

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

Third Quarter, 1904.

JULY TO SEPTEMBER.

Lesson I.—July 3.—The Kingdom Divided.—1 Kings 12: 1-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.—Prov. 16: 18.

EXPLANATORY.

THE TWO WAYS PRESENTED TO REHOBOAM.—The Right Way urged by the Old Men. Rehoboam first consulted the old men, who had been Solomon's councillors. They advised the young king to grant the people's requests, "speak good words to them," and the people would be his servants forever. Very likely this had been their customary advice to Solomon, and following it may have aided him greatly in maintaining his dominion.

The Wrong Way urged by the Young Men. Their advice was that Rehoboam should make to the people this defiant and insolent reply: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastized you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

REHOBOAM'S FOOLISH CHOICE.—Vs. 12-15. After the old men had given their displeasing advice, Rehoboam had peremptorily decided against them (1 Kings 12: 8.) He was ready, therefore, to accept promptly the advice of the young men.

12. SO JEROBOAM AND ALL THE PEOPLE. The sending for Jeroboam was not because the northern tribes intended to revolt whether their demands were granted or not. Exiles naturally return on the death of the kings they have offended, and it was only prudent for these northern tribes to have their strongest leader at hand in case their demands should be refused. CAME AS THE KING HAD APPOINTED. R. V., as the king bade.

13. AND THE KING ANSWERED THE PEOPLE ROUGHLY. Solomon had easily put down the revolt of Jeroboam and David that of Sheba (2 Sam. 20: 1-22.) Rehoboam felt that he could as readily put down this third insurrection.

14. MY FATHER ALSO CHASTISED YOU WITH WHIPS. Imposed heavy burdens of taxation. There is also a literal reference for such forced labor as Solomon exacted was often labor under the lash. BUT I WILL CHASTISE YOU WITH SCORPIONS. "Things thickly set with sharp iron points, used in the castigation of slaves." "So that each blow might wound like a scorpion's sting." I will increase your civic burdens.

15. WHEREFORE (R. V. SO) THE KING HARKENED NOT UNTO THE PEOPLE. This sums up the entire narrative; we need not suppose that they renewed their plea. FOR THE

FOOD FACTS.

What an M. D. Learned.

A prominent physician of Rome, Georgia, went through a food experience which he makes public:

"It was my own experience that first led me to advocate Grape-Nuts food and I also know from having prescribed it to convalescents and other weak patients that the food is a wonderful builder and restorer of nerve and brain tissue, as well as muscle. It improves the digestion and sick patients always gain just as I did in strength and weight very rapidly.

"I was in such a low state that I had to give up my work entirely and go to the mountains of this state, but two months there did not improve me; in fact I was not quite as well as when I left home. My food absolutely refused to sustain me and it became plain that I must change, then I began to use Grape-Nuts food and in two weeks I could walk a mile without the least fatigue and in five weeks returned to my home and practice, taking up hard work again. Since that time I have felt as well and strong as I ever did in my life.

"As a physician who seeks to help all sufferers I consider it a duty to make these facts public." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Trial 10 days on Grape-Nuts when the regular food does not seem to sustain the body will work miracles.

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CAUSE WAS FROM THE LORD (R. V., it was a

thing brought about of the Lord.) like the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 4: 21.) or the Jews' crucifixion of Christ (Acts 2: 23.) THAT HE MIGHT PERFORM HIS SAYING (R. V., establish his word.) The reference is to Ahijah's prophecy to Jeroboam (1 Kings 11: 21) that he should rule over ten tribes. A difficult point is raised by the questions, How could this unhappy division of the kingdom be said to be "from the Lord," and how was Rehoboam to blame, if God was the author of the event?

1. Undoubtedly God desired that his people should remain united. His plan for them from the days of Abraham was that they should become a strong and populous nation. The kingdom under David and Solomon seemed on the point of fulfilling this design. "It might have extended itself," says McCurdy, "so as to become the superior of Egypt, and fit to cope with Assyria." Thus extended, if the union had remained true to God, it would have been a far mightier power for advancing the true religion.

