

V. 14.—“Chief of the priests”—like Simon the Sorcerer, the Jewish priests who crucified the Saviour, would use his name for gain! But they fail: for they “could lightly speak evil of Jesus.” Satan cannot cast out satan, but demons delight to torment men.

Vv. 15, 16.—The devil will not be ordered away by such persons.

V. 19.—“Curious Arts”—viz., of Sorcery, magic or conjuring. Probably they taught the misuse of the occult science, such as Mesmerism and Biology, and the consulting of familiar spirits, which is now reappearing in the extravagances of modern Spiritualism. These excesses are the dire penalties of Scepticism, which ends in gross credulity. Their only cure is true faith and active love in God, our Saviour.

*Lesson.*—The power of the Holy Spirit is infinitely greater than all the powers of demons and of devils combined.

#### LESSON FOR JUNE 30TH—2 SAM. VI.

*Text*, 2 Chron. 26: 18, 19. *Show from Scripture—The Danger of Irreverence.*

2 Sam. 6.—The parallel passages are in 1 Chron. 13th, 15th and 16th chapters. As these chapters give ample explanations, our notes may be brief.

V. 2.—“Baale”—or Baalah, was another name for the town of Kirjath-jearim, (1 Chron. 13: 6). There the ark has been left by the Philistines, (1 Sam. 6: 21; 7: 1.)

V. 3.—“New cart.”—This was a heathen invention of the Philistine priests (1 Sam. 6: 7; and was inadvertently continued by the ignorant people, and by David, quite contrary to the law of Moses, (see Numb. 4: 15.) The breach of this law cost the life of Uzzah; verses 6 and 7. See 1 Chron. 15: 2, 12, 13, 14, 15. The great evil lay in perverting the very symbols—namely, misrepresenting the Divine representations.

V. 6, &c.—See last note. “Perez-Uzzah” means the breach of Uzzah. This is very sad; but perfectly according to Nature and Providence. Poor Uzzah died for his rashness; but we trust his soul was saved, as he acted sincerely and well-meaning.

*Lesson.*—Let us dread to introduce heathen ceremonies into God’s worship. The “new cart” innovation was the root of this bitterness.

V. 9.—“Afraid.”—The joy of that day was suddenly overcast and turned into terror and gloom.

V. 12.—“Blessed Obed-edom.”—Now David repents of his gloomy fear and longs for the blessing of the ark. Truly his conduct in this, seems weak and selfish enough.

But he was learning. He now knew why Uzzah was smitten, (1 Chron. 15: 2, 13.)

V. 16, &c.—“Michal”—with aristocratic *hauteur*, is disgusted with the “music and dancing.” She is “Saul’s daughter,” and puffs herself up with fatal pride and contempt. Compare Luke 15: 25–32.

V. 19.—The daughters of Jerusalem had come out to meet the Ark and join the procession. They are kindly entertained in the festival following.

V. 20.—After the splendid Psalms (24th, 68th and 132d) were sung, and David had blessed the people and dismissed them with festive profusion and joy for the Ark established in Jerusalem, he returns to bless his own household; but the bitter contempt of unhappy Michal exploded, and a strange “blessing” she gained by her irreverence! She had been kind and loving once; but now she was deluded by satan. If David had been more patient, perhaps he might have converted her.

#### LESSON FOR JULY 7TH—ACTS XIX: 21–41.

*Text*, 1 Tim. 6: 9–10. *Show from Scripture—That covetousness opposes the Gospel.*

V. 21.—“Rome”—the metropolis of the known world at that era. Paul was sent thither as a prisoner, his passage paid and his life protected by the Roman Government, (Acts 28: 1–2). Little did the proud Romans think that they were importing a conqueror in whom was more power than “many Cæsars” (2 Cor. 12: 9.) It is singular, too, that as Pompey the Great entered the Holy of Holies and reduced the Jews to pay tribute to Rome, B. C. 63, even so in 63 A.D., St. Paul began to reduce Rome personally to the service of Jesus Christ.

V. 23.—“That way”—viz., the Christian religion. See verse 9: also chapter 9: 2.

V. 25, &c.—This shameless appeal to gross self-interest has passed into a proverb of contempt; yet the same policy is frightfully prevalent to this day. “Wealth,” not “Right,” is the motive. So also in verse 27, “our craft is in danger,” rouses their excitement exceedingly. This is inevitable; but we should love God and our neighbours more than our craft or our wealth. This may be hard to do, but we must come to this, or else we are not fit for heaven (1 John 2: 15–16.)

V. 28.—Diana was the fabled daughter of Jupiter, and the goddess of hunting, chastity and marriage. A most splendid and magnificent temple was built to her at Ephesus.

V. 29, &c.—The tumult was begun and the mob rushed infuriate to the theatre.