



LESSON II. — OCTOBER 9.

Jehoshaphat's Good Reign.

II. Chron. xvii., 1-10. Memory verses 3-6.

Golden Text.

'In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.'—Prov. iii., 6.

Home Readings.

- M. I. Kings xiv., 21-31.—'Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord.'
- T. I. Kings xv., 1-24.—'Abijah and Asa, kings of Judah.'
- W. I. Kings xv., 25-16: 10.—'Nadab, Baasha, and Elah, in Israel.'
- T. I. Kings xvi., 15-34.—'Omri and Ahab did worse than all before them.'
- F. II. Chron. xvii., 1-19.—'Jehoshaphat's good reign.'
- S. Psa. i., 1-6.—'The blessedness of the godly.'
- S. Psa. cxix., 1-40.—'I have stuck unto thy testimonies.'

Lesson Story.

The 'good King Asa,' of Judah, had a good son. Asa died in the forty-first year of his reign, and 'Jehoshaphat, his son, reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.' He continued his father's work of fortifying the land and placing troops in the strong cities of his kingdom. God prospered Jehoshaphat because of his sincerity and loyalty. Because he set himself to serve God, the Lord gave him riches and honor in abundance. In the third year of his reign: he saw that the people needed public instruction in the word of God, so he sent five princes, nine Levites and two priests to teach the people. So these teachers went through all the cities of Judah teaching and expounding the law of God. The people hearkened and obeyed the law and prospered. And on all the nations round there fell a great fear of Jehovah, so they did not dare to fight against his people.

Jehoshaphat made a great mistake later, in his desire for peace and prosperity he made a league with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. The friendship of this wicked man led him into a great deal of trouble and danger, as all evil friendships will. God sent a prophet to reprove Jehoshaphat for this evil alliance, and the king repented and turned back to the Lord.

After this a great army came against Judah and they fasted and prayed to God for help. So the Lord sent word by a prophet that he would fight for them, they need only believe and praise God. They all went out to the battle-field and sang loud praise to Jehovah. Then our God put the enemy to flight, and the men of Judah were three days gathering the spoil. On the fourth day they met in the valley of Berachah to bless and thank the Lord.

Lesson Hints.

'Jehoshaphat'—was thirty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned till he was sixty. His sincerity and loyalty to God gave him one of the most prosperous and honorable reigns in the whole history of Judah. But his foolhardy friendship with the wicked Ahab brought sorrow to him and miserable death to most of his descendants. Beware of the friendship of bad men.

'Strengthened himself against Israel'—his father had already done a great deal of fortifying, but he carried on the work and made as strong defences as possible. The time of peace is the time to fortify. The Lord will not fight our battles unless we are clad in his armor, (Eph. vi., 11-18.)

'Garrisons'—military posts or stations for soldiers.

'Cities of Ephraim'—probably on the southern border of the kingdom of Judah.

'The first ways'—the marginal reading is 'the first ways of his father, and of David.' The first ways of Asa were upright and sincere, but in his old age he forgot the Lord, and walked in his own ways.

'Therefore'—because he sought the Lord. An unbeliever would say that all this pros-

perity and peace came simply because of his fortifying the country so well. But the word of God states the real cause and effect. The 'so's' and 'therefore's' and 'and's' are very interesting connectives in this history. The bible has been called God's interpretation of history. The history of this whole nation is very like the history of individual hearts.

'The book of the law of the Lord'—the most necessary public text-book.

Questions.

1. Whose son was Jehoshaphat?
2. Why did God prosper him?
3. How did he teach the people the law of God?
4. What great mistake did he make?
5. What do we learn from this?

Suggested Hymns.

'Stand up, stand up, for Jesus,' 'He leadeth me,' 'Holy Bible, Book divine,' 'Hear the battle-cry,' 'Have courage, my boy, to say No?'

Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

Walled cities and garrisons, torpedoes and cannon, steamship and man-of-war, all are insecure unless God be a wall of fire around his people. Verses 1-3.

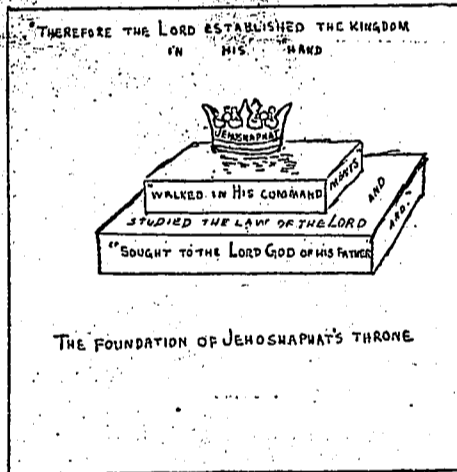
Those who honor the Lord are certainly honored by him, for in the keeping of his commandments there is great reward. Verses 4-6.

