S. A. Wellman

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY

SENIOR DIVISION
Second Quarter, 1930

OLD TESTAMENT EXPERIENCES

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, June 28, 1930
East and West Africa

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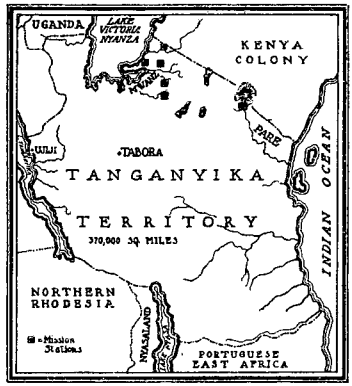

One Hundred and Twenty Tribes Without a Protestant Missionary

G. A. ELLINGWORTH

Superintendent West Tanganyika Mission

RECENTLY a letter came to us giving the good news that the Thirteenth Sabbath overflow for the second quarter of 1930 is for the development of the work in East and West Africa. I want all to share with me an overwhelming desire to see our work pushed farther south in the Tanganyika Territory. A very large part of this territory is without one Adventist. We have at present entered only a tiny corner in the northwest section, as shown on the map. Our five mission stations are from seventy to a hundred miles apart. Our hope is to open work in the Tabora Province as a first hop south. Tabora is two hundred miles south of our most southerly station. But we cannot advance without your help.

One worker says regarding the need in Tanganyika: "In the Ujiji Province (Stanley met Livingstone at Ujiji) is the Waha tribe with a population of 117,000, and here no Protestant mission work is being carried on. The Tabora Province covers an area of 41,000 square miles; it is divided into four districts, and has a population of 800,000. Perhaps it would be no exaggeration to say that no fewer than a hundred twenty tribes in the Tanganyika Territory are without a Protestant mission."

Can we be satisfied to say, "We have entered Tanganyika"? It would greatly help our work in this field if we *could* say, "We are now to carry the gospel to a new district; we are now entering a new tribal area." Will you help forge our way south in this enormous territory and open stations from which our message of a returning Saviour can be broadcast to those who sit in darkness? If all will give until it hurts, we shall bring salvation to thousands, and shall ourselves reap a blessing that is inestimable.

Lesson 1—April 5, 1930

A Warning Against Disobedience

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Sam. 15:22.
LESSON HELP: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 627-636 (new ed., pp. 653-663).

INTRODUCTION

"Saul had failed to bear the test of faith in the trying situation at Gilgal, and had brought dishonor upon the service of God; but his errors were not yet irretrievable, and the Lord would grant him another opportunity to learn the lesson of unquestioning faith in His word and obedience to His commands.

"When reproved by the prophet at Gilgal, Saul saw no great sin in the course he had pursued. He felt that he had been treated unjustly, and endeavored to vindicate his actions, and offered excuses for his error. From that time he had little intercourse with the prophet. Samuel loved Saul as his own son, while Saul, bold and ardent in temper, had held the prophet in high regard; but he resented Samuel's rebuke, and thenceforth avoided him so far as possible.

"But the Lord sent His servant with another message to Saul. By obedience he might still prove his fidelity to God, and his worthiness to walk before Israel. Samuel came to the king, and delivered the word of the Lord. That the monarch might realize the importance of heeding the command, Samuel expressly declared that he spoke by divine direction, by the same authority that had called Saul to the throne."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 627.

THE LESSON

1. When Saul was established as king of Israel, what command came to him concerning the Amalekites? 1 Sam. 15:1-3.

NOTE.—The Amalekites were a powerful people living in Arabia between the Dead Sea and the Red Sea. They were a roving people living in caves or in tents. The Israelites had scarcely passed the Red Sea when the Amalekites made an unprovoked assault upon them. As a result, God decreed their extermination. Ex. 17:14.

"For four hundred years the execution of this sentence had been deferred; but the Amalekites had not turned from their sins. The Lord knew that this wicked people would, if it were possible, blot out His people and His worship from the earth. Now the time had come for the sentence, so long delayed, to be executed."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 628.

2. How many men did Saul call together for the attack on Amalek? Who were warned to separate from Amalek? Why was this consideration shown? Verses 4-6.

NOTE.—"While inflicting judgment, God remembered mercy. The Amalekites were to be destroyed, but the Kenites, who dwelt among them, were spared. This people, though not wholly free from idolatry, were worshipers of God, and were friendly to Israel. Of this tribe was the brother-in-law of Moses, Hobab, who had accompanied the Israelites in their travels through the wilderness, and by his knowledge of the country had rendered them valuable assistance."—Ibid.

3. How fully did Israel smite Amalek? Who was spared? What portion of the spoil did they save? Verses 7-9.

4. What word immediately came to Samuel from the Lord? What was the effect of this message upon the prophet? Verses 10, 11.

5. When Samuel met Saul, with what words did Saul greet him? Verse 13.

NOTE.—"With an aching heart the prophet set forth the next morning to meet the erring king. Samuel cherished a hope that, upon reflection, Saul might become conscious of his sin, and by repentance and humiliation, be again restored to the divine favor. But when the first step is taken in the path of transgression, the way becomes easy. Saul, debased by his disobedience, came to meet Samuel with a lie upon his lips. He exclaimed, 'Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord.' "—Id., p. 630.

6. What question did Samuel ask? What excuse did Saul give for his disobedience of the Lord's command? Verses 14, 15.

7. From whom had Samuel received a message for Saul? Verse 16.

8. What was true of Saul when chosen king? What had God commanded him to do? What straight question did Samuel ask? Verses 17-19.

NOTE.—"When called to the throne, Saul had a humble opinion of his own capabilities, and was willing to be instructed. He was deficient in knowledge and experience, and had serious defects of character. But the Lord granted him the Holy Spirit as a guide and helper, and placed him in a position where he could develop the qualities requisite for a ruler of Israel. Had he remained humble, seeking constantly to be guided by divine wisdom, he would have been enabled to discharge the duties of his high position with success and honor. Under the influence of divine grace, every good quality would have been gaining strength, while evil tendencies would have lost their power. This is the work which the Lord proposes to do for all who consecrate themselves to Him. There are many whom He has called to positions in His work because they have a humble and teachable spirit. In His providence He places them where they may learn of Him. He will reveal to them their defects of character, and to all who seek His aid He will give strength to correct their errors."—Id., pp. 632, 633.

9. What reply did Saul make? Upon whom did he again seek to lay the responsibility for sparing the sheep and oxen? Verses 20, 21.

10. In Samuel's response, what question is asked? What conclusion is drawn? Verse 22.

NOTE.—"When, in direct violation of God's command, Saul proposed to present a sacrifice of that which God had devoted to destruction, open contempt was shown for the divine authority. The service would have been an insult to Heaven. Yet with the sin of Saul and its result before us, how many are pursuing a similar course. While they refuse to believe and obey some requirement of the Lord, they persevere in offering up to God their formal services of religion. There is no response of the Spirit of God to such service. No matter how zealous men may be in their observance of religious ceremonies, the Lord cannot accept them if they persist in willful violation of one of His commands."—Id., p. 634.

11. To what are rebellion and stubbornness compared? What was to be the result of Saul's open disobedience? Verse 23.

12. At this sentence, what changed attitude did Saul take? Verses 24, 25.

NOTE.—"Terrified by the denunciation of the prophet, Saul acknowledged his guilt, which he had before stubbornly denied; but he still persisted in casting blame upon the people, declaring that he had sinned through fear of them. It was not sorrow for sin, but fear of its penalty, that actuated the king of Israel as he entreated Samuel, 'I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.' If Saul had had true repentance, he would have made public confession of his sin; but it was his chief anxiety to maintain his authority, and retain the allegiance of the people. He desired the honor of Samuel's presence in order to strengthen his own influence with the nation."—Id., p. 631.

13. Why was Samuel unwilling to go with Saul at his request? As Samuel turned to leave, what did Saul do? With what result? Verses 26, 27.

14. What further prediction did Samuel now make? Verses 28, 29.

15. What final acknowledgment did Saul make? To what request did Samuel finally accede? Verses 30, 31.

NOTE.—"Saul was more disturbed by the alienation of Samuel than by the displeasure of God. He knew that the people had greater confidence in the prophet than in himself. Should another by divine command be now anointed king, Saul felt that it would be impossible to maintain his own authority. He feared an immediate revolt, should Samuel utterly forsake him. Saul entreated the prophet to honor him before the elders and the people by publicly uniting with him in a religious service. By divine direction, Samuel yielded to the king's request, that no occasion might be given for a revolt. But he remained only as a silent witness of the service."—Id., p. 632.

16. Saul having failed, what instruction from the Lord did Samuel carry out? Verses 32, 33.

NOTE.—"An act of justice, stern and terrible, was yet to be performed. Samuel must publicly vindicate the honor of God, and rebuke the course of Saul. He commanded that the king of the Amalekites be brought before him. Above all who had fallen by the sword of Israel, Agag was the most guilty and merciless; one who had hated and sought to destroy the people of God, and whose influence had been strongest to promote idolatry."—Ibid.

17. To what place did Samuel go? How did Samuel feel concerning Saul? What was God's attitude toward Saul? Verses 34, 35.

