

## The Sunday School

### BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubeta's Notes.

Fourth Quarter, 1902.

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER.

Lesson XI. December 14. 1 Sam. 3: 6-14.

THE BOY SAMUEL.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Speak Lord; for thy servant heareth.—  
1 Sam 3: 9.

#### EXPLANATORY.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BOY INTO A GODLY MAN. I. SAMUEL.—Name. Samuel means "Asked of God;" and he was so named because his birth was in answer to his mother's prayer.

Parentage. He was a Levite. His father's name was Elkanah, and his mother a Hannah. Their story is beautifully told in 1 Sam. 1, 2.

Birth. Samuel was born about B. C. 1146, at Ramah (Hill) (called also Ramathaim, "the double hill," or "the two Ramahs,") situated about four miles north-west of Jerusalem and thirteen miles south of Shiloh. Probably Obed, the son of Ruth and grandfather of King David, was a little boy when Samuel was a baby.

Home. His earliest years were spent with his mother at Ramah. As soon as he was weaned (probably when he was two or three years old,) he was taken to the tabernacle at Shiloh, and placed under the care of the high priest, Eli, where he had a room connected with the tabernacle court. For a long time he had his official residence here at Shiloh, then the religious capital of Israel; but his own home was at Ramah, where he married and had two sons.

THREE PHASES OF RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT.—Dr. C. S. Robinson in writing upon Samuel says that "here are represented three phases of religious experience in children. A study of this story will show parents and teachers much which ought to be supremely helpful in their dealings with those young persons who come under their care. First, conscientious routine; then, awakened restlessness; and lastly, spiritual surrender to the full service of God." We will follow this arrangement.

First Phase. Routine Labor Faithfully Performed. SAMUEL, when he was 12 years old (Josephus' "Antiquities" 5: 10, 4,) the age when Jesus first went up to the Temple at Jerusalem (Luke 2: 42,) MINISTERED UNTO THE LORD BEFORE ELI (vs. 1.) "To minister" means to serve; a minister is a servant. Samuel performed various services in the house of worship, such as lighting the lamps (vs. 3,) opening the doors (vs. 15,) running of errands, and other duties required for the sacrifices and worship. He was also the personal attendant and aid to the aged and dim-sighted Eli, as is implied in his sleeping near him, and his readiness to respond to his call. So the young Mark and Timothy ministered unto Paul.

Second. The Call of God—Awakening his Higher Nature (vs. 2-10.) Eli lived in some of the buildings connected with the tabernacle, and Samuel slept not far away, ready for any call from Eli, who was old and partly blind. THE LAMP OF GOD (vs. 4) was probably the golden lamp before the holy of holies, which was lighted at sunset, and which burned till morning. One night, before this light had burned out, Samuel was awakened by a call. It could not be morning, for he could see

#### NEED TEETH.

Serious Failure of Body Comes from Lack of a Good Grinding Mill.

"A few years ago Mother had her teeth all taken out, hoping in that way to relieve her suffering, but failed, and it left her gums so sensitive that the wearing of false teeth or the proper mastication of food were equally impossible, so that in the spring of 1901 she rallied rapidly, mind and body both giving way for many weeks life and reason were despaired of.

At one call of her physician he said she absolutely must take more nourishment, something easily digested, 'try Grape-Nuts.' I immediately obtained a package, prepared some with good, rich cream, and fed her from a teaspoon. She began to take it regularly and liked the food so well she would ask between times if we had any ready for her. She began to improve at once.

It is now three months since she began eating the food. She has fully recovered her health, looks better and is fleshier and stronger mentally and physically, than for many months previous.

Grape-Nuts furnished the nourishment for her that it seemed impossible to get from any other kind of food." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

the glimmer of the light. What could the matter be? He ran quickly to Eli, answering the call. "He thus showed consideration and politeness. He would not keep Eli in doubt till he got there, but let him know at once that he had heard the call. The men whom God chooses to convey his great messages to men are ordinarily those who are thoughtful for the rights and the comfort of their fellows.

6. THE LORD CALLED YET AGAIN. "Eli's sense of hearing, like his sense of sight, was failing, or else the voice was revealed to Samuel alone; either supposition will account for the fact that the high priest did not hear the call."

7. SAMUEL DID NOT YET KNOW THE LORD. This explains why so great a prophet as Samuel became did not recognize the divine voice. This was his first experience, and he did not know what it meant.

