

Lesson IX.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON

December 1, 1907

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—After his great victory, the people wished to make Gideon king, but he refused this title, and continued to rule as judge during twenty peaceful years, ch. 8 : 28. His son Abimelech, however, did become king, reigning three years, ch. 9 : 22. At his death, rule by "judges" was restored. Several less important holders of this office are named in ch. 10, and chs. 11 and 12 tell of Jephthah, one of the most famous. Then comes the story of Samson, who was raised up of God to judge Israel and to perform many valiant deeds against the Philistines, who were now their oppressors.

GOLDEN TEXT—Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.—Eph. 6 : 10.

Memorize vs. 28-30. THE LESSON PASSAGE—Judges 16: 21-31. Read Judges, chs. 13 to 16.

21 ¹ But the Philistines ² took him, and put out his eyes, and ³ brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

22 Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

23 ¹ Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Da'gon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Sam'son our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our ⁴ hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which ⁵ slew many of us.

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Sam'son, that he may make us sport. And they called for Sam'son out of the prison house; and he made ⁶ them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

26 And Sam'son said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house ⁷ standeth, that I may lean upon them.

Revised Version—¹ And they; ² laid hold on; ³ they; ⁴ hand; ⁵ hath slain; ⁶ sport before them; ⁷ resteth; ⁸ rested, and leaned upon them, the one; ⁹ Omit of.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I. B. R. A.)—M.—Samson and the lion, Judges 14 : 1-9. T.—Philistines slain, Judges 15 : 9-17. W.—Samson defeated, Judges 16 : 4-20. Th.—The death of Samson, Judges 16 : 21-31. F.—The snare, Deut. 12 : 28-32. S.—Consent not I Prov. 1 : 7-19. S.—The gospel armor, Eph. 6 : 10-20.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. SAMSON CAPTURED.—21-22. The Philistines. See Geography Lesson. Took him; Samson. His father's name was Manoah, of the tribe of Dan, and his birth was announced beforehand to his parents by an angel, ch. 13 : 2-25. He was a Nazirite (ch 13 : 5), that is, one pledged not to use grapes, wine, or strong drink, to allow the hair to go uncut, and to avoid touching dead bodies, Num. 6 : 2-6. Samson was famed

**DAGON, THE FISH GOD**

The principal idol worshipped by the Philistines.

for his strength. For some of his wonderful feats, see chs. 14 : 5, 6; 14 : 19; 15 : 3-8; 15 : 9-14; 15 : 15-17; 16 : 2, 3. How he was at last captured is told in ch 16 : 4-20 Put out his eyes; to lessen the chances of escape, and render him harmless if he should escape. Fetters of brass; on hands and feet. Did grind; the work of the lowest slaves, if it was a hand mill, of asses or mules, if it was a larger mill. Hair . . began to grow; and with its growth the strength began to come back which he had lost when he had practically broken his

Nazirite vow, by putting it in Delilah's power to have his head shaven, vs. 17-19.

II. SAMSON MOCKED.—23-26. Lords of the Philistines; their chief men. Dagon their god. The name signifies "fish" (see Illustration). To rejoice; because the enemy they had so greatly dreaded was now in their hands. Our God hath delivered Samson. They impiously boasted in their god, as if he were stronger than the God of Israel. People saw him; gloating over the helpless prisoner. Praised their god; ascribing their triumph to this lifeless idol (see Ps. 115 : 4-8). Hearts were merry; with feasting and wine drinking. Call . . Samson; now at their beck and bidding. Make us sport; dance and make music. Apparently Samson was set to make sport in a sort of courtyard in front of the temple, where the common people gathered. Between the pillars. Dr. Thomson thinks that the temple was built on the brow of a hill, so that the back of the roof rested on the hill itself and the front on two pillars. Suffer (permit) me . . feel . . pillars . . lean upon them; as if for rest after his exertions.

III. SAMSON VICTORIOUS.—27, 28. House . . full; underneath the roof. Upon the roof; which was probably flat. The higher classes were probably on or under this roof. Avenged . . for my two eyes. No doubt Samson's desire for revenge was wrong (Rom. 12 : 19); but he had suffered great cruelty. Besides, the Philistines were