NOTE.—"Samuel returned to his home at Ramah, Saul to his at Gibeah. Only once thereafter did the prophet and the king ever meet each other."—Ibid.

18. What warning does this lesson give to us?

NOTE.—"It is a perilous step to slight the reproofs and warnings of God's word or of His Spirit. Many, like Saul, yield to temptation until

they become blind to the true character of sin. They flatter themselves that they have had some good object in view, and have done no wrong in departing from the Lord's requirements. Thus they do despite to the Spirit of grace, until its voice is no longer heard, and they are left to the delusions which they have chosen."—Id., p. 635.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Am I careful to listen to God's instruction, and carry it out in every detail?

2. Does a realization of the enormity of the sin of disobedience to God's commands reach my heart?

3. Are ready excuses for disobedience a habit of my life? If so, what will be the result to my Christian experience?

Lesson 2—April 12, 1930

Saul Rejected—David Called to the Kingdom

MEMORY VERSE: Ps. 51:17.

LESSON HELP: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 639-642, 697-702 (new ed., pp. 665-669, 729-735).

INTRODUCTION

"The Lord, having placed on Saul the responsibility of the kingdom, did not leave him to himself. He caused the Holy Spirit to rest upon Saul to reveal to him his own weakness, and his need of divine grace; and had Saul relied upon God, God would have been with him. So long as his will was controlled by the will of God, so long as he yielded to the discipline of His Spirit, God could crown his efforts with success. But when Saul chose to act independently of God, the Lord could no longer be his guide, and was forced to set him aside. Then He called to the throne 'a man after His own heart;'—not one who was faultless in character, but who, instead of trusting to himself, would rely upon God, and be guided by His Spirit; who, when he sinned, would submit to reproof and correction."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 636.

THE LESSON

1. When Saul had twice openly disobeyed the commands of God, what sentence was passed upon him? From whose counsel was he thenceforth separated? 1 Sam. 15:28, 35.

2. What effect did Saul's disobedience have upon Samuel? What had God decided concerning Saul? What did God command Samuel to do? 1 Samuel 16:1.

3. How was Samuel instructed to proceed lest Saul kill him? What occurred when Samuel came to Bethlehem? Verses 2-5.

4. When Jesse and his sons came to sacrifice at the appointed time, upon whom did Samuel look? What message did the Lord give relative to judging by appearances? Verses 6, 7.

NOTE.—"No outward beauty can recommend the soul to God. The wisdom and excellence revealed in the character and deportment, express

the true beauty of the man; and it is the inner worth, the excellency of the heart, that determines our acceptance with the Lord of hosts. How deeply should we feel this truth in the judgment of ourselves and others. We may learn, from the mistake of Samuel, how vain is the estimation that rests on beauty of face or nobility of stature. We may see how incapable is man's wisdom of understanding the secrets of the heart, or of comprehending the counsels of God, without special enlightenment from heaven."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 638.

5. How many of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel? With what result? Verses 8-10.

6. What further question was asked concerning Jesse's children? When David was brought in, what was his appearance? What did the Lord say to Samuel concerning him? Verses 11, 12.

7. What ceremony did Samuel perform upon David apart from the family of Jesse? Verse 13.

NOTE.—" 'Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of [from among] his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.' The prophet had accomplished his appointed work, and with a relieved heart he returned to Ramah. Samuel had not made known his errand, even to the family of Jesse, and the ceremony of anointing David had been performed in secret."—Id., p. 641.

The above quotation from "Patriarchs and Prophets" is in harmony with the rendering in 1 Kings 16:13, in Leeser's translation, issued by the Hebrew Publishing Company of New York, which reads, "anointed him from among his brothers." It also coincides with the general attitude of the brothers, for they failed to recognize David as the chosen of God till some years later.

8. What power did Saul lose? What took place in his life? What plan was devised to benefit Saul? Who was chosen to play for Saul? Verses 14, 16, 23.

NOTE.—"When King Saul realized that he had been rejected by God, and when he felt the force of the words of denunciation that had been addressed to him by the prophet, he was filled with bitter rebellion and despair. . . . He was ever occupied in anticipating the ruin that had been brought upon his house. . . . He did not accept with meekness the chastisement of God; but his haughty spirit became desperate, until he was on the verge of losing his reason."—Id., p. 643.

9. After David's victory over the giant Goliath, what lifelong friendship was formed in Saul's palace? How was this friendship first demonstrated? 1 Sam. 18:1-4.

10. When David's life was imperiled, how did Jonathan aid him? 1 Sam. 20:11-17, 42.

11. While David was a fugitive from King Saul, what two opportunities came to him to destroy Saul and take the kingdom? What was David's attitude toward Saul? 1 Sam. 24:1-6; 26:7-11.

NOTE.—"The enmity that is cherished toward the servants of God by those who have yielded to the power of Satan, changes at times to a feeling of reconciliation and favor; but the change does not always prove to be lasting. After evil-minded men have engaged in doing and saying

wicked things against the Lord's servants, the conviction that they have been in the wrong sometimes takes deep hold upon their minds. The Spirit of the Lord strives with them, and they humble their hearts before God, and before those whose influence they have sought to destroy, and they may change their course toward them. But as they again open the door to the suggestions of the evil one, the old doubts are revived, the old enmity is awakened, and they return to engage in the same work which they repented of, and for a time abandoned."—Id., pp. 662, 663.

12. What did David expect from God for his magnanimity toward Saul? What was Saul forced to acknowledge? Verses 23-25.

13. How did Saul and his sons ultimately meet their death? 1 Sam. 31:1-6.

14. What was the effect of the death of Saul and Jonathan upon David? How are they described in his lament? 2 Sam. 1:17, 24-26.

NOTE.—"David's grief at the death of Saul was sincere and deep, evincing the generosity of a noble nature. He did not exult in the fall of his enemy. The obstacle that had barred his access to the throne of Israel was removed, but at this he did not rejoice. Death had obliterated the remembrance of Saul's distrust and cruelty, and now nothing in his history was thought of but that which was noble and kingly. The name of Saul was linked with that of Jonathan, whose friendship had been so true and so unselfish."—Id., pp. 695, 696.

15. After the death of Saul, what inquiry did David make of the Lord? What instruction did he receive? 2 Sam. 2:1.

16. Following the death of Abner and Ish-bosheth, what did all Israel do? 2 Sam. 5:1-3.

17. When David had fully come to the kingdom, what was still his attitude toward the house of Saul? 2 Sam. 9:1-7.

18. How did David essentially differ from Saul although he sinned against God? Psalm 51.

Answer: David humbly acknowledged his sin, sought forgiveness, and pleaded for the blessing of God in his life.

19. What promise was made to David concerning the perpetuation of his kingdom? Ps. 89:3, 4.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Do I allow sin to separate me from the ministry of God's Spirit?
2. Do I desire to take matters into my own hands, or do I await God's time to remove the transgressor from power?
3. What is my attitude toward a reproval for my personal sins?
4. The magnanimity of David as revealed in his attitude toward Saul.

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering

June 28, 1930

East and West Africa

Lesson 3—April 19, 1930

David—King, Psalmist, and Prophet

MEMORY VERSE: Ps. 91:9, 10.

LESSON HELP: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 711-716 (new ed., pp. 744-749).

INTRODUCTION

David stands out in the records of the Bible as more than king of Israel. In his youth he had known God and had been able to read God's messages as revealed in nature all about him. Then had begun the songs for which he is even better known to-day than for his martial prowess and his kingly qualities. Through these songs, or psalms, perhaps unconsciously even to the singer, God had revealed His plans and purposes for His children until that hour when He should welcome them to the city of God. In his songs David prophetically depicts earth's closing conflicts, the sacrifice of the saints, God's care for His people in the time of trouble, the destruction of the earth that now is, and the eternity of the redeemed. Not only is he revealed therein as the outstanding poet of God's ancient people, but as a prophet whose utterances, quoted by the Master and by the apostles, have ever given new faith and courage to the church of God. David, the boy of Bethlehem's sheepfolds, will forever remain head of the kingly line of our Saviour, prince of poets, and peerless prophet of the kingdom of God.

THE LESSON

1. About what age was David when he was anointed by Samuel? 1 Sam. 16:11, 12.

NOTE.—At the time of David's anointing, he was still a lad, probably around sixteen years of age.

At the age of thirty David went up to Hebron to begin his reign over Judah, which lasted for seven and one-half years, before Israel also called him to the throne. (See 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:4, 5.)

During those years constant warfare ensued between the two sections of the nation. The defection of Abner and his death at the hands of Joab and Abishai, and the subsequent murder of Ish-bosheth by those who sought David's favor ended the house of Saul, whom Israel had continued to support. Then Israel joined with Judah in proclaiming David king of the united nation.