When Jehoshaphat abolished the heathen religion he gave the people something better. Verses 7-9.

There is no better code of morals, statute book, or guide to happiness than the bible. Verse 10.

Lesson Illustrated.

Jehoshaphat's reign of peace, prosperity, power and purity were shown to rest upon solid foundations of study of God's word to find out his will and of obedience to it when known.



Study of God's word with earnest seeking after the knowledge of his will and persevering obedience makes a foundation that God can build up into something, noble and enduring.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

Oct. 9.—Patriotism.—Psa. xxxiii., 1-22.

What Our Classes Do For Us.

'I should think that class of big girls would be very grateful to you,' remarked an old lady to Miss L—, our bible-class teacher. 'The things you think to do for them didn't used to be heard of when I went to Sunday-school.'

'Would you like to know what they have done for me?' quietly asked the bible-class teacher. 'I had not had a class for years; I had been kept at home by mother's long illness, and the Sunday Mr. Leek asked me to take that class was the first time I had been in Sunday-school for eight years and a half. After my years of sick-room seclusion I did not feel like going into society, but here was society opened to me, and the kind I love best—fifteen bright girls to influence, fifteen bright girls to grow with. Had he offered me a position as bookkeeper in his store with a salary of six hundred dol-

lars, it would not have given me the thrill that sitting down before those girls did. Girls, and study, and the bible! The three things: I love best in this world, and expect to love best in the next world, where girls study and love God's will, and do it with purified hearts and quickened brains. And now every Sunday we, the growing girls, and the grown-up girl, would help each other for that perfect time. And it was not only Sunday, but all the week! My teacher's bible became a new book to me; every help that could help me became a live thing to me; even in the daily newspapers I found illustrations of the truth we were studying, and I just shouted when in an old magazine, up garret, I found the very story I wanted to teach them, a truth that I could not quite get hold of. I had felt lonely; now I had fifteen new friends, fifteen fresh lives to bring their freshness into mine. Not a week passed that several of them did not call upon me; not a week passed that I did not find an errand into one of their homes, and when one of them went away for a week or two there was a letter or two.

'In six months we had our own little private missionary society, meeting every Thursday afternoon in my small parlor, and in another six months we had our own little Chautauqua circle, meeting also weekly in my small parlor. I am another woman since I took that class four years ago, and when I helped Jennie make her wedding-dress and knit socks for Margaret's wee girl baby, how I felt that I had something new in my life and so much more to live for! Mr. Leek gave me fifteen new friends that day, fifteen life-long friends, if I will keep them so, and who knows but they may be fifteen eternity-long friends?'—American Paper.

Teachers, 'Fire Low!'

(By Geo. Schwitzer, Esq.)

It is possible for teachers, as well as preachers, to be too learned, that is, to teach beyond the depth of their class. A young lad was asked by his aunt what he had learned at Sabbath-school. 'Nothing,' said he, 'the teacher used such big words that I gave up tryin' to understand him.' Dr. Payson's advice to preachers holds good for teachers: 'Paint Jesus Christ upon your canvas, and then hold him up so that not even your little-finger can be seen.'

Bernard, preaching one day very scholastically, the learned thanked him, but not the godly; but, the next day he preached plainly. The good people came, blessing God for him, and giving him many thanks, which some scholars wondered at. 'Ah!' said he, 'yesterday I preached Bernard, but to-day I preached Christ.' 'The very essence of truth,' says Milton, 'is plainness and brightness; the darkness and crookedness are our own.'

In teaching the young it is wise to heed the advice that Cromwell gave his soldiers, 'Fire low!' Teachers should make a point of aiming at the hearts of their scholars. To be too scholastic and too eloquent would be to soar above their heads, thus drawing attention, not to Christ but to ourselves. It is said of Pericles that he never went into the pulpit to make orations to the people without praying to the gods that nothing might go out of his mouth but what might be to the purpose. If prayer went before all teaching, then all teachers would stand behind Christ. If always behind Christ we cannot help being successful, for our souls are in our work. Of course, there are often difficulties in the way, but there is joy in overcoming them.

A husbandman, who had a stony and sterile piece of land, lamented day after day the labor it cost him. When, however, he saw upon it a capital crop, he said to himself, 'Fool that I am! had I thought more of the harvest and less of the labor, how much vexation I might have spared myself!' What a lesson for us, for how frequently we forget that there is to be a harvest while worrying over the burden and the heat of the day. Difficulties met and conquered make of us heroes.—'Evangelical Sunday-school Teacher.'

If you stand half a mile off from a man and throw the gospel at him you will miss him, but if you go close to him and lay hold upon him, giving him a hearty grip of the hand, and show that you have an affection for him, you will, by God's blessing, lead him in the right way.