

**ABSALOM'S DEFEAT AND DEATH.**

30 August.

Les. 2 Sam. 18: 9-17, 32, 33. Gol. Text, Ps. 1: 6.  
 Mem. vs. 32-33. Catechism Q. 76, 77.

*Time.*—B. C. 1023, shortly after the last lesson.  
*Places.*—Mahanaim, east of the Jordan (vs. 32-33); the wood of Ephraim, south of Mahanaim (vs. 9-17).

**HOME READINGS.**

M. 2 Sam. 15: 13-37.... *Itai's Fidelity.*  
 T. 2 Sam. 16: 1-14.... *Shimei's Hatred.*  
 W. 2 Sam. 17: 1-29.... *Absalom's Counselors.*  
 Th. 2 Sam. 18: 1-17.... *Absalom's Defeat and Death.*  
 F. 2 Sam. 18: 18-33.... *David's Grief.*  
 S. Psalm 86: 1-17.... *A Prayer for Help.*  
 S. Psalm 57: 1-11.... *Faith in God's Protecting Love.*

**LESSON OUTLINE.**

- I. Caught in the Oak. vs. 9-13.
- II. Slain by Joab. vs. 14-17.
- III. Mourned by His Father. vs. 32, 33.

**HINTS AND HELPS IN STUDY.**

Absalom's conspiracy matured before David had any suspicion of it. Resistance seemed useless, as he had not sufficient force with which to defend his capital against the rebels whose strength was constantly increasing. He therefore fled from Jerusalem to Mahanaim. Absalom's pursuit of David was delayed by Hushai's counsel. This enabled David to rally his forces and organize his army before Absalom's army, under Amasa's command, arrived. David urged his generals to deal gently with Absalom. The decisive battle was fought in a dense wood near Mahanaim. Absalom's army was completely routed, and Absalom himself was slain by Joab and his men, in disregard of David's earnest command. David, at Mahanaim, anxiously awaited tidings of the battle. When he heard of his son's death he gave way to violent grief.

**WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.**

1. Filial ingratitude brings curse upon itself.
2. A father's love would guard his child even when he has sinned.
3. Justice seems cruel at times even when right.
4. A father would willingly suffer for his son's sin if he could.
5. Even a father's love cannot save a son from sin's penalties.

**DAVID'S LOVE FOR GOD'S HOUSE.**

6 September.

Les. 1 Chron. 22: 6-16. Gol. Text, Ps. 84: 4.  
 Mem. vs. 11-13. Catechism Q. 78.

*Time.*—About B. C. 1018-1015, not long before David's death.

*Place.*—Jerusalem.

**HOME READINGS.**

M. 1 Chron. 22: 1-19.... *David's Love for God's House.*  
 T. Psalm 84: 1-12.... *Delight in God's House.*  
 W. Psalm 122: 1-9.... *Going to the Lord's House.*  
 Th. Psalm 100: 1-5.... *Enter into His Courts with Praise.*  
 F. Psalm 96: 1-13.... *Declare His Glory.*  
 S. Psalm 89: 1-18.... *God's Covenant with His Chosen.*  
 S. John 4: 5-24.... *Spiritual Worship Sought.*

**LESSON OUTLINE.**

- I. David's Mind to Build. vs. 6-10.
- II. David's Charge to Solomon. vs. 11-13.
- III. David's Preparation. vs. 14-16.

**HINTS AND HELPS IN STUDY.**

David's kingdom, after his restoration, was more strongly established than ever before. In his last days he applied himself with great zeal to the preparation of materials for the temple which Solomon his son was to build. Before his death he secured the succession of Solomon by

placing him upon the throne as his associate in government. Our lesson passage contains the charge which he gave to Solomon concerning building the temple. It shows how fully his heart was set upon the matter, and how anxious he was that Solomon should faithfully perform the work assigned to him. Besides the Home Readings, carefully read 1 Chron. 28, 29.

**WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.**

1. God blesses even our desires to honor and serve him.
2. Each of us has his own part of God's work to do.
3. It is often a son's duty to finish what his father began.
4. God will use us if only we are faithful to him.
5. Much of our work is only preparation for the work of others.—*Westminster Ques. Book.*

**THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS.**

"Give me the first seven years of a child's life and you may have all the rest," said a distinguished educator. The value of these early years is forcibly illustrated in the biography of one of the greatest philanthropists of modern times, the Earl of Shaftesbury. His childhood was singularly lonely and neglected. His parents cared nothing for his society, and, untroubled by any ideas of parental duty, they gave him over entirely to the care of the servants.

Fortunately for the sensitive child and for the world, the nurse to whose care he was specially intrusted for the first seven years of his life was a kind-hearted woman and a devout Christian. She soon won the heart of the susceptible child, and planted therein the seed which afterward brought forth such abundant fruit. She taught him to believe in a loving God and developed a desire to serve him by being helpful to his fellow-creatures. She taught him a prayer which the great Earl never forgot to repeat daily throughout his long and busy life. He was wont to say that this prayer had been of more value to him than all the religious teachings of later years.

When this good woman died she left him her watch, and to his dying day the Earl would wear no other, saying, "It was left to me by the best friend I ever had." At seven years of age he was sent away to a boys' school, which he describes as one of the worst in England. Here he learned little and suffered brutal treatment. Shrinking from the society of the rough boys, he lived on the memory and love of his one true friend, and thus her teaching sank deeper into his life.

The work which this nobleman accomplished for the neglected and helpless classes, especially for the cruelly abused factory children, is known throughout the world. He gave up ease, political advancement, and popularity, and accepted in their place unceasing labor, neglect, and even persecution, that he might become the champion of the working people in Parliament. That he might know for himself their condition he spent his leisure hours in the factories and mines, in the homes of the poor and the haunts of the outcast, and was known among them as "our earl."

When near the close of his life the Earl said to a friend, with a touching tenderness of tone, "I simply cannot bear to leave this world with so much misery in it." His wonderful example is especially encouraging to those who, even in the humblest ways, are ministering to childhood. Let the teachings of the first seven years of a child's life be as truly spiritual as were those of Lord Shaftesbury, and all the influences of after years cannot easily turn the mind from the early ideal.—*Congregationalist.*