

invader is it likely that they would protect the conquerors? With regard to local deities see 1 Kings 20: 23; 2 Kings 17: 26-28. The Amorites worshipped the vile deities Astarte and Moloch. As for me and my house—Whatever others might do, Joshua and all his family would remain loyal to their God (Gen. 18: 19). “Here speaks the sturdy old warrior who had led them to victory in many a battle. He invites them, as Elijah did on another even more memorable occasion, to make their choice between the false worship and the true, between the present and the future, between the indulgence of their lusts and the approval of their consciences. But, as for himself, his choice is already made. No desire to stand well with the children of Israel obscures the clearness of his vision. No temptations of this lower world pervert his sense of truth. The experience of a life spent in his service has convinced him that Jehovah is the true God, and from that conviction he does not intend to swerve. In days when faith is weak and compromise has become general, when the sense of duty is slight, or the definitions of duty vague, it is well that the spirit of Joshua should be displayed among the leaders of Israel.” (Lias.) Shew this spirit yourself and urge your scholars to take this stand.

II. DIVISION MADE. 16. God forbid—Lit. “Far be it from us” (22: 29). An expression of horror at the very thought. “The substance of their reply is this, that as God by his wonderful deliverance has constituted them his peculiar people, and has constantly assisted them, and proved that he is their God, the ingratitude on their part would be despicable, if they were to reject him, and turn to other Gods.” (Calvin). Three times Joshua made them repeat their resolve. It was faithfully kept while those who made it lived (ch. 24: 31; Judg. 2: 7).

17. The Lord our God—“Jehovah our God.” The reasons given for their choice are (1) He was their covenant God, (2) He had delivered them from bondage, (3) He had defended them and provided for them in their journey, (4) He had conquered the land for them. Amid all their defections from the true worship of Jehovah, the Israelites had never denied his existence or the reality of the facts of their history. The prophets everywhere appeal to these as articles of undoubted belief and national pride. Their besetting sin seems to have been the mingling of heathen rites with the worship of God. Of course the practical result was the entire abandonment of the service of Jehovah. These great signs—referring to the miracles of which Joshua had just reminded them. Through the midst of whom we passed (R. V.)—(Num. 20 to 25). The Ishmaelites, Edomites, Moabites.

18. We also—As well as thee and thy house. He is our God—They fully recognize the intimate and gracious relationship established by the covenant. They do not mean that he is their God as distinguished from the

gods of other nations, but he is the one living and true God, the God of the whole earth, yet standing to them a special relation which gave him special claims upon them.

19. Ye cannot serve the Lord—This is not meant absolutely but that it will demand their whole-hearted and zealous endeavors. Calvin thinks that this strong language is used to rouse the people to consider more closely what their choice implied. Others that he means “ye will not be able from merely human resolutions, and apart from the help of the grace of God, without seriously turning away from idols, or without true penitence and faith.” Still others see in these words a glimpse of Paul’s doctrine, that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God’s sight” (Rom. 3: 20). (Lias). “The difficulty was with themselves, in the state of their hearts, in their wandering affections, in their proneness to yield to the solicitations of evil, in the want of that strong abiding attachment to his service which would prevent their swerving from it.” (Green). (Matt. 6: 24; Luke 14: 25-33).

A holy God—The word for “God” is plural here and generally, “It directs attention to the infinite riches and infinite fulness, contained in the one divine being, and, therefore, to the fact, that if we were to believe in innumerable gods, and endow them with perfection, they would still all be contained in the One.” (Hengstenberg). Since God is holy he demands that his worshippers be holy likewise (Lev. 19: 2; 1 Sam. 6: 20; Matt. 5: 5; Heb. 12: 14; Eph. 5: 5; 1 Pet. 1: 15, 16; 1 Thess. 4: 7). “The holiness of the Scriptures combines most closely both glory and holiness; God is holy, inasmuch as he is separated from everything created and finite, and elevated above it, especially above sin, which could only fix its seat within the limits of the finite.” (Hengstenberg). “Holiness is the principle that guards the eternal distinction between the Creator and creature, between God and man; it preserves the divine dignity and majesty from being infringed by the divine love; it eternally excludes everything evil and impure from the divine nature (Isa. 6: 3).” (Maclean). He is a jealous God—Loyalty to him forbids that any other should share his place in our hearts (Ex. 20: 5). Jealousy is the indignation of love when defrauded of its rights. In the Divine emotions there is nothing of human unreasonableness and selfishness. Here the word for “God” is singular, and attention is drawn to him as the exclusive object of affection and reverence. He will not forgive—He will not tolerate, or overlook your sins (Ex. 23: 21). Sin is not a light matter in his eyes. Presumptuous offenders will not escape with impunity. To the penitent God is ever merciful (Ex. 34: 6, 7; Ps. 32: 5; Prov. 28: 13; 1 John 1: 9, 7).

20. Strange gods—Heb. “gods of the stranger,” the deities worshipped by the foreign heathen nations around them. He will turn—(Jas. 1: 17). The essential nature and