



Fourth Quarter.

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 2.

Reformation Under Asa.

II. Chron. xiv., 2-12. Memory verses 2-5. Read II. Chron. xiv., xv., xvi.

Golden Text.

'Help us O Lord our God: for we rest on thee.'—II. Chron. xiv., 11.

Home Readings.

- M. II. Chron. xii., 1-16.—Rehoboam's reign and death.
- T. II. Chron. xiii., 1-22.—The reign of his son Abijah.
- W. II. Chron. xiv., 1-15.—Reformation under Asa.
- T. II. Chron. xv., 1-19.—Asa's solemn covenant with God.
- F. II. Chron. xvi., 1-14.—The end of Asa's reign.
- S. Psa. xx., 1-9. — Confidence in Jehovah's help.
- S. Psa. xxv., 1-22.—'Let not mine enemies triumph over me.'

Lesson Story.

During the last three months we have been studying the history of the kingdom of Israel with its evil kings and corrupted people, who followed the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. The rest of the lessons this year are about the kingdom of Judah, beginning at Asa the grandson of Rehoboam, son of Solomon. Asa had many hindrances to goodness in his life, his father and grandfather were evil men, and heathenism had gained a firm foothold in the country. Neither birth nor surroundings were conducive to great morality, but Asa turned to the Lord and served him. As soon as he became king he set himself to destroy the idol worship, the images and the altars of the heathen. He also commanded the people to repent and return to Jehovah, to do his will and keep his commandments.

Then the Lord was pleased with Asa and his people and gave them rest from war for ten years. So the people prospered and built strong cities and fortifications.

Asa had an army of about five hundred and eighty thousand mighty men of valor, but there came against him Zerah the Ethiopian with an army more than twice as large. They met at Mareshah about twenty miles from Jerusalem, and when Asa saw the great host of the enemy he prayed to the Lord Jehovah for succor. 'Lord, it is nothing to thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.'

'So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.'

Lesson Hints.

'Asa'—the king whose heart was perfect with the Lord as was his great-grandfather David's.

'Strange gods'—the idols of the neighboring nations, whose worship was so strictly forbidden by Jehovah. (Ex. xx., 3-5.)

'Images'—the idols that his father had made (I. Kings xv., 12). He also destroyed the horrible idol made by Maachah his mother, and removed her from being queen.

'Commanded Judah'—having first set them a good example, precept is needed as well as example.

'While the land is yet before us'—while we have time and opportunity to cultivate and forlify our land, let us work at it.

'An army'—probably not a standing army, but strong, trained men, who worked at their farms or other business when not needed for war.

'Mareshah'—a city about twenty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem.

'Asa cried unto the Lord'—he knew who only could help him. The Lord will not fail anyone who honestly trusts in him.

'It is nothing'—God is just as able to save

his people with Gideon's three hundred, or with David's little sling and pebble, as with the greatest and best equipped army. The Revised Version perhaps gives this verse more clearly, 'There is none beside thee to help between the mighty and him that hath no strength.'

'We rest on thee'—in perfect trust we rely on thee, no anxious worrying over what we have committed to thee; we have done our utmost, we restfully trust thee to do the rest.

'Against thee'—or against thy people. If we love and serve God we identify ourselves with him and our interests are his.

'So'—the emphatic word connecting the prayer with the answer.

Questions.

1. What relation was the good king Asa to David the Psalmist?
2. How did Asa show his faith when he first became king?
3. How did he show his faith when war came?
4. Why did God smite the Ethiopians?

Suggested Hymns.

'Our God is able to deliver thee,' 'Jesus saves,' 'Not to the strong is the battle,' 'Yield not to temptation.'

Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

October 2.—II. Chron. xiv., 2-12.

'He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.' Verse 2,

One good way to observe the first commandment is to practise the second. Verses 3 and 5: also Ex. xx., 3-6.

True rest is the gift of God. Verses 6 and 7.

Good men will always have enemies. Verses 8 and 9.

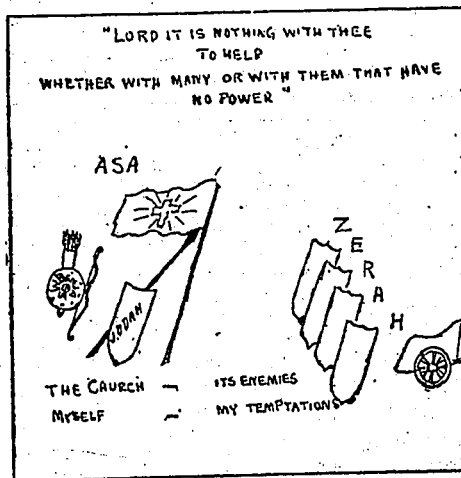
There are sins which are best conquered by open resistance; there are others more alluring from which the only safety is found in flight. Verse 10.

