

the river would not be very formidable to modern science, yet to those primitive tribes it was a serious barrier. The crossing of it

was a great crisis in Israel's history, and seemed to cut them off forever from the east, their original home.

APPLICATION

Sanctify yourselves, v. 5. Cromwell's Ironsides were almost invincible in battle. Like a whirlwind, they swept the enemy from before them. The secret of their prowess did not lie in discipline, though that had much to do with their victories. It did not depend on their human leader, though he was a great factor in the winning of their triumphs. But these men prayed before they fought. They went against the foe, each one feeling that he was fighting God's battle in God's strength. No force could withstand men fired with such a conviction. Before Israel could conquer Canaan, their minds and hearts must be turned to God as the Source of their strength. Then, and then only, would the conquest be assured to them. All success, real and enduring, is conditioned on our realizing God's presence with us, and His energy working in us.

Take up the ark of the covenant, v. 6. It was a great day in British history when King John signed Magna Charta, on the Plain of Runnymede, by the banks of the Thames. To that document, we owe the protection of our life, liberty and property. It is the symbol of a pledge and a freedom. But even more important than civil rights, are those of the spiritual realm. The ark with its sacred contents, was God's pledge to Israel that He would protect and guide them. We see the ark no more; but we have the cross of Jesus Christ, than which there can be no clearer sign or stronger guarantee of God's love to us and His purpose to save us. Beyond all price are the privileges secured to us by Calvary.

Magnify thee, v. 7. There is a little poem that tells how a German peasant, tired with the day's toil, sat at evening in his clay cottage, and while he sat he slept, and as he slept, he dreamed. Suddenly, the low roof became lofty like the dome of a cathedral, the small windows became large, and of gloriously painted glass, and the rude fire-

place was changed into a golden altar, before which, he and his household became ministering priests. The sense of God's presence magnifies and glorifies every life. Its commonplace is redeemed, its limitations are broken, and every act becomes a divine service.

Hereby ye shall know, v. 10. It is not alone what a thing is, but what it represents, that lays hold of the heart. Behind the visible

is the invisible, and it is by the invisible that we are all, consciously or unconsciously, most moved. A weather-beaten rag, shot-torn and stained with blood, may scarcely be worth rag-gatherers' while to pick up; but it is the Union Jack, and speaks of deeds that can never be forgotten. There have been crises when the waving of that flag was half omnipotent. The intrinsic value of the ark would not be very great, but when faith touched it, and hope shone upon it, and precious memories were woven around it, it became something of infinite value. A piece of broken bread is one of the commonest things in the world. But Christ took it and blessed it, and exalted it into a symbol of His own sacrifice, and now that broken bread awakens the holiest feelings of the soul.

Behold the ark, v. 11. No doubt the Israelites left many things behind them, as they crossed the Jordan, the accumulated

rubbish of their wilderness journey,—useless baggage, cast-off clothing, utensils; but they took the ark with them. So there is one supreme classification for every one in life: things that matter, and things that do not matter. Every call that comes to us to enter new and untried ways, should be a time of sifting, a summons to leave behind our foolish sins, our worthless ways, and to tighten our hold on truth and goodness.

And it shall come to pass as soon as, v. 13.

Long ago in Syria there lived a brave warrior, trusted and honored by his king. But his life was blighted: he was a leper. A little slave

Prayed Before
They Fought

The Meaning
Behind

The Ark and
the Cross

Things That
Count

The Common-
place Glorified

The Great
from the Little