2. What desire did David have concerning the house of the Lord? 2 Sam. 7:1-3.

3. What message did the Lord send him by Nathan the prophet? Verses 4-11.

4. Who did the Lord say would build the house for Him? What did God promise to the house of David? Verses 12-16.

5. How did David respond to God's message of denial and His promises? Verses 18-21, 29.

NOTE.—"David knew that it would be an honor to his name, and would bring glory to his government, to perform the work that he had purposed in his heart to do; but he was ready to submit his will to the

will of God. The grateful resignation thus manifested is rarely seen, even among Christians. How often do those who have passed the strength of manhood, cling to the hope of accomplishing some great work upon which their hearts are set, but which they are unfitted to perform! God's providence may speak to them, as did His prophet to David, declaring that the work which they so much desire is not committed to them. It is theirs to prepare the way for another to accomplish it. But instead of gratefully submitting to the divine direction, many fall back as if slighted and rejected, feeling that if they cannot do the one thing which they desire to do, they will do nothing. Many cling, with desperate energy, to responsibilities which they are incapable of bearing, and vainly endeavor to accomplish a work for which they are insufficient, while that which they might do, lies neglected. And because of this lack of coöperation on their part, the greater work is hindered or frustrated."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 712, 713.

6. With what literature is the name of King David inseparably connected?

Answer: The Psalms.

NOTE.—"The psalms of David pass through the whole range of experience, from the depths of conscious guilt and self-condemnation to the loftiest faith and the most exalted communing with God."—Id., p. 754.

7. In the Psalms, whom does David constantly exalt? Ps. 108:5; 150:1-6.

NOTE.—In the Psalms the exaltation of Jehovah stands out in great prominence. The love, the long-suffering, the mercy, the power and majesty of God are seen in each experience voiced by the sweet singer of Israel, and especially may be traced in these prophetic songs the life experiences of the Son of God when He should come as the Saviour of men. How vividly is depicted the suffering of Jesus in Gethsemane and on the cross in the twenty-second psalm; His entrance into the dark valley of death in the twenty-third; His ascension with trophies of His redeeming victories in the twenty-fourth. No doubt through the psalms prophetically are also traced many of the prayers of Jesus on the mountainside as alone He communed with His Father. Those unjust persecutions of David's as he was hunted by Saul fitted him to enter into the sufferings of Christ, in whose life experiences many of the psalms were to meet their more complete fulfillment.

8. What prophecy did the psalmist make concerning the first coming of Christ? Ps. 40:6-8.

9. How is the second appearing of the Saviour described? Ps. 50:1-4.

10. Who will be gathered to Christ at His coming? Verses 5, 6. (See 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.)

11. How does David describe the care of God for His children during the time of trouble? Ps. 91:5-10.

12. What is revealed concerning the ultimate fate of the wicked? Ps. 73:12-19, 27.

13. What beautiful description does David give of the return to heaven of the triumphant Redeemer? Ps. 24:7-10.

14. What prophecy is made concerning the work of the saints in judgment? Ps. 149:4-9. (See Rev. 20:6 and Dan. 7:22.)

15. How does the psalmist speak of God's use of storm and tempest? Ps. 148:8.

NOTE.—"At His own will, God summons the forces of nature to overthrow the might of His enemies,—'fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling His word.' When the heathen Amorites had set themselves to resist His purposes, God interposed, casting down 'great stones from heaven' upon the enemies of Israel. We are told of a greater battle to take place in the closing scenes of earth's history, when 'Jehovah hath opened His armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of His indignation.' 'Hast thou,' He inquires, 'entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?'

"The revelator describes the destruction that is to take place when the 'great voice out of the temple of heaven' announces, 'It is done.' He says, 'There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent.' "—Id., p. 509.

16. In what words does David describe the destruction of the earth? How does he make known the eternity of God and His redeemed? Ps. 102:25-28.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Have I learned to await God's time for meeting my needs, or do I become impatient for the fulfillment of His promises?

2. Do we seek some way,—verse, prose, song, service,—in which each of us may pour out our thanks to God for His mercies?

Lesson 4—April 26, 1930

The Wisdom of Solomon

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Kings 8:56.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 25-60.

INTRODUCTION

"The wisdom that Solomon desired above riches, honor, or long life, God gave him. His petition for a quick mind, a large heart, and a tender spirit was granted. . . . The name of Jehovah was greatly honored during the first part of Solomon's reign. The wisdom and righteousness revealed by the king bore witness to all nations of the excellency of the attributes of the God whom he served. For a time Israel was as the light of the world, showing forth the greatness of Jehovah. Not in the surpassing wisdom, the fabulous riches, the far-reaching power and fame that were his, lay the real glory of Solomon's early reign; but in the honor that he brought to the name of the God of Israel through a wise use of the gifts of Heaven."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 31-33.

"Solomon was endued with wonderful wisdom; but the world drew him away from God. Men to-day are no stronger than he; they are as prone to yield to the influences that caused his downfall. As God warned

Solomon of his danger, so to-day He warns His children not to imperil their souls by affinity with the world. . . . In the midst of prosperity lurks danger. Throughout the ages riches and honor have ever been attended with peril to humility and spirituality. It is not the empty cup that we have difficulty in carrying; it is the cup full to the brim that must be carefully balanced. Affliction and adversity may cause sorrow; but it is prosperity that is most dangerous to spiritual life. Unless the human subject is in constant submission to the will of God, unless he is sanctified by the truth, prosperity will surely arouse the natural inclination to presumption."—Id., pp. 59, 60.

THE LESSON

1. For what purpose did Solomon, when he had come to the throne, go to Gibeon? Who appeared to him there? What was he told to do? 1 Kings 3:4, 5.

2. What did Solomon reply? Verses 6-9.

3. With what was God pleased? What did God promise Solomon? Verses 10-12.

NOTE.—"Those who to-day occupy positions of trust should seek to learn the lesson taught by Solomon's prayer. The higher the position a man occupies, the greater the responsibility that he has to bear, the wider will be the influence that he exerts, and the greater his need of dependence on God. Ever should he remember that with the call to work, comes the call to walk circumspectly before his fellow men. He is to stand before God in the attitude of a learner. Position does not give holiness of character. It is by honoring God and obeying His commands that a man is made truly great. The God whom we serve is no respecter of persons. He who gave to Solomon the spirit of wise discernment, is willing to impart the same blessing to His children to-day. . . . When a burden bearer desires wisdom more than he desires wealth, power, or fame, he will not be disappointed. Such a one will learn from the great Teacher not only what to do, but how to do it in a way that will meet with the divine approval."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 30, 31.

4. What did God add to Solomon because of his wise choice? Verse 13.

5. What further conditional promise was made? How was the revelation made? Verses 14, 15.

6. What early illustration of Solomon's wisdom is given us? What was the effect of this experience upon the nation? Verses 16-28.

7. How is Solomon's wisdom compared with the wisdom of other kings of his time? 1 Kings 4:29-31.

8. Who came to hear his wisdom? Verse 34.

9. What beautiful building did he erect for the worship of God? How long was it in building? 1 Kings 6:1, 37, 38.

NOTE.—"Of surpassing beauty and unrivaled splendor was the palatial building which Solomon and his associates erected for God and His worship. Garnished with precious stones, surrounded by spacious courts with magnificent approaches, and lined with carved cedar and burnished gold, the temple structure, with its broidered hangings and rich furnish-

ings, was a fit emblem of the living church of God on earth, which through the ages has been building in accordance with the divine pattern, with materials that have been likened to 'gold, silver, precious stones,' 'polished after the similitude of a palace.'"—Id., p. 36.

10. When the temple was completed and the ark of the covenant placed in the most holy place, how did God manifest His presence? I Kings 8:10, 11.

11. As Solomon witnessed the presence of the Lord, what did he do? Verse 14.

12. For what did Solomon plead in the beautiful prayer offered at the dedication of the temple?

Answer: (a) Acknowledging God's faithfulness (1 Kings 8:23), he asks for the fulfillment of God's promises to David. Verses 24-26.

(b) He pleads for God's eye day and night on the sanctuary and His name therein. Verses 27-30.

(c) Justification for the righteous and condemnation for the wicked. Verses 31, 32.

(d) If because of sin enemies overcome them, or if drought come by reason of transgression and they repent, that God hearken and forgive. Verses 33-36.

(e) If defeated in battle, or taken into captivity because of transgression, should they repent with all the heart, that God forgive and restore. Verses 44-50.

13. What attitude did Solomon assume while praying? Verses 22, 54; 2 Chron. 6:13.

NOTE.—"The humility of Solomon at the time he began to bear the burdens of state, when he acknowledged before God, 'I am but a little child;' his marked love of God, his profound reverence for things divine, his distrust of self, and his exaltation of the infinite Creator of all,—all these traits of character, so worthy of emulation, were revealed during the services connected with the completion of the temple, when during his dedicatory prayer he knelt in the humble position of a petitioner. Christ's followers to-day should guard against the tendency to lose the spirit of reverence and godly fear. . . . Both in public and in private worship, it is our privilege to bow on our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. Jesus, our example, 'kneeled down, and prayed.' . . . True reverence for God is inspired by a sense of His infinite greatness and a realization of His presence. With this sense of the Unseen, every heart should be deeply impressed. The hour and place of prayer are sacred, because God is there. And as reverence is manifested in attitude and demeanor, the feeling that inspires it will be deepened."—Id., pp. 47-49.

