



LESSON,—SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1908.

David's Kindness to Jonathan's Son.

II. Sam. ix. Memory verse 7. Read II. Sam. xvi., 1-4; xix., 24-30.

Golden Text.

And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another. Eph. iv., 32.

Home Readings.

Monday, October 12.—II. Sam. iv., 1-12.
 Tuesday, October 13.—II. Sam. viii., 1-18.
 Wednesday, October 14.—II. Sam. ix., 1-13.
 Thursday, October 15.—II. Sam. xvi., 1-4; xix., 24-30.

Friday, October 16.—I. Sam. xix., 1-7.
 Saturday, October 17.—I. Sam. xx., 1-17.
 Sunday, October 18.—II. Sam. xxi. 1-14.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Last Sunday we learned about something that David, although he was now king, could not do. Do you remember what that was? Yes, God told him he must not build the new temple. To-day we learn about something that David both could and did do. You know Christ teaches us that we can help God only by helping those who are about us, so we can easily see that David was serving God by his kindness to a poor lame man just as truly as though he had been allowed to build the temple. There was one thing David always remembered, and that was that it was God who had given him all the good things he enjoyed, and he did not intend to keep them all to himself. The title of our lesson is 'David's Kindness to Jonathan's Son.' Who can tell me who Jonathan was? And why did David remember Jonathan? David would have been very ungrateful if he had forgotten Jonathan, the king's son, who had been so kind to David, the shepherd boy, but David never forgot a kindness. He grieved very much when he heard about Jonathan's death, and he knew, too, that Saul and all his sons were dead, but now that he was so well off he set to work to find out if there were no relatives of Jonathan's alive to whom he could show kindness for Jonathan's sake. You see, what David could do he wanted to do well, and he soon found out what he was likely very surprised to hear, that Jonathan had a son who was still alive. This son's name was Mephibosheth, and he was only a very little boy, five years old, when his father was killed in battle. It was the terrible battle in which Saul and so very many of his people were killed and the news came to Saul's palace, where little Mephibosheth was playing about that the cruel enemies were marching on to kill him and all the rest of the people. In the terrible hurry and flight an accident happened to the poor little prince that left him lame in both his feet. David now heard this story for the first time, and heard too that this lame man was still living, so what do you think David did?

FOR THE SENIORS.

It is quite reasonable to suppose that the numerous wars that threatened David's kingdom from all sides and formed a very strong reason why he should not build the temple (I. Kings v., 3), had so occupied his time that he had felt it necessary to put aside for some time what was, after all, only a private enterprise. At any rate Mephibosheth had had time to grow up from babyhood to manhood, being married and having a growing son of his own before David found out his existence. More than possibly he had been congratulating himself that in his retreat on the eastern side of the Jordan he

had so far escaped David's notice, for, according to the customs of the time, he might well have expected to be the object of the new king's hatred, only escaping death at his hands by escaping his notice completely. He might recall the story of Abimelech and Jotham (Judges ix., 1-6) and Saul's own relentless pursuit of David and all David's relatives (I. Sam. xxii., 3, 4) and all who in any way assisted him (I. Sam. xxii., 13-16), if he were at all inclined to consider his own nation better than those around them in this respect. In David's action in the matter of the remaining representatives of Saul's house he rose to a plane of wonderful magnanimity when we consider the times in which he lived. It is true he had promised both Saul and Jonathan to pursue the course he did (I. Sam. xx., 11-17; xxiv., 20-22), but few would have been found to consider such promises binding.

Apart from the subject of the lesson, it should be remembered that this Sunday has been set aside for special consideration of and prayer for, the Sunday School. It has been hoped that both scholars and teachers will think seriously over what the Sunday School means to them, and pray earnestly for its highest and truest success as an instrument in God's hands of winning souls to himself.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

He shall eat Bread at my Table. Four times we are told in this chapter that David had Mephibosheth eat bread at the king's table; the emphasis laid on this fact has in it a lesson for us. David might have been content with restoring to Mephibosheth his father's estates and appointing Ziba and his household as his servants. This would have been showing Mephibosheth abundant kindness, but it would have cost David little, for what were estates to David the King? Something of himself must go with the gift, there must be a personal element in it, in order to be a kindness shown for Jonathan's sake. At a time when stature and physical strength were deemed important attributes of the royal household, there may well have been even some sacrifice in having a cripple always at the king's table. Notwithstanding this, David decreed that the man who was lame in both his feet should eat continually at his table.

