

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* David's victories. 2 Sam. 10: 8-19. *Tuesday.* A song of victory. Ex. 15: 1-11. *Wednesday.* Divine preservation. 1 Chr. 18: 1-13. *Thursday.* Trust in God. Ps. 144. *Friday.* Deliverance from God. Ps. 13: 32-50. *Saturday.* Praise for deliverance. Ps. 54. *Sabbath.* The soul's warfare. Eph. 6: 10-20. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. Upon hearing of the death of Na'hash, king of Ammon, David remembering past kindness shewn to him by Na'hash, sent a kindly message to Ha'nun congratulating him on his accession, and offering sympathy in connection with his father's death. The princes of Ammon evidently despised David, being jealous of his growing power. They persuaded Hanun that David's messengers were simply spies in disguise. After subjecting them to the vilest insults they sent them back. Knowing that David would not allow such an outrage to pass unavenged, they immediately prepared for war. They succeeded in getting the Ar-a-me'ans of Zo'bah, Re'hob, Ma-ach'ah and Tob to make common cause with them. These realms furnished 33,000 hired soldiers. Parallel passage 1 Chron. 9-19.

LESSON PLAN. I. In Battle Array. vs. 8-11. II. Enemies Vanquished. vs. 12-19.

I. IN BATTLE ARRAY. 8. Children of Ammon—Descendants of Ben-Ammi, a son of Lot. Gilead to the east of the Jordan was the chief portion of their possessions. "They appear to have led a wandering, predatory life, similar to that of the wild Arab tribes." **Came out—**"From their cities to the capital (Rab'bah), and put themselves in array before the gate." **Were by themselves—**"Who came and pitched before Med'e-ba" (1 Chron. 19: 7). **9. Joab—**David's nephew and the commander-in-chief of his army: brave, skilful, ambitious, but unscrupulous and revengeful. **The front of the battle was against him—**"The battle was set against him" (R. V.). The two armies of the Ammonites and the Syrians were drawn up facing each other, the former in front of the city Rab'bah, the latter in the plain in front of Med'e-ba; so that if Joab proceeded to attack the one, the other would be in his rear. **All the choice men of Israel—**Joab divided his forces. He selected the most competent and skilled of the army to march under himself to give battle to the Syrians, the more formidable foe. **10. The rest—**He left in charge of his brother Abi'shai, to keep in check the Ammonite army. **11. Thou shalt help me—**The brothers mutually agreed to watch each other's interest and welfare, and in a moment's time if need be, render assistance. "Mutual helpfulness is brotherly duty." (M. Henry). It is the duty of Christ's soldiers as brethren to consider one another's condition; to sympathize with and render timely help. Look "not every man on his own things" (Philip 2: 4).

II. ENEMIES VANQUISHED. 12. Be of good courage—It was a critical moment, a time of great peril; the interests at stake were great. In every worthy enterprise courage is essential to success. Virtue probably expresses the idea (2 Pet. 1: 5). "It is that quality of mind which meets difficulty, danger, pain or death, calmly and tearlessly." (Pulpit Com.) Joshua was exhorted of the Lord to "Be strong and of good courage" (Josh. 1: 6). All the noble deeds that have beat their marches through succeeding ages have proceeded from men of courage. (O. Felltham.)

Play the man—Act the truly manly part. No grander sight than seeing men acting the manly part. "Quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16: 13). **For our people—**Two noble incentives to faithfulness set forth. 1. "Our people." 2. "The cities of our God." Like Ne-he-mi'ah's words of encouragement to his faithful workers on the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 4: 14.) True patriotism will quicken the spirit of heroism. "Love for one's country must be held in harmony with and in subordination to love for the Christian brotherhood, united in spiritual fellowship and confined to no nation." It was all-important to prevent an Israelite city from falling into the hands of a heathen people, and have the rites of Mo'lech substituted for the worship of Jehovah. **Which seemeth him good—**Expression of their strong confidence in God and humble submission to his will. Faith in God is the root of all Christian courage "and every Christian excellence." "The battle is the Lord's" (1 Sam. 17: 47). **13. Draw nigh unto the battle (R. V.)—**However numerous and formidable our enemies may be we must not give way before them for a single moment, but courageously confront them and put them to flight. **They fled—**They retreated before the onward march of Joab's army. **14. They likewise fled—**The army of Am'mon, on seeing the Syrians fleeing, lost courage and grew disheartened. Cowardice on the part of leaders will infect instantly all the rank and file of their followers. **Returned—**No good reason can be given why Joab did not follow up his victory, unless the lateness of the season (ch. 11: 1), and the certainty of a long siege before Rabbah could be taken. **15. Gathered themselves together—**The Syrians had been broken and dispersed, but probably with small loss. They speedily make a new attempt to regain their lost honors and check the progress of David's kingdom. **16. Had-a-re'zer—**King of Zobah. **Brought out—**Troops were summoned from all parts of the Aran'ean states, with the view of making good their cause against the Israelites. He'lam—was made the common meeting ground. **17. Gathered all Israel together—**Whether