

Lesson X. ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL September 5, 1915

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—In the third year, perhaps after the restoration of the widow's son, Elijah, at God's command, went again to Ahab, this time to announce the termination of the drought Vs. 1, 2. Vs. 3-15 tell of Elijah's meeting with Obadiah.

GOLDEN TEXT—The Lord is far from the wicked : but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.—Proverbs 15 : 29. Memorize vs. 36, 37.

THE LESSON PASSAGE—1 Kings 18 : 30-39. Study 1 Kings 18 : 16-40.

30 And Eli'jah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

31 And Eli'jah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Ja'cob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Is'rael shall be thy name :

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord : and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

Revised Version—¹me ; and : ²it ; ³wood. And he said : ⁴offering ; ⁵time ; and : ⁶oblation ; ⁷O Lord, the God : ⁸of ; ⁹thou, Lord, art God ; ¹⁰Omit the.

35 And the water ran round about the altar ; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Eli'jah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Is'rael, let it be known this day that thou art God in Is'rael, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God. And that thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces : and they said, The Lord, he is the God ; the Lord, he is the God.

*HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

M.—Elijah and the prophets of Baal, 1 Kgs. 18 : 16-29.

T.—Elijah and the prophets of Baal, 1 Kgs. 18 : 30-40.

W.—Elijah and Ahab, 1 Kgs. 18 : 41-46.

Th.—Warning against idolatry, Josh. 23 : 11-16.

F.—Confidence in God, 2 Tim. 1 : 6-13.

S.—The vital choice, Deut. 30 : 15-20.

Sunday—A solemn confession, Neh. 9 : 32-38.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Elijah, at his meeting with Ahab, challenged the king to prove whether Jehovah or Baal was the true God, by summoning a public assembly on Mount Carmel, where the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal should call upon their god to send down fire to consume their sacrifice, while he should make the same appeal to Jehovah, the answer to decide which was the true God. Vs. 16-24. In vs. 25-29 the failure of Baal's prophets is recorded.

I. THE PREPARATION MADE.—30.

Elijah ; the single champion of Jehovah against the multitude of Baal's prophets. Said unto all the people ; that all might witness what he was about to do and be convinced. Come near unto me ; leaving the Baal prophets to continue their wild cries and frantic leaping if they would. Repaired the altar. The kind of altar commonest amongst the Hebrews was built of unhewn stones (see Ex. 20 : 25). Of the Lord. There had been on the top of Carmel a place for the worship of Jehovah. Broken down ; by the command of Ahab or Jezebel (see ch. 19 : 10).

31, 32. Took twelve stones ; to signify that the twelve tribes, though divided into two kingdoms, were still one in this worship of Jehovah. Sons of Jacob ; each of whom was the ancestor of a tribe. Is'rael ("Perseverer with God") . . thy name ; given to Jacob because of his persistence and consequent success in prayer. The people were about to see a like success. Built an altar. This was his way of re-



A FIGURE OF BAAL

pairing the altar (vs. 30),—selecting the twelve stones from the ruins of the old altar. In the name of the Lord ; by the Lord's authority and for His worship. Made a trench ; a channel for holding water. As great, etc. ; either "large enough to hold" two measures (a measure or "seah" being 3 gallons), or "as deep as the grain measure holding 6 gallons."

33-35. Wood in order, etc. Elijah gave the people a fine example of reverence for God's law (see Lev. 1 : 6-8). Four barrels with water ; that is, large earthenware jars, such as were carried on the head. Filled the trench ; the twelve barrels of water not having made it quite full. After this there could be no suspicion of fraud.

II. THE PRAYER OFFERED.—36, 37. Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob ; a title which would recall to the people God's appearance to Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3 : 6) and so quicken their faith in His power to answer Elijah by fire. God in Is'rael . . I . . thy servant ; Elijah's first petition, that God would prove that Elijah had all along been acting under God's authority. Turned their heart back again ; the second petition, that the people might be brought back to their faith in the true God.

III. THE PEOPLE CONVINCED.—38, 39. The fire of the Lord fell ; not a chance stroke of lightning, for the sky was clear (vs. 43, 44), but supernatural