It is not written, Blessed is he that feedeth the poor, but he that considereth the poor,' Ruskin reminds us. 'A little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money.' There is a great need in this world that can be met only by the gift of self. Tolstoi tells of his saying to a beggar, 'Brother, I have no money,' and of the beggar's clasping his hand with joy and saying that he had given him better than money, for he had called him 'Brother.'

The great English statesman Gladstone was found sitting by the bedside of the poor sick boy whose duty it had been to sweep the street crossing, and reading the Bible to him. A minister in Boston has told about going to see a poor family and being met at the door by Bishop Phillips Brooks with a baby in his arms. He had given the tired mother some street car tickets and sent her off to get the fresh air, and was caring for her baby till she returned. If a man like Bishop Brooks, who could preach such wonderfully helpful sermons, could give of his time to a poor tired woman, shall we say that we have no time for such a gift of ourselves?

The kind man does not say merely what he feels like saying; that would be adaptation to his own moods, and only self-love. He says what he thinks another needs to hear. Kindness relates you not to your own mood, but to the mood of the other man. To say a pleasant thing because you feel pleasant may be an accidental kindness, for it may meet another's need, though good, it is not highly virtuous. Genuine kindness oftenest comes from self-repression,—a cheerful message from a sad soul, a brave word from a trembling heart, a generous gift from a slender purse, a helping hand from a tired man. It is not your mood, but the other man's need, that determines kindness.—M. D. Babcock, 'Thoughts for Everyday.'

There are many good people who are willing to give alms who are never ready to do

almsdeeds; half the beauty and power of Christian charity is in the personality of its administration.—Pentecost.

Bible References.

Matt. xxv., 40; Luke vi., 38; Prov. xxxi., 26; Isa. xxxii., 8; Psa. ciii., 2, 4; Prov. iii., 1-4.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, October 18.—Topic—Commending our Society. IV. By systematic, generous giving. I. Cor. xvi., 1, 2; Mal. iii., 7-12.

C. E. Topic.

Monday, October 12.—What shall I do? Luke xviii., 18.

Tuesday, October 13.—'If ye love me,' John xiv., 15.

Wednesday, October 14.—'Keep my commandments.' Deut. v., 29.

Thursday, October 15.—A new commandment. John xiii., 34, 35.

Friday, October 16.—Give to the poor. Luke xviii., 22.

Saturday, October 17.—Rich in good works. I. Tim. vi., 17-19.

Sunday, October 18.—Topic—A young man whom Jesus loved. Mark x. 17-22.

Solve the Problem if You Can.

He was an illiterate cripple and a converted drunkard. He had only one leg, and he was too poor to own a cork leg. He walked with crutches. He stood on the one leg all day in a box factory, nailing boxes. He got home about six o'clock every evening, and, after supper, he visited from home to home in his section of the city, hunting Sunday School scholars.

Nearly always he found them. On Sunday mornings, he would go by for those who had promised to go with him to his Sunday School. One Sunday morning he brought nine new pupils—one man, one woman, two big boys, one big girl and four little children. I shook his hand and congratulated him on his new pupils. 'Yes, I reckon I did just rate for one mornin', but I'm a little disappointed. I had fifteen of 'em what promised to come, but the rest of 'em went back on me.'

Now here is a simple problem in arithmetic. It is a problem that every man especially ought to work out practically. Here is the problem: If one man with one leg can bring nine new pupils to Sunday School on one Sunday morning, how many could a man with two legs bring in if he were to really try?—Central Baptist.

A Trade-mark.

A Christian manufacturer, who puts principle into production, and morality into mechanism, is known and advertised far more widely than he thinks by the goods he makes.

A story appeared in print the other day which well illustrates this. It seems that a man went into an ironmonger's shop in a neighboring town to buy a shovel.

Examining one, he asked the dealer:

'Is this a first-class tool?'

The shopkeeper replied:

'My friend, I think you can know very little of shovels. You will notice that this shovel is made by Mr. So-and-so. He is a Christian man, and he makes a Christian shovel. Anything you see marked with his name you may know to be first-class.'

The tribute was a significant one. It is Christian principle which makes the best tools that the world uses. Ever since the days of the faithful Carpenter of Nazareth, its influence has been exerted in the direction of reliability in trade and honesty in all relations of life.—Exchange.

Sunday School Offer.

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N.B.—Ask For Our Special Year End Offer.