

Elijah the Tishbite.

THE REV. NEWMAN HALL, in his comments on this lesson in the *S. S. Times*, says :

We should believe when we cannot understand. ELIJAH might wonder why he should be sent into the wilderness, and especially he must have marvelled how the promise about the ravens could be fulfilled. But this was not his business. The birds were God's, and the brook was God's, and the wilderness was God's. "So he went and did according to the word of the Lord." So let us obey and trust. When the path of duty is clear to our conscience let us leave our safety with Him who says, "Fear not, for I am with thee." "Trust in the Lord, and do good ; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Seasons of retirement and waiting, equally with seasons of active service, should be welcomed when divinely appointed. Very often we see that special working is preceded by special waiting. Moses spent forty years in the wilderness of Horeb before his great mission to Pharaoh. John the Baptist, the second Elijah, was in the seclusion of the desert when he began his work. Jesus, after his long seclusion at Nazareth, spent forty days in the wilderness of Judea before entering on his public ministry. Paul spent three years in Arabia before he began his apostolic labors. And so Elijah went into the wilderness, that by meditation and prayer he might be fitted for the great struggle on which he was to enter. It is often harder to wait than to work. When God bids it is as true service to be silent as to speak, to sit still as to traverse the earth. Let us not murmur at any privation or seclusion in any wilderness if God sends us there, and so fit us for better serving Him.

All God's creatures serve God's saints. If, as some suppose, the ravens were Arabs, it was quite unlikely that such wandering thieves would so care for the prophet as daily to bring food during many months. If they did it was by the special direction of God. And so God could equally dispose the ravens, contrary to their nature, to supply the prophet morning and evening with food suitable for him. We are in a universe which God pervades, and where all things serve Him. What seems most unlikely to render help may become God's minister. The most trifling events have often effected most important deliverances to God's people. We have better messengers than birds. God commanded the ravens to feed Elijah, but "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee to keep thee in all thy ways." "Are they not all ministering spirits?" "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him."—*To be continued.*