8. THE THIRD TIME. God kept repeating his call. For he knew it was not from unwillingness to hear and obey that Samuel did not answer him, but from inexperience. Indeed, Samuel's prompt obedience to Eli's supposed call was the assurance that he would answer God's call whenever he recognized it. Obedience to parents and teachers is one proof of obedience to God. AND ELI PERCEIVED THAT THE LORD HAD CALLED THE CHILD. Because there was no other explanation of the repeated calls.

10. AND THE LORD CAME, AND STOOD. The Hebrew is emphatic, "presented himself." In a vision, or in personal presence as the Angel of the Lord (Compare Gen. 18: 17, 20, 21, 33; Judges 6: 11-14; Rev. 1: 1; 22: 16.)

Early Piety. Like Samuel, we should answer God's calls by, "Here am I." (1) It is easier to be a Christian in youth. (2) Then it gives us a much longer time in which to serve God. (3) We may not live to be old, and thus by putting off our duty we may fail altogether. (4) We escape many evils and dangers. No one can sow wild oats in youth, and not reap a harvest of evil. There are some spiritual blessings which can come only to those who have grown up in the Christian life.

Third. A New Life Begun. Yielding all to God (vs. 11-13.) 11. AND THE LORD SAID TO SAMUEL. Through Samuel whom Eli loved, God sent a terrible message, similar to one which he had previously sent by a holy man (1 Sam. 2: 27-36,) but which did not have sufficient effect to enable Eli to compel his sons either to live a different life, or to leave the pure service of God. AT WHICH BOTH THE KIDS . . . SHALL TINKLE with horror and alarm. "As a loud, sharp, discordant note thrills one's ears with pain, so the bitter tidings of Israel's woe in the judgment about to fall on Eli's house would shock all Israel."

12. ALL THINGS WHICH I HAVE SPOKEN. By the mouth of the man of God, as recorded in 1 Sam. 2: 27-36. WHEN I BEGIN, I WILL ALSO MAKE AN END. I will perform thoroughly, I will go through with the performance from first to last. It was twenty years before God fulfilled his warning, thus giving abundant time in which both Eli and his sons might change their course and avert their punishment. Like all God's warnings, these were the messages of infinite love; they were barriers in their downward course; they were angels of mercy entreating them to turn back.

13. I WILL JUDGE (condemn to punishment) HIS HOUSE FOR EVER. HE RESTRAINED THEM NOT and therefore he was in a measure responsible. He probably had not trained and disciplined his boys sufficiently when young. And now the wild and active young men were too strong and impetuous to be restrained by the infirm old man, without a faith and courage he did not then possess.

14. SHALL NOT BE PURGED WITH SACRIFICE NOR OFFERING FOR EVER. Literally, "shall not cover itself;" shall not make atonement for itself. "The sons of Eli had sinned 'with a high hand' against light and warnings, and for such unpunished, presumptuous offenders the law had no atonement. See Numbers 15: 27-31." "The ordinary sins of the people were purged by the appointed sacrifices (Num. 15: 25; Compare Heb. 7: 27; 9: 13, etc.) But the sin of the sons of Eli could not be so purged."

Twenty years were given as space for repentance. But every effort to restrain these wicked sons of a good man proved unavailing. Then the doom came, sudden and irresistible. See 1 Sam. 4. The Philistines set themselves in battle array, and defeated the Israelites.

To get delight in God's house we must bring there two or three requisites. The first is a pure heart. One of the chief objects in seeking the sanctuary all through the centuries, has been to obtain

the forgiveness of sins. He who is not ready to offer the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart," has not taken the first step toward realizing the joy of God's house. Again, one must bring an attentive mind. To go from the headlines of the morning paper and all the gossip of the neighborhood to God's house, does not make for joy in the hour of worship. We need to collect ourselves to call home our wandering thoughts, to fix our minds on the service of worship and what the preacher has to say. Most of all, we need to acquire a great sense of reverence for the unseen world. For only as we yearn for a rift in the clouds are we likely to become aware of the glory of the world and of the presence of the unseen Master, who manifests himself to his disciples gathered in his name as he does not to the world.—Sel.

In view of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's retirement and Premier Balfour's seeming support of Chamberlain's ideas as to imperial fiscal policy, the Cobden Club is renewing its activity. A special meeting has been organized for November 28, when the parliamentary leaders of the liberal party, Lord Spencer and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, will head a large and representative gathering of free-traders to protest against recent endeavors to subvert the free trade policy of Great Britain.

### For Singers and Speakers.

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Tess—So Mr. Gossom really proposed  
to you? Jess.—Yes. While we were  
strolling in the cemetery we came to their  
family lot, and he asked me how I'd like  
to be buried there some day with his name  
on the stone above me.