

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON XI.

Dec. 15, 1883.] [1 Sam. 24: 1-17.]

DAVID SPARING HIS ENEMY.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 15, 17.

1. And it came to pass when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, Behold David is in the wilderness of Engedi. 2. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. 3. And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, where was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. 4. And the men of David said to him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. 5. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. 6. And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth my hand against him seeing he is the anointed of the Lord. 7. So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way. 8. David also arose afterward and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. 9. And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? 10. Behold this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee to-day into mine hand in the cave; and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee: and I said, I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed. 11. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee: yet thou huntest my soul to take it. 12. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenger of me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. 13. As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee. 14. After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea. 15. The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand. 16. And it came to pass when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17. And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. GOLDEN TEXT.—"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."—Matt. 5: 44. TOPIC.—Forbearance toward Enemies.

LESSON PLAN.—1. DAVID'S MAGNANIMITY, VS. 1-7. 2. HIS APPEAL TO SAUL, VS. 8-15. 3. SAUL'S PENTENCE, VS. 16-17.

Time.—B.C. 1061. Place.—Engedi, east of Hebron, on the west shore of the Dead Sea.

LESSON NOTES.

V. 1. WILDERNESS—a desolate thinly-inhabited region, with limestone cliffs in which are caves. V. 2. WILD GOATS—"climbers," chamois or ibex. V. 3. SHEEPCOTES—caverns used as sheep-pens. Saul went into the very cave, in the far depths or dark side-chambers of which David and his men were hidden. V. 4. BEHOLD THE DAY—the men of David saw in this indication of the Lord's will that he should kill Saul. SKIRT—edge, or border. ROBE—outer garment, or cloak. V. 5. SMOTE HIM—condemned him. Saul was yet king, and David's act was an insult to him. V. 6. THE LORD FORBID—David refuses to do wrong to save his own life. V. 7. STAYED HIS SERVANTS—it is just as bad to let others do wrong for us as to do it ourselves. V. 8. MY LORD THE KING—hold in his innocence and respectful in his loyalty. V. 9. MEN'S WORDS—mere hearsay. V. 10. BEHOLD, THIS DAY—his deeds showed that he was not an enemy. V. 12. THE LORD JUDGE—David would not take it upon himself to avenge the wrongs he had suffered. V. 14. A DEAD DOG—worthless to be so hunted by Israel's king. V. 15. THE LORD, ETC.—"Christ 'committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.'" 1 Pet. 2: 23. PLEAD MY CAUSE—Ps. 35: 1; 43: 1. V. 16. SAUL WEPT—his heart melted. He had once loved David, and now something of the old affection returned as he contrasted David's conduct with his own.

TEACHINGS: 1. We are to love our enemies with kindness. 2. We are never to seek safety by doing what is wrong. 3. We are not to be too ready to believe evil of others. 4. We are to respect and obey those who are placed in authority over us. 5. We are so to live that we can commit ourselves to God and find our defence in him.

LESSON XII.

Dec. 23, 1883.] [1 Sam. 31: 1-13.]

DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 11-13.

1. Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. 2. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchishua, Saul's sons. 3. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. 4. Then said Saul unto his armorbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me. But his armorbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it. 5. And when his armorbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. 6. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armorbearer, and all his men, that same day together. 7. And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley, and they that were on the other side Jordan saw that the men of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. 8. And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. 9. And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people. 10. And they put his armor in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan. 11. And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul: 12. All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. 13. And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death."—Prov. 14: 32.

TOPIC.—The Death of the Disobedient.

LESSON PLAN.—1. THE DISASTER TO ISRAEL, VS. 1-6. 2. THE REMOING OF THE PHILISTINES, VS. 7-10. 3. THE KINDNESS OF JABESH-GILEAD, VS. 11-13.

Time.—B.C. 1050. Place.—Mountains of Gilboa.

LESSON NOTES.

V. 1. GILBOA—a mountain range extending from the east into the plain of Esdraelon. V. 2. FOLLOWED HARD—pursued him closely. SLEW JONATHAN—thus fell one of the noblest and best of princes. His death was a great grief to David. V. 3. THE BATTLE WENT SORE AGAINST SAUL—the time of retribution had come. He had forsaken God, and God now left him to his enemies. ARCHERS—soldiers armed with the bow and arrow. SORE WOUNDED—rather, "sore afraid." V. 4. HIS ARMORBEARER—Jewish traditions say it was Doeg. ABUSE ME—Saul feared either slow torture before death or the mutilation of his body after it. TOOK A SWORD—killed himself. How much more manful and courageous to have died fighting! V. 6. ALL HIS MEN—his body-guard and servants. The end of the king was like his life. He died by his own act without repentance. For David's lament, see 2 Sam., 1: 17-27. V. 7. THE VALLEY—of Jezreel. OTHER SIDE JORDAN—east side. THE CITIES—places most likely to be first attacked. DWELT IN THEM—making good their conquest. V. 8. FOUND SAUL—a great prize, as it assured them that Israel had lost their king. V. 9. CUT OFF HIS HEAD—the very thing he had dreaded. TO PUBLISH IT—with public rejoicings. V. 10. HOUSE OF ASHTAROTH—temple of their idol-gods. BETHSHAN—at the eastern end of the plain of Esdraelon. V. 11. INHABITANTS OF JABESH-GILEAD—they remembered Saul's kindness to them at the beginning of his reign, and under cover of night crossed the Jordan, took down his body and those of his sons, and reverently burned them. V. 12. BURNT THEM—probably, to prevent their falling again into the hands of the Philistines. V. 13. TOOK THEIR BONES—after the burning. David afterward interred them in Saul's family burial-place at Zelah. 2 Sam., 21: 11-14.

