

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1877 by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON XV. APRIL 15.] NAAMAN THE LEPER. [About 894 B. C.] READ 2 Kings v 1-14. RECITE vs. 10-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.—Ps. li, 7. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Healing comes through humility.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Kings i. 2-17. T.—2 Kings vii. 7-15. W.—Deut. xxxii. 35-47. Th.—Dan. ii. 11-23. F.—John ix. 1-25. Sa.—Luke iv. 18-32. S.—2 Kings v. 1-14.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Elisha healed the deadly pottage at Gilgal; satisfied a hundred men with twenty loaves and full ears of corn. [Naaman was probably cured before the raising of the Shunammite's son. The writer having begun the account of Elisha's visit to Shunem, completes it before noting other events.]

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Study the Old Testament story of the healing of a leper, with the desire of finding how it illustrates the New Testament cure for sin.

NOTES.—Nal-a-man (pleasantness, grace), not mentioned elsewhere except in Luke iv. 27. Jewish tradition says he was the archer who shot king Ahab (1 Kings xxii. 34), and thus gave "deliverance unto Syria." The Assyrian monuments show that Syria had broken away from the Assyrian yoke about this time, and Naaman may have performed his great services in this war for independence. Lep-ro-sy, a most terrible, loathsome and incurable disease, by which the victim's body is slowly consumed. Special laws were given to those who had it (Lev. xiii. xiv.), and they were kept apart from all others by the Jews. The Syrians were less strict in isolating lepers. Leprosy was sometimes a direct judgment from God, as with Moses (Ex. iv. 6), Miriam (Num. xii. 10), Gehazi (2 Kings v. 27), Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 19). Leprosy is a most forcible type of sin. Christ healed it. Matt. viii. 2; Luke xvii. 12. Tal-ent, a silver talent was equivalent to about 1,600 American "trade dollars." Pieces of gold, coined money did not exist. The pieces were cut from bars (Wilkinson says they were sometimes in the form of rings) and weighed. The "piece" or "shekel" was worth from six to ten dollars. The whole value of the silver and gold taken by Naaman is estimated at from \$54,000 to \$75,000, Char-i-ot. Solomon had brought chariots of Egypt and furnished them to the Syrians. 1 Kings x. 29. These were two-wheeled vehicles, drawn by horses, and usually containing two persons. Jor-dan, (the descender), the chief river of Palestine. It is a deep, sluggish stream, of a clayey color. Ab-na-na, "the golden stream" of the Greeks, rises in Anti-Lebanon, 23 miles from Damascus, and runs directly through the city, supplying its orchards and gardens; now the Barada. Phar-par, the modern El-Awaj, rising in Mt. Hermon, and flowing through the plains 8 miles south of Damascus. Both the rivers are clear, bright mountain streams. Da-mas-cus, the capital of Syria, one of the oldest cities in the world, and still flourishing.

PERSONS: Naaman, the little maid, the king of Syria, the king of Israel, Elisha. PLACES, etc.: Damascus, Samaria, the Jordan, Abana, Pharpar.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS. LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) NAAMAN SEEKING TO BE HEALED. (II.) ELISHA'S DIRECTION. (III.) NAAMAN CURED.

I. NAAMAN SEEKING TO BE HEALED. (1.) CAPTAIN OF THE HOSTS, commander-in-chief of the army; HONORABLE, honored, held in favor by the king; LORD... DELIVERANCE, see Notes; LEPER, see Notes. (2.) BY COMPANIES, in marauding bands. (3.) IN SAMARIA, where Elisha had a house. 2 Kings vi. 24, 32. (4.) ONE—i.e., he, Naaman. (5.) KING OF SYRIA, probably Benhadad. TALENTS, PIECES, see Notes, and picture, RAINMENT, often bestowed as gifts, see Gen. xvi. 22; Esther vi. 8; Dan. v. 7. (6.) KING OF ISRAEL, probably Jehoram, son of Ahab. (7.) ME TO RECOVER, leprosy was incurable. Num. xi. 12.

II. ELISHA'S DIRECTION. (9.) HORSES, his whole retinue of attendants. (10.) SENT A MESSENGER, Naaman needed to be taught humility; WASH, bathe; SEVEN TIMES, the Hebrew number for completeness, comp. 1 Kings xviii. 43; Josh. vi. 4. (11.) STRIKE... HAND, move it to and fro. (12.) ABANA AND PHARPAR, see Notes.

