

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIFTH YEAR, 1877. JANUARY. FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

B. C. 925. Lesson III. OMRI AND AHAB; or, Growth of Sin. Jan. 21. 1 Kings 16, 23-34.

EXPLANATORY.

THIRTY AND FIRST YEAR. Reckoning from Tibni's death, [compare verse 15.] when he began to reign alone. Twelve years. Dating from Zimri's death. [See verse 29.] He reigned four years with Tibni, and eight years alone. Six years. The first half of his reign. Tirzah. Originally a Canaanitish royal city; exact site not known, perhaps the modern Tel-luzah, a place in the mountains north of Nablus, (Shechem,) about nine miles distant. The kings Baasha, Ela, and Zimri lived at Tirzah, and Jeroboam seems to have had a palace there.

SAMARIA. Shemer—two talents. See Special Exegetical Notes. On the hill. Samaria was situated on an oblong hill, having steep sides rising from a remarkable basin, and a long flat top. Possessing abundant springs of water, it was admirably adapted for defense, and, therefore, continued to be a royal city until the end of the kingdom.

WROUGHT EVIL. An expression used to describe the character of all the kings of Israel after Jeroboam. Did worse. The "statutes of Omri" are spoken of in Micah [6. 16] as kept in his time. That he enacted laws for idolatrous worship, and laid the foundation for the worse idolatry under Ahab, is highly probable.

THE WAY OF JEROBOAM. That is, opposition to the Jehovah worship from self, fish fear, fostering image worship, observing a self-appointed feast day instead of the day divinely appointed for that purpose, supporting the false priests' not of the line of Levi, and leading the people into sin. His sin. The calf worship. To provoke—to anger. The expression here used is employed in the Bible only in reference to the sin of idolatry, and has reference to the second commandment, "The Lord thy God is a jealous God," another form of the same word. [See Deut. 32, 21.] Vanities. Nothingness, that is, worship of things which are nothing in themselves. "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." Jonah 2, 6.

REST OF THE ACTS. This record is only concerned with the apostasy of Israel, and those acts which led to it or helped it on. It appears from chap 20, 34, that there was war between Israel and Syria of Damascus during the reign of Omri, and that the Syrian king not only captured several cities, but obtained the right to make for himself streets in Samaria. His might. Valor—brave deeds. Probably shown in this war, as well as in the contests with Tibni. Books of the Chronicles. Doubtless one of the original works from which the books of Kings was compiled, but not now extant.

SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS. A formula for death used throughout the books of Kings, and less regularly in Chronicles. A somewhat similar expression is found in Gen. 15, 15, and in Judges 2, 10. Buried in Samaria. It was the custom to bury kings in their capital city. So David and his descendants were buried in Jerusalem, (chap. 2, 10; 2 Kings 12, 20,) though no other interment was permitted within the walls.

ASA, Rehoboam's grandson. Thirty and eighth year. Asa's long reign contrasts with the short reigns of the wicked kings of Israel. Twenty and two years, reckoning in the full years of his accession and of his death. Compare chap. 15, 10, with 22, 51.

EVIL. The great sin of Ahab, that by which he exceeded all his predecessors, was his introduction of the very gross and positive idolatry of the Canaanites, and its establishment as the religion of the State.

A LIGHT THING. Sin is never "a light thing." It is rebellion against a God of holiness, power and grace. It brought Christ from heaven. Look at Gethsemane and Calvary. Can sin be "a light thing?" Jezebel. The most sinful, as she was the most powerful, woman of Old Testament times. A heathen, base, cruel, intriguing, heartless. Her name "became a by-word for false doctrine, idolatry and harlotry in after ages of the church." Zidonians. And king also, in all probability, of Tyre. Baal. A woman's influence for good or for evil is immense. Ahab's bad heart clave unto a bad companion, and the heart became all the weaker and more wicked. Worsipped. Forgetting and defying the God of Israel. But sin goes from bad to worse, and from worse to worse.

BUILT IN SAMARIA. Permanency insured to this new and infamous idolatry by the erection of a house of Baal in the

very capital of the nation. A large, capacious building. A monument to Jezebel's power and Ahab's shame.

GROVE. Shaded, silent, solemn, dark retreats for heathen mysteries, and for the unhallowed and forbidden sins which pertained to idolatrous worship. Anger. God really hates sin.