2. But God never forces his plans on a nation or an individual. We are not mere puppets in God's hands. God has given us free will, which he allows us to use even in opposition to him.

3. But God's love follows the erring still. Our father makes even the wrath of man to praise him. If men will not choose the best, God brings them the second best. If the United States will not free the slaves peacefully, God, as the result of a terrible war, causes their emancipation and confirms the union of States.

4. So the disruption of the kingdom was made in God's providence to work out good for the nation—not the highest good possible for them if they had obeyed God, but the highest good possible when disobedient.

THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM, AND THE RESULT.—Vs. 16-20. As soon as the leaders from the north saw that Rehoboam had no intention of remedying abuses and effecting reforms, they gave the signal for the great revolt.

16. ALL ISRAEL SAW THAT THE KING HARKENED NOT. Josephus saw that "they were struck by his words as by an iron rod." WHAT PORTION HAVE WE IN DAVID? What have we to do with David's son, Rehoboam, or David's tribe, Judah? Compare 2 Sam. 20: 1. NEITHER HAVE WE INHERITANCE IN THE SON OF JESSE. "Contrast the language of the ten tribes after the collapse of Absalom's rebellion: 'We have ten parts in the king' (2 Sam. 19: 43.) To your tents, O ISRAEL. Back to your homes, and prepare for war. This cry—the Marseillaise of Israel—was an old war-cry of Ephraim. The use of the word "tents" may have originated when people dwelt in tents, or from the tents of an army. NOW SEE TO THINE OWN HOUSE. DAVID. Look after your own tribe of Judah, Rehoboam, for that is all you will have left.

17. THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WHICH DWELT IN THE CITIES OF JUDAH. The members of the northern tribes who had homes in the cities of Judah did not join their kinsmen in the revolt, but remained under Rehoboam.

18. REHOBOAM WAS SO INFATUATED, AND SO blind to the real state of affairs, that he attempted to stop the revolt by sending to them ADORAM, WHO WAS OVER THE TREASURE. This man, probably the Adoniram of 1 Kings 4: 6, presided over the forced labor, and the foolish young king could not have chosen a more hated messenger. His persuasion and threats were alike fruitless. The indignant people, following a common practice of ancient mobs (Ex. 8: 26; 17: 4; 1 Sam. 36: 6, etc.) STONED HIM TO DEATH. THEREFORE KING REHOBOAM MADE SPEED TO ESCAPE FROM SHECHEM TO JERUSALEM, recognizing his own peril.

19. UNTO THIS DAY. "This expression shows that the writer, who lived during the captivity, and consequently long after the rebellion of Israel had come to an end, is embodying in his history the exact words of an ancient document."

20. WHEN ALL ISRAEL, the northern tribes, HEARD THAT JEROBOAM WAS COME AGAIN OUT OF EGYPT. Only the leaders of Israel, with their immediate followers, had been present at Shechem. CALLED HIM UNTO THE CONGREGATION. The general assembly of the northern tribes. AND MADE HIM KING. BUT THE TRIBE OF JUDAH ONLY. The next verse adds "with the tribe of Benjamin," which was divided, the smaller, southern half adhering to Judah.

Returned to Jerusalem, Rehoboam assembled an army to put down the rebellion, but he was forbidden by God, speaking through the prophet Shemaiah, of whom nothing further is known (1 Kings 12: 21-24.) This event completed the separation of the kingdoms, settling God's seal upon it.

"Do you believe," a lady asked, "that a genius can possibly be a good husband?" "Well, I would prefer not to answer that question; but my wife ought to be able to tell you!

