

Lesson XII.

SAMUEL THE UPRIGHT JUDGE

December 22, 1907

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons, were slain in battle with the Philistines, the ark was captured, and the shock of the news caused Eli's death, ch. 4 : 10-18. The ark proved troublesome to the Philistines, and was sent back to Israel, chs. 5, 6.

GOLDEN TEXT—Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.—1 Samuel 7 : 3.

Memorize vs. 12, 13. THE LESSON PASSAGE—1 Samuel 7: 1-13. Read 1 Samuel, chs. 5 to 7.

1 And the men of Kirjath-je'arim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.

2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjath-je'arim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Is'rael lamented after the Lord.

3 And Sam'uel spake unto all the house of Is'rael, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ash'taroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Phil'istines.

4 Then the children of Is'rael did put away Ba'alim and Ash'taroth, and served the Lord only.

5 And Sam'uel said, Gather all Is'rael to Miz'peh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord.

6 And they gathered together to Miz'peh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Sam'uel judged the children of Is'rael in Miz'peh.

7 And when the Phil'istines heard that the children of Is'rael were gathered together to Miz'peh, the

Revised Version—¹ from the day that; ² heart; ³ the; ⁴ Mizpah; ⁵ whole burnt offering; ⁶ answered; ⁷ down; ⁸ within the border.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I. B. R. A.)—M.—Samuel, the upright judge, 1 Sam. 7: 1-13. T.—Samuel's integrity, 1 Sam. 12: 1-5. W.—Intercession of Moses, Num. 14: 11-21. Th.—Godly sorrow, 2 Cor. 7: 1-11. F.—Heart repentance, Joel 2: 12-19. S.—Returning, Luke 15: 11-24. S.—"Save, Lord!" Psalm 20.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. THE PEOPLE'S REPENTANCE.—1, 2. **Men of Kirjath-je'arim.** See Geography Lesson. **Fetches up the ark;** from Beth-shemesh, a town on the borders of Judah and Philistia, where the ark had been left by the Philistines. The people of this place had asked to have it removed from amongst them. (See ch. 6: 13-21.) **House of Abinadab in the hill;** some elevation near Kirjath-je'arim. **Sanctified;** set apart to watch over the ark. **The time was long;** because during the twenty years Israel was sorely oppressed by the Philistines. **Lamented after the Lord;** as a child follows a father justly angry, seeking reconciliation with tears of sorrow. Israel was weary of the sin that had displeased God, and brought so great suffering upon themselves.

3, 4. **Samuel spake.** During the twenty years, his influence had been growing, and now he steps forward as the leader of the people. He appeals to them to forsake sin, and in particular the vile worship of Ashtaroth and Baalim, which were female and male deities respectively, worshiped by the Canaan-

lords of the Phil'istines went up against Is'rael. And when the children of Is'rael heard it, they were afraid of the Phil'istines.

8 And the children of Is'rael said to Sam'uel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Phil'istines.

9 And Sam'uel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord; and Sam'uel cried unto the Lord for Is'rael; and the Lord heard him.

10 And as Sam'uel was offering up the burnt offering, the Phil'istines drew near to battle against Is'rael: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Phil'istines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Is'rael.

11 And the men of Is'rael went out of Miz'peh, and pursued the Phil'istines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car.

12 Then Sam'uel took a stone, and set it between Miz'peh and Shen, and called the name of it Eb'e'zer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

13 So the Phil'istines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Is'rael: and the hand of the Lord was against the Phil'istines all the days of Sam'uel.

ites. Both names as given here are plural, the one of Ashtoreth and the other of Baal. The people yielded to Samuel's appeal, and put away these gods and goddesses.

II. SAMUEL'S PRAYER.—5-9. All Israel to Miz'peh. See Geography Lesson. I will pray for you. Samuel was a man of prayer, chs. 8 : 6 ; 12 : 19, 23 ; Jer. 15 : 1. **Drew water, and poured it out;** a picture of the outpouring of their hearts in penitent confession. **Fasted;** to express their sorrow. **We have sinned;** an honest confession, such as never fails to secure forgiveness, 1 John 1 : 9. **Samuel judged.** He was not recognized as Israel's ruler. The Philistines, suspecting that this gathering meant revolt against their authority, prepared to attack the

Israelites. These implored Samuel to continue to pray for them, which he did, offering at the same time a burnt offering to represent Israel's full surrender to God.

III. ISRAEL'S VICTORY.—10-13. The Lord thundered. Thunder is the voice of God, Ps. 29 :



MIZPEH