

BEREAN NOTES.

Jan. 30.] LESSON V. DAVID AND JONATHAN [B.C. 1032.] 1 SAM. 20. 35-42. HOME READINGS. MONDAY—1 Sam. 19. 1-17. TUESDAY—1 Sam. 20. 1-17. WEDNESDAY—1 Sam. 20. 18-34. THURSDAY—1 Sam. 20. 35-42. FRIDAY—1 Sam. 23. 1-18. SATURDAY—John 15. 12-27. SUNDAY—1 John 3. 10-24.

TOPIC: Blessings Enjoyed in the Bonds of Friendship.

GOLDEN TEXT: There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Prov 18. 24.

TOPICAL OUTLINE.

- 1. The fidelity of true friendship, verse 35-40. 2. The sympathy of true friendship, verse 41. 3. The permanence of true friendship, verse 42.

DOCTRINE: Brotherly love a fruit of piety. John 15. 12; 1 John 4. 7.

- What lessons may we here learn— 1. Concerning the choice of friends? 2. Concerning the duties of friends? 3. Concerning the best of all friends?

GENERAL STATEMENT.

See CONNECTING LINK following last lesson. The TOPIC we are now to consider is a most beautiful and practical one, namely: "Blessing Enjoyed in the Bonds of Friendship." The narrative of David and Jonathan is famous as an illustration upon this point. It furnishes us, according to the OUTLINE, with views of 1. The fidelity of true friendship; 2. The sympathy of true friendship; 3. The permanence of true friendship. The last two of these points find illustration in the SERMON VERSES. The whole lesson, through the GOLDEN TEXT, points upward to Jesus. Viewing him, we may emphatically say: "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Impress the blessedness of his superior friendship. Do not fail to call up in review the facts of this month's work. It has covered from Saul's rejection to the separation of David and Jonathan, a period of some seventeen years.

A full understanding of the beautiful friendship of David and Jonathan can be obtained only by a careful study of the Connecting Link. It shows us the increasing malignancy and boldness of Saul's plans against David, and the thickening pet's gathering around the latter, in which even Jonathan became involved.

Attempts on David's life. After his personal attack in chapter 18, Saul never lost the idea that David was the intended future king. This purpose he resolved to defeat. The first plan was to get him killed in battle with the Philistines. It was a failure, as Saul believed, through divine protection. This fact, with the knowledge that Michael's love was on her husband's side, as against her father, so intensified his hate that he BECAME DAVID'S ENEMY CONTINUALLY. The fresh war that then arose showed him to be the most skillful officer in the army, and raised him higher than ever in public esteem. 18. 30.

The second step was bolder. A command to KILL DAVID is issued, and speedily given to Jonathan. At his intercession the order is revoked, and his friend brought back to the court and reinstated in his old position. 19. 7.

Maddened again by David's success in battle, Saul once more attacks him with his own hands. He next sets men to watch his house and assassinate him as he comes out in the morning. Read Psa. 59, which he then wrote. David seems hitherto to have ascribed Saul's attempts to his insane freaks; now he believes that they are deliberately purposed, and flees from the court to Samuel at Ramah.

The fourth step was to send officers to arrest him at the prophetic school and then to go himself for the purpose. But the Almighty Spirit of God prostrated them, and showed Saul that he was fighting against Jehovah. David then fled to Jonathan, with the fullest conviction that his destruction was determined on. THERE IS BUT A STEP BETWEEN ME AND DEATH, (20. 3), but expresses his sense of his extreme peril. Jonathan, trusting to his father's oath, (19. 6), could not believe it; but at his friend's entreaty he undertook to ascertain the facts. In the conversation which occurred, Saul, falling into a passion, distinctly avowed his purpose that David MUST SURELY DIE, and for the first time declared openly the reason: AS LONG AS THE SON OF JESSE LIVETH UPON THE GROUND, THOU SHALT NOT BE ESTABLISHED, NOR THY KINGDOM. Vain presumptuous man! to think of defeating the decree of Jehovah, as thou hast David's life were all that stood between his son and the throne. Hitherto there had been the most intimate confidence between Saul and Jonathan; but now upon the attempt of the latter to intercede for his friend, Saul's temper, which had already led him to utter foul words of insolent abuse, verse 30, gets the perfect mastery, and he hurls his javelin at him, ver. 33. This atrocious act roused his whole soul to a wild tumult of passionate grief. He left the table and went out to fulfill his agreement with his covenant friend. He would have saved his father from the commission of a base crime, the murder of a

faithful servant, innocent of all wrong; but the father would not be saved.

