

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

QUARTER: STUDIES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.

B. C. 896. LESSON VI. JEROSHAPHAT HELPED OF GOD; or, Established by Faith. 2 Chron. 20. 14-22. Commit to memory verses 17, 18. February 10.

EXPLANATORY.

UPON JAHAZIEL. See God's answer to his people's cry. 1.) It came promptly, for there was urgent and instant need. 2.) It came in a divine manner, proclaiming a supernatural origin. 3.) It came through a human instrumentality. God honors men by making them his agencies of power. 4.) It came in the line of the agent employed, Jahaziel was a singer. Of the sons of Asaph, and therefore we find the trait of song running all through this divine deliverance. So from Charles Wesley to Bliss and Sankey. God has in modern days honored the Gospel in song. The Spirit of the Lord. A prophetic power by divine inspiration. God's Spirit was given in ancient days to few: now it is poured out freely upon all. In the midst. While the service of supplication was in progress, unexpectedly, and through one not hitherto regarded as a prophet, came the message from Jehovah.

HE SAID. The message. 1.) It was direct, beginning with specific mention of those to whom it was addressed. 2.) It bespoke a divine authority—not in the name of human reason, or logic, or opinion—but, Thus saith the Lord. 3.) It was precise. They were told just where to go, and when, just what to do, and what not to do. When God leads the way is light. 4.) It was encouraging, lifting up their troubled hearts as with the voice of a trumpet. 5.) It pledged divine help. They were powerless to resist these overwhelming foes; and God came to their aid. 6.) It required at once their action, and their trust. They were bidden to go against them but forbidden to fight against them. Zis. A place not certainly known, but perhaps the pass Ben-gedi (Ain Jidy), in the wilderness of Judah, on the western coast of the Dead Sea; still a haunt of marauding Arabs. The brook. Or valley; probably the Wady Jehar. Jeruel. "Probably between Ben-gedi and Tekoa."—Whitney.

AND JEROSHAPHAT. In these versions we see three manifestations of faith. 1. Faith manifested in prayer. The king and people bowed as one man before God, and together mingled their voices in thanksgiving, worshipping the Lord. 2. Faith manifested in praise. The Mohathites, the immediate family of the high-priest, and the Korhites, or sons of Korah, a branch of the Levites especially prominent in song, together broke forth in psalms of gratitude, not for the accomplished past, but for the promised future. So Mr. Moody opened his great meetings in London with, "Let us praise God for what he is going to do in London." 3. Faith manifested in performance. They rose early...and went forth. True faith does not expend all its energy in rapturous excitement, it enters into action, and shows itself in deeds as well as feelings. Strong, indeed, is that confidence, which thus ventures out upon God's word and marches to meet its foe. Tekoa. A place situated twelve miles south of Jerusalem. The wilderness lay between it and the Dead Sea. Jehoshaphat said. The words of one man whose faith is strong can strengthen many hearts. We are not to keep our faith shrouded in the silence of our hearts, but to speak it forth for others' comfort. Believe. As the host files by for the campaign, there comes no command to keep the armor braced and the sword unsheathed. The watchword is "Believe." If the shield of faith be fixed, the warfare will end in victory.

CONSULTED. By asking the people's advice he secured their hearty concurrence. The true statesman, like Lincoln the good, leads, but does not drive the people. Singers. Not warriors in mail, but priests in robes of worship, formed the van of the advancing army. Beauty of holiness. Some understand this as referring to the sacred vestments of the praising company; but it seems rather to indicate the spirit and heart in which the psalms were chanted. Ambushments. Literally, liars in wait. Perhaps marauding Ishmaelites, whose unexpected attack for plunder threw the host into confusion, and turned their arms against each other. Ammon, Moab. Descendants of Lot, dwelling east of the Dead Sea, former on the north, the latter on the south. Mount Seir. A range of mountains, extending from the Dead Sea southward; the home of the Edomites, or descendants of Esau. Smitten. Or, "smote each other." In the confusion friend and foe were mingled, and the allied host was scattered and slain long before the army of Judah came upon the scene.

GOLDEN TEXT: Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. 2 Chron. 20. 20.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION: Value of faith. The next lesson is 2 Chron. 24. 4-13.

SABBATH BELLS.

"Hark! hark! methinks that o'er my ear Some distant strains of music fell; And now it comes, more soft, more near— It is thy chime, sweet Sabbath bell!"

Blest sound! how oft with willing feet Have I obeyed thy sacred spell; And loved to join where pilgrims meet, Obedient to the Sabbath bell.

Its distant echoes faint and fleet Could music's softest tones excel; Nor knew mine ear a strain so sweet As thine harmonious Sabbath bell!

Of holy hopes of joys refined, The passive murmur seemed to tell; And spoke of countless joys combined In that sole thought, the Sabbath bell.

And now my spirit spurs the thrall That binds me to my pillow cell; And fain would hasten to the call That vibrates from the Sabbath bell.

The holy fane, the sacred rite, The hallowed joys I loved so well; Say, shall they bless again my sight, At summons of the Sabbath bell?

Ah, no! that hope I fear is o'er I bid the dear deceit farewell, And scarce may hope to hear once more The music of the Sabbath bell.

Soon, soon its meek and mournful strains May vibrate in my funeral knell; Yet while a thought of life remains, 'Twill ne'er forsake the Sabbath bell.

And if beyond this mortal lot, On former joys the soul may dwell, My spirit e'er shall haunt the spot That echoes from the Sabbath bell."

Passed from imperfect worship here, To fullness which no tongue can tell, Thou dost not pine, ah, spirit dear, For any earthly Sabbath bell!"

—Sunday at Home.

THE EVENING PRAYER.

Mrs. Elliott was a busy woman, but she was never too busy to put her darlings to bed herself, and to hear them say their evening prayers. No matter how many engagements were pressing on her time and care, she always gave the little ones their own happy hour after tea. "Do you think, mamma dear," said Jessie one evening, "that Jesus hears my prayer, when so many children are praying to Him at the same time? I should think he would grow confused, and not know which little voice was talking to Him." What answer did Mrs. Elliott make to Jessie's questions? Does anybody wonder? Well she said this:

"Dear little Jessie, when you call me in the night, even if I am half asleep, I know which one it is that is in want of mamma. Though I may be tired or sick, it is not a trouble to me to rise and go to the bed, and find what it is my child wants. Jesus is more tender than any mother can be. And He is never weary; and there is no little lamb in all his flock whom He does not know from every other. He calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. He loves to listen to every real prayer, and He always has time enough to hear it. When you have any trouble, or have done wrong and are sorry, or when you do not know what to do or which way to go, then always tell Jesus." "Yes," said Jessie, "I like to hear Aunt Nancy sing,

"Nobody knows de trouble I see, Nobody knows but Jesus."

Said Roy, I prefer the hymn mamma loves:

"One more day's work for Jesus, One less of life for me."

"I like them both," Clara said; but better than all is the old hymn which papa so often gives out in church:

"Jesu lover of my soul."

There are days when the Elliott children are naughty; when they lose their tempers, or say impatient words, or forget to perform their tasks well. But when evening comes the raveled threads of the day are all knit up; and as they pray, they learn how sweet and comforting it is to tell everything to Jesus, confess sin, to thank Him for His love, and trust to His care. May we all know for ourselves the same blessedness!

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