

Companionship with Jesus.

Oh, blessed fellowship divine!
Oh, joy supremely sweet!
Companionship with Jesus here,
Makes life with bliss replete.
In union with the purest One
I find my heaven on earth begun.
Oh, wondrous bliss! oh, joy sublime!
I've Jesus with me all the time.

I'm walking close to Jesus' side,
So close that I can hear
The softest whispers of His love
In fellowship so dear.
And feel His great, almighty hand
Protects me in this hostile land.
Oh, wondrous bliss! oh, joy sublime!
I've Jesus with me all the time.

I'm leaning on His loving breast,
Along life's weary way;
My path, illumined by His smiles,
Grows brighter day by day.
No woes, no foes, my heart can fear
With my almighty friend so near.
Oh, wondrous bliss! oh, joy sublime!
I've Jesus with me all the time.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

B.C. 1114.] **LESSON I.** [Oct. 7.]

ELI'S DEATH.

1 Sam. 4. 10-18. Commit to mem. vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.

His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.—1 Sam. 3, 13.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The exceeding sinfulness of sin.

TIME.—B.C. 1114. About 20 years after the last lesson.

PLACE.—(1) Ebenezer, named from Samuel's victory 20 years later. It was a few miles north-west of Jerusalem, and 15 south-west of Shiloh. (2) Shiloh, the capital, 17 miles north-west of Jerusalem.

SAMUEL, about 80 years old.

ELI.—Judge and priest for 40 years. Now 98 years old. He was a Levite, and descendant of Aaron through Ithamar.

HOPHNI, "the fighter," and **PHINEHAS**, "the brazen-mouthed," degenerate sons of Eli.

SAMSON, in another part of Israel, was just beginning his exploits. B.C. 1116-1096.

INTERVENING EVENTS.—The Israelites, rejoicing that the prophetic gift has returned in the person of Samuel (ch. 4. 1), and possibly encouraged by Samuel's victorious death, rise and attempt to throw off the yoke of the Philistines. They are defeated in the first battle of Ebenezer, with the loss of 4,000 men. At the suggestion of the elders, they send to Shiloh for the ark. It arrives with Hophni and Phinehas, and, encouraged by its presence, while the Philistines are dismayed, they join battle again.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—10. *To his feet*—i.e., home (Josh. 22. 8). 11. *Ark of God taken*—A proof that God had departed from them. *Hophni and Phinehas slain*—The sign fulfilled, foretold by Samuel (ch. 2. 34). 12. *Ran*—A professional runner, accomplishing his 15 miles in the hours of daylight remaining after the battle. A tradition of the Jews says it was Saul fleeing with the tables rescued from the ark. 13. *Seat*—A judgment-seat or throne at the entrance of the temple enclosure, above and beyond the city. *Heart trembled*—For the ark he had let go to the battle. 16. *I am he*—"He had to announce himself to the blind old man who cannot see the tale of disaster which his dust-soiled, blood-stained garments tell all too plainly to the people."—*Cambridge Bible*. 18. *Fell off the seat backward*—"His seat or throne, without a back, stood with the side against the jamb of the gate, leaving the passage through the gate quite clear, but placed so that every one passing through the gate must pass in front of him."

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The three battles of Ebenezer.—Eli's life and character.—The condition of Israel.—The responsibility of Eli's sons for Israel's condition.—Position of Samuel at this time.—Reasons for the defeat.—Hophni and Phinehas.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How old was Samuel at this time? What were the relations between the Philistines and the Israelites? What led

the Israelites to engage in the first battle of Ebenezer? What led to the second battle? When was the third fought, and with what results? (1 Sam. 7. 3-14).

SUBJECT: SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

1. **ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENT** (vs. 10, 11).—What indications appear that Israel had neglected the true worship of God? (ch. 2. 17). What superstition had taken the place of piety? (ch. 4. 3). Where was the battlefield? With what spirit did the Philistines fight? (vs. 7-9). With what did the Israelites? (v. 5). What was the result? Where did the Israelites go? What became of the ark? What did this show respecting the Divine presence? Were the Israelites punished for their own sins, or the sins of others? Upon whom rested the chief responsibility for this disaster?

2. **THE PUNISHMENT OF HOPHNI AND PHINEHAS** (v. 11).—Who were these two men? What was their character? (ch. 2. 12-16). How had they been brought up? Where had they been brought up? How came they with the ark? In fulfillment of what prophecy was this? (ch. 2. 34). Of what further event was this to be the sign? (ch. 2. 31-36). Who was responsible for these deaths?

3. **ELI'S CHASTISEMENT** (vs. 12-18).—What is the difference between punishment and chastisement? What was Eli's sin? (Ans. Golden Text). What spirit did he show under reproof? (ch. 3. 18). What was wanting in this spirit? Where was Eli waiting for news of the battle? How was the news brought? What was his physical condition? For what was his affection strongest? What four things did the runner tell? Which blow smote heaviest? Name some of Eli's good characteristics. Name some of his defects. How far was he responsible for the disaster of the battle? How does Eli's conduct show the sinfulness of sin? What was there glorious in his death? What features of sadness? What warnings?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. The sins of a good man have direful consequences.
2. A worthy example before children not sufficient without stern restraint.
3. Humility and submission are not enough without repentance and reform. (ch. 2. 18).
4. The strictness and severity with which a loving God exacts punishment from the good and the bad.
5. No sin is small, no act insignificant.
6. The honour and the service of God must lie more upon our hearts than children or parents.
7. "It is an honourable and glorious death to die from concern for the honour of God."

