

## The Sunday School

### BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

#### Third Quarter, 1904.

JULY TO SEPTEMBER.

Lesson XI.—September 4.—Elijah taken up into Heaven.—2 Kings, 2: 1-11

#### THE LESSON.

The first chapter of Second Kings, exhibiting the beginning of God's judgment upon the house of Ahab and relating Elijah's last public act. The translation of Elijah.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

He was not; for God took him.—Gen. 5: 24.

I. SCENE I. THE LAST REBUKE OF SIN.—2 Kings 1: 1-18. Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, who reigned little more than a year before he fell through the lattice of a window or balcony in his palace, and was seriously injured. In his distress he sent to the Philistine city, Ekron, to inquire at the oracle of Baal-zebub, of flies, whether he would recover. At Jehovah's command Elijah intercepted the king's messengers, rebuked them for inquiring of a heathen idol and not of Israel's God, and bade them tell Ahaziah that he should not recover.

II. SCENE II. THE LAST INSTRUCTION OF DISCIPLES.—Vs. 1-6. The history of Elijah is characterized throughout by abrupt and mysterious appearances and disappearances. We are not told how Elijah escaped from Ahaziah's palace, but pass at once to the last day of his life.

1. WHEN THE LORD WOULD TAKE UP ELIJAH. There is a great doctrine of providence here. Not when Elijah would go but when the Lord would take him. INTO HEAVEN. Elijah was viewed as "continuing in heaven a mysterious life which no death had ever interrupted, whence he was ready at any time to return to earth."—Ewald. BY A WHIRLWIND. See on v. 11. THAT ELIJAH WENT WITH ELISHA. This was a number of years (ten, according to Farrar) since the call of Elisha. Of these years it is recorded only that the young man "ministered" to Elijah (1 Kings 19: 21), and "poured water on his hands" (2 Kings 3: 11). He was Elijah's servant, but also his scholar and friend. FROM GILGAL. Not the Gilgal near Jericho, which is far below Bethel, but a Gilgal in the hill country of Ephraim, about eight miles northwest of Bethel. The modern name is Jiljilia.

2. AND ELIJAH SAID UNTO ELISHA, TARRY HERE, I PRAY THEE. Elijah, Elisha and even the sons of the prophets, evidently knew that Elijah's departure was at hand. FOR THE LORD HATH SENT ME TO (R. V. "as far as) BETHEL. Another school of the prophets was there. Elijah's last journey was clearly laid out for him. Its object was twofold: a natural desire on the part of the great leader to revisit the scenes so dear to him, and his purpose to fix upon his disciples' minds the principles and precepts he held most important. AS THE LORD LIVETH AND AS THY SOUL LIVETH. The two phrases confirming the statement by the two supreme truths of all knowledge, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, are often found singly, but seldom together (besides this passage, only in 1 Sam. 20: 3; 25: 26); the conjunction expresses the most intense earnestness. I WILL NOT LEAVE THEE. With the eagerness of Peter, who would follow his Lord even across the river of death (John 13: 37). SO THEY WENT DOWN TO BETHEL. Bethel is 2880 and Gilgal 2441 feet above the sea, but to reach Bethel from Gilgal one must first go down into a deep valley).

3. THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS. These were young men attending the theological seminaries of the time, largely fostered and perhaps founded by Samuel. "These ancient colleges were under the superintendence of a recognized prophet who was called the father, while the students were styled his children or sons. They were places of retirement adapted for study and devotion. SAID UNTO HIM, KNOWEST THOU. We may imagine them taking Elisha aside and speaking in awed whispers. How Elijah's coming departure was known to them we are not told. TAKE AWAY THY MASTER FROM THY HEAD TO DAY. "The teacher sat on an elevated seat, so that his feet were level with the heads of his pupils. (Compare Acts 22: 3).—Cook. YEA, I KNOW IT: HOLD YE YOUR PEACE. The matter was too grave to be made the subject of conversation."—Cheyne. And Elisha's sorrow was too deep.

4. THEY CAME TO JERICHO. The important city in the Jordan valley, the first to fall before Joshua. It was about 13 miles from Bethel, 1,200 feet lower, and there also was a school of the prophets.

6. THE LORD HATH SENT ME TO JORDAN. Elijah is ordered, not to a town, where his follower might find lodging and refreshment and companionship, but into the open country—to the Jordan.

III. SCENE III. THE LAST MIRACLE.—Vs. 7, 8. This last journey was a sort of epitome of Elijah's life, and it was most fitting that it should contain an illustration of his miraculous power.