14. Having concluded his prayer, what did King Solomon do? What did he say had not failed? 1 Kings 8:55, 56.

15. What influences drew Solomon away from his allegiance to God? With what result? 1 Kings 11:4, 9-13.

NOTE.—"So gradual was Solomon's apostasy that before he was aware of it, he had wandered far from God. Almost imperceptibly he began to trust less and less in divine guidance and blessing, and to put confidence in his own strength. Little by little he withheld from God that unswerving obedience which was to make Israel a peculiar people, and he conformed more and more closely to the customs of the surrounding nations. Yielding to the temptations incident to his success and his honored position, he forgot the Source of his prosperity. An ambition to excel all other nations in power and grandeur led him to pervert for selfish purposes the heavenly gifts hitherto employed for the glory of God. . . . His wives exerted a strong influence over him, and gradually prevailed on him to unite with them in their worship. . . . His separation from God through communication with idolaters was his ruin. As he cast off his allegiance to God, he lost the mastery of himself. His moral efficiency was gone. His fine sensibilities became blunted, his conscience seared."—Id., pp. 55-57.

16. Whom did God raise up to trouble Solomon's declining years? Verses 14, 23, 26.

17. In what special way has the wisdom of Solomon been recorded? What is the purpose of these sayings? Prov. 1:1-6.

NOTE.—"In the proverbs of Solomon are outlined principles of holy living and high endeavor; principles that are heaven-born and that lead to godliness; principles that should govern every act of life. It was the wide dissemination of these principles, and the recognition of God as the one to whom all praise and honor belong, that made Solomon's early reign a time of moral uplift as well as of material prosperity."—Id., pp. 33, 34.

18. In what other forms has the wisdom of Solomon been preserved for us? Eccl. 1:1; The Song of Solomon 1:1.

19. How many proverbs did he speak? How many songs did he compose? Concerning what did his wisdom teach? 1 Kings 4:32, 33.

20. What may be learned from the experience of Solomon's departure from God?

NOTE.—"From such examples we should learn that in watchfulness and prayer is the only safety for both young and old. Security does not lie in exalted position and great privileges. One may for many years have enjoyed a genuine Christian experience, but he is still exposed to Satan's attacks. In the battle with inward sin and outward temptation, even the wise and powerful Solomon was vanquished. His failure teaches us that, whatever a man's intellectual qualities may be, and however faithfully he may have served God in the past, he can never with safety trust in his own wisdom and integrity."—Id., p. 82.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. What choice do we make for our lives? Is it the path of divine wisdom or worldly honor and wealth?

2. Are we drifting, due to wrong influences, or are we standing steadfast?

3. Where may we, too, obtain wisdom for the affairs of life?

Lesson 5—May 3, 1930

Ten Tribes Secede; The Disobedient Prophet

MEMORY VERSE: Matt. 11:28-30.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 87-108.

INTRODUCTION

During the reign of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel rose to a position of great power and influence among the nations of earth. All this might have been brought about in God's way, which would have developed a happy and contented people, justly ruled, and not burdened by an unnecessary taxation and military oppression. But Solomon lost sight of his dependence upon God, so evident when he ascended the throne. His heathen wives and his courtiers turned his ideals to those of the nations about him, and the kingdom was oppressed to maintain the luxurious court and army which ministered to his vanity, and exalted him in the eyes of surrounding peoples. While loyal to Solomon, the nation became discontented, and the people were unwilling for these conditions to continue. After his death, the revolt against oppression and injustice which had been seething in the hearts of the people, burst forth, and his son Rehoboam by his lack of discernment and his ambition for power brought about the secession of the ten tribes.

THE LESSON

1. After the death of Solomon, where did his son Rehoboam go for his coronation? Who appeared from exile? 1 Kings 12:1-3.

2. Under the leadership of Jeroboam, what question did Israel ask? What request did Rehoboam make? Verses 4, 5.

NOTE.—"The tribes had long suffered grievous wrongs under the oppressive measures of their former ruler. The extravagance of Solomon's reign during his apostasy had led him to tax the people heavily, and to require of them much menial service. Before going forward with the coronation of a new ruler, the leading men from among the tribes determined to ascertain whether or not it was the purpose of Solomon's son to lessen these burdens."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 88, 89.

3. What counsel did the old men give when Rehoboam consulted them? Verses 6, 7.

4. To whom did he then turn? What advice did the young men give? Verses 8-11.

5. When the ten tribes heard the unwise decision of Rehoboam, what course did they take? Verses 16, 19, 20.

NOTE.—"Had Rehoboam and his inexperienced counselors understood the divine will concerning Israel, they would have listened to the request of the people for decided reforms in the administration of the government. But in the hour of opportunity that came to them during the meeting in Shechem, they failed to reason from cause to effect, and thus forever weakened their influence over a large number of the people. . . . The breach created by the rash speech of Rehoboam proved irreparable. Thenceforth the twelve tribes of Israel were divided, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin composing the lower or southern kingdom of Judah, under

the rulership of Rehoboam; while the ten northern tribes formed and maintained a separate government, known as the kingdom of Israel, with Jeroboam as their ruler."—Id., pp. 90, 91.

6. How did Rehoboam plan to regain the kingdom? What word did he receive from the Lord? Verses 21-24.

NOTE.—"How sad, how filled with significance, the words, 'And all Israel with him'! The people whom God had chosen to stand as a light to the surrounding nations, were turning from their Source of strength, and seeking to become like the nations about them. As with Solomon, so with Rehoboam,—the influence of wrong example led many astray. And as with them, so to a greater or less degree is it to-day with every one who gives himself up to work evil,—the influence of wrongdoing is not confined to the doer. No man liveth unto himself. None perish alone in their iniquity. Every life is a light that brightens and cheers the pathway of others, or a dark and desolating influence that tends toward despair and ruin. We lead others either upward to happiness and immortal life, or downward to sorrow and eternal death. And if by our deeds we strengthen or force into activity the evil powers of those around us, we share their sin."—Id., p. 94.

7. What did Jeroboam fear would cause the ten tribes to restore their allegiance to the house of David? What did he do to wean them from the temple worship? Verses 26-33.

NOTE.—"So strong was Jeroboam's desire to keep the ten tribes away from Jerusalem, that he lost sight of the fundamental weakness of his plan. He failed to take into consideration the great peril to which he was exposing the Israelites by setting before them the idolatrous symbol of the Deity with which their ancestors had been so familiar during the centuries of Egyptian bondage. Jeroboam's recent residence in Egypt should have taught him the folly of placing before the people such heathen representations. But his set purpose of inducing the northern tribes to discontinue their annual visits to the holy city, led him to adopt the most imprudent of measures."—Id., p. 100.

8. While Jeroboam stood to burn incense on the altar he had built, who came to him? What message did the man of God bring? What sign was given showing that he was a true prophet? 1 Kings 13:1-3.

9. What did Jeroboam attempt to do? With what result? Verses 4, 5.

10. At this warning and punishment, for what did Jeroboam plead? What answer did he receive? Verse 6.

11. What did Jeroboam desire to do for the prophet? What instruction had the man of God received? What did he do? Verses 7-10.

12. Who was told of the experiences of that day? What plan did the old prophet form and at once put into execution? Verses 11-14.

13. With what response did he meet when he invited the man of God to eat bread with him? What message did he claim to have received? What did he thus do? Verses 15-18.

14. What message came to the man of God while he was eating the forbidden dinner? Verses 19-22.

NOTE.—"Because the true prophet allowed himself to take a course contrary to the line of duty, God permitted him to suffer the penalty of

transgression. While he and the one who had invited him to return to Bethel were sitting together at the table, the inspiration of the Almighty came upon the false prophet."—Id., p. 106.

15. How speedily, and in what manner, was this prophecy fulfilled? Who saw and reported his death in the city? Verses 23-25.

16. When the old prophet heard it, what did he say and do? Where was the disobedient prophet buried? Verses 26-30.

17. What instruction did the old prophet give his sons concerning his own burial? What did he say concerning the disobedient prophet's message? Verses 31, 32.

18. Even after this warning, what course did Jeroboam pursue? What did his course become to his house? To what end? Verses 33, 34.

NOTE.—"The penalty that overtook the unfaithful messenger was a still further evidence of the truth of the prophecy uttered over the altar. If, after disobeying the word of the Lord, the prophet had been permitted to go on in safety, the king would have used this fact in an attempt to vindicate his own disobedience. In the rent altar, in the palsied arm, and in the terrible fate of the one who dared disobey an express command of Jehovah, Jeroboam should have discerned the swift displeasure of an offended God, and these judgments should have warned him not to persist in wrongdoing."—Id., p. 107.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Counsel is best sought from those of long and wide experience. Whose advice do I seek? Why?
2. Many seek to buttress their influence and power by pursuing a wrong course. Do I allow my desires thus to lead me?
3. Do I sufficiently regard the necessity for obedience that I heed no voice but God's, and even willingly deny apparent physical need?

Lesson 6—May 10, 1930

Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath

MEMORY VERSE: John 15:10.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 119-132.