The praying soldier is no coward. Compare Cromwell, Bruce, Havelock, etc. Verse 11.

One along with God makes a mighty army. Verse 12.

Lesson Illustrated.

The forces upon our left are those of Asa. Judah being represented by the spear and the heavy shield, capable of protecting the whole body. The round target or light shield with the bow and quiver of arrows stands for the archers of Benjamin. Against them are Zerah's force, double their number and chariots extra. Asa did not have a banner with a cross, that comes in for our application; for we rub out Judah and call it the Church, then in the enemies' shield put the names the scholars will give in answer to



the question, 'Name some enemies of the Church?' 'Liquor traffic,' 'Love of money,' 'Bad literature,' etc. You can rub out Benjamin and put in its place the Sunday-school, Y.F.S.C.E., or other help of the Church.

Then rub out the Church and other names and put in 'myself,' and my enemies. What are some of our enemies, our temptations? Can the Church and we ourselves conquer? Yes, if we trust God, for it is nothing with him to help, whether with many or with them that have no power.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

Oct. 2.—Trials, and how to bear them. — Isa. xli., 8-20.

They Set the Fashion.

Judge Carter, of Haverhill, Massachusetta, who died last January at an advanced age, was a native of Maine. It was one of the pleasantries of this excellent magistrate to confess that once in his life he was 'guilty of bribery.'

While practising his profession in Bridgton, Maine, forty or fifty years ago, both he and Mrs. Carter were active church helpers, and both took particular interest in the Sunday-school, serving as teachers, and using all their influence to keep the classes full.

In those simpler times the children went bare-foot in the summer on week-days, but there were exceptions to the rule in a few well-to-do families of position, and when Sunday came, the etiquette for young church-going feet was so far in favor of shoes that poor people out of pride, kept their unshod children at home.

Lawyer Carter noticed this, and when several promised recruits to the Sunday-school failed to come, he divined the cause without offending the susceptibilities of the parents. It was a question how to secure the shoeless boys and girls, and finally it occurred to him to work out the problem at home. He 'bribed' his own children to go to Sunday-school barefoot.

Whether the household at first 'filed a demurrer,' we are not told, but the little folks agreed to their father's terms, and went. One appearance was enough to set the fashion. The shoeless families said, 'If Squire Carter's children can come to Sunday-school barefoot, it's a pretty how-de-do if ours can't.' And after that there were no more stay-at-homes for pride's sake.

The end does not always justify the means, but in this case most of us will be inclined to call the expedient of the good 'squire' by a gentler name than he used. — 'Youth's Companion.'

The Teacher's Example.

A short time ago I heard a mother expostulating with her daughter concerning a certain doubtful amusement. The young girl replied, 'My Sunday-school teacher, Miss A—, often goes there, so I am sure there cannot be much harm in my going'—and so the daughter continued to go, regardless of her mother's anxiety. As teachers, let us be prayerfully careful in regard to our example. Let us be bright, happy Christians, willing to deny ourselves if needs be. Our influence outside of the school will not be made up of great sacrifices and duties, but will largely consist in little actions—where we go, in what amusements we participate, and how we speak—this, combined with smiles, kindness and small obligations given habitually, will win for us and help us to retain the heart and respect of our pupils, and in the effort to help and uplift others we will rise to a higher plane of spiritual enjoyment ourselves.—Mrs. Acheson, in 'Christian Guardian.'

The Awakening.

(By Mrs. Merrill E. Gates.)

One day the fingers of the Lord
Upon my eyes shall lie;
And when their tender weight shall lift,
'Twill be eternity.

But while he holds my yielding lid
With that soft force of his,
My spirit shall not sleep, but wake
Into his utter bliss.
—'Sunday-school Times.'

One of the speakers at the recent Y.M.C.A. convention at Reading, Pa., addressing the workers there assembled on the subject of 'The Nineteenth Century Boy,' declared that the most remarkable thing about him was that he was going to be the twentieth century man. The speaker made a strong plea for the boy, adding that people were willing to spend a lifetime studying about beetles, the social life of fleas, etc., but regarded boys as an unmitigated nuisance. He believed, however, that the Y. M. C. A. was engaged in a great work, in taking up the task of helping boys. Boys are certainly worth cultivating. Daniel Webster when a lad once remarked to somebody who had despised his youth: 'Sir, they make men out of such things as we!' It is worth while training a boy if a man can be made out of him.