

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1877, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON XI.

MARCH 17.]

HEZEKIAH AND THE ASSYRIANS. [About 702 B. C.]

READ 2 Chron. 32: 9-21. RECITE vs. 19-21.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Chron. 32: 9-21. T.—2 Chron. 32: 1-8. W.—2 Kings 18: 13-22. Th.—Ps. 27. F.—Dan. 3: 16-25. Sa.—2 Kings 19: 20-35. S.—Isa. 36.

GOLDEN TEXT.—With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.—2 Chron. 32: 8.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—God is the refuge of his people.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Hezekiah offered solemn sacrifices; held a solemn passover; continued to put down idolatry; was delivered from death and fifteen years added to his life; paid tribute to Assyria; again attacked by Assyria; delivered by the angel, who slew 185,000 Assyrians.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Notice that a deliverance from Assyria seemed almost impossible in the eyes of man, but how easy it was for God to send it!

NOTES.—Sen-nach'erib or Sen-na-cherib, son and successor of Sargon, king of Assyria; reigned 22 years (702-680 B. C.). In the 3rd year of his reign he conquered Phoenician cities; was victorious in Egypt; made Judah pay tribute; built a grand palace at Kouyunjik (Nineveh); was the greatest of Assyrian kings; fled from before Jerusalem; was slain by his two sons while worshipping Nisroch, his god, La'-chiah, city of the Amorites, its king defeated by Joshua, Josh. 10: 26-33; fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. 11: 9; the refuge of Amaziah, 2 Kings 14: 19; captured by Sennacherib, according to Assyrian records; now in ruins and called Um-Lakis. The ruins are about fifteen miles eastward of Gaza. As-syr-i-a, Heze-ki-ah.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE ASSYRIANS' ATTACK. (II.) THE ASSYRIANS' THREATS. (III.) THE ASSYRIANS' DESTRUCTION.

I. THE ASSYRIANS' ATTACK. (9.) SENNACHERIB, see Notes; HIS SERVANTS, probably three of his generals. See 2 Kings 18: 17. (10.) ABIDE IN THE SIEGE, or "stronghold," and do not surrender to the Assyrians. (11.) TO DIE BY FAMINE, etc., as the Assyrians expected they would; OUR GOD SHALL DELIVER US. See Isa. 36: 14, 15. (12.) HEZEKIAH TAKEN AWAY HIS HIGH PLACES, a false suggestion of the Assyrian; the high places were for idolatrous, and not for Jehovah's worship; Ye . . . WORSHIP . . . ONE ALTAR, so God had commanded. Deut. 12: 13, 14.

II. QUESTIONS.—Give the title of the last lesson. Of this lesson. State the chief facts in the Connected History. What had Hezekiah given Sennacherib? What cities had the king of Assyria attacked? v. 1. What city was he now besieging? v. 9. Whom did he send to Jerusalem? How many of his servants? 2 Kings 18: 17. Their first question to Hezekiah? v. 10. Who had besieged Jerusalem? v. 2. Near what city was the king himself? v. 9. How did he say the people of Jerusalem would die? In what way did Hezekiah expect deliverance? Why did the Assyrian servants say the Lord would not deliver him? How was their charge false?

III. THE ASSYRIANS' THREAT. (13.) I AND MY FATHERS, Sennacherib, Sargon, and Tiglath-pileser, etc., see 2 Kings 15: 29; 18: 13; GODS OF THE NATIONS . . . ABLE TO DELIVER, the Assyrians thought that as Egypt and other nations were greater than Judah, so their gods must be greater than Judah's God; these other nations had been conquered by Assyria, and therefore they thought that Judah's God could not deliver it. (14.) MY FATHERS UTTERLY DESTROYED, Isa. 10: 5-12. (15.) LET NOT HEZEKIAH DECEIVE YOU, to think that God will deliver you. (17.) TO RAIL ON, to revile, 2 Kings 19: 10-13; Isa. 37: 9-13. (18.) IN THE JEWS' SPEECH, the Assyrian servants could speak the Hebrew language as well as their own, or at least Babshukch, the chief speaker, could; NO AFFRIGHT THEM, so as to make them surrender the city. (19.) GOD OF JERUSALEM . . . GODS OF THE PEOPLE, they spoke in derision of both alike.