INTRODUCTION

"The glory of Israel departed! Never before had the chosen people of God fallen so low in apostasy. Of 'the prophets of Baal' there were 'four hundred and fifty,' besides four hundred 'prophets of the groves.' Nothing short of the miracle-working power of God could preserve the nation from utter destruction. Israel had voluntarily separated herself from Jehovah; yet the Lord in compassion still yearned after those who had been led into sin, and He was about to send to them one of the mightiest of His prophets, through whom many were to be led back to allegiance to the God of their fathers."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 116.

"Among the mountains of Gilead, east of the Jordan, there dwelt in the days of Ahab a man of faith and prayer whose fearless ministry was

destined to check the rapid spread of apostasy in Israel. Far removed from any city of renown, and occupying no high station in life, Elijah the Tishbite nevertheless entered upon his mission confident in God's purpose to prepare the way before him and to give him abundant success. The word of faith and power was upon his lips, and his whole life was devoted to the work of reform."—Id., p. 119.

THE LESSON

1. From what part of Israel did Elijah the Tishbite come? What was his first recorded prophecy? 1 Kings 17:1.

NOTE.—"Oft-repeated appeals, remonstrances, and warnings had failed to bring Israel to repentance. The time had come when God must speak to them by means of judgments. Inasmuch as the worshipers of Baal claimed that the treasures of heaven, the dew and the rain, came not from Jehovah, but from the ruling forces of nature, and that it was through the creative energy of the sun that the earth was enriched and made to bring forth abundantly, the curse of God was to rest heavily upon the polluted land. The apostate tribes of Israel were to be shown the folly of trusting to the power of Baal for temporal blessings. Until they should turn to God with repentance, and acknowledge Him as the source of all blessing, there should fall upon the land neither dew nor rain."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 120.

2. When Elijah had thus prophesied to Ahab, what command did God give him? What provision would God make for him? Verses 2-4.

3. Having carried out God's command, what fulfillment of His promise did he see? What took place as the drought continued? Verses 5-7.

NOTE.—"The prophet's words went into immediate effect. Those who were at first inclined to scoff at the thought of calamity, soon had occasion for serious reflection; for after a few months the earth, unrefreshed by dew or rain, became dry, and vegetation withered. As time passed, streams that had never been known to fail, began to decrease, and brooks began to dry up. . . . A year passes, and yet there is no rain. The earth is parched as if with fire. The scorching heat of the sun destroys what little vegetation has survived. Streams dry up, and lowing herds and bleating flocks wander hither and thither in distress. Once-flourishing fields have become like burning desert sands,—a desolate waste."—Id., pp. 123, 124.

4. Where next was Elijah directed to go? Who was to care for him? Verses 8, 9.

NOTE.—"This woman was not an Israelite. She had never had the privileges and blessings that the chosen people of God had enjoyed; but she was a believer in the true God, and had walked in all the light that was shining on her pathway. And now, when there was no safety for Elijah in the land of Israel, God sent him to this woman to find an asylum in her home."—Id., p. 129.

5. On arrival in Zarephath, how did he find the one who was to care for him? For what did he ask? Verse 10.

6. As she was about to bring the water, what further request did he make? In her response what condition of poverty did she reveal? Verses 11, 12.

7. What did Elijah then instruct her to do? What assurance of God's blessing did he give her? Verses 13, 14.

8. In carrying out his instruction, what temporal blessing came to her household? For how long did this continue? According to whose word had Elijah spoken throughout this experience? Verses 15, 16.

NOTE.—"No greater test of faith than this could have been required. The widow had hitherto treated all strangers with kindness and liberality. Now, regardless of the suffering that might result to herself and child, and trusting in the God of Israel to supply her every need, she met this supreme test of hospitality by doing 'according to the saying of Elijah.' . . . The widow of Zarephath shared her morsel with Elijah; and in return, her life and that of her son were preserved. And to all who, in time of trial and want, give sympathy and assistance to others more needy, God has promised great blessing. He has not changed. His power is no less now than in the days of Elijah. No less sure now than when spoken by our Saviour is the promise, 'He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward.'"—Id., pp. 130-132.

9. About this time, what befell the son of the widow? How serious was his illness? Verse 17.

10. What impression did her son's illness apparently make upon the woman's mind? Verse 18.

11. What course did Elijah immediately take? What prayer did he utter? Verses 19, 20.

12. Following his prayer, what did he do? What cry did he utter? Verse 21.

NOTE.—The faith of Elijah was here severely tested. He had been providentially cared for in the home of the widow, but now his presence in the home as a representative of the Most High is held by the mother as the cause of the child's death. Yet not for a moment did Elijah question nor hesitate. He asks for the boy, carries him to his own chamber, in implicit faith calls for help from God, and receives the answer to his prayer. To him was fulfilled the promise made to all God's children, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22.

13. How did God respond to the faith of Elijah? With what words did Elijah present the lad to his mother? Verses 22, 23.

14. As the result of this experience, of what was the widow convinced? Verse 24.

NOTE.—Convinced long before that Elijah was no ordinary man, the restoration of the widow's son to health and strength after his breath had left him, brought to her heart fully the conviction that Elijah was a man of God. He was in very fact one in whose mouth the word of the Lord was truth. She recognized that the messages which from time to time he had spoken were from the God of heaven.

15. Who only can raise the dead and give life? John 11:25.

16. Referring to the petitions of Elijah, what is said of the prayer of a righteous man? James 5:16, 17.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Would utter discouragement come to me if the deliverance of God's message meant flight and lonely exile?

2. A barrel of meal about gone; three people to feed; a year or more of famine ahead. What would my faith do, if similarly tested?

Lesson 7—May 17, 1930

The Prophets of Baal Destroyed

MEMORY VERSE: James 5:17, 18.

LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 143-158.

INTRODUCTION

"God cannot use men who, in time of peril, when the strength, courage, and influence of all are needed, are afraid to take a firm stand for the right. He calls for men who will do faithful battle against wrong, warring against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It is to such as these that He will speak the words: 'Well done, good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' "—"Prophets and Kings," p. 142.

THE LESSON

1. After many days, what word came from God to Elijah? 1 Kings 18:1.

2. How long had it been since Elijah gave his first message to Ahab? Luke 4:25; James 5:17.

NOTE.—"There is apprehension in the hearts of the priests as they remember that at the word of the prophet the land of Israel for three years and a half has been destitute of dew and rain. Some fearful crisis is at hand, they feel sure. The gods in whom they have trusted have been unable to prove Elijah a false prophet. To their frantic cries, their prayers, their tears, their humiliation, their revolting ceremonies, their costly and ceaseless sacrifices, the objects of their worship have been strangely indifferent."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 144, 147.

3. When Elijah went to Samaria with a message for Ahab, what condition did he find there? Verse 2.

4. When the famine grew sore, for what purpose did Ahab call Obadiah? What office did Obadiah hold? What was his attitude toward the Lord? What had he done to save the prophets? Verses 3-6.

NOTE.—"About the time that the prophet set forth on his journey to Samaria, Ahab had proposed to Obadiah, the governor of his household, that they make thorough search for springs and brooks of water, in the hope of finding pasture for their starving flocks and herds. Even in the royal court the effect of the long-continued drought was keenly felt. The king, deeply concerned over the outlook for his household, decided to unite personally with his servant in a search for some favored spots where pasture might be had."—Id., pp. 137, 138.

5. Whom did Obadiah meet by the way? Recognizing Elijah, how did he show respect to the prophet? Verse 7.

6. What did Elijah command Obadiah to do? What did Obadiah fear? How did he express his objections? Verses 8-14.

7. What promise did Elijah make to Obadiah? As Ahab heard Elijah was near, what did he do? Verses 15, 16.

8. On meeting Elijah, how did Ahab greet him? What was Elijah's response? Verses 17, 18.

NOTE.—"It is natural for the wrongdoer to hold the messengers of God responsible for the calamities that come as the sure result of a departure from the way of righteousness. Those who place themselves in Satan's power are unable to see things as God sees them. When the mirror of truth is held up before them, they become indignant at the thought of receiving reproof. Blinded by sin, they refuse to repent; they feel that God's servants have turned against them, and are worthy of severest censure. Standing in conscious innocence before Ahab, Elijah makes no attempt to excuse himself or to flatter the king. Nor does he seek to evade the king's wrath by the good news that the drought is almost over. He has no apology to offer. Indignant, and jealous for the honor of God, he casts back the imputation of Ahab, fearlessly declaring to the king that it is his sins, and the sins of his fathers, that have brought upon Israel this terrible calamity. . . . True love seeks first the honor of God and the salvation of souls. Those who have this love will not evade the truth to save themselves from the unpleasant results of plain speaking. When souls are in peril, God's ministers will not consider self, but will speak the word given them to speak, refusing to excuse or palliate evil."—Id., pp. 139-141.

9. What command did Elijah give to Ahab? How fully did Ahab carry out this instruction? Verses 19, 20.

NOTE.—"The command was issued by one who seemed to stand in the very presence of Jehovah; and Ahab obeyed at once, as if the prophet were monarch, and the king a subject. Swift messengers were sent throughout the kingdom with the summons to meet Elijah and the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth."—Id., p. 143.

