



LESSON IV.—JULY 24, 1898.

Elijah's Flight and Encouragement.

I. Kings xix., 1-16. Read the chapter. Memory verses, 9-12.

Golden Text.

'Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.' (Psa., xxxvii., 7.)

Home Readings.

- M. I. Kings xix., 1-21.—Elijah's flight and encouragement.
 T. Psa. lxxiii., 1-28. — 'My flesh and my heart faileth.'
 W. Psa. xxxvii., 1-22.—'Fret not thyself because of evildoers.'
 T. Psa., xxxvii., 23-40.—'The Lord . . . forsaketh not his saints.'
 F. Psa. lxii., 1-12.—'Wait thou only upon God.'
 S. Rom. xi., 1-36.—'Hath God cast away his people?'
 S. Nah. i., 1-15.—'The Lord knows them that trust him.'

Lesson Story.

Elijah, after God's wondrous showing forth of power, after the people's acknowledgment of Jehovah as their God and the ending of the famine, ran before Ahab to the city of Jezreel.

Ahab told his wife Jezebel about the fire from heaven and about Elijah's slaying the prophets of Baal. Jezebel, caring nothing for the true God, and mad with fury that one man should have dared to kill all the priests of the religion she had set up, at once sent a blasphemous message to Elijah threatening his life. With the utmost haste Elijah started and ran to Beersheba, nearly one hundred miles distant. Leaving his servant there he went on alone a day's journey into the wilderness.

Weary and discouraged Elijah sat down under a juniper tree, and prayed for death. The strain and fatigue had been too much for him and he was thoroughly discouraged of life. But God was watching over him with tender care, he is near us in the darkest hour, and he sent his angel to Elijah with dainty food and drink. Elijah ate and drank and slept again.

Again God sent the angel with food and comfort. And Elijah refreshed in body set out for Horeb, the Mount of God. For forty days and nights he wandered in the wilderness thinking over his troubles and wondering if God had anything further for him to do. Finally he reached Horeb and lodged in a cave. Then the Lord God spoke to him in tender reproof, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' Elijah answered plaintively that he was the only true prophet left and his life was in peril.

Then God commanded Elijah to stand forth and watch him pass by. The wind blew a fierce hurricane that rent the mountains and tore the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind. Then an awful earthquake came, followed by fire and lightning, but the Lord was in none of these. 'And after the fire a still small voice.'

The Lord God was in the stillness, and Elijah reverently hid his face while God talked to him. Then the Lord encouraged Elijah and sent him an errand for him.

Lesson Hymn.

Lie low, O heart, at Jesus' feet,
 For then all bitter things are sweet;
 Then thou canst know the peace of God;
 Canst use the staff and kiss the rod.

Lie still, O heart, upon His breast,
 And prove the peace of utter rest;
 Then unbelief shall find no place,
 And fear die out before his face.

Lie still, O heart, upon His breast,
 For he can work if thou wilt rest;
 The journey is too great for thee;
 Unless the Lord thy shelter be.
 —Anon.

Lesson Hints:

'Jezebel sent a messenger'—thereby defeating her end, by giving Elijah warning and time to escape. The character of Jezebel can be well judged by her conduct on this occasion, she exhibits the blind fury of a heathen shend.

'Beersheba'—on the farthest limit of the kingdom of Judah, ninety-five miles south of Jezreel.

'It is enough'—he felt as though his work was done and there was no more use in life. But God had work for him yet.

'Did eat'—For us, too, in hours of discouragement, God has provided living waters and the manna from heaven in his word, and in the presence of the Holy Spirit. (Peloubet.)

'Horeb'—the same as Mount Sinai, from which God gave the commandments and law to Moses. (Exodus xix., 10, 11.)

'What doest thou here?'—a loving reproof. Why are you hiding away, do you fear that God can not take care of you when you are working for him?

'Jealous for the Lord'—anxious that only he should be honored and worshipped.

'Forsaken thy covenant'—and worship. They had been false to their part of the covenant between them and Jehovah.

'I only am left'—he saw no other worshippers, but God saw the hearts of seven thousand who were true to him, though they were not as bold as Elijah.

'Wrapped his face'—no man could gaze on the glory of God, Moses had to cover his face in awe, at the wondrous majesty.

'Return'—go back to thy work, I am with thee always.

Questions to Be Studied at Home.

1. What were the principal events in last week's lesson?
2. Why was Elijah discouraged?
3. Did God care for Elijah when he ran away?
4. How did God show his loving care?
5. What food does God give us?
6. Do you remember about another prophet who was much discouraged?

Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

July 24.

Ahab was unstable as water. Jezebel furious as a cyclone. Yet, the wind and the waves must obey the will of God. Verses 1, 2: Matt. viii., 27.

