson, he was killed in battle, and with him died his three eldest sons, Jonathan, of course, among them. The country now had no king, and David, who you must remember had been anointed king by Samuel, asked God what he should do. He was living among the Philistines you know because Saul had driven him out of Judah. Now God told him to go back to Judah to the city of Hebron, and here the people gathered together to make him king as soon as they heard that he had come back. Not all the Israelites though, because some of them chose another king, Ishbosheth, the youngest son of Saul. He was not very much of a king, but he had a very brave general called Abner, his father's uncle, and this general got ten of the tribes to proclaim Ishbosheth their king. Just think what David would feel like. It must have been about thirteen or fourteen years since Samuel had anointed him king, and pretty nearly all that time David had been having to hurry from place to place to get away from Saul, who wanted to kill him. David had been very careful not to fight over the matter, although he had a great many men who would have done anything for him. Now Saul is dead and David asks God if it's time yet for him to be king. God told David to go into Judah, and when he gets there he finds he is to be king over only two tribes, while Ishbosheth, Saul's son, is made king over all the rest. What do you think you would have done if you had been David? Don't you think you would have felt like fighting over it? 'It is God's intention that I should be king,' David might have said, 'so I'm not going to let Ishbosheth be.' However, it seems that he didn't do any fighting at all until Abner forced him to, because he believed that if God had promised to make him king, God would keep his promise when the time came for it. A little girl one day told her mother that she had been helping God make the flowers blossom, but what she really had done was to pull open a lot of buds before they were ready and had killed them all. We must be patient if we are to help God. If the little girl had been watering the flowers and pulling out the weeds she might really have

said she had been helping God. That is something like what David did. For seven years and a half David reigned in Hebron and looked after the little bit of a kingdom God had given him, so that it kept growing and growing all the time until at last he found it was God's time to give it all to him.

FOR THE SENIORS.

Try to get the time of David's reign placed in your scholars' minds in its right place in the world's history. It was two or three centuries before there was any thought of building Rome, even if the legendary age of that city is considered to be correct. If any other king of that time had been brought the news that a certain city had done especial service to his recent rival, the act would have brought upon the city summary vengeance, or at least the deed would have been stored up in the king's mind until a fitting time to revenge it should come. The age was one of cruelty and selfishness, and in considering the story of David his faults pale into insignificance by comparison with those of contemporary monarchs, while his virtues stand out with wonderful brilliancy. This was doubtless owing to the hold his religion had upon him, although the Bible bears record that there was still much of darkness and superstition mixed up with the revealed religion. The seven years and a half of waiting at Hebron for the completion of God's promise were not by any means years of stagnation. David was being trained in the lesser office before he was trusted with the larger. First of all he had learned to govern a company of outlaws in the caves of the mountains, so that his report to Nabal (I. Sam. xxv., 7) could be heartily confirmed by the man's own servants (verses 15, 16); then he was trusted with a city (I. Sam. 6, 7), where he ruled his people so well that on a particularly difficult question his word was accepted and vested upon (I. Sam. xxx., 21-25); the next advance was to the Kingdom of Judah. His probation here was of longer duration, but quietly accepted by David. He had paved the way for himself in Judah, not only by his prudent behavior at Saul's court, by his abstinence from any marauding acts during the years of his hiding from Saul, but also by a generous gift to the regions where he had most generally stayed during the years of trial (I. Sam. xxx., 26-31). He paved the way for himself to the larger kingdom largely by just such prudence and generosity during the years of his reign at Hebron. There is a splendid lesson in the fall of Jebus in those chapters. This citadel, entrenched by nature, had remained for all these centuries in the hands of the heathen. They derided the idea that it could ever be taken. Yet by the perseverance of God's servants it was taken, and became the synonym through all ages for the city of God. Many evils seemingly as strongly entrenched will fall before God's people with due perseverance.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

3. David made a covenant with them before Jehovah. One of the psalms (101) ascribed to David sounds like the resolves of a new monarch on his accession. In it the Psalmist draws the ideal of a king, and says such things as, 'I will behave myself wisely, in a perfect way. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. I hate the work of them that turn aside. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me.' That psalm we may regard as the first words of the king, when, after long, weary years, the promise of Samuel's anointing was fulfilled, and he sat on the throne.—Maclaren.

Of all the Old Testament characters from Genesis to Samuel, the most tactful one is David. When the women praised him so as to arouse the king's jealousy, the court would naturally be opposed to him, too, but he behaved himself so wisely that he won the devoted love of Jonathan, the prince, and of all the people. When he was made a captain over the warriors, his popularity increased. When he was hunted from place to place as an outlaw, the disaffected men of the kingdom joined him, and these brave but turbulent companions he kept in check and

won their loyal devotion. All who came near him seem to have felt the charm of his personality, and this could only mean that he possessed the 'peculiar skill or faculty' called tact in dealing with men.

People are always talking of perseverance, and courage, and fortitude; but patience is the finest and worthiest part of fortitude—and the rarest, too. I know twenty persevering girls for one patient one; but it is only that twenty-first who can do her work, out and out, and enjoy it. For patience lies at the root of all pleasure, as well as of all powers. Hope herself ceases to be happiness, when Impatience companions her.—Ruskin, 'Ethics of the Dust.'

He has attained to an eminent degree of Christian grace who knows how to wait.—Henry Ward Beecher.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

David was a fine example of Christ's parables of the Talents and the Pounds. Faithfulness in lesser things is the only way to higher and better things. David was now hearing the Lord's 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things' (Matt. xxv., 21).

II. Sam. v., 1.—The book of Chronicles contains further interesting details about this assembly at Hebron (I. Chron. xii., 23-40). The joy was universal, for the fame of David was again on all lips. The homage and fidelity to a new monarch, shown in modern nations on the part of public servants by taking a solemn oath, have been expressed in the East from the earliest ages by gifts presented by the population at large to their new ruler. Vast quantities of the thin, dry bread of the country, loads of meal or flour, of figs pressed into cakes, and of raisins, arrived on long trains of asses, camels, mules, and oxen; wine and oil, and cattle and sheep in herds and flocks, filled the Hebron valley; at once a demonstration of the unanimous election of David and provision for the usual feast of the Accession, which was held for three days at Hebron with unprecedented rejoicings.—Geikie.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, September 13.—Topic—Commending our Society. I. By church attendance. Ps. xxvi., 1-12; Heb. x., 21-25.

C. E. Topic.

- Monday, September 7.—Adam's excuse. Gen. iii., 12.
- Tuesday, September 8.—Aaron's excuse. Exod. xxxii., 21-24.
- Wednesday, September 9.—Conscience accusing. Rom. ii., 15.
- Thursday, September 10.—Without excuse. Rom. i., 20, 21.
- Friday, September 11.—Too busy. I. Kings xx., 39, 40.
- Saturday, September 12.—Not ready. Matt. xxv., 1-12.
- Sunday, September 13.—Topic—Making excuses. Luke xiv., 16-24.

In the conflict between truth and error, faith and unbelief, virtue and vice, temperance and intemperance, liberty and lawlessness, victory is on the side that wins the children.—S. S. Teacher.

Childhood is the key which unlocks all our problems, and the Sunday School has its hand on the key.

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.