10. What question did Elijah put to the congregation of Israel? What was the attitude of the people? Verse 21.

NOTE.—"Unashamed, unterrified, the prophet stands before the multitude, fully aware of his commission to execute the divine command. His countenance is lighted with an awful solemnity. In anxious expectancy the people wait for him to speak. Looking first upon the broken-down altar of Jehovah, and then upon the multitude, Elijah cries out in clear, trumpetlike tones: 'How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord [Jehovah] be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.' The people answer him not a word. Not one in that vast assembly dare reveal loyalty to Jehovah. Like a dark cloud, deception and blindness had overspread Israel. Not all at once had this fatal apostasy closed about them, but gradually, as from time to time they had failed to heed the words of warning and reproof that the Lord sent them. Each departure from rightdoing, each refusal to repent, had deepened their guilt, and driven them farther from heaven."—Id., p. 147.

11. What plan did Elijah set before the people and the prophets of Baal? Verses 22-24.

12. Having been given their choice of bullocks, what did Baal's prophets proceed to do? What did they cry? When no answer came, what did they do? Verses 25, 26.

13. How did Elijah mock them? What did this cause the heathen priests to do? For how long did they cry out to their gods? With what result? Verses 27-29.

NOTE.—"All day long the people have witnessed the demonstrations of the baffled priests. They have beheld their wild leaping round the altar, as if they would grasp the burning rays of the sun to serve their purpose. They have looked with horror on the frightful, self-inflicted mutilations of the priests, and have had opportunity to reflect on the follies of idol worship. Many in the throng are weary of the exhibitions of demonism, and they now await with deepest interest the movements of Elijah."—Id., pp. 150, 151.

14. As Baal's prophets failed, whom did Elijah call? What did he do? How many stones did he use? Describe his preparations. Verses 30-35.

15. When the preparations were completed, with what words did Elijah pray to God? For what purpose did he plead with God? Verses 36, 37.

NOTE.—"Reminding the people of the long-continued apostasy that has awakened the wrath of Jehovah, Elijah calls upon them to humble their hearts, and turn to the God of their fathers, that the curse upon the land of Israel may be removed. Then bowing reverently before the unseen God, he raises his hands toward heaven, and offers a simple prayer. Baal's priests have screamed and foamed and leaped, from early morning until late in the afternoon; but as Elijah prays, no senseless shrieks resound over Carmel's height."—Id., p. 152.

16. In what manner did God answer Elijah? What effect did the answer have on the people? What did they cry? Verses 38, 39.

NOTE.—"No sooner is the prayer of Elijah ended, than flames of fire, like brilliant flashes of lightning, descend from heaven upon the upreared altar, consuming the sacrifice, licking up the water in the trench, and consuming even the stones of the altar. The brilliancy of the blaze illumines the mountain and dazzles the eyes of the multitude. In the valleys below, where many are watching in anxious suspense the movements of those above, the descent of fire is clearly seen, and all are amazed at the sight. . . . The people on the mount prostrate themselves in awe before the unseen God. They dare not continue to look upon the Heaven-sent fire. They fear that they themselves will be consumed; and, convicted of their duty to acknowledge the God of Elijah as the God of their fathers, to whom they owe allegiance, they cry out together as with one voice, 'The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God.' With startling distinctness the cry resounds over the mountain and echoes in the plain below. At last Israel is aroused, undeceived, penitent. At last the people see how greatly they have dishonored God."—Id., p. 153.

17. Following this demonstration of God's power, what did Elijah command the people to do? What was done with the prophets of Baal? Verse 40.

18. What instruction did Elijah then give Ahab? Where did Elijah go? What did he do? How many times did his servant look for signs of rain? Verses 41-43.

19. At the seventh look toward the sea, what did the servant discover? What order was given to Ahab? As Ahab rode to Jezreel, how was Elijah enabled to run before him? Verses 44-46.

NOTE.—"This was enough. Elijah did not wait for the heavens to gather blackness. In that small cloud, he beheld by faith an abundance of rain; and he acted in harmony with his faith, sending his servant quickly to Ahab with the message, 'Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.' "—Id., p. 156.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Courage is required to carry out God's instructions. Do I have courage to obey Him in face of obvious danger?
2. The popular thing in Elijah's day was to follow Baal. Have I the trust in God that will help me to stand alone for Him?
3. Do I know my prayers will be answered when I pray as did Elijah? If not, what separates me from the source of power?

Lesson 8—May 24, 1930

Elijah a Fugitive

MEMORY VERSE: Ps. 139:2, 3.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 160-176, 217-222.

INTRODUCTION

"It would seem that after showing courage so undaunted, after triumphing so completely over king and priests and people, Elijah could never afterwards have given way to despondency, nor been awed into timidity. But he who had been blessed with so many evidences of God's loving care, was not above the frailties of mankind, and in this dark hour his faith and courage forsook him. . . .

"Elijah should not have fled from his post of duty. He should have met the threat of Jezebel with an appeal for protection to the One who had commissioned him to vindicate the honor of Jehovah. He should have told the messenger that the God in whom he trusted would protect him against the hatred of the queen. Only a few hours had passed since he had witnessed a wonderful manifestation of divine power, and this should have given him assurance that he would not now be forsaken. Had he remained where he was, had he made God his refuge and strength, standing steadfast for the truth, he would have been shielded from harm. The Lord would have given him another signal victory by sending His judgments on Jezebel; and the impression made on the king and the people would have wrought a great reformation."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 159, 160.

1. When Ahab returned to the palace and told Jezebel, his wife, what Elijah had done to the prophets of Baal, what message did she send? 1 Kings 19:1, 2.

NOTE.—"As Ahab told the queen of the slaying of the idolatrous prophets, Jezebel, hardened and impenitent, became infuriated. She refused to recognize in the events on Carmel the overruling providence of God, and, still defiant, she boldly declared that Elijah should die."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 159.

2. What did this cause Elijah to do? To what place did he first go? Whom did he leave there? Verse 3.

3. Where did he himself go? What did he desire? How did he express the bitterness of his soul? Verse 4.

NOTE.—"A reaction such as frequently follows high faith and glorious success was pressing upon Elijah. He feared that the reformation begun on Carmel might not be lasting; and depression seized him. He had been exalted to Pisgah's top; now he was in the valley. While under the inspiration of the Almighty, he had stood the severest trial of faith; but in this time of discouragement, with Jezebel's threat sounding in his ears, and Satan still apparently prevailing through the plotting of this wicked woman, he lost his hold on God. He had been exalted above measure, and the reaction was tremendous. Forgetting God, Elijah fled on and on, until he found himself in a dreary waste, alone. Utterly wearied, he sat down to rest under a juniper tree. . . . A fugitive, far from the dwelling places of men, his spirits crushed by bitter disappointment, he desired never again to look upon the face of man. At last, utterly exhausted, he fell asleep."—Id., pp. 161, 162.

4. As Elijah slept, who appeared unto him? What did the angel say? Verse 5.

5. What provision had been made for Elijah's temporal needs? After partaking of food, what did Elijah again do? Verse 6.

6. When the angel came a second time, what did he announce to Elijah? How long did he go in the strength of the food of this second divine provision? To what place did he go? Verses 7, 8.

7. On arrival at Horeb where did Elijah seek lodging? What question did the Lord address to him? Verse 9.

8. What answer did Elijah give to the Lord's inquiry? How isolated did he feel in Israel? Verse 10.

NOTE.—"Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement,—days when sorrow is the portion, and it is hard to believe that God is still the kind benefactor of His earthborn children; days when troubles harass the soul, till death seems preferable to life. It is then that many lose their hold on God, and are brought into the slavery of doubt, the bondage of unbelief. Could we at such times discern with spiritual insight the meaning of God's providences, we should see angels seeking to save us from ourselves, striving to plant our feet upon a foundation more firm than the everlasting hills; and new faith, new life, would spring into being."—Id., p. 162.

9. What command came to Elijah from God? As the Lord passed by, what took place? What followed next? Verse 11.

10. What came after the wind and the earthquake? What followed the fire? Hearing the voice, what did Elijah at once do? What question was again addressed to him? Verses 12, 13.

NOTE.—"Not in mighty manifestations of divine power, but by 'a still small voice,' did God choose to reveal Himself to His servant. He desired to teach Elijah that it is not always the work that makes the greatest demonstration that is most successful in accomplishing His purpose. While Elijah waited for the revelation of the Lord, a tempest rolled, the lightnings flashed, and a devouring fire swept by; but God was not in all this. Then there came a still small voice, and the prophet covered his head before the presence of the Lord. His petulance was silenced, his spirit softened and subdued. He now knew that a quiet trust, a firm reliance on God, would ever find for him a present help in time of need. It is not always the most learned presentation of God's truth that convicts and converts the soul. Not by eloquence or logic are men's hearts reached, but by the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit, which operate quietly yet surely in transforming and developing character. It is the still small voice of the Spirit of God that has power to change the heart."—Id., pp. 168, 169.

11. By what reply did Elijah indicate that his feeling of isolation had not disappeared? What commission was given him concerning the king of Syria? Verses 14, 15.

12. Whom was he to anoint king of Israel in place of Ahab? Who was to be anointed to take his own place? Verse 16.

NOTE.—"The Lord answered Elijah that the wrongdoers in Israel should not go unpunished. Men were to be especially chosen to fulfill the divine purpose in the punishment of the idolatrous kingdom. There was stern work to be done, that all might be given opportunity to take their position on the side of the true God. Elijah himself was to return to Israel, and share with others the burden of bringing about a reformation."—Id., p. 169.

13. What was to come to rebellious Israel through these men? Verse 17.

14. What assurance was given to Elijah concerning the faithful in Israel? Verse 18.

NOTE.—"From Elijah's experience during those days of discouragement and apparent defeat, there are many lessons to be drawn,—lessons invaluable to the servants of God in this age, marked as it is by general departure from right. The apostasy prevailing to-day is similar to that which in the prophet's day overspread Israel. In the exaltation of the human above the divine, in the praise of popular leaders, in the worship of mammon, and in the placing of the teachings of science above the truths of revelation, multitudes to-day are following after Baal. Doubt and unbelief are exercising their baleful influence over mind and heart, and many are substituting for the oracles of God the theories of men. . . .

"Yet this apostasy, widespread as it has come to be, is not universal. Not all in the world are lawless and sinful; not all have taken sides with

the enemy. God has many thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal, many who long to understand more fully in regard to Christ and the law, many who are hoping against hope that Jesus will come soon to end the reign of sin and death. And there are many who have been worshiping Baal ignorantly, but with whom the Spirit of God is still striving."—Id., pp. 170, 171.

15. As he returned to Israel, whom did he find plowing? What significant act did he perform? Verse 19.

16. What request did Elisha make? Having performed this service, what did he immediately do? Verses 20, 21.

NOTE.—"The call to place all on the altar of service comes to each one. We are not all asked to serve as Elisha served, nor are we all bidden to sell everything we have; but God asks us to give His service the first place in our lives, to allow no day to pass without doing something to advance His work in the earth. He does not expect from all the same kind of service. One may be called to ministry in a foreign land; another may be asked to give of his means for the support of gospel work. God accepts the offering of each. It is the consecration of the life and all its interests, that is necessary. Those who make this consecration, will hear and obey the call of Heaven."—Id., p. 221.

17. How is the truth of the memory verse illustrated in this lesson?

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. When God's call to service comes, what is my response?
2. Does discouragement come to me when I am called upon to stand alone?
3. In the face of violent opposition, how would my faith stand the test?

Lesson 9—May 31, 1930

The Vineyard of Naboth

MEMORY VERSE: Eph. 5:11.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 204-207.

INTRODUCTION

Although Ahab had, through a large part of his reign, followed the evil course dictated by his heathen wife, yet when Ben-hadad, king of Syria, came against him, claiming authority over Israel because of the superiority of the gods of Syria over the God of Israel, God intervened to glorify His own name before His people and before the nations. He it was who gave the plan of battle and chose those who should participate. He warned of the second attack, and the form it would take. He gave definite instruction as to what course should be followed. He also condemned when the instruction given was disobeyed.

In spite of these warnings and these evidences of God's power, Ahab turned back to do evil, and his selfish, pleasure-loving, covetous heart, abetted in its weaknesses by a perverse and wicked consort, led him to

crime which brought upon him the final condemnation of God, and the ultimate destruction of his house.

THE LESSON

1. In the days of Ahab, what great king came with his armies against Israel? What are the principal points in the message sent to Ahab by Ben-hadad? 1 Kings 20:1-8.

NOTE.—"The Syrian king gathered together the thirty-two kings of the smaller tribes allied to his kingdom, and assembling a mighty host of 130,000 men with horses and chariots, made an overpowering raid upon Israel, destroying villages, and farms, and orchards, paralyzing business, ravaging the homes, and driving the people to the more strongly fortified towns. They were like 'a tempest of hail, a destroying storm, a flood of mighty waters overflowing, an overwhelming scourge.' These epithets describe in vivid speech the irresistible violence, the devastating force with which the Syrians were about to overwhelm them. It is almost impossible for us to realize the devastating power of such half-savage hordes who lived upon the country, who ravaged villages, who murdered women and children, who had an unrestrained power. . . . What the invaders sought was the wealth, the harvests, and all kinds of valuables, without paying for them, and entirely without regard to the welfare of the people."—Peloubet's Select Notes.

2. What advice did the elders and people give to Ahab? When Ahab refused the demands of Ben-hadad, what threat did Ben-hadad make? What was the response of Ahab? Verses 7-11.

3. By whom and with what promise was Ahab assured of victory? Verses 13-15.

4. How did the condition of Ben-hadad contribute to his defeat? What were his orders when the young men of the provinces appeared? Verses 16-18.

5. What was the result of the first battle? What did the prophet say would again happen? Verses 19-22.

6. What did the servants of the king of Syria tell him? Verses 23-25.

7. When Syria under Ben-hadad again came against Israel, how complete was the victory gained by Israel? How did Ahab fail to carry out the will of God? Who of the Assyrians was spared? Verses 29, 30, 34.

8. For making a covenant with the enemy of Israel, what sentence came to Ahab from the prophet of God? How did it affect Ahab? Verses 42, 43.

9. After these things, what desire came into the heart of Ahab? What effect did his inability to satisfy his desire have upon the king? 1 Kings 21:1-4.

NOTE.—"Naturally of a covetous disposition, Ahab, strengthened and sustained in wrongdoing by Jezebel, had followed the dictates of his evil heart, until he was fully controlled by the spirit of selfishness. He could brook no refusal of his wishes; the things he desired he felt should by right be his."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 204.

10. Who came to the king? With what question? How did Ahab reply? Verses 5, 6.

NOTE.—The setting of this incident is thus described by Peloubet: "Ahab was the seventh king of Israel, the northern kingdom, and reigned from 876 B. C. to 854 B. C., or twenty-two years. Weak in his personal character, he married a heathen princess whose fierce strength of purpose was able to overmaster his at every turn, the infamous Jezebel, daughter of the king of Zidon, who made her husband an idolater like herself. This royal pair had a summer palace at Jezreel on a spur of Mount Gilboa, looking westward toward Mount Carmel over the great plain of Jezreel. Near this palace was a vineyard belonging to a simple farmer named Naboth. Ahab wished to add it to the palace grounds and offered to pay Naboth in money or in a better vineyard. The Hebrews, however, were always reluctant to part with their ancestral lands, and especially to sell them outside their own kin. Naboth refused the king's proposal with horror, and Ahab knew that popular feeling would back up the farmer, so he went to his palace and sulked like a little boy whose wishes had been thwarted. He flung himself on his bed, face to the wall, and even refused to eat."

11. What did Jezebel ask? What assurance did she give? Verse 7.

12. What plan did Jezebel at once formulate and carry out? Verses 8-14.

NOTE.—"Ahab cared not by what means his wife might accomplish the desired object, and Jezebel immediately proceeded to carry out her wicked purpose."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 205.

13. On hearing news of the success of her plot, what did Jezebel do? Verse 15.

14. How eagerly did Ahab act upon the news of Naboth's death? Verse 16.

15. Who was at once sent with a message of reproof to Ahab? What punishment was to come upon him for his part in the crime? Upon Jezebel? Verses 17-24.

16. What description is given of Ahab's wickedness under the influence of Jezebel? Verses 25, 26.

NOTE.—No more scathing condemnation of the evil course of any man can be found in Old Testament history. Jezebel has come down to posterity as a synonym of evil influence and life. "Did sell himself" indicates that Ahab had full knowledge of what was right, but because of his selfishness and his inability to control his desires, he sold his birthright, that he might follow evil and enjoy the pleasures of sin for life's brief span.

17. What saved Ahab from personally suffering the punishments threatened? In whose days would the punishment come? Verses 27-29.

NOTE.—"It was less than three years later that King Ahab met his death at the hands of the Syrians. Ahaziah, his successor, 'did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam.' 'He served Baal, and worshiped him, and provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel,' as his father

Ahab had done. But judgments followed close upon the sins of the rebellious king. A disastrous war with Moab, and then an accident by which his own life was threatened, attested to God's wrath against him." —Id., p. 207.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Divine instruction is to be followed to the letter. Am I faithful in so doing?

2. Covetousness is equally fatal in the lives of rulers and people. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

3. Passive participation in evil is as abhorrent to God as active sinning. Do I consent to wrongdoing either by silence or by encouragement?

Lesson 10—June 7, 1930

The Mantle of Elijah

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Thess. 4:16-18.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 207-234.

INTRODUCTION

"God had bidden Elijah anoint another to be prophet in his stead. 'Elisha the son of Shaphat . . . shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room,' He had said; and in obedience to the command, Elijah went to find Elisha. . . . Elisha's father was a wealthy farmer, a man whose household were among the number that in a time of almost universal apostasy had not bowed the knee to Baal. Theirs was a home where God was honored, and where allegiance to the faith of ancient Israel was the rule of daily life. In such surroundings the early years of Elisha were passed. In the quietude of country life, under the teaching of God and nature and the discipline of useful work, he received the training in habits of simplicity and of obedience to his parents and to God that helped to fit him for the high position he was afterwards to occupy. . . . Had Elisha asked Elijah what was expected of him,—what would be his work,—he would have been answered: God knows; He will make it known to you. If you wait upon the Lord, He will answer your every question. You may come with me if you have evidence that God has called you. Know for yourself that God stands back of me, and that it is His voice you hear. If you can count everything but dross that you may win the favor of God, come."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 217-221.

