

for David, reflecting on the contrast between his cedar palace and the curtained tabernacle, to think of building a more substantial resting place for the ark. His purpose to become a temple builder was quite worthy of him. Haggai 1 : 4. Nathan's first impression was that such a desire could not but meet with divine approval, v. 2. Encourage your young people to entertain high purposes, to cultivate a worthy ideal of life and service, 1 Tim. 4 : 12. Lacking ambition for noble tasks, will they be likely to attempt any ?

2. *A commendable purpose frustrated*, vs. 3-6. However praiseworthy David's intention, there were good reasons why it should not be carried out. There would be a certain incongruity in the erection of a temple to the God of peace by a man so warlike, 1 Chron. 28 : 3. The lesson of simplicity and spirituality in worship embodied in the tabernacle, it appeared, was not yet complete, v. 5. A gorgeous temple might prove "the sepulchre, rather than the shrine, of true devotion". It had not yet been asked for, v. 6. David's commendable purpose, however, was not to be denied outright : it was only to be postponed, 2 Chron. 6 : 9. Hence the message from Nathan next day, vs. 3, 4. We should not be discouraged because our day-dreams are not instantly realized. The very glow of them does good, 2 Chron. 6 : 8. It was after a series of frustrated purposes (Acts 16 : 6, 7), that Paul had a clearer vision of higher service (Acts 16 : 9), and did his most enduring work.

3. *A better purpose revealed*, vs. 7-14. David's own house was to be built on sure foundations, v. 10 (last clause). Assurance is given of intimate Divine interest both in his realm (vs. 9, 10), and in the stability of his throne, vs. 11-14.

Point out how the promise to David necessarily reaches beyond David and his descendants to his greater Son, Luke 2 : 11. "No succession of mortal men can reach to eternal duration." David was but the shadowy forerunner of Christ, in whom the "better" purpose of God (Heb. 8 : 6) is fully disclosed, 2 Tim. 1 : 9, 10. It is Christ that has "built the true temple, in that his body is the seat of sacrifice and revelation, and the meeting place of God and man", Eph. 2 : 22.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

"God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold.
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold."

It will give variety, if these words, which strike the key-note of the Lesson, are committed to memory by the class, before their Bibles are opened. It is the work of but a moment or two for the eager retentive memory of childhood. No need to say that it is the key-note. Let the lines be committed to memory by simultaneous recitation of them. Their place in the Lesson will appear as the hour goes on.

"As David sat in his house." A chance here for review questions, tracing the varied career of the shepherd boy who was called to the kingship, his battle with the giant, his persecution by Saul, his wars with the Philistines, his bringing up of the ark, when more peaceful days came ; now, days of quiet and of rest.

"I dwell in an house of cedars...the ark...remaineth under curtains." Again, question as to David's palace, which King Hiram had helped him to build ; and the rough goats' hair curtains by which the ark and cherubim and the sacred vessels of the tabernacle were covered. What was the wish in David's heart ? Was it to his credit, or otherwise ? What is the lesson for us in regard to our places of worship ?

"Nathan said...Do all that is in thine heart." Does not Nathan's advice seem the right advice ? It does not so turn out to be. The reason why ? Although a prophet of God, he spoke without asking God what His will was. Make the point, that nothing is ever decided aright unless we seek to know how God would have it be.

"Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build." Here are three minds turned on the same thing, David's, Nathan's, God's ; the two first wrong, the third alone right. The class will be readily led to converse about the distance one can see from varying heights. The higher the elevation, the farther the view. God sees farthest of all. He is, therefore, the surest Guide.

"For I have not dwelt in an house." This is one reason. Before taking it up, ask for