TEACHINGS: 1. God's threatened judgments are as sure as are his promises of mercy. 2. The strong become weak when God forsakes them. 3. God often uses the wicked to accomplish his will. 4. Bad men do not escape from God by self-murder. 5. Wicked men often care more for the shame of the world than for the danger of their souls.

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MARTIN LUTHER.

(Continued from first page.)

was with him. One man said "Dear Doctor, if you are right, the Lord God stand by you." Another, a gallant soldier, said, "Little monk, little monk, thou hast work before thee that I, and many a man whose trade is war never faced the like of. If thy heart is right, and thy cause is good, go on in God's name. He will not forsake thee." But in all these friendly expressions there was an "if." Luther alone was sure that he was right. Before all that august assembly, priests, nobles, elector, dukes, Emperor; Italians, Spaniards and Germans he, a peasant's son, stood alone. Yet not alone for God was with him. He listened to all their accusations and refused to retract one word. "Popes have erred," he said, "and councils have erred. Prove to me out of Scripture that I am wrong, and I submit. Till then my conscience binds me. Here I stand, I can do no more. God help me. Amen."

When he reached his lodgings at the close of the trial he flung up his hands and exclaimed "I am through! I am through! If I had a thousand heads they should be struck off one by one before I would retract."

His friends now became convinced that the Diet would condemn him to death and on his way home to await its decision, while passing through the Thuringian forest, he was seized by armed men, and carried to Wartburg Castle, where he remained, known only to a few, disguised as a captive knight and known by the name of the Ritter George. Here he stayed until the storm had blown over and political troubles held the attention of the authorities. While here Luther translated the New Testament and ere long he had the joy of seeing the whole Bible, in their own tongue, in the homes of all his countrymen.

The victory for which Luther had so long fought was now won. Books multiplied and the new doctrines spread rapidly. Churches could not hold the crowds who flocked to hear the great Reformer preach, and Luther spoke at times to 25,000 in the market place.

The Reformation was now fairly on its way, the country was marching rapidly on towards religious freedom, and no one could bar its progress.

Thinking of Dr. Martin Luther so long as a monk and a reformer, it is difficult to think of him at the same time as a loving husband and a devoted father. In spite of great opposition he married Katherine von Bora who had been a nun in a distant convent. She was sixteen years his junior. The last twenty years of his life were less eventful but were spent happily in the care of his wife and children. He was passionately devoted to his children and allowed them all kinds of innocent enjoyment.

The death of two of his children he felt keenly, and when the third, Magdalen, in whom he saw promise of a beautiful character, died at the age of fourteen he was almost broken hearted.

The various political difficulties during the latter part of his life troubled Luther greatly. He reached his last birthday, we are told, sick at heart and sick in body. His sight failed gradually and in writing to a friend in January 1546 he calls himself "old, spent, worn, weary, cold, and with but one eye to see with." At the end of the month he went to his birthplace but took cold on the way and on the 14th of February he preached in the church there for the last time. He never saw his wife and home again.

He wanted to get home but could not. He went to bed apparently as usual on the night of the 17th, but became restless and lay upon a sofa in the next room, and died between two and three in the morning. His two sons and his friend Jonas were with him. When they asked him if he would still stand by Christ and the doctrine which he had preached he said "Yes." Almost his last words were "It is death, I am going; Father into thy hands I commend my spirit."

CHURCH MOORINGS.

An old sea captain was riding in the cars, and a young man sat down by his side. He said: "Young man, where are you going?" "I am going to Philadelphia to live." "Have you letters of introduction?"

"Yes," said the young man, and he pulled some of them out.

"Well," said the old sea captain, "have you a church certificate?"

"O yes," replied the young man; "I did not suppose you desired to look at that."

"Yes," said the sea captain, "I want to see that. As soon as you reach Philadelphia present that to some Christian Church. I am an old sailor, and I have been up and down in the world; and it is my rule, as soon I can get into port, to fasten my ship fore and aft to the wharf although it may cost a little wharfage, rather than have my ship out in the stream, floating hither and thither with the tide."—Presbyterian.

DID YOU EVER see a counterfeit ten-dollar bill? Yes. Why was it counterfeit? Because it was worth counterfeiting? Did you ever see a scrap of brown paper counterfeited? No. Why? Because it was not worth counterfeiting. Did you ever see a counterfeit Christian? Yes, lots of them. Why was he counterfeited? Because he was worth counterfeiting. Did you ever see a counterfeit infidel? No. Why? You answer; I am through.

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