BUILD JERICO. Against God's express command; under influence of a popular disregard to God's law and threatened penalties; in imitation of the recklessness and boldness of Ahab. Bethel. All the sacred memories of Jacob's God that clustered about Bethel. Here, too, Abraham built his altar. Word of the Lord, which is unalterably and eternally true.

The following is the order of worship at Clyde (Ohio) Methodist Episcopal Sunday school.

- 1 Song—ten minutes. 2 First bell—attention. 3 Second bell—song—opening. 4 Superintendent—I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.—Ps. cxvii, 1. 5 Pastor—God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.—James iv, 24. 6 Assistant Superintendent—Drawnigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.—James iv, 8. 7 Chorister—Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice, have mercy also upon me, and answer me.—Ps. xxvii, 1. 8 Superintendent—I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.—Ps. cxvi, 1. 9 All the School—The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. 10 Primary School—Those that seek me early shall find me.—Prov. viii, 17. Singing by same, one verse of appropriate song. 11 Males—For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. 12 Females—As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God.—John i, 12. 13 All the School—Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.—1 John iii, 1. 14 The Apostle's Creed repeated by all in concert. 15 Have you brought your Bible? 16 Reading the Lesson. 17 Prayer. 18 Secretary's report of last Sabbath. 19 Collection. 20 Notices. 21 Lessons study. 22 Song. 23 Review. 24 Distribution of Papers. 25 Song. 26 Lord's Prayer. 27 Benediction. Perfect silence till closing bell.

CAPT. BOYTON'S SWIM OF EIGHT HUNDRED MILES.—Intelligence has been received that Captain Boyton has accomplished the feat of swimming down the Po, from Turin to Ferrara, a distance of 800 miles. On reaching the latter place he is stated to have been received with great enthusiasm by the foreign as well as Italian residents. In November he swam from Turin to Castel Nuovo in his life-saving dress, 260 miles, in 83 hours, but was obliged to leave the water, feeling that a fever, caused by the malarious atmosphere of the river and his exertions, was coming upon him. He was laid up for several days at Castel Nuovo. On starting again from that place, however, he completed the journey down the Po to Ferrara, 280 miles, in 96 hours, without a single break. This he states to be the last, as it has been longest, of his feats.

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Smith's Bible Dictionary, Farrar's Dictionary, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, Stanley's Sinai and Palestine, Thompson's Land and Book, Conybeare & Howson's Life and Epistles of Paul, Weymeyer's New Testament Grammar, French's Synonyms of New Testament, Lounge on Genesis, Alexander on Isaiah, Stuart on Proverbs, Delitzsch on Job, Lange on New Testament, Tholuck on the Sermon on the Mount, Trench on the Parables, Trench on the Miracles.

THEOLOGY.

Dodge's Theology, Watson's Institutes, Follen's Lectures, Trevelyan's Sermons of Christ, Butler's Analogy, Chalmer's Natural Theology, Fairbairn's Typology of the Scriptures, McCosh on the Method of the Divine Government, Rawlinson's Historical Evidences, Liddon's Bampton Lectures on the Divinity of Christ, Farrar's History of Free Thought, Bushnell's Nature and Supernatural, Young's Christ of History, R. Payne Smith's Prophecy a Preparation for Christ, Ecce Deus.

MENTAL MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

Noah Porter's Human Intellect, Hamilton's Metaphysics, McCosh's Defense of Fundamental Truth, Wayland's Elements of Moral Philosophy.

CHURCH HISTORY.

Newman's History of the Church, Schaff's History of the Apostolic Church, Schaff's History, Smith's Table of Church History, Milman's History of Latin Christianity, Stanley's Lectures on History of Jewish Church, Shedd's History of Christian Doctrine, Stevens's History of Methodism, Missions, and D'Aubigne's Reformation, Moister on Missions, Dr. Smith's Old and New Testament History, Stanley's History of Early Christianity.

HOMILETICS & PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

Farrar's Life of Christ, Robert Hall's Sermons, Thomas Arnold's Sermons, Wesley's Sermons, Robertson's Sermons, Bushnell's Sermons, Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, Spencer's Pastors' Sketches.

SECULAR HISTORY.

Cox's History of Greece, Gibbon's Decline and fall of Roman Empire, Merivales General History of Rome, Hallam's Middle Ages, Howe's England, Macaulay's England, Robertson's Charles the Fifth, Motley's Dutch Republic, Motley's United Netherlands, Bancroft's United States, Prescott's Mexico.

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