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induce children to forsake sin and to seek after holiness. (b.) *The offender was discovered.* The tribe of Judah, the division of the Zarithes, and the family of Zabdi were successively taken by lot; and we can imagine how Achan's heart died within him as the finger of God thus pointed nearer and nearer to himself; and how great would be his remorse when at length he stood revealed as the culprit, before the thousands of Israel. How terrible is the thought that a day will certainly come when the sins and follies which we now carefully conceal, will, unless they are repented of and pardoned, be proclaimed before an assembled universe.

22 50 *3dly. The Confession.* It was late, indeed, but full, free, and without any attempt at extenuation. Joshua's address to Achan suggests two important thoughts. He calls him "My son" showing that while as a judge he must punish, he still pitied the criminal, and felt for him as a father, thereby setting a noble example to all who are called on to administer justice. In calling on him to give glory to God, he also points out to him that in confessing his sin before the people he would glorify God's omniscience in revealing, and his justice in punishing his sin; and from this we learn that the humble confession of our sins is highly pleasing to God as well as necessary to our spiritual welfare. Achan describes the articles which he had stolen—a golden garment—or, as Josephus writes, a purple garment woven entirely of gold—such robes as princes wore, and perhaps belonging to the King of Jericho. Two hundred pounds in weight of silver would be about the value of our currency. The words "I saw," "I touched," "I took," point out the rise, progress, and consummation, not only of the sin, but of all sin; and should warn us to guard every thought of forbidden pleasure. We use the prayer of the Psalmist: "Turn away your eyes from beholding vanity."

5 00 *The punishment.* Achan and all his household were stoned to death and afterwards buried with all their possessions. The crime was famous, it was brought home to the perpetrator, not only by his confession, but by the discovery of the articles in his tent, and he had a terrible punishment—especially as he was necessary to teach the Israelites, just as we are, regarding their great work of conquest, a lesson of implicit obedience. As children of God (Gen. 24, 16) were not to be punished for the offences of their parents, we must be careful that Achan's family were implicated in

SECOND SABBATH.

LECTURE:—Ebal and Gerizim. Joshua 8: Golden Text. Deut. 30: 13. Read Deut. 11: 29, 30; and Deut. 27: 2—26.

had now crossed Jordan and had pitched their camp at Jericho and Ai. The land was now divided between them. The two cities just mentioned were the first fruits of the conquest: the full harvest would assuredly be gathered in. We must now remember the injunctions which Moses twice given, must go to Ebal and Gerizim, and must in one of the grandest acts, if not the grandest ever per-

formed, declare their hearty assent to the truth that God's blessing might be expected on a people's obedience, but His curse upon their disobedience. In this solemn federal transaction, too, they must renew their covenant engagements, be encouraged to go forward to conquest, and be reminded by what tenure they hold the land.

It was fitting that in the very outset this solemn transaction should take place. Some think that the scene was not so far from Jordan as the localities now known as Ebal and Gerizim, alleging in support of this view that it would be dangerous for the people to go so far at once into the interior of the country. To this view it may be replied, 1. Uniform tradition is in favor of the present Ebal and Gerizim; 2. God could easily put the fear of the Israelites upon the inhabitants of the land; 3. Ebal and Gerizim were in the very heart of the country, and they might be regarded as representing the whole country; 4. This was hallowed ground. It was the first spot where Abraham rested, and where he erected an altar, (Gen. 12: 6, 7. See also in connection with Jacob's history, Gen 33: 19.)

Matthew Henry remarks that the reason why the altar was erected on Ebal, the mount on which the curse was put, Deut. 11: 26, was to signify "that there, where by the law we had reason to expect a curse, by Christ's sacrifice of himself for us, we have peace with God; He has redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us. The curses pronounced on Ebal would immediately have been executed, had not atonement been made by sacrifice."

The law, probably only the ten commandments as being the sum of the whole, was written upon plastered stones. This inscription, with the altar of rough stones on which the sacrifice had been offered, was left on Mt. Ebal.

In the valley between the mountains the Levites stood with the ark of the covenant, while six of the tribes stood on Ebal and six on Gerizim. The tribes on Ebal responded with simultaneous "A mens" to the curses, while those on Gerizim answered to the blessings.

Nablus, the ancient Shechem lies between Ebal and Gerizim. The valley has been supposed to be too broad for the purpose stated in this passage, but a gentleman long resident in the neighborhood has asserted that a voice can be heard without difficulty across the valley separating the two points in question. Gerizim is said to be 2600 feet high, and Ebal about 2700.

DOCTRINES.

1. Nations should remember that righteousness will exalt but sin will destroy. Read history for illustrations.
2. God is good in so faithfully and solemnly setting before all who have the Bible, the blessing and the curse.
3. Let us choose the blessing. And for this purpose may we first come to Christ for pardon, and then trust in God for Christ's sake to keep us from falling.