7. AND FIFTY MEN . . . WENT, AND STOOD TO VIEW AFAR OFF. The abrupt heights behind the town commanded an extensive view of the river, the nearest bend of which was five miles away. STOOD TO VIEW. R. V. "over against them afar off," i. e., looking toward them. STOOD BY JORDAN. We can imagine with what eager longing Elijah looked across, toward the hills of his native Gilead.

8. AND ELIJAH TOOK HIS MANTLE. Of sheepskin, the outward sign of the prophet's office. This was to show Elisha "that the power of wonder-working rested not with the prophet individually, but was attached to his office, of which this rough garment was the badge."—Edersheim. AND WRAPPED IT TOGETHER. Rolled it up, so that it was not unlike Moses' rod. SMOTE THE WATERS. "As Moses smote the river Nile (Ex. 7: 20), Aaron the dust (Ex. 8: 17), and Moses the rock (Num. 20: 11)—strongly as one smites an enemy."—Cook. THEY WERE DIVIDED. As the Red Sea by Moses (Ex. 14: 21), and the Jordan, near or at this very spot, by Joshua (Josh. 3: 13) five and a half centuries before.

IV. SCENE IV. THE LAST COMMUNION WITH HIS FRIEND.—Vs. 9, 10. Together they climb the steep ascent—the old prophet and the young.

9. ELIJAH SAID UNTO ELISHA, ASK WHAT I SHALL DO FOR THEE ("but ask quickly." Cheyne inserts) BEFORE I BE TAKEN AWAY. There were three sources of this offer: Elijah's love for Elisha, his desire to strengthen Elisha for the burden he was about to assume, and his longing for the good of his nation. LET A DOUBLE PORTION OF THY SPIRIT BE UPON ME. Not twice as much of God's Spirit as Elijah has, for how could Elijah give it? and how would Elisha dare to ask it? But twice as much as any other of the prophets, Elijah's spiritual "sons" might receive. This was the portion of the eldest son according to Jewish law (Deut. 21: 17)—he received a double share of the inheritance.

10. THOU HAST ASKED A HARD THING. "Good things are hard," was Plato's favorite motto. "The Christian is a man who attempts impossibilities." IF THOU SEE ME WHEN I AM TAKEN FROM THEE. "If he proves his fitness for prophetic gifts by remaining with his master to the end and looking without fear on the dread messengers of the invisible world, his request will not be denied."

V. SCENE V. THE LAST OF EARTH AND THE FIRST OF HEAVEN.—V. 11. THEY STILL WENT ON, AND TALKED. Perhaps they talked of the work Elisha was to do, and Elijah gave his last weighty instructions to the young disciple. Perhaps the theme of their talk was like that when Moses and Elijah talked with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9: 31)—anticipations of the final scene. THERE APPEARED A CHARIOT (R. V. marg. "chariots"—the Hebrew is a collective noun, "chariotry") OF FIRE, AND HORSES OF FIRE. Compare the celestial convoy around Elisha in later times (2 Kings 6: 17), and the legions of angels that Christ could summon (Matt. 24: 53). There was a storm of great violence, a "whirlwind," accompanied by some manifestation of light and flame which seemed to Elisha most like chariots and horses of fire. AND PARTED THEY BOTH ASUNDER. Surrounding Elijah as with a flaming war host."—Ellicott. AND ELIJAH WENT UP BY A WHIRLWIND INTO HEAVEN. Literally, "Elijah went up in a storm into the sky."—Cook. The Bible records only two similar events, the translation of Enoch, and the ascension of Christ. We are not to think of Elijah as ascending in a chariot, but, as it says, in a storm. The chariots and horses would symbolize to a Hebrew mind the power and protection of Jehovah, just as the whirlwind symbolized his awful majesty.

#### RUSHING THINGS ALONG.

As there is a law against burying in the city of Albany, the Bishop had to have a special act of the legislature to be buried in the cathedral. He was successful in having the act pass the lawmakers, but his friends were astonished and worried when they read its text. It began with the usual verbiage. The ending was something like this:

"We do grant that Bishop Doane be buried within the precincts of the cathedral at Albany. This act to take effect immediately."

Mrs. Vernon-Greene—"Why don't you get your husband to cut off his whiskers?"

Mrs. Smiffian Perie—"I wouldn't have him do it for the world. I want him to let them grow and get them all out of his system."

