

journey with it, and he reaped the reward, for "the Lord blessed Obed-Edom:" how, we do not know but evidently in a manner that proved to all that it was because of the abiding with him of the Ark of God.

Ver. 12. Three months care of the Ark by Obed-Edom taught David more than one lesson; he found out not only that there was no danger when the Divine commands were obeyed, but that abundant blessing followed. When this was told to him, he went down and brought the ark "unto the city of David:" this time—as we learn from the fuller account in 1 Chron. 15, followed closely the Divine directions as to its transport. "With gladness:" the servile fear that had filled his soul was gone, and he could rejoice in the assurance that now there would be a blessing indeed to the whole House of Israel.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Topical Analysis—(1) The journey with the Ark. (Vers. 1-5.) (2) Sin and judgment. (Vers. 6, 10.) (3) Faith and blessing. (11-12.)

On the first topic let us teach that it was a right thing to do, though unhappily done in a wrong way. The ark was not only the symbol of the Divine presence, it was the especial token and sign of God's headship of the nation; the people were His, He was their king. David reigned, it is true, but it was under, and as the representative of God, so it was right and fitting that the ark of the Divine presence should be in the capital of the kingdom. It would be to the people a constant lesson on their relations to Jehovah, a constant assertion of their subjection to the laws of the King of Heaven, and it was a worthy act for David to plan and accomplish; preserved by God through long years of wandering and exile, and finally brought, in a wonderful way to the throne, what more fitting public manifestation of the gratitude of his heart than to bring back the ark and thus centre the thought of the nation about the recognition of God. It was also a grand thought of the king's to make it a national and not simply a personal movement, and by enlisting all the tribes in the ceremony to let it be the work of the people. Let us teach here that it is a right thing publicly to profess our reverence for God and the things of God, and our determination to serve Him openly and at all times.

On the second topic recall the previous judgments which had followed irreverence to the ark, the Philistines so sorely smitten that they were glad to send it away and the men of Beth-shemesh, slain in large numbers. This ought to have taught all how terrible a thing it was to treat it carelessly or with disrespect. So we may learn reverence for the things of God. We have no visible symbol of the Divine presence in our midst, nor do we need it. In the childhood of the race men needed object lessons to teach them Divine things; but we who live in the latter daylight should rejoice to be able to put away childish things and to live as in His sight. Yet there are things which from their connection demand respect. The Bible is but a printed book, yet it contains the revelation of God to men and is filled with the highest and grandest truths or which it is possible to conceive. If our scholars realized this would they treat the book as sometimes we see it treated? So also God's house, the place of prayer; so also the gatherings of His people. Well would it be for our young people to grow up with a spirit of earnest reverence for all these things. No better lesson can be taught them here than the lesson of reverence in the heart, of holy fear towards holy things.

On the third topic point out that the humble faith of this unknown villager brought a blessing to himself, and the whole nation. When the scared king and his great host took the ark into the house of Obed-Edom he did not cry out, "Ye have brought the ark to slay us," but humbly and reverently gave it a place in his house, mak-

ing, as we doubt not, of a special chamber a holy place, and so it was manifested at once that the blessing of God was upon him, the spreading story brings back faith to David, and he leads the nation back to God. Let us teach how God honours obedience, how His blessing will always rest upon the devout and faithful, and that even the humblest in station who has true faith, may be a blessing to thousands.

Supplementary.—One thought as illustrating the better dispensation must not be omitted. In those days there was but one ark with its mercy-seat, and one place for its dwelling. Now the mercy-seat is everywhere, and the Divine presence will fill every house where it is humbly and reverently sought.

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

One act of disobedience leads to another.

Worship demands reverence, we have sought the immediate presence of God.

Joy and gladness belong to the worship of God.

God will be served in His appointed way, not in the way of the world.

Nothing is too small for obedience.

If the symbol was so sacred, what of the reality?

Uzzah, a warning to unsanctified workers.

The worship of God, a blessing wherever it is set up in humble faith.

Main Lesson.—"To the irreverent and careless God, is a consuming fire, but the humble he receives and blesses—Lev. 10:1-3; 1 Sam. 7:3; Psa. 5:7; 29:2; Ecc. 5:1-2; John 4:24; Acts 12:23-29.

Lesson 3.

July 20, 1884. } GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID. { 2 Sam. 7:1-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy throne shall be established forever."—2 Sam. 7:16.

TIME.—Probably soon after the events of the last lesson. B.C.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PARALLEL.—1 Chron. 17:1-15; see also some of the Messianic Psalms, 2nd, 45th, 22nd, 16th, 118th, 110th.

Introduction.—Each of our previous lessons in this series brings out a great advance in the development of God's purposes for David and Israel. In the first he is made king over all Israel, the nation is united to serve Him loyally as their sovereign captain; in the last lesson the religious life of the nation is localized and centralized, the ark is brought up to the city of David, the capital of the nation, and becomes a standing confession of the faith of the people. Now, consequent upon the wish of David to build a house for the Lord, which he is forbidden to do, God promises to build up an eternal house for David that his throne should be established for ever, and that his son should build a house for the name of the Lord.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 1. "In his house:" the residence that he had built for himself. (Chap. 5:11.) "Rest:" the calm after and before a storm, he had, not long afterwards to go to battle again, but now he had peace and rest.

Ver. 2.—His thoughts naturally and rightly go out in the thought of God's goodness to him, and it at once struck him as something improper that while he was dwelling in a magnificent palace the ark of God had only the shelter of a tent; so he "said unto Nathan:" the first mention of one who played an important part in the history of David and of his son Solomon. It was Nathan who rebuked David for his sin with the touching parable of the lamb (chap. 12:1); who became Solomon's tutor as we understand (chap. 12: