

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1876 by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

CONNECTED HISTORY.—David flees from Jerusalem because of Absalom's rebellion; is cursed by Shimei, of Saul's house; crosses over Jordan; Hushai, David's friend, defeats the plans of Ahithophel, and delays Absalom's attack on David; David organizes his forces for battle, and Absalom is defeated and slain.

MARCH 19.] LESSON XII.

ABSALOM'S DEATH. [About 1021 B. C.] READ 1 Sam. xviii. 24-33. RECITE v. 33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death.—Prov. xi, 19. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Disgrace follows disobedience.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Sam. xviii. 1-33. T.—Ps. xxxv. 1-28. W.—2 Sam. xvii. 1-24. Th.—1 Sam. iv. 1-18. F.—Judg. v. 2-31. Sa.—2 Sam. xv. 24-37. S.—Ps. cxlvii. 1-15.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—The events in this lesson took place near Mahanaim, east of the Jordan, and where Jacob met the angels. Gen. xxxii. 2. See how terribly and swiftly Absalom is punished for his pride and rebellion, and what grief it brings to his father.

NOTES.—Two gates, of the city of Mahanaim. At the gateway of walled cities the walls were made unusually strong, and often there was a double wall, an outer and an inner wall, and to each wall a gate. In the room thus made David probably sat between the two gates. Porter. The duty of the porter was to open and close the gates. See 2 Kings vii. 10. Joab, oldest son of David's sister Zeruah, and one of David's greatest warriors. Cush, a man of Cush, or Ethiopia, a swift runner. These runners then filled the place of mails and telegraphs. Chamber over the gate, a room over the place where David first sat (v. 24). It was a retired place.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) THE NEWS FROM THE BATTLE. (II.) DAVID'S LAMENT.

I THE NEWS FROM THE BATTLE. (24.) sat, anxiously waiting for news; two gates (see Notes); (25.) tidings, news; apace, with haste, quick. (27.) porter (see Notes); running alone, as a messenger. (27.) Methioketh, or (Heb.) "I see thee running," etc. (28.) All is well, or (Heb.) "Peace be unto thee;" fell down, after the Eastern custom of showing respect to men of rank; king's servant, perhaps Cush, but the better reading is, "When Joab, the king's servant, sent me, thy servant" (Speaker's Com); tumult, a noisy crowd. (32.) be as that young man, which meant that Absalom was dead.

I. Questions.—Into how many parts did David divide his forces for battle? v. 2. State the names of his three generals. Why did David not go into battle? v. 3. What charge did he give about Absalom? v. 5. Which army gained the victory? How was Absalom caught? By whom slain? Where was David during the battle? v. 24. Name the two messengers bringing news to him. What did the first say? What did the king ask about Absalom? What reply did Ahimaaz make? What news did Cush bring? What did he say about Absalom?

II. DAVID'S LAMENT. (33.) much moved, very sorrowful; chamber over the gate (see Notes); wept, over his erring son; died for thee, so great was his grief and his love for his son.

II. Questions.—How did David receive the news of Absalom's death? With what feelings? Where did he go to mourn for him? Recite verse 33. How do Christian parents now feel when their sons go into wicked ways? How would they feel if such sons were to die in their sins?

MAR. 26.] LESSON XIII.

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.—Ps. xxxvii, 34. CENTRAL TRUTH.—God is with us as we are with him.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—1 Sam. xv. 1-35. T.—1 Sam. xvi. 1-13; xvii. 32-51. W.—1 Sam. xviii. 1-16; xx. 35-42. Th.—1 Sam. xxiv. 1-16; xxvi. 5-22. F.—1 Sam. xxxi. 1-13. Sa.—2 Sam. vi. 1-15; vii. 18-29. S.—2 Sam. xv. 1-14; xviii. 24-33.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—The twelve lessons which we are now to review all centre about David; for even Saul is rejected, and finally slain, to make way for David as king over Israel. They cover a period of about forty-five to forty-eight years.

It will give a clearer view of this portion of the history to look back over the whole history of Israel from the time of leaving Egypt, and notice that Moses and Joshua were appointed as rulers by the Lord, and guided the nation as he taught them to do; when the nation sinned by worshipping the golden calf, their rulers were judges, and were raised up from time to time, to deliver the people from their greatest oppressions; but these rulers were raised up only for a short time, so that the people were united together as a nation.

tion until the days of Samuel. As these leaders and judges were raised up and delivered the people under the special direction of God, the government was called a theocracy—that is, "God-governed." When Saul was chosen king and God rejected, the government was changed to a monarchy (rule by one man), similar to the heathen nations. 1 Sam. viii. 5.

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND TOPICS.

The lessons may be well re-examined in three groups.

Plan of review.—(I.) A KING WITHOUT A KINGDOM [Lessons I.-V.] (II.) A KING GAINING HIS KINGDOM [Lessons VI.-IX.] (III.) A KING MAINTAINING HIS KINGDOM [Lessons X.-XII].

About whose life do the past twelve lessons centre? State the event with which they begin. The one with which they end. The probable length of time they cover. How many years before Christ did these events take place? How was Israel ruled in the wilderness? How governed on entering Canaan? How after Joshua's death? Who was the last judge? Why was the form of government changed? Who was the first king? How chosen? Who was grieved at the people because they desired a king? What was Samuel to tell the people about the king's rule? 1 Sam. viii. 10-18. Why did they still desire a king? 1 Sam. viii. 20.

I. Questions.—Give the title of the first of the past twelve lessons. Why was Saul rejected? How had he sinned? How did he seek to escape punishment? 1 Sam. xv. 18-21. How was he detected in his lie? How reproved.

From what family had God selected a new king? Who was commanded to anoint him king? What excuse did Samuel make? What order did he then receive? Which of the sons of Jesse did he think God had chosen? How did he find out his mistake? Upon what did God look in making a choice? Where was the new king found? What came upon David at that time?

What champion defied the armies of Israel? For how many days? 1 Sam. xvii. 16. Who offered to meet him? How did the king arm David? Why did he put Saul's armor off? How did he arm himself? In whose strength did he go? With what result?

Why was David wanted at Saul's court? How did Saul first honor him? Why afterward hate him? Why did Saul not kill David?

How did Jonathan warn David? Where? How did they show their love of each other?

II. Where did David hide from Saul? 1 Sam. xxiv. 3. Why did David spare Saul? How did Saul know that David had spared his life? State his reproach of Saul. Against whom did Israel fight in Gilboa? Which gained the victory? Who were slain in battle? How did Saul die? Why did he kill himself?

Where did David first rule as king? Over what portion of Israel? How long? 2 Sam. v. 5. How was he made king over all Israel? Where? Where and how long did he reign over all Israel?

Give titles of Lessons IX. and X. Where was the ark? How long had it been there? How did they attempt to bring it to Zion? Who was struck dead on the way? What for? How had God commanded the ark to be carried? Num. vii. 9. In whose house was it then left? How finally brought to Zion?

III. What did David propose to build for God? See 2 Sam. vii. 2. Who forbade him? Why? Upon whom did David rely to establish his kingdom? What did he plead with God to do for him?

Which of David's sons planned a rebellion? State how he began it. Where? What did he first long for? 2 Sam. xv. 4. Where did he ask to go? Who went out with him? Who joined him from Gilead? Whither did David flee? Why?

Where did Absalom's and David's armies meet? How was Absalom slain? How did David get the news? What effect had it upon him? How did he mourn for Absalom?

Which of these lessons teach us:

- (1.) The danger of disobeying God? (2.) The blessings of serving and trusting God? (3.) The value of true friendship? (4.) The true way to show kindness to an enemy? (5.) The importance of supporting the worship of God? (6.) The danger of being envious of others? (7.) The end of a disobedient son?

Illustration.—End of Ambition. Notice the end of four of earth's most ambitious and perhaps greatest rulers: (1.) Alexander, weeping because there were no more worlds to conquer, died in a drunken debauch. (2.) Hannibal, having filled three bushels with gold rings of conquered princes, died unknown in a foreign land by taking poison. (3.) Caesar conquered eight hundred cities, and having slain a million of his foes died by the dagger of his best friend. (4.) Napoleon, the scourge of Europe, died a captive on the rocky Island of St. Helena.

DAVID without a gaining his maintaining his KINGDOM.

THE PRIZES.

Our prize campaign for this season has been ended. At first it appeared as if the prizes would cost more than the total amounts received in competition, and in one instance there were not competitors enough to claim all the premiums. But the competition ending January 7th has entirely exceeded our expectations. There were three hundred and seventy competitors, and the total amount

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