II. QUESTIONS.—What did the king of Assyria boast that he and his fathers had done? Who were not able to deliver those other lands? Why were they not able? What became of those nations? v. 14. Who would be unable, therefore, to deliver Jerusalem? How did the king of Assyria further threaten Jerusalem? What did he do in his letters? The meaning of "to rail on"? In what language did his messengers speak? Who heard them? Why did they use the Hebrew language? Against what God did they speak? Among what false gods did they place him?

III. THE ASSYRIANS' DESTRUCTION. (20.) FOR THIS CAUSE, because of these threats; HEZEKIAH . . . AND . . . ISAIAH . . . PRAYED, for the prayer of Hezekiah see Isa. 37: 15-20; for the answer by the prophet see Isa. 37: 21-35. (21.) THE LORD SENT AN ANGEL, so he once destroyed Judah, 2 Sam. 24: 16; see also Ps. 18: 50; Dan. 3: 28; 6: 22; CUT OFF ALL THE MIGHTY MEN, etc., see 2 Kings 19: 35; RETURNED WITH SHAME, because of his defeat; THE HOUSE OF HIS GOD, the idol Nisroch (see picture); THEY THAT CAME FORTH, etc., his two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, 2 Kings 19: 37; SLEW HIM with the sword, or literally "made him to fall."

III. QUESTIONS.—For what prophet did Hezekiah send? What did they two do? For what did Hezekiah pray? Where is his prayer recorded? In what other place? By whom did the Lord send an answer? Where is the

answer recorded? Who was sent of the Lord to destroy the Assyrians? How many were slain? When did the slaughter take place? 2 Kings 19: 35. With what feelings did Sennacherib return to Assyria? Who slew him? Where? While he was doing what?

What facts in this lesson teach us— (1.) The foolishness of pride in those who are strong? (2.) That it is unwise to boast of our strength? (3.) That it is safe to continue to trust God while others are deriding us for it? (4.) That God can deliver us in most unexpected ways?

ILLUSTRATION.—The Assyrians' Destruction. The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold, And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold; And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea, When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee. Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green, That host with their banners at sunset were seen; Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown That host on the morrow lay withered and strewn.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast, And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed. And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill, And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still. And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail, And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal; And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword, Hath melted like snow at the glance of the Lord. [From Assyrian Monuments.]—Lord Byron.



NISROCH.

LESSON XII.

MANASSEH BROUGHT TO REPENTANCE. [About 677-667 B. C.]

READ 2 Chron. 33: 9-16. RECITE vs. 12, 13.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Chron. 33: 9-16. T.—2 Kings 21: 1-9. W.—Psalm 107: 10-22. Th.—Job 36: 5-19. F.—Ezra 8: 21-30. Sa.—Matt. 3: 1-12. S.—Luke 15: 11-32.

GOLDEN TEXT.—As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent.—Rev. 3: 19.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Afflictions should lead to repentance.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Hezekiah received many gifts and presents; was honored at his death; succeeded by his son Manasseh, who became king at 12, and reigned 55 years (688-642 B. C.); he was wicked; restored Baal-worship; caused his children to pass through the fire; used witchcraft; was punished by being carried captive to Babylon, where he repented.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Contrast the conduct of Manasseh when in distress with the greater wickedness of Ahab under similar trials, and learn how we should conduct ourselves in times of trouble.