#### AT THE SEASIDE.

"Oh! George, what lovely waves!" He—"Very nice; but, poor things, they're just like me—we both arrive at the shore in splendid style—and go back broke."—Judy.

Just as the kindergarten children in the opinion of some educators, have lost for our children a certain sturdiness, a certain grim power of overcoming difficulties, so the platform habit, the club habit, the president and secretary habit have entailed upon our women serious losses. The daily uncomplaining attention to household details that make for comfort and a restful home atmosphere; the tender, unseen care given to the children; the brooding over, watching and painstaking upbuilding of character; the brave, inspiring encouragement of the wearied wage-earner—for these things have not taste been lost?

I fail to see in women any evidence of the character that is needed in our public life. I fail to see that they are even on the right track to attain it. I think there is no school so eminently unfit for the development of character as that of the public platform, which women are seeking more and more. I think there is a grave danger to the moral force of womanhood in woman's increasing participation in organized effort, in public life—Annie Meyer.

"Each morning sees some task begun,  
Each evening sees its close;  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose."

Never be forward, but be friendly and courteous; the first to salute, hear and answer, and not pensive when it is time to converse.—George Washington.

My conscience is my crown,  
Contented thoughts my rest.  
My heart is happy in itself,  
My bliss is in my breast.

—Robert Southwell.

The effective life and the receptive life are one. No sweep of aim that does some work for God, but harvests also some more of the truth of God and sweeps it into the treasury of the life.—Phillips Brooks.

Actor—"Ah, Robbins, how are you?" I saw you at our performance the other night. How did you like my assumption of Hamlet? Robbins—"Capital, my dear fellow! Greatest piece of assumption I ever saw in my life!"

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Of all the diseases known with which the female organism is afflicted, kidney disease is the most fatal. In fact, unless prompt and correct treatment is applied, the weary patient seldom survives. Being fully aware of this, Mrs. Pinkham, early in her career, gave careful study to the subject, and in producing her great remedy for woman's ills—Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound—made sure that it contained the correct combination of herbs which was certain to control that dreaded disease, woman's kidney troubles.

#### Read What Mrs. Weisslitz Says.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—For two years my life was simply a burden. I suffered so with female troubles, and pains across my back and loins. The doctor told me that I had kidney troubles and prescribed for me. For three months I took his medicine, but grew steadily worse. My husband then advised me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and brought home a bottle. It is the greatest blessing ever brought to our home. Within three months I was a changed woman. My pain had disappeared, my complexion became clear, my eyes bright, and my entire system in good shape."—MRS. PAULA WEISLITZ, 178 Seneca St., Buffalo, N. Y.—\$5000 Perfect if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

#### Notice of Sale.

To James A. McHall (or McHale) of Halifax in the Province of Nova Scotia, Clerk formerly of the City of Saint John in the Province of New Brunswick and Mary Elizabeth McHall his wife. Notice is hereby given that under and by virtue of a power of sale contained in a certain Indenture of Assignment of lease by way of mortgage bearing date the second day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and three and made between the said James A. McHall and Mary Elizabeth McHall his wife, of the first part, and Allen O. Earle and J. Roy Campbell of the said City of Saint John Barristers at Law Trustees of the second part and duly registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds in and for the City and County of Saint John in Libro 84 of Records folio 588, 594 and 595, there will for the purpose of satisfying the moneys secured thereby default having been made in the payment thereof be sold at public auction on Monday the twenty sixth day of November next at twelve o'clock noon at Chubb's Corner (so called) on Prince William Street in the said City of Saint John all the term of years yet to come benefit of renewal right title interest property claim and demand at law or in Equity of them the said James A. McHall and Mary Elizabeth McHall in and to a 1 1/2 acre certain lot piece and parcel of land situate lying and being in Brooks Ward on the western side of the harbor in the said City of Saint John known and distinguished on a plan of that part of the said City of Carleton on file in the office of the Common Clerk of the said City by the number 313) five hundred and thirteen the said lot being fifty feet front on Saint James street and extending back preserving the same breadth one hundred feet more or less, and which said lot of land was demised by the Mayor and Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of Saint John to one Mary Campbell by a certain Indenture of lease dated the twenty sixth day of February A. D. 1887 and registered in said office in Libro 80 of records folio 420 to 422 for the term of twenty one years from said last mentioned date and being at the yearly rent of twelve dollars together with the said Indenture of Lease and the buildings improvement, nt, privileges and appurtenances to the said lands, and premises belonging or in any way appertaining. Dated, this twenty second day of August A. D. 1904.

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