

Lesson XI.

THE BOY SAMUEL

December 14, 1902

1 Sam. 3: 6-14. Study 1 Sam. 3: 1-14. Commit to memory vs. 7-10. Read 1 Sam. chs. 1-3.

6 And the Lord called yet again, Sam'uel. And Sam'uel arose and went to E'li, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Sam'uel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.

8 And the Lord called Sam'uel again the third time. And he arose and went to E'li, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And E'li perceived that the Lord had called the child.

9 Therefore E'li said unto Sam'uel, Go, lie down; and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth. So Sam'uel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at

other times, Sam'uel, Sam'uel. Then Sam'uel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

11 And the Lord said to Sam'uel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

12 In that day I will perform against E'li all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.

13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of E'li, that the iniquity of E'li's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.

15 Did bring a curse upon themselves.

EXPLANATION

Connection—From the charming story of Ruth we pass to the story of Samuel, who was born at Ramah, or Ramathaim (ch. 1:1) about four miles from Jerusalem. Having been given in answer to prayer (1:11) his mother Hannah dedicated him to God in the temple at Shiloh (Josh. 18:1), which was about 17 miles from Jerusalem, and was the centre of the religious worship of the Hebrews. Our lesson tells us of an incident in his life at Shiloh when twelve years of age.

Eli, the high priest, was growing old and feeble and the child Samuel was assisting him by performing little services in the temple (v. 15.) It was a wicked age and no message had come from God for a long time.



Samuel Brought to Eli the High Priest.

One night God spake to Samuel; but he naturally thought it was Eli calling and ran to see what he wanted.

6. Called yet again: repeating the call of v. 5. Eli's sense of hearing was failing, or the voice was revealed to Samuel alone. Either supposition will account for the fact that the high priest did not hear the call. **Samuel.** The name means "asked of God," for he was given in answer to prayer ch. 1:11. **Samuel arose, etc.** Prompt and obedient, no loitering—fine

qualities in a boy. **Thou didst call me.** He did not yet know God's voice, and naturally thought that it was Eli who called him. **I called not.** It was puzzling; but he does not argue or complain. He promptly obeys, and returns to his bed.

7, 8. Did not know the Lord. He knew Him in heart and life and loved to obey Him, but he did not know His voice speaking to him as a prophet. **The third time.** Samuel though inexperienced, was ready and willing to obey, and God repeats His message. **Eli perceived;** that it was a divine message. He had received a message from God through a prophet not long before, ch. 2: 27-36.

9. Go, lie down; and wait for God to give His message. **So Samuel went.** Note again his obedience both to Eli and to God.

10, 11. The Lord came and stood. It was more than a voice. It was a personal presence, Gen. 18: 1; Judges 6: 12. **As at other times;** as on the two former occasions. **I will do a thing in Israel.** It was to be a public calamity, for people and priests had sinned together. **Both the ears . . . shall tingle;** so frightful was the coming punishment, 4: 12-18.

12. In that day; of public calamity. **All things which I have spoken;** by his servant in ch. 2: 30-36. **When I begin.** It was twenty years before the blow fell. **I will make an end;** will perform it thoroughly.

13. I have told him; and, therefore, he was without excuse. **Will judge;** pass judgment upon. **His house forever.** His family would become extinct. **Made themselves vile;** or brought a curse upon themselves. **He restrained them not;** though gently reproving them (2: 23, 24), yet he did not exercise proper authority over them. They should have been expelled from the priestly office.

14. I have sworn. Their impenitence had fixed their doom. **Purged;** washed out with. **Sacrifice nor offering.** None of the usual forms of sacrifice would suffice to atone for their sins, for they were guilty of most awful immoralities. **For ever.** It is one of the fearful things about sin that its results remain so long. Often long after the transgressor has himself passed away, those who come after him suffer for his misdeeds.