

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

CONDUCTED BY S. JOHN DUNCAN-CLARK.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON IV.—GOD'S PROMISES TO DAVID.—JULY 26.

(2 Sam. vii. 4-16.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust."—Ps. lxxi. 1.

ANALYSIS.—

1. David's plan rejected, v. 4-7.
2. David's house established, v. 8-11.
3. David's son to build the house, v. 12-16.

TIME AND PLACE.—B. C. 1042, Jerusalem.

INTRODUCTION.—David, having brought up the ark of the covenant, and having set it up in a new tabernacle in Jerusalem, thus establishing this as the centre of public worship for the people of Israel, where all the ordinance appointed by Moses should be observed, began to cherish the purpose of building in place of the tabernacle a temple to the Lord that should be, not only suitable according to his idea for such a worship, but also more in accord with the magnificence of His capital and His kingdom. This purpose he communicated to Nathan, the prophet, who commended it, but the Lord, through Nathan, forbade him to undertake the work, as related in our present lesson.

V. 4. "And it came to pass that night."—The night after David had communicated his purpose to Nathan. That the word of the Lord came unto Nathan. We meet now for the first time the office of prophet as a separate, distinct office. Samuel had discharged the functions of this office in connection with his judgeship, but Nathan seems to have been the first of a long line of prophets, who, as representatives of Jehovah, stood near the throne during the whole of Israel's separate history, advising, exhorting, rebuking, and sometimes denouncing their kings in the name of that God who was the supreme Ruler of the nation. Nathan appears from time to time up to the end of David's reign.

V. 5. "Go and tell My servant David, . . . Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in?" The form of the question implies a negative answer. And in the Chronicles we have, "Thou shalt not build me a house."

V. 6. "Whereas."—The Revised Version reads, 'For.' I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, . . . but have walked, etc. God had chosen the tent as the form of His dwelling-place, the place where the ark of His covenant should be kept, and where He would meet His people, because of the wandering, unsettled life His people were to lead. Reviewing their history, it appears that up to this time there had been no permanent, unendangered place for it. That a permanent temple was approved by Jehovah appears from what follows in this history.

V. 7. "In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel?"—In preceding times the judges of Israel had been chosen from different tribes, and thus the rule, or shepherding of Israel had passed from tribe to tribe, and during all this period none of them had been commanded to build a temple of cedar. The suitable time for such a work had not yet come.

V. 8. "Now therefore, . . . I took thee from the sheepcote."—Where as a shepherd he had folded his flock. To be ruler over My people. David is reminded that the change from the sheepcote to the throne was wholly of the Lord.

V. 9. "And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight."—The reference is to those enemies who had opposed his elevation to the throne, such as Saul and his party. There were many other enemies still to be conquered. And have made thee a great name. By the success he had given him, and the recognized wisdom of his rule, which had been also the gift of God.

V. 10. "Moreover I will appoint."—Rather, I have appointed. A place for My people Israel. The land of Canaan. And will plant them. Or, have planted them. David is reminded of all this to show him that the Lord had been carrying out His own purposes, and that he was but the instrument in His hand to carry out His purposes.

V. 11. "Since the time that I commanded judges, etc., . . . have caused thee to rest, etc."—The contrast between the troubled times of the judges and the settled prosperity and peace now near at hand is here referred to. Also the Lord telleth thee that He will make thee a house. The Lord now proceeds to show David how the desire of his heart will be realized. What follows shows

that the meaning of this promise is that the Lord would establish His family in possession of the throne of the kingdom.

V. 12. "I will set up thy seed after thee."—Referring to Solomon. And I will establish his kingdom. Establish it, that is, in permanent peace and quiet.

V. 13. "He shall build a house."—So at last David's desire should be accomplished, and a magnificent temple should be built in Jerusalem. For My name. In honor of God and for His worship. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. This prophecy is accomplished in the line of David on the throne of Israel and Judah, but finally in Christ, of the lineage of David, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

V. 14. "I will be his father, and he shall be my son."—If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. That is, such chastisement as the father visits upon his children for their correction, and not for their destruction, would be used.

V. 15. "But My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul. Saul was finally left of God to his own destruction, but the family of David, though chastened and severely disciplined, continued until the Messiah came.

V. 16. "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever." Only in Christ, the Son of David, does this repeated promise find its complete fulfilment.

Looks into Books:

The Presbyterian and Reformed Review for July is a well balanced number with good articles in all the several departments of theological thought. Mr. Minton writes on "The Theological Implications of the Synthetic Philosophy," Dr. Warfield on "The Right of Systematic Theology," Dr. DeBann on "Current and Reformed Theology Compared"; Dr. Lowrie gives an *Exegesis* of the Third Chapter of Second Corinthians, Dr. Hunt a Study of Mrs. Browning. While the Editors give an account of Dr. Green's Jubilee and a complete list of his writings. The usual book reviews complete the number. Philadelphia, MacCalla & Co. \$3 a year. Single numbers 80 cents.

The Fourth of July number of *Littell's Living Age* begins a new volume and retains the character which has so long marked this excellent periodical notwithstanding the recent death of its founder. The lines on "Potter Felt Farm" from the *Spectator* are written in the style of the old saga poetry, the nervous strength and charm of which are well preserved. The principal article is a critical study of Leigh Hunt. It is carefully and fairly written, and contains many incidents of interest in the lines of the group of republican poets with whom Hunt was intimate. There is also a sketch of the present condition of Persia and of the habits of the people, an article of general interest from the attention recently directed to that country by the assassination of the Shah. "Men and Manners in Florence" is a short humorous description of pension life in Italy. "Reminiscences of Lord Bath" gives one a glimpse of political life in England during D'Israeli's time. Littell & Co., Boston. \$6 a year. Single copies 15 cents.

The *Homiletic Review* for July again gives first place to an article from Sir William Dawson on the Deluge and continues the Light on Scriptural Texts from Recent Discoveries by Dr. McCurdy. Other articles are on Expository Preaching by Professor Blaikie of Edinburgh, on Responsibility for Error of Opinion by Dr. Burr. and on Kaftan as a Theologian by Dr. Plantz. The Homiletic departments are up to the usual high standard of this magazine, and represent the best thought of the American pulpit of to-day. Fank & Wagnalls, New York, \$3.00 per annum.

The *Truth* for July is filled with matter of the usual style, and on the usual subjects. This number, however, differs from preceding ones in that it exhibits Dr. Brookes as a convert to Faith Healing on the strength of cases reported to him but of which unfortunately he had not personal knowledge. His previous fads have prepared him for this, and it was sure to come sooner or later. F. H. Revell. \$1.00 per annum.

Beginning with 1889 *Scribner's Magazine* has annually published a Fiction Number that has been remarkable for the number of famous stories that have first made their appearance in it. The August issue of this year will fully sustain this reputation. There will be six short stories, a comedietta, and several popular illustrated articles.