

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1876 by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

CONNECTED HISTORY.—The ark being in a tabernacle orient at Jerusalem, David proposes to build a house for the Lord. Nathan the prophet, at God's command, forbids him, but tells him his son shall build a house for the Lord.

MARCH 5.] LESSON X. GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID. About 1042 B. C. READ 2 Sam. vii. 18-29. RECITE v. 27.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.—Act xiii. 23. CENTRAL TRUTH.—By grace we stand.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Sam. vii. 1-29. T.—1 Chron. xvii. 1-27. W.—Ps. lxxxix. 1-52. Th.—Isa. xiv. 1-25. F.—2 Sam. xxii. 1-51. Sa.—Jol. xvii. 8-17. S.—Ps. xlviii. 1-14.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) DAVID'S THANKSGIVINGS. (II.) DAVID'S PRAYER.

I. DAVID'S THANKSGIVINGS.—(18.) then, after Nathan's message; sat before the Lord, in the tent where the ark was (see picture); brought me, from a shepherd-boy to be a king; (19.) great while to come, in promising future honors to his house; manner of men (a difficult clause). See 1 Chron. xvii. 17. (21.) own heart, thine own wish or will; great things, made David a great king. (24.) confirmed, made firm. See 1 Chron. xvii. 22.

I. Questions.—What did Nathan say to David about the house of the Lord? Why was David not to build it? Who would build it? Where did David go after hearing Nathan's message? For what did he feel thankful to God? What great things had God done for David? What great things had he done for Israel? What feelings should we have for God's great blessings to us?

II. DAVID'S PRAYER. (25.) the word, the promise; thy servant, David; his house, his family or children; establish, fix, make sure. (26.) magnified, made great. (27.) revealed, or (Heb.) "uncovered the ear;" saying, or "when he said" (?); therefore, having been once heard, he comes again. (28.) words be true. See John xvii. 47. (29.) continue, as thou hast promised; be blessed, as it was in Christ's coming through "his house."

II. Questions.

—What was David's first request? v. 25. Who had promised this? State his second request? v. 26. What prayer of David had God heard? v. 27. What goodness had God promised David? vs. 12, 13. State David's final request. v. 29. How was this prayer answered?



WORSHIP BEFORE THE TEMPLE WAS BUILT.

Illustration—God's promises are not to reward the lazy. They are as a boat in crossing a stream—of real value when plied with the two oars of prayer and faith.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—David conquers the Philistines and Moabites, dedicates silver, gold, and treasures of the spoils to God; is kind to Saul's grandson; conquers the Ammonites; commits adultery, and causes the death of Uriah; is reproved for his sin; repents; his sons act wickedly, Absalom slays Amnon his brother and flees to Geshur; David, persuaded by Joab, permits Absalom to return to Jerusalem.

MARCH 12.] LESSON XI. ABSALOM'S REBELLION. [About 1221 B. C.]

GOLDEN TEXT.—The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.—Prov. xxx. 17. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Sin becomes its own punishment.

READ 2 Sam. xv. 1-14. RECITE vs. 5, 6. DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Sam. xv. 1-14. T.—1 Kings i. 5-31. W.—2 Sam. xii. 1-14. Th.—Ps. xli. 1-18. F.—Prov. xxii. 1-23. Sa.—Ps. xii. 1-13. S.—Ps. lv. 1-23.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Notice that Absalom's pride, love of display, and wicked ambition led him to lie to the people, and to flatter them, to lie to his father, and finally to open rebellion. Love of display is one of the greatest dangers to the young now, as it was in Absalom's day.

NOTES.—Absalom, third son of David, born at Hebron, counted the most handsome man of his time, as apportioned an indecent as he was good-looking; his mother was Maachab, daughter of the king of Geshur, a country east of the Jordan, and north-west of Bashan, of which Absalom's grandfather was king. Syria, ancient Aram, a country extending from the Mediterranean Sea to the river Tigris, and from Palestine to Mount Taurus, length (north and south) about

300 miles, breadth about 130 to 150 miles. Abithophel, a noted councillor at David's court. 2 Sam. xv. 12; xvi. 23. Gihon, "exile," a city in the mountains of Judah, probably near Hebron; its exact location is not known.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) ABSALOM'S AMBITION. (II.) ABSALOM'S REBELLION.

I. ABSALOM'S AMBITION. (1.) after this, after Absalom's sins, flight to Geshur, and return to Jerusalem and forgiveness by the king; chariots, war chariots, to make a great show; fifty men to run, as Adonijah had. Men running before kings or great persons is still common in the East; these runners announce the coming of the great man. (2.) gate, Eastern cities are surrounded by high walls, having strong gates which are closed at night and in time of danger. At one of these gates courts were held; controversy, a dispute, a suit at law; for judgment, the king to hear and decide the case in dispute; Absalom called, he assumed to do what the king only was authorized to do. (3.) good, your case is just, you are in the right; deputed, appointed. (4.) made judge, see his wicked ambition; justice, but see how unjust he was toward the king. (5.) obedience, to make a low bow of respect for him as the king's son; kissed him, in pretended love and friendship. (6.) stole, deceived the people, or "gained their love" by his artful ways.

I. Questions.—Why did Absalom flee to Geshur? 2 Sam. xiii. 32-37. Who brought him back? 2 Sam. xiv. 23. How long did he stay in Jerusalem before he saw his father? 2 Sam. xiv. 28. What is said of his beauty? 2 Sam. xiv. 25. What great show did he make? v. 1. In what public place did he stand? For what purpose? What position did he wish to gain? v. 4. How did he flatter the people? What object had he in this? Why was this conduct wicked?