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

1. What was the result of the first and second battles of Ebenezer? **ANS.** Defeat of the Israelites.
2. Who perished in the second battle? **ANS.** The sons of Eli?
3. What was captured? **ANS.** The ark of God.
4. How did the tidings affect Eli? **ANS.** He fell from his seat and died.

B.C. 1094.] **LESSON II.** [Oct. 14.]

SAMUEL THE JUDGE.

1 Sam. 7. 5-17. Commit to memory vs. 12, 13.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.—1 Sam. 7. 12.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.

TIME.—B.C. 1094. About 20 years after last lesson (see chs. 6. 1, and 7. 2.)

PLACE.—Mizpeh, the watch-tower, a conspicuous hill about 4½ miles north-west of Jerusalem.

SAMUEL, now about 50 years old, living at Ramah, his native place. Known as a prophet (1 Sam. 3. 20), he must have been gradually preparing the people for the great reformation. Possibly the "schools of the prophets" were already at work under his supervision.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—The ark captured by the Philistines, as recorded in our last lesson, remained with them for seven months. It was then returned with precautions which showed the Divine care for it, and was brought to Kirjath-jearim, 10 miles a little north of west from Jerusalem. Here it remained nearly 50 years. Shiloh was laid waste, and the tabernacle removed thence from city to city, until at the time of the erection of Solomon's temple it was either

taken down or left to perish and be forgotten. The ark was never restored to it. There was no central place of worship. The times are ripe for a reform, and a reformer appears.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—3. *Ashtaroth*—Plural of Ashtoreth, meaning the many images of the female deity of the Phoenicians. *Prepare your hearts*—Fix your hearts on God. 4. *Baalim*—Plural of Baal, the male deity of the Phoenicians, the sun. 6. *Poured it out*—(1) Showing that, like this water, their promises could never be returned to them. Hence, it was an act of confirmation of their words. (2) A confession of weakness. (3) A complete renunciation of their idolatry, none was left. 7. *Afraid*—A fear that threw them on the Divine aid. (Ps. 56. 3, 8). *Cease not*—Importunate prayer. 9. *Burnt offering*—"The sacrifice" was a substratum for prayer. A lamb, for they were new creatures by repentance. *Heard*—Answered. *As Samuel was offering*—The answer immediate. (Is. 65. 24). 14. *Amorites*—"Highlanders," dwellers in the mountains of Palestine. 15. *All his days*—Sharing his authority with his sons and Saul.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—History of the ark.—History of the tabernacle.—The relations of the Philistines and Israelites.—Forms of heathen worship in Israel.—Gatherings at Mizpeh.—Cities restored by the Philistines.—Analysis of Samuel's sermon.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How many years intervene between this lesson and the last? What had befallen the ark? How old is Samuel now? What has he been doing? What change has gradually come over Israel? (ch. 7. 2). How are we to account for this change?

SUBJECT: REPENTANCE AND ITS FRUITS.

1. **AN EXHORTATION TO REPENTANCE** (v. 3).—On what condition does Samuel base his appeal? What follows this condition? What act of ours corresponds to the putting away strange gods? What is meant by "prepare your hearts"? What follows consecration? What is meant by "only"? Have we reason to suppose that this was a new appeal of Samuel's? What gave it unusual effect?

2. **WORKS MEET FOR REPENTANCE** (vs. 4-8).—What was the immediate result of Samuel's sermon? What mass-meeting was called? Where? For what purposes? What religious rites were performed? What was their significance? What effect did this have upon the Philistines? Why? What effect does a revival of religion have on the enemies of Christ? Why was it a bad time for the Philistines to attack Israel? Why was Israel "afraid"? What was the result of this fear? What does the appeal to Samuel show?

3. **IMMEDIATE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE** (vs. 9-12).—What did Samuel do? What other examples of intercessory prayer can you give? What was the answer? How soon did it come? Who routed the Philistines? Who pursued them? What was the memorial stone called? Why?

4. **PERMANENT FRUITS OF REPENTANCE** (vs. 13-17).—What was the final result of the battle? Did the Philistines ever trouble Israel again during Samuel's life? What is the meaning of v. 13? What office did Samuel hold the rest of his days? What is the meaning of "judge"? Trace his yearly circuit. When did he build an altar? Where was the tabernacle? What characteristics did Samuel have fitting him for a reformer? What advantages of training did he have?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. The fruit of long labour may be reaped in a day.
2. All exhortation must close with a *Now*.
3. Repentance and confession must go before reformation.
4. Repentance of heart must be followed by works meet for repentance.
5. Victory follows consecration.
6. A revival of religion excites opposition.
7. Better piety without the ark, than the ark without piety.
8. Effective help is Divine help.
9. The glory of salvation is to be ascribed to God.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

5. What led to the third battle of Ebenezer? **ANS.** The exhortation of Samuel, and the repentance of Israel.
6. How long was this after the second? **ANS.** Twenty years.
7. What was the result? **ANS.** Defeat of the Philistines, and a lasting peace.
8. Who ruled over Israel? **ANS.** Samuel, the last of the judges.

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