III. NAAMAN CURED. (13.) GREAT THING, difficult thing. (14.) WENT DOWN, from Samaria to Jordan there is a rapid descent; the distance is about 30 miles. (15.) THEE CALL AGAIN, became sound.

(II.) QUESTIONS.—Who expostulated with Naaman? What argument did they use? With what effect? Describe the result. What did Christ say of this healing? Luke iv. 27. Mention the cures of leprosy wrought by Christ. See Notes. Of what is leprosy a type? Who can heal the leprosy of sin? What does this lesson teach us— (1.) Of the troubles which may come to great men? (2.) Of the good which a child may do? (3.) Of the natural pride of the human heart? (4.) Of God's cure for sin?

LESSON XVI. APRIL 22.] GEHAZI THE LEPER. [About 894 B. C.] READ 2 Kings v. 20-27. RECITE vs. 25-27. DAILY READINGS.—M.—1 Tim. vi. 6-19. T.—Josh. vii. 16-26. W.—John i. 45-51. Th.—Ps. cxxxix. F.—Num. xii. 1-14. Sa.—2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21. S.—2 Kings v. 20-27.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house.—Prov. xv. 27. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Deceit brings destruction.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Naaman returned from the Jordan, where he had been healed; acknowledged that Jehovah was the true God; urged Elisha to take a present, which the prophet refused; Naaman started for Damascus.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Notice how one sin leads to another until punishment finally comes. Gehazi coveted that which did not belong to him; he lied to Naaman to obtain it; then lied to Elisha to conceal his sin; was found out and terribly punished. Always dare to be true.

NOTES.—Mount E'phra-im. Gilgal and Bethel at each of which was a "school of the prophets," or a theological seminary were both situated on the great central range of hills extending north and south through the territory of Ephraim and called Mt. Ephraim. Tow-er, more properly "the hill," the then well-known hill before Elisha's house which probably cut off the view in the direction taken by Gehazi. Olive yards, olive orchards where the wild olives were set out in rows and grafted. An acre of olive trees sometimes yields a crop worth a hundred dollars.



WEIGHING PIECES OF GOLD. [From Wilkinson's Ancient Egypt.]

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS. LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) GEHAZI'S COVETOUSNESS. (II.) HIS DECEIT. (III.) HIS PUNISHMENT.

I. GEHAZI'S COVETOUSNESS. (20.) SAID, to himself; THIS SYRIAN, this foreigner and enemy of Israel; AS THE LORD LIVETH, here a profane oath. Compare v. 16. (21.) LIGHTED DOWN, an Eastern method of showing respect. See Gen. xxiv. 64. QUESTIONS.—How far had Naaman gone on his journey? What did Gehazi say to himself? What did he make up his mind to do? What oath did he use? What two commandments did he break by his covetousness and by his profanity? Repeat them. What does the Bible say of the love of money? 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. What good rule does it give us? Heb. xiii. 5.

II. HIS DECEIT. (22.) MOUNT EPHRAIM, see Notes; SONS OF THE PROPHETS, see Lesson IX.; A TALENT, from \$1,500 to \$2,000. (23.) BE CONTENT, be pleased to take; TWO TALENTS, one for each of the young men; URGED HIM, pressed them upon him; UPON... HIS SERVANTS, two talents of silver would weigh about 200 pounds. (24.) TOWER, see Notes. (25.) STOOD BEFORE HIS MASTER, Eastern servants stay with their masters except when sent on errands. (26.) WENT NOT MINE HEART, was I not there in spirit? compare 1 Cor. v. 3; IS IT A TIME TO RECEIVE, when Jehovah will be dishonored by it. OLIVE YARDS, etc., probably Gehazi was planning to buy these.

III. HIS PUNISHMENT. (27.) LEPROSY OF NAAMAN, you have got his money, you shall with it his disease; THY SEED, all thy descendants; WHITE AS SNOW, the skin of the leper is of a chalk or snow-white color. Ex. iv. 8; Num. xii. 10. QUESTIONS.—What disease should come upon Gehazi? Upon whom else? For how long? Was the punishment inflicted upon Gehazi immediately? In what form? State some of the other sins of Gehazi. How many commandments did he violate? Which? How are children tempted to covetousness? To profanity? To lying? Mention another awful example of punishment for lying. Acts v. 10. When will secrets surely be exposed? Eccl. xii. 14. What will be the fate of liars? Rev. xxi. 8.

What facts in this lesson teach us— (1.) That being associated with the good does not ensure goodness?