II. ABSALOM'S REBELLION. (7.) forty years, an obvious though ancient error for four years (Speakers Com.)—that is, four years after his return from Geshur, or, as Josephus says, after the king's pardon. chap. xiv. 33. (8.) a vow, he probably had never made such a vow, but lied to his father. (10.) spies, persons sent out secretly to do any work or gain any information. (11.) simplicity, not suspecting any wrong; knew not, knew not of Absalom's purpose to rebel. (12.) conspiracy, an agreement of several persons to do some wicked thing. (13.) after Absalom, he was popular. (14.) smite the city, David wished to spare the city the horrors of a siege.

II. Questions.—What excuse did Absalom give for leaving Jerusalem? Who gave consent? Whether did Absalom go? What did he send out through the land? What were the people to shout? What did Joab do with Absalom? Why were they not guilty of treason? For whom did David send? Why did he send for him? With whom did Abithophel join? v. 31. What news came to David? v. 13. What did he now propose? Why? Why is it dangerous and wicked to cherish a vain and ambitious spirit?



ANCIENT CHARIOT.

HOUSEHOLD ALTARS.

In the olden time the father of the household was its prophet and priest. The father of the present fast age can hardly find time to make the acquaintance of his own children, to say nothing of decent and devout attention to the proprieties and sanctities of family religion.

It is a sad fact that, in many households, nominally Christian, there is no family altar and no household recognition of God. The Bible is an unopened book, and there is no open acknowledgment of allegiance to God, the Father in heaven. A godless, prayerless household is a terrible spectacle, especially when there is an outward profession of better things. The evils are magnified manifold where there are young children. What can compensate for the sweet and tender influences of well-conducted family worship on the minds and hearts of the little ones? Parents who omit it not only provoke the wrath of the Lord, but neglect the best and most natural means of religious education, and thus put in fearful jeopardy the souls of their children.

It was not an idle superstition that bade the simple-minded, devout Norwegian girl to flee from the house where she had engaged service, because there were no "prayers in the house." A prayerless soul is a fearful anomaly. But a home where children are born, and nurtured and reared, where loved ones sicken and suffer and die, where, in the eyes of the children, the father should be the type of the "All Father in heaven," and the mother the ideal of all that is tender and affectionate and devout, where all precious memories should be garnered like hidden treasures, and where all holy and pure influences and associations should pervade the very air—with no open Bible and no voice of song, prayer or praise—what shall we say of that home? One can

hardly conceive it possible that such a home could exist in a Christian land. No wonder that the curse of the Lord hangs in dark relief over the families that call not on his name.

We alluded to family worship as a religious educator. One can hardly over-estimate the power of this service over young hearts, if wisely and earnestly conducted.

A daughter of irreligious parents spent, not long since, a few months in a Christian home. Selected passages of Scripture, usually the readings connected with the current Sabbath school lesson, were read, each member taking a verse in course. Not seldom there was some familiar talk and comment on the passage and the Sabbath lesson. Then a song, and then all bowed in brief and simple thanksgiving and prayer for daily grace and protection. This gay young girl soon found the God thus honored and worshipped in this house to be her God and Saviour. Not long after, another daughter, gay, cultured, and highly educated, spent a few weeks in this humble home. She, too, was sweetly won to the religion so magnified in the house in which she was a guest. Going to her own home, she preached Christ to her mother, and now all three are rejoicing in the Lord. These girls attributed their conversion to the indirect yet powerful appeal that day by day came to their hearts and consciences from these simple ordinary services of family religion.

We fear that pastors and church officers are not watchful and faithful in the oversight of the church touching this matter, especially in the case of young couples just setting up their homes. Habits of neglect once formed are not easily overcome. Starting right at the outset is often a guarantee of life-long fidelity. Let the voice of the preacher and the Christian teacher be lifted up with no uncertain sound on this subject. We need nothing so much as consecrated homes.—Presbyterian at Work.

KINGSLEY AND THE BOYS.—His sympathy with the sports of boys was naturally strong and keen. One morning I was asking him about the position of his house in Hampshire, and he told me that some of his land was within reach of the boys of Wellington College, when they were abroad engaged in paper-chases. "Young rascals," he said, "they play the mischief with my fences too. One day a great gap was pointed out to me in one of my fences, and I was told that it was made by those young fellows. So I got wind of their next paper-chase in my direction, and I went out to read my friends a lesson respecting the property of their neighbors. Sure enough, before long I saw the 'hares' coming straight towards me and my gap, and I prepared to meet them. But when they were close upon me, the excitement of the chase, which had been for some moments coming over me, got the better of my resolution; and if I did not throw down my stick and tear off with them as fast as my legs would carry me! In a hundred yards or so I was dead beat, and when the pack came a minute or two later, and set to work to break down my fences worse than ever, I had not the breath in me to remonstrate with them, even if I had had the inclination."—Good Words.

OBEDIENCE IN SCHOOL.—Obedience to properly constituted authority is one of the most valuable lessons of their lives, and here is just the place for them to learn it. Never allow a scholar to argue, or answer you back. You place yourself on his level, and lose all the advantage of your position. Never promise or threaten anything which you are not certain you can and will carry out. Nothing so quickly wins children's confidence, and establishes your authority, as to find that you invariably keep your word.

I have known more than one country town whose whole people were elevated and improved to a high standard by the interest one clergyman took in the public schools. I believe that if a small body of intelligent, educated, earnest women would devote their energies to the improvement of the schools in every town, they would do more for the moral, intellectual, and industrial improvement of the country than any other agency I can imagine.—Mrs. Cheney, in Journal of Education.

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The NORTHERN MESSENGER is printed and published on the 1st and 15th of every month, at Nos. 218 and 220 St. James street, Montreal, by JOHN DOUGALL & SON, composed of John Dougall, of New York, and John Redpath Dougall and J. D. Dougall, of Montreal.