NOTES.—Ma-nas'-seh, 14th ruler of Judah, and son of Hezekiah; became king at 12; reigned 55 years (688-642 B. C.); forsook his father's righteous ways; followed idolatry; was taken captive to Babylon; repented; was restored to his kingdom; put away some of his idolatries; restored the worship of the Lord. [Lange says that the Assyrian monuments place his captivity in Babel about 647 B. C., while Assurbanipal or Sardanapalus was king, but Jewish tradition places it in the 22nd year of Manasseh's reign, and while Esarhaddon was king of Assyria. Tradition says that Manasseh condemned the prophet Isaiah to be sawn asunder.] Bab'-y-lon, a great capital of the Chaldean kingdom, on the Euphrates. For 600 years Babylon was alternately free from Assyria and ruled by it; became the residence of the Assyrian kings about 630 B. C.; destroyed Nineveh about 625 B. C.; was overthrown by the Medes and Persians about 538 B. C. Two Assyrian inscriptions refer to Manasseh of Judah as a vassal or captive—one made by Esarhaddon, who reigned 681-688 B. C., the other made by his successor Assurbanipal, about 648 B. C. Gh'-hon, a valley west of Jerusalem, named also Hinnom; had two large pools; the lower now called Pool of the Sultan, though some think it was the Pool of the Bath, or of Hezekiah, near the Jaffa gate. O'-phel, "the tower," it is also the name of the southern portion of the hill Moriah, and between the temple area and Siloam. It is now outside the city wall.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) MANASSEH'S SIN. (II.) HIS CAPTIVITY. (III.) HIS RESTORATION.

I. MANASSEH'S SIN. (9.) MADE JUDAH . . . TO ERR, led Judah into sin; DO WORSE THAN THE HEATHEN, to do more evil than the nations God had destroyed, Jos. 24: 8. (10.) LORD SPAKE TO MANASSEH, rebuking him for his sin.

II. QUESTIONS.—How old was Manasseh when he began to reign? How long did he reign? Where? Who was his father? What was Manasseh's character? Name twelve wicked things that he did. Whom did he make to sin with him? What had become of those heathen? Who reproved Manasseh? With what effect?

III. HIS CAPTIVITY. (11.) THE HOST, the army; OF THE KING OF ASSYRIA, see Notes on Babylon; AMONG THE THORNS, "took Manasseh with hooks, and bound him with double chains" (Kell), or "took Manasseh with fetters

and bound him with chains" (Lange), or better than the above, "took Manasseh captive with rings" (Mauw); BABYLON, see Notes. (12.) IN AFFLICTION . . . HUMBLED HIMSELF, so did Rehoboam, 2 Chron. 12: 12. (13.) PRAYED UNTO HIM, Manasseh's prayer is given in the Greek version, but is not authentic, see v. 18; WAS ENTREATED OF HIM, listened to his prayer; BROUGHT HIM AGAIN TO JERUSALEM, cause? the king of Assyria to release and restore him.

II. QUESTIONS.—What did the Lord bring upon Manasseh and Judah? Who was carried to Babylon? How taken? Give the various supposed meanings of "among the thorns." To what city was Manasseh carried? When did it become the capital of the Assyrian kingdom? Whom did Manasseh seek in captivity? How? Who brought Manasseh again to Jerusalem? Of what was the king then certain?

III. HIS RESTORATION. (14.) CITY OF DAVID, Jerusalem; GIHON, see Notes; FISH GATE, at the north-east corner of the city, Neh. 3: 3; OPHEL, or "the tower," ch. 27: 3, and Neh. 3: 26; possibly it refers to a district of Jerusalem. See Notes. (15.) STRANGE GODS, see v. 3; THE IDOL, etc., see vs. 4, 5. (16.) REPAIRED THE ALTAR, ch. 29: 18; THANK OFFERINGS, Lev. 7, 12.

III. QUESTIONS.—Who had restored Manasseh to his throne? What portion of Jerusalem did he rebuild? What did he raise to a great height? Meaning of Ophel. [A tower.] How did he strengthen other cities? By what acts did he prove that he had repented? v. 15. What offerings did he make? v. 16. What command did he give to Judah?

What facts in this lesson teach us— (1.) That a ruler can do great evil? (2.) That the Lord can punish kings and rulers? (3.) That God will spare rulers when they repent?

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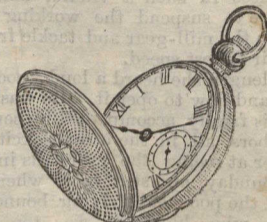
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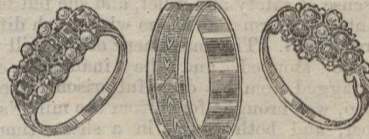
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