



LESSON I.—OCTOBER 4.

David Brings Up the Ark.

II. Samuel vi., 12.

Golden Text.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.
Psalm lxxxiv., 4.

Home Readings.

- Monday, Sept. 28.—II. Sam. vi., 1-11.
Tuesday, Sept. 29.—II. Sam. vi., 12-19.
Wednesday, Sept. 30.—I. Chron. xiii., 1-14.
Thursday, Oct. 1.—I. Chron. xv., 25; xvi. 3.
Friday, Oct. 2.—Ex. xxv., 10-22.
Saturday, Oct. 3.—I. Sam. iv., 1-11.
Sunday, Oct. 4.—I. Sam. vi., 10; vii., 2.

1. Again David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel thirty thousand.
2. And David arose and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.

3. And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.

4. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

5. And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

6. And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

7. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

8. And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-uzzah to this day.

9. And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?

10. So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

11. And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

12. And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

(By R. M. Kurtz.)

INTRODUCTION.

In our last lesson about David, three weeks ago, we saw him at last come to be king over all Israel. The tribes that refused, under Abner's leadership, to recognize King David, at last acknowledged their allegiance to him. Abner and Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, who opposed David, soon met violent deaths as we learn from the Scripture which comes between the last regular lesson and this one. David did not find the opening years of his reign entirely peaceful, for his old enemies the Philistines gave him trouble, though he

conquered them, and there were other conflicts as well.

But David was not content to be merely a conqueror of enemies; he sought to serve God in a high and true sense, and to better the condition of his people. He brought about a revival of religion, which under Saul had suffered a decline. In I. Chronicles we learn still more fully of the king's labors in this direction.

David was at the time of this lesson about forty-four years old, having reigned for fourteen years. The ark representing the presence of God, had for about seventy years been at Kirjath-jearim, a few miles west of Jerusalem, and in this lesson we have the account of David's effort to bring it to Jerusalem, which he had taken and made his capital. So far as any physical thing could be such, the ark was the centre of the religious life of the people, for, as has been said, it represented the very presence of God.

THE LESSON STUDY.

1. 'Again David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.' When we come to examine into the gathering of this large company, we see its great significance. In I. Chronicles xiii. we have a somewhat more extended account, and discover that these thirty thousand chosen men were gathered from the utmost parts of the country, so that this great religious act was calculated to interest and impress the whole nation. They assembled at Baale, that is, Kirjath-jearim.

2. 'And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him,' etc. The name 'Baale' is an old name for Kirjath-jearim. The purpose of this gathering is stated in this verse, and special mention is here made of the name of the Lord. The Revised Version says, 'Which is called by the Name, even the name of the Lord of hosts.' The word Lord, when printed in capitals, as here, is the translation of 'Jehovah,' meaning the absolute sovereign over every being and thing in the universe. The cherubim were the figures upon the ark.

3. 'And they set the ark of God upon a new cart,' etc. They showed a desire to reverence the ark by devoting to it a cart that had never been used for other purposes. Still, this was not according to the law governing the removal of the ark from one place to another. Read Numbers iv., to learn how the ark was to be transported. This disregard of God's law led to disaster. It will not do to seek to honor or obey him in our own way; we must do it in his way. 'To obey is better than sacrifice.'

4. 'Gibeah,' referred to in this verse, is better translated 'the hill,' meaning a place at Kirjath-jearim.

5. 'And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments,' etc. The bringing up of the ark was to be the beginning of a spiritual revival, and it was a time for expressing great joy. Music has always been a means for expressing joy, so that it was very natural that David and those with him should employ various instruments of music.

6. 'Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God.' Had the ark been carried in the proper way this would not have occurred. The stumbling oxen led one of two brothers who were driving the cart to reach out to steady the ark, as it was being shaken.

7. 'And God smote him there for his error,' etc. This was not a sudden, unaccountable act of God, for we read in Numbers iv. the rules governing the carrying of the ark, and in the 15th verse it says, 'But they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die.' Israel had been neglecting their religion, and forgetting God's law, and now a terribly impressive object lesson was given in the presence of thirty thousand chosen representatives from all parts of their country. It was as though God would warn the whole nation again of the results of disregarding his holy law, and at the same time remind them of his power.

8. 'And David was displeased,' etc. This word seems not to convey exactly the right idea. David was dismayed at the sudden turn of affairs.

9. 'And David was afraid of the Lord that day,' etc. He was called from his rejoicing to realize that the divine will had been neglected. Zeal alone will not do. It must be backed by the observance of law.

10. 'So David would not remove the ark of the Lord,' etc. The enthusiasm and joy were gone, and he now realized that he must learn how to conduct this thing rightly.

11. 'The ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months,' etc. Obed-edom was of the 'sons of Kohath,' appointed to the special service of carrying the ark and other things of the tabernacle. Read Numbers iv., 1-4; and I. Chronicles xxvi., 1-8.

12. 'So David went and brought up the ark,' etc. He had heard how God blessed Obed-edom, who cared for the ark three months. This encouraged David, making him realize that the presence of the ark was a blessing, when accompanied by obedience, and he now completed the task of bringing it to Jerusalem. The presence and gifts of God are blessings to any life, but the responsibilities they involve must not be overlooked.

Next week we have, 'God's Covenant with David,' II. Sam. vii., 4-16.

C. E. Topic

Sunday, Oct. 4.—Topic—Great men of the Bible: what Abraham teaches us. Gen. xii., 1-8; Heb. vii., 1-10; Rom. iv., 1-9.

Junior C. E. Topic.

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK.

Monday, Sept. 28.—Hindering winds. John vi., 18.

Tuesday, Sept. 29.—Faith and courage. Isa. xxvi., 3.

Wednesday, Sept. 30.—Being cheerful. Matt. xiv., 26, 27.

Thursday, Oct. 1.—An island of safety. Ps. xxvii., 5.

Friday, Oct. 2.—Thanks for deliverance. Ps. cxvi., 16.

Saturday, Oct. 3.—A desired haven. Ps. cvii., 30.

Sunday, Oct. 4.—Topics—Lessons from Paul's shipwreck. Acts xxvii., 21-44.

Visit and Invite.

(The Rev. James Mursell.)

The teacher should visit his scholars in their homes. Knowledge of their home surroundings, and of the influence predominating there, is vital. Visiting should be systematic, and be carried on simply on the ground of his relation to his class. Absence and sickness offer special opportunities for visits, and for personal conversation upon spiritual themes. If flowers or fruit accompany the visit so much the better. A jelly sent to a sick boy may win him for Christ, where what he would call 'preaching' repels. Birthdays are another opening for individual effort. Children love to be remembered on these anniversaries, and a letter—of course sent through the post—is keenly relished, and often treasured all through life.

Open your home to your scholars. If you have a pear tree in the garden, ask the boys to come and gather the fruit for you, and give them two or three to take away. Set apart an evening once a month and let them come and play a game or two, and finish up with cakes and hot milk, and family prayers.

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