The promise kept. The method of information agreed on was one of prudence. For if David's belief were well founded a personal interview might be unsafe for both. David was in the appointed hiding place in the country, perhaps some cave a little way from Gibeath. He heard the voices of Jonathan and his servant as they approached the spot; he listened with throbbing heart for the signal. And when the fatal words were uttered, IS NOT THE ARROW BEYOND THEE? he knew that thenceforth he was an exile and an outlaw.

The interview. Jonathan could not thus part with his friend. Contrary to his original plan, obeying the yearnings of his heart, he sent THE LAD BACK TO THE CITY with his bow, arrows, and quiver and remained. David presently came forth and saluted his friend with the tokens of the reverence and respect due him as a prince. THEY KISSED ONE ANOTHER as their wordless expression of their mutual love. THEY WEPT together in their sorrow over Saul's sins and their own calamity as they talked of the sad business. DAVID EXCEEDED. As he well might, for while Jonathan was losing his friend, David was losing in addition his home, his wife, his relatives, his country, and the sanctuary of his God.

THE FRIENDSHIP. When Jonathan first learned that David was to supplant him in the kingdom does not appear, but it never moved his envy or jealousy, or disturbed his love. He is only anxious that their children shall be bound in the same solemn covenant with themselves, vers. 14-17 and 42. They parted in this sad tearful way, never to meet but once again on earth, chap. 23. 16-18, when Jonathan's highest earthly desire was to see David king, and himself next to him. How David fulfilled his promise when Jonathan was dead? may be seen in 2 Samuel 9. 1, 3, 7; 21. 7.

Lessons.—We may note in the light of this lesson some of the principles which ought to guide in the formation of our friendships. Wealth, social position, and outward advantages should have but little weight, while character is essential. One is better off without a friend who will influence him by word or act to irreverence, unbelief, impurity, or sin. Prov. 1. 15; 13. 20; Ruth 1. 16, 17; 2 Cor. 6. 15; 1 Pet. 1. 22.

2 A friendship more faithful, more sympathetic, and more precious than any other can be offered us by the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us secure it first of all. Matt. 11. 28; John 11. 5; 15. 14; Phil. 2. 5; 1 Pet. 2. 21; 2 Tim. 4. 8.

BEAVE BOYS.—At Rochester, N. Y. lately, says the Democrat, one Friday night a man threw a small dog into the river from the railroad bridge. Instead of passing over the falls, as was expected, the dog reached a large piece of ice close to the brink. He was seen there Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, but no one ventured to rescue him. An attempt was made to induce him to jump into the river by throwing stones at him, but it failed. The moaning of the dog during the night, was painful to listen to. About noon on Tuesday, two small boys passed over the bridge, and seeing the dog, determined to rescue him. Neither one of them would go alone, but each challenged the other to go with him. They started, walked through the cold water to where a single misstep would have sent them to their death below the falls, picked up the poor dog, and regained the bridge in safety, to receive the hearty compliments of those who had witnessed their daring adventure. The dog when rescued had been on the ice just above the brink of the falls for four days, and was so weak that he could not stand up. It would afford a great deal of satisfaction to many that witnessed the dog's misery to see the man who threw him into the river properly punished.

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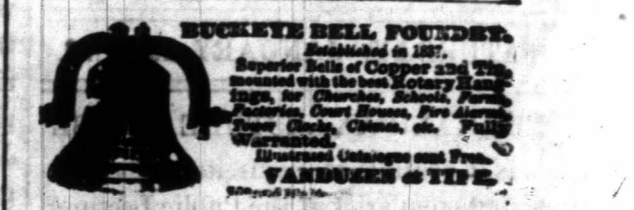
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