If we are to have Christian education in our institutions of learning, we must have Christian teachers. Those who attend them are in a formative period. They are affected by the spirit, character, opinion, life and influence of those who instruct them. As an illustration and confirmatory of this, it is said that "all the professors of the science who were students at Yale in Prof. March's classes are agnostics, while all the professors of the science who studied at Harvard under professor Agassiz are theists." This is in accord with the general principle that personal influence is a mighty factor in religious as well as in secular training. Parents should consider this fact more than they do, and be careful where they send their children if they wish them to grow up under Christian environments and to retain the faith of their childhood. On the other hand, those who have charge of our institutions of learning should be careful whom they introduce into the professional chair and should show due regard to the character of their religious belief and practice. The church especially cannot afford to have her youth become agnostics and infidels. She must have her own training schools, both preparatory and collegiate, if she is to hold her sons and daughters true to Christian ideals, tenet and practices—Presbyterian.

SUNSHINE AND MUSIC.

A laugh is just like sunshine,
It freshens all the day,
It tips the peaks of life with light,
And drives the clouds away;
The soul grows glad that hears it,
And feels its courage strong—
A laugh is just like sunshine
For cheering folks along!
A laugh is just like music,
It lingers on the heart,
And where its melody is heard
The hills of life depart;
And happy thoughts come crowding
Its joyous notes to greet—
A laugh is just like music
For making living sweet!

JOSEPH PARKER'S LIBRARY.

Dr. Joseph Parker was once asked how he managed to draw thousands to his city temple simply to hear him talk. His reply is characteristic.

"You would understand if you read my library."

"Oh, it's good, bad, indifferent, grand and squalid," answered the mighty talker. "It's everything. It's in underground trains and on busses, in aerated tea-shops, smart restaurants, at churches, stations, parties, receptions, meetings, jubilees and sick beds; you find it in prisons and boudoirs. The fact is, you can never get away from it. We call it 'human nature,' for want of a better name. I study it—that's why I call it my library. Most men don't, you see. But that's why I'm listened to."

QUICK WORK.

At one time Bishop Williams of Marquette was a university preacher at Cornell for a few weeks, and during that time he not only gave fine sermons, but provided his friends at the university with many good stories.

One he brought from Winnipeg, where he had been attending the synod of the Canadian church. He had seen there a missionary bishop who had come a long journey, travelling for six weeks, most of the time by canoe.

This missionary had brought messages and excuses from coming to the synod because "his biocese had gone to the dogs."

He proceeded to explain that the brother bishop was laboring among the Eskimos, north of Hudson Bay. He had built them a church with whale's ribs for rafters, covered with tanned walrus hide.

"It held eighty persons," said the missionary bishop, "and served its purpose well until in a bad time the dogs grew famished and devoured the church!"

SPEAKING ENGLISH.

Here is a story that comes from London, and illustrates the peculiarities of the American boy: The youngster was at the Hotel Cecil, and he listened intently to a group of English people. Suddenly he looked up at his mother, "Say, ma, do these people talk English?" "Certainly they do, my child. What a question!" Then we don't said the boy.



A severe case of Ovarian Trouble and a terrible operation avoided. Mrs. Emmons tells how she was saved by the use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I am so pleased with the results obtained from Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound that I feel it a duty and a privilege to write you about it."

"I suffered for more than five years with ovarian troubles, causing an unpleasant discharge, a great weakness, and at times a faintness would come over me which no amount of medicine, diet, or exercise seemed to correct. Your Vegetable Compound found the weak spot, however, within a few weeks—and saved me from an operation—all my troubles had disappeared, and I found myself once more healthy and well. Words fail to describe the real, true, grateful feeling that is in my heart, and I want to tell every sick and suffering sister. Don't dally with medicines you know nothing about, but take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and take my word for it, you will be a different woman in a short time."—MRS. LAURA EMMONS, Walkerville, Ont.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

Don't hesitate to write to Mrs. Pinkham if there is anything about your sickness you do not understand. No woman ever regretted writing her and she has helped thousands. Address Lynn, Mass.

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