

25); it was his representation of the treason of Adonijah that led David to have Solomon proclaimed King in his own lifetime, and he was, as we find from statements in 1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29, the historian in part of the reigns of both David and Solomon. "Cedar:" a choice and costly wood, sent by Hiram. (Chron. 5:11.) "Within curtains:" the tent covering, woven of goats hair. (Ex. 26:7-14.)

Ver. 3. "Do all—in thine heart:" charmed with the purposes of the King, and thinking it eminently right, Nathan said "Go on," but he had yet to learn that a right thing may be done at a wrong time, and by an unfit instrumentality. This shows us, as other passages, that the prophets were not always under inspiration, speaking by command of God. (See 1 Sam. 16:6; 2 Kings 4:27.)

Vers. 4-7. "That night:" that the plan might be checked at once, before David made any arrangements or incurred any expense. "My servant:" specially, all God's people are His servants, but to some are given special service. "Shalt thou build me:" a Hebrew form of strong negative; in the parallel account in 1 Chron. 17:4, the message is negative in form, "thou shalt not." "Not dwell—have walked in a tent:" referring to the journeyings of the people through the wilderness with the Ark of God's presence borne before them. "Tent:" the outward covering of skins. "Tabernacle:" the framework of boards and bars. "Tribes:" or sceptres, rulers; meaning that whatever tribe had in the past supplied the person for the ruler of the people, to none of them had God spoken to build him "a house of cedar." We must understand that there is no rebuke to David here, God recognizes the goodness of his wish and intention, but it was not in accordance with the Divine will.

Vers. 8-9. The message now recounts the goodness of God to David. It is tender, and anything but a stern rejection of the purpose of the King, although the words are very positive. "Sheepcotes:" or pastures. "Following the sheep:" lit. from being a shepherd to be a King, this was God's doing, the circumstances might appear natural, but the Divine will had overruled it all. Do we not need this lesson! "Was with thee—cut off thine enemies—made thee a great name:" the first thought was the foundation of all. David had God with him and so followed his victories and his greatness. Unquestionably the name of David was made great. To-day the Jews look back to him as the grandest of their kings, and although the reign of Solomon was more magnificent and apparently more prosperous, yet the controlling influence of Israel, the respect it commanded was greater during the reign of David than that of any other King; he found Israel a disorganized company of tribes, he left it a great homogeneous nation.

Vers. 10-11. The message now speaks of permanency and rest for the nation. "Will appoint:" rather, have appointed, the idea is of a blessing already bestowed. "Move no more:" like all the promises this involved a duty; this long and persistently violated, the promise was at length withdrawn, and the permanency of the nation ceased forever. "Children of wickedness:" or wicked people. "And as since:" the break of the verse injures the thought, it is that they shall not be afflicted as they were in Egypt, or as they were during the times of their judges.

Vers. 11, 12, 13. "Make Thee an house:" David had desired to build a house for God, this was not permitted, but for his pious purpose God would make him "an house:" that is God would preserve and establish the family of David and secure to it the throne of Israel, another promise hanging upon a duty, not only should a family be established, but when he had passed away his son should do what he had purposed. "Build a house for my name:" for the fulfilment of this read the history of Solomon, especially 1 Kings chaps. 7 and 8; and 2 Chron. chaps. 3 to 7.

Ver. 14. "His father:" (see Psalms 89:20) a relationship involving mutual love, and it cannot exist with any man who does not cherish in his heart love to God, and obedience; the son must obey the father or he cannot be a true son, if one, God will do to him as to David's son. "I will chastise him:" God is no respecter of persons as Solomon found when he did commit iniquity. (1 Kings 11:9-40.) "Rod of men:" the adversities and trials to which sinful men are subject; or, it may mean that men shall be as a rod and stripes to him, which they were; see above.

Ver. 15, 16. Although the sinner was to be punished for his sins, yet there was not to follow the extinction of the family as happened to that of Saul. David's sons for their apostasy first lost the throne and then were weakened more and more, until when the great Son of David came it had sunk to the lowest ebb, yet the promise of God was fulfilled and in Jesus began a new and everlasting reign, a reign as wide as it is to be enduring, for to Him all nations shall bow, and all His enemies shall be put under His feet. "Established:" or I will, as in 1 Sam. 2:15. "Forever:" fulfilled in Jesus who lives forever. David dwelt much upon this promise (see vers. 25-29, Psalms 18:50; 89:29) and David's kingdom does indeed continue forever; let us who are the spiritual children of faithful Abraham bless God for the promise and for its fulfilment.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Topical Analysis.—(1) David's plan 1-3; (2) rejected by God 4-7; (3) God's promise 8-16.

On the first topic we may teach that *the plan of David was a good one*; it was a right feeling that prompted the idea, and although, as we see, God did not allow its carrying out, yet he is not rebuked for the desire. David felt how anomalous it was, that while he was dwelling in a house of cedar, a grand magnificent palace, that the ark of God should rest within the old tent covering that had done service through the wilderness journeyings; then he remembered all the goodness of God to himself, and the warm feeling of gratitude in his heart was another motive to his purpose. That God accepted the spirit of the service although he did not permit its fulfilment, we may be sure from the later verses in our lesson, and from the fact that David was instructed to make all necessary preparations; he was to gather together all the materials and provide for the cost of the house that he was never to see. God honoured him in permitting him thus to be the preparer of the way. Let us learn and teach from this, that nothing we can give to the service of God and to the spread of the Gospel is unacceptable to God, and although it may not do the work we intended, or serve the purpose we designed, it will, in God's providence, do a work and serve a purpose that shall be to His glory. Happy if we may be the pioneers only, doing the rough work and seeing not the beauty and glory that is to follow. Happy we, if we feel that all we have, of means, influence and talents should be consecrated to the service of God.

On the second topic let us explain why the purpose of David was rejected by God. *The time had not then arrived* when it would be fitting and desirable. Jehovah during the 500 years (or nearly so) of the nation's existence had dwelt in tent and tabernacle, and had not sought from any of the rulers from Joshua to David, a permanent sanctuary; nor did he need one, for the Most High "dwelleth not in temples made with hands," a truth which Solomon faintly grasped, but which had to be taught in its fulness by the Master Himself and by His inspired apostle. (John 4:25; Acts 17:24.) There were circumstances in the condition of the people, which as we may well believe, had to do with the Divine rejection of the plan; the nation was hardly as yet consolidated; the house of David had to endure for at least a generation, and peace must be established before it was fitting that the Temple of God should be builded.