

LESSON X. MARCH 5, 1876

GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID. 2 SAM 7-18

(B. C., 1042.)

18. THEN WENT KING DAVID IN AND SAT BEFORE NAUL.—The gracious promise thus given to David filled his heart with irrepressible joy and gratitude. It was to the tabernacle of course that he went, and his "sitting" posture was, no doubt, that position between kneeling and sitting—kneeling first upon the ground, and then sitting back upon the heels, which is covered a very respectful posture in the East.

19. AND THIS WAS A SMALL THING IN THY EIGHT, etc., for a great while to come, literally that which points to a remote period, i. e., that of the eternal establishment of my house and throne.

21. FOR THY WORD'S SAKE. The word for the sake of which God has done such great things for David, must be some former promise on the part of God.

23. WENT TO REDEEM.—The redemption of Israel, as described here, was typical of our redemption by Christ; the honor of God and the eternal happiness of the saints are the two things aimed at in their redemption.

24. THOU HAST CONFIRMED TO THYSELF. The covenant he had made with them was (1) *Mutual*—"They to be a people to thee, and thou a God to them" (2) *Immutable*—"Thou hast confirmed them." He that makes the covenant makes it sure and will make it good.

27. THOU HAST REVEALED THIS TO THY SERVANT; i. e., "Thou hast of thine own good will given me the promise that thou wilt build me a house, else I could never have found it in my heart to pray such a prayer as this."

29. FOR THOU, O LORD GOD HAST SPOKEN IT.—He prays for the performance of his promise. Thus we turn God's promises into prayers, and then they shall be turned into performances.

LESSON XI. MARCH 12, 1876.

ABSALOM'S REBELLION. 2 SAMUEL 15 : 1-14

(B. C. 1042.)

1. AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THIS.—Three years Absalom had been an exile with his father-in-law and now two years a prisoner at large in his own house, and

in both better dealt with than he deserved; yet his spirit was still unhumiliated, his pride unmodified; and instead of being thankful his life is spared, he thinks himself sorely wronged that he is not restored to all his places at court. He longs to see the king's face, pretending it was because he loved him, but really because he wanted to supplant him.

2. 6. AND ABSALOM ROSE UP EARLY.—To gain the power he wanted, he endeavors to instill into the people's minds a bad opinion of the present administration. He got around him all he could that had business at the council-board, inquired what their business was; and upon a slight and general inquiry into their cause pronounced it good.

7. AFTER FORTY YEARS.—It should be after *four* years, or after forty days. The nature of the case forbids the period of forty years. Josephus and also the Syriac and Arabian versions, have it four years. Two ancient manuscripts have it not "years" but days; in which case it may date from Absalom's kind reception by his father.

10. Hebron. The oldest town of Palestine, original name, Kijath-Orba, situated among the mountains of Judah, twenty Roman miles south of Jerusalem.

12. GILOH, Abithopel's home, was upon the mountains of Judah, to the south or southwest of Hebron. Thus the strength of Absalom's conspiracy is seen to be a direct result of David's great transgression. Abithopel's name was in itself almost a guarantee of Absalom's success. And we may judge of the importance which was attached to him.

13, 14. AND THERE CAME A MESSENGER TO DAVID.—Evil tidings fly swiftly. So a messenger soon brought news to David of Absalom's procedure, and the King at once resolved to leave Jerusalem. This determination was probably taken because there were not sufficient troops to garrison the city, or because he had no confidence in the inhabitants that they would be faithful to him; and the story of his departure is told here with a beauty and a pathos that are perfectly unapproachable. He left ten of his concubines behind to look after the house, and went on it is said, to a place that is far off; or rather, as it might be rendered, to the "house afar off," the last house probably in the city.