We all have our weak moments when love grows faint, hope becomes dim and faith is weakened by entertaining doubts and fears instead of asking grace to live for God, rather than close our eyes in death. Verses 3, 4.

He who hath led will lead all through the wilderness. He who hath fed will feed. He who hath blessed will bless. Verses 5-8.

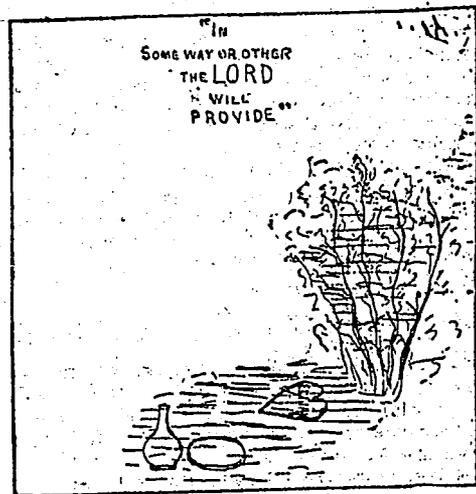
Elijah on Carmel was the mighty prophet. Elijah in Beersheba was the man of like passions with us. Verses 9, 10.

Faith can see God in little affairs of everyday life as well as in the great events of history. Verses 11, 12.

We need not fancy ourselves alone in the good fight of faith since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses. Verses 13-16, and 18.

Illustration for July 24.

The value of this lesson lies rather in

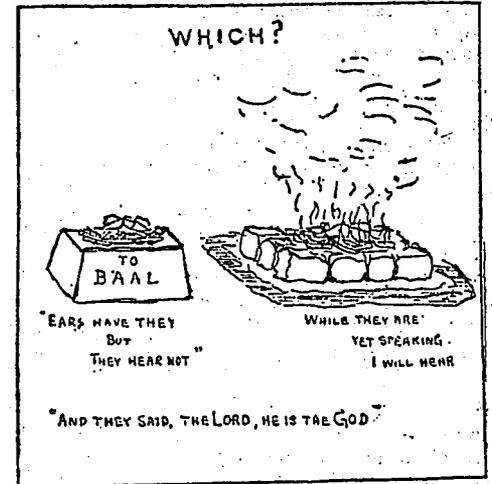


God's kindly treatment of the wearied prophet than in the question of the wisdom of

Elijah's flight. The prophet's words and action show not a change of mind or a loss of courage but simply the tremendous physical reaction from the high nervous strain of Carmel. So we find him, fled out of Israel altogether and indeed not stopping till he had reached the farther side of the sister kingdom of Judah. Here in the desert the exhausted prophet sinks down in the shade of a thorn tree, and God ministers through his angel, sleep and food. By the side of the sleeping prophet lie the bread and the cruse of water. No desert so lonely, no wilderness so far off that God cannot reach his children, and no trouble but he knows it and will provide the relief.

Illustration for July 17.

For this lesson we have the two altars, that of Baal, elaborately made, but cold and dead, no smoke, no fire, no power. On the other hand, the altar of Elijah's building, its twelve rough stones signifying the unity of the twelve tribes of Israel and the duty of all twelve to join in the worship of God.



About it is the trench filled with water and upon it the sacrifice touched with fire from on high, and blazing up, with smoke ascending to heaven. The verses give the contrast for that time and for all ages between the service of God and all other apparent sources of help.

For the flames use yellow and red chalks, indicating the flames with a few strokes of the side of the crayon, the same with white and blue for the smoke and blue for the water, the altars in brown.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

July 24.—How to have a happy home.—Job xxix., 1-20: Deut., vi., 6-9.

Lesson Study.

A well-managed school will especially foster and develop the home study of its scholars, knowing that thirty minutes a week of class study will profit little unless supplemented by study in the home. To this end:

1. The superintendent should review every lesson at its close by questioning the scholars upon the chief points of study. The questions should be addressed to individual scholars, and not answered in concert by class or school.
2. The teacher should assign a week in advance to every scholar something to learn or to do in connection with next Sunday's lesson, some simple and easy requirement. He should then take time to see if the work has been done.
3. The teacher should also keep record of the good and bad lessons of each scholar during the quarter; and the school, by some fixed standard and system, should publicly honor all who study at home and come with lessons prepared.
4. The superintendent (together with the pastor) should urge upon the parents the need and value of the scholar's home study and the use of the Sunday-school lesson in family worship, etc.
5. The quarterly review should be given invariable place and importance as a true and proper test of whether the scholars are really learning and retaining a knowledge of God's Word. The entire school should be used as one class, and the ground of the quarter's lessons covered once a quarter by judicious questioning.—Sunday-school Magazine.