(2.) That covetousness leads to other sins and brings reproach upon religion? (3.) That secret sins will be found out? (4.) That the punishment of sin is certain and terrible? LESSON XVII. APRIL 29.] ELISHA AT DOTHAN. [About 893 B. C.] READ 2 Kings vi. 8-18. RECITE vs. 15-17. DAILY READINGS.—M.—Jer. xxii. 18-32. T.—Gen. xxxvii. 15-28. W.—2 Chron. xxxii. 1-16. Th.—Ps. xlvii. F.—Rom. viii. 28-39. Sat.—2 Kings vi. 8-18. S.—Zech. xii. 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.—2 Kings vi. 16. CENTRAL TRUTH.—On the Lord's side is safety.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—Elisha went with the sons of the prophets to the Jordan, caused the lost axe-head to swim so that it was recovered.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Learn from this lesson that God always takes care of his children; and if they fear and trust him they need not fear anything else.

NOTES.—Camp, the encampment of the army, from a Hebrew word meaning to "sit down" hence "to pitch a tent," or encamp. See Ex. xiii. 20; xvii. 1. Bed-cham-ber. The palace of an Oriental monarch consists of two distinct parts, one accessible to the public and in full view; the other, the harem, jealously concealed. Do-than (the double fountain), a place twelve miles north of Samaria, on a "huge" hill of such shape that the Syrians might easily surround it; while around its sides, between Elisha and the enemy, might appear "the horses and chariots of fire" as often, also, Joseph found his brethren. Gen. xxxvii. 17. The modern name is Dothan.

EXPLANATION AND QUESTIONS. LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE TWO KINGS AT WAR. (II.) THE PLOT AGAINST ELISHA. (III.) THE HEAVENLY DEFENDERS.

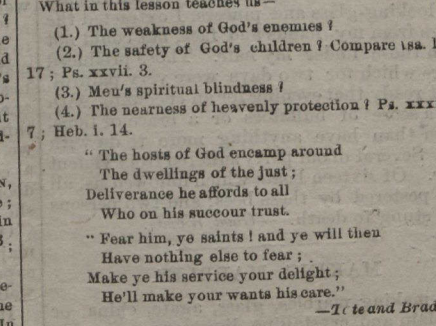
I. THE TWO KINGS AT WAR. (8.) KING OF SYRIA, Benhadad the Great; WARRIED AGAINST, was at war with; ISRAEL, the ten tribes; SERVANTS, military officers; MY CAMP, the camp of my army. (9.) MAN OF GOD, Elisha; PASS NOT, do not leave unfortified; ARE COME DOWN, to make their invasion. (10.) SENT, sent troops; SAVED HIMSELF, "protected himself" at the threatened point; NOT ONCE OR TWICE—that is, several times.

II. THE PLOT AGAINST ELISHA. (12.) NONE, we have no traitor among us; IN THY BEDCHAMBER—that is, in the most secret manner. Compare Eccl. x. 20. (13.) HE, the king; FETCH HIM, bring him away as a prisoner; DOTHAN, see Notes. (14.) COMPASSED THE CITY, surrounded it so that the prophet might not escape. (15.) SERVANT, the new attendant in Gehazi's place a host—i.e., footmen.

III. THE HEAVENLY DEFENDERS. (16.) MORE THAN... WITH THEM see Rom. viii. 31; 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8. (17.) THAT HE MAY SEE, spiritual things visible to the natural eye; THE MOUNTAIN, on the top of which Dothan stood; HORSES AND CHARIOTS OF FIRE, representing the angelic host. Comp. 2 Kings ii. 11; Pa. lxxvii. 17. (18.) THEY, the Syrians; CAME DOWN, from the rising ground on which they were encamped into the valley; BLINDNESS, mental, so that, although they saw enough to go to Samaria, they did not perceive things truly.

QUESTIONS.—How did Elisha cheer his servant? Why was he not to fear? State Elisha's prayer? How was it answered? Describe the young man's vision. After his eyes were opened, what was done to the Syrians? Compare Gen. xix. 11. Tell where they were taken, and how treated. vs. 19-23. What in this lesson teaches us— (1.) The weakness of God's enemies? (2.) The safety of God's children? Compare Isa. lv. 17; Ps. xxvii. 3. (3.) Men's spiritual blindness? (4.) The nearness of heavenly protection? Ps. xxxiv. 7; Heb. i. 14.

"The hosts of God encamp around The dwellings of the just; Deliverance he affords to all Who on his succour trust. Fear him, ye saints! and ye will then Have nothing else to fear; Make ye his service your delight; He'll make your wants his care." —I. C. and Brady



PERSIAN CHARIOT.

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