

made him content with a limited, formal obedience.
(8) *In our acceptance of God's promises we need boldness, perseverance, and above all faith.*

19. The man of God was wrath. It was not an evil passion, but a just indignation against one who had used but half his opportunity; the anger of an earnest soul with lukewarmness and lack of faith. How the all-conquering zeal of the prophet shines in contrast with the lassitude of the king! (9) *Let us be careful how we lose our privileges by our neglect of them.* Most churches are like factories running on half-time, or like farms of which only a quarter is under cultivation. *Thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.* The latter verses of our lesson record the fulfillment of the prediction. Syria waned, indeed, with the restoration of Israel, but its final destruction was wrought by the Assyrian power, from the East.

20. Elisha died. (10) *Death claims God's people, but he is after all a conquered conqueror. They buried him.* Josephus says that the prophet received the empty honor of princely funeral. Had he been heeded while living as he was honored when dead, there would have been no need to recover lost provinces or beat back invading armies. How often do men "crown the statue when they have not crowned the brow, and pay honor to the ashes which they have denied to the spirit!"—*Ruskin.* **The bands of the Moabites.** These were the people living on the east of the Dead Sea, who had recently emancipated themselves from the yoke of Israel. **Invaded the lands.** A marauding raid, not a permanent occupation. **Coming in of the year.** The crops in the Jordan valley ripen in the late spring, earlier than elsewhere in Palestine; and to this day they are often seized by predatory bands.

21. They cast the man. They threw the body which they were burying into the nearest sepulcher, which chanced to be that of Elisha; which was not a grave but a cave, with perhaps a stone over its mouth. **Touched the bones of Elisha.** Neither body was in a coffin; but both were wrapped around with clothes, so that they might touch each other. **He revived and stood up.** In the depressed state of Israel, under the yoke of Syria and invaded by Moab, such a miracle may have been needed to encourage the people in their

efforts for deliverance. We know not whether this was a permanent restoration to life or a momentary quiver. But whatever the nature of the miracle, it was wrought by the power of God, and not by the virtue of the dead prophet's bones. So God works in the world still, through the remembered words and the written thoughts, the "remains" of good men whose bodies have crumbled back to their native dust. Paul touches the world to-day in his letters, Charles Wesley in his songs, and Robertson in his sermons.

22. Hazael king of Syria. The story now goes back to the previous reign, in order to show the fulfillment of Elisha's prophecy. Hazael was the general of Ben-hadad II., who murdered his master and usurped the throne. He was the ablest man of his day, and the made Syria supreme from the Mediterranean to the Egyptian border. **Jehoahaz.** The son and successor of Jehu, and father of Joash. Under him Israel was scarcely more than a province of Syria. But he sought God's help, which was granted, though not until after his death. (11) *How often trouble brings men and nations back to God!*

23. The Lord was gracious. Even backsliding Israel long enjoyed God's mercy, and was again and again restored to his favor. **Because of his covenant.** The pledge made a thousand years before to the patriarchs that God would preserve their seed, and make them his own people. **From his presence as yet.** The captivity, from which the ten tribes never returned, was their final casting off, which took place about ninety years after this time.

24. So Hazael died. The death of this fierce warrior was the beginning of Israel's deliverance. **Ben-hadad his son reigned.** He was the third king of that name, and inheritor of his father's conquests, all of which were lost through his weakness.

25. Jehoahaz. The same king who in verse 14 is called Joash. **The cities.** These may have been in that section of Israel east of the river Jordan, or even nearer Samaria, but their names are not known. **Three times.** So fulfilling Elisha's prophecy. Yet either he did not press on to the full subjugation of Syria, or he was unable to accomplish it.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Death of Elisha. 2 Kings 13, 14-25.
Th. The covenant with Abraham. Gen. 15, 7-18.
W. The promise to Isaac. Gen. 26, 1-12.
Th. The covenant with Jacob. Gen. 28, 1-15.
F. The covenant fulfilled in Christ. Luke 1, 68-79.
S. The resurrection of dry bones. Ezek. 37, 1-14.
S. Reward of faith. Heb. 11, 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He being dead yet speaketh. Heb. 11, 4.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 203, Dominion Hymnal.
There is a glorious world of light,
Above the starry sky.
No. 200, Dominion Hymnal.
There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign.
No. 206, Dominion Hymnal.
Give me the wings of faith to rise,
Within the veil, and see

TIME.—B. C. 838.

PLACE.—Unknown.

RULERS.—Joash, grandson of Jehu, twelfth King of Israel; Amaziah, ninth King of Judah; Ben-hadad III., King of Damascus; Shalmaneser II., King of Assyria.

HISTORY.—During the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz, Israel fell under the power of Syria, which was ruled by Hazael. Joash, who was king of Israel when Elisha died, regained much that had been lost, and his son, Jeroboam II., conquered Syria, and made Israel almost as powerful as it had been under David and Solomon.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's fidelity to his covenant.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. A Royal Visitor, v. 14.**
Who was dying?
What king came to see him?
Why was Joash so sorrowful?
What was the significance of his exclamation?
2. A Prophetic Lesson, v. 15-19.
What did Elisha direct the king to do?
What did Elisha mean by putting his hands upon the king's hands?
Why was the arrow shot eastward?
What explanation of the arrow did the prophet give?
What was the king told to do?
Why did he smite only thrice?
3. A Sacred Sepulcher, v. 20, 21.
What occasioned the hurried burial?
What occurred when the body touched Elisha's bones?
What was its significance?
4. A Fulfilled Prophecy, v. 22-25.
What prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled concerning Hazael? 2 Kings 8, 12.
Why did God preserve Israel?
What other prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—1. That a good man's death is cause for lamentation? 2. That indifference to divine command brings disaster? 3. That none of God's words fail?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. A Royal Visitor, v. 14.**
Who was stricken with a fatal illness?
What royal visitor had he?
How did the king show his grief?
What was his language?
Who had used this language before? 2 Kings 2, 12.
2. A Prophetic Lesson, v. 15-19.
What four things did Elisha bid the king do?
What did the arrow signify?
What was the king then directed to do?