THE LESSON

1. When Ahaziah the king of Israel fell and was injured, of whom did he inquire concerning the possibility of recovery? 2 Kings 1:1, 2.

2. Because of this transgression, what message from the Lord did Elijah bring to Ahaziah's messengers? Verses 3, 4.

3. What did they report to the king? In their description of the man they had met, whom did Ahaziah recognize? Verses 5-8.

NOTE.—"The astonished servants hastened back to the king, and repeated to him the words of the man of God. . . . 'It is Elijah the

Tishbite'!' Ahaziah exclaimed. He knew that if the stranger whom his messengers had met were indeed Elijah, the words of doom pronounced would surely come to pass. Anxious to avert, if possible, the threatened judgment, he determined to send for the prophet."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 208.

4. What did Ahaziah make three attempts to do? With what results? What was Elijah instructed to do? What was his message to this king? Verses 9-16.

5. How fully was the word of Elijah fulfilled? Verses 17, 18.

NOTE.—"The history of King Ahaziah's sin and its punishment has in it a warning which none can disregard with impunity. Men to-day may not pay homage to heathen gods, yet thousands are worshiping at Satan's shrine as verily as did the king of Israel. The spirit of idolatry is rife in the world to-day, although, under the influence of science and education, it has assumed forms more refined and attractive than in the days when Ahaziah sought to the god of Ekron. . . . To-day the mysteries of heathen worship are replaced by the secret associations and séances, the obscurities and wonders, of spiritualistic mediums. . . . The apostles of nearly all forms of spiritism claim to have power to heal. They attribute this power to electricity, magnetism, the so-called 'sympathetic remedies,' or to latent forces within the mind of man. And there are not a few, even in this Christian age, who go to these healers, instead of trusting in the power of the living God and the skill of well-qualified physicians."—Id., pp. 210, 211.

6. Upon whom had Elijah cast his mantle on his return from the wilderness? 1 Kings 19:19-21.

7. What intention of the Lord concerning Elijah was later revealed? 2 Kings 2:1.

8. What instruction did Elijah give to Elisha? What did Elisha reply? Verse 2.

NOTE.—"As Elisha accompanied the prophet on his round of service from school to school, his faith and resolution were once more tested. At Gilgal, and again at Bethel and Jericho, he was invited by the prophet to turn back. 'Tarry here, I pray thee,' Elijah said; 'for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel.' But in his early labor of guiding the plow, Elisha had learned not to fail or to become discouraged; and now that he had set his hand to the plow in another line of duty, he would not be diverted from his purpose. He would not be parted from his master, so long as opportunity remained for gaining a further fitting up for service. Unknown to Elijah, the revelation that he was to be translated had been made known to his disciples in the schools of the prophets, and in particular to Elisha. And now the tried servant of the man of God kept close beside him. As often as the invitation to turn back was given, his answer was, 'As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.' "—Id., pp. 225, 226.

9. Who came to Elisha? What conversation took place between them? Verse 3.

10. In what manner was this scene and conversation repeated? Verses 4-6.

11. When Elijah and Elisha stood at the crossing of Jordan, who watched in the distance? What did Elijah do? With what results? Verses 7, 8.

12. When they were gone over the Jordan, what request did Elisha make of Elijah? What reply was received? Verses 9, 10.

NOTE.—"Elisha asked not for worldly honor, or for a high place among the great men of earth. That which he craved was a large measure of the Spirit that God had bestowed so freely upon the one about to be honored with translation. He knew that nothing but the Spirit which had rested upon Elijah, could fit him to fill the place in Israel to which God had called him; and so he asked, 'I pray thee, let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me.' "—Id., pp. 226, 227.

13. As they walked and talked, what took place? Verse 11.

NOTE.—"Elijah was a type of the saints who will be living on the earth at the time of the second advent of Christ, and who will be 'changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,' without tasting of death. It was as a representative of those who shall be thus translated, that Elijah, near the close of Christ's earthly ministry, was permitted to stand with Moses by the side of the Saviour on the mount of transfiguration. . . . In the desert, in loneliness and discouragement, Elijah had said that he had had enough of life, and had prayed that he might die. But the Lord in His mercy had not taken him at his word. There was yet a great work for Elijah to do; and when his work was done, he was not to perish in discouragement and solitude. Not for him the descent into the tomb, but the ascent with God's angels to the presence of His glory."—Id., pp. 227, 228.

14. When Elisha saw Elijah ascend in the whirlwind, what did he say? What did he do? Verse 12.

15. What had fallen from Elijah as he ascended? What did Elisha do with it? What miracle thus was performed? Verses 13, 14.

16. What attitude did the sons of the prophets take toward Elisha? Why? Verse 15.

NOTE.—"When the Lord in His providence sees fit to remove from His work those to whom He has given wisdom, He helps and strengthens their successors, if they will look to Him for aid and will walk in His ways. They may be even wiser than their predecessors; for they may profit by their experience and learn wisdom from their mistakes."—Id., p. 228.

17. What further evidence of Elisha's call was given to the inhabitants of the city? Verses 19-22.

NOTE.—"The healing of the waters of Jericho was accomplished, not by any wisdom of man, but by the miraculous interposition of God. . . . In casting salt into the bitter spring, Elisha taught the same spiritual lesson imparted centuries later by the Saviour to His disciples when He declared, 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' The salt mingling with the polluted spring purified its waters, and brought life and blessing where before had been blighting and death. When God compares His children to salt, He would teach them that His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may become agents in saving others. The object of God in choosing a people before all the world was not only that

He might adopt them as His sons and daughters, but that through them the world might receive the grace that bringeth salvation. When the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a medium of the peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations."—Id., pp. 231, 232.

18. Of what was Elijah's translation illustrative? 1 Thess. 4:16-18.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. Elijah acted instantly and fearlessly on the instruction of the angel of God. What is my attitude?

2. Elisha earnestly followed Elijah, seeking help and power in godly companionship. What is my relation to those who dwell near to God?

Lesson 11—June 14, 1930

Elisha and the Shunammite; The Poisoned Meal; The Hundred Miraculously Fed

MEMORY VERSE: John 5:25.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 235-243.

INTRODUCTION

"Elisha was a man of mild and kindly spirit; but that he could also be stern is shown by his course when, on the way to Bethel, he was mocked by ungodly youth who had come out of the city. These youth had heard of Elijah's ascension, and they made this solemn event the subject of their jeers, saying to Elisha, 'Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.' "—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 235, 236.

This early experience of severity upon the lawless, idle, and dissolute youth of Bethel never had to be repeated by Elisha. His later life was marked by firmness, yet by a ministry of helpfulness to all classes which demonstrates the kindness and love of his natural disposition. The experiences with the widow, in the home of the Shunammite, the healing of the poisoned pottage, and the feeding of the hundred through miraculous multiplication of the food to meet their need, are illustrations from his constant life of devoted service.

THE LESSON

1. Who came to Elisha with a plea for help? What was her condition? What did she fear? 2 Kings 4:1.

2. What question did Elisha ask? What was the woman's reply? Verse 2.

3. What did Elisha tell her to do? What was to be done with the full vessels? Verses 3, 4.

4. Having carried out the instruction of the prophet, what resulted? Verses 5-7.

5. When passing through the village of Shunem, what invitation was given to Elisha? Verse 8.

6. What did the woman observe? What plan did she suggest to her husband? How did the prophet avail himself of the hospitality provided? Verses 9-11.

7. How did Elisha seek to reward this family for their kindness? Verses 12, 13.

8. What desire of the Shunammite woman's heart was granted according to the promise of God through Elisha? Verses 14-17.

NOTE.—"To this retreat Elisha often came, thankful for its quiet peace. Nor was God unmindful of the woman's kindness. Her home had been childless; and now the Lord rewarded her hospitality by the gift of a son."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 237.

9. What incident brought about the death of the child? When the lad died in his mother's arms, what did she do with him? Verses 18-21.

10. What request did she make of her husband? Where did she find Elisha? Verses 22-25.

NOTE.—From Shunem to the nearest part of Carmel was a journey of at least twenty miles.

11. What questions did Elisha ask through Gehazi? How did the Shunammite show reluctance to tell her trouble to the servant? When she came to Elisha, what did she do? When at length the woman spoke, what questions did she ask? Verses 26-28.

NOTE.—It seems that even to Elisha the mother could not speak the awful words, "My boy is dead." She expressed almost a reproach in the words of verse 28. Elisha seemed to understand the truth at once.

12. Perceiving the trouble, what instruction did Elisha give Gehazi? What attitude did the Shunammite take? With what result? Verses 29, 30.

13. What result followed the carrying out of the instructions of Elisha by Gehazi? When Elisha arrived, what did he do? Verses 31-34.

14. When Elisha had a second time stretched himself upon the lad, what took place? Whom did he call? What did the mother do? Verses 35-37.

15. In studying this miracle, what words of Jesus should be remembered? John 5:25.

NOTE.—"So was the faith of this woman rewarded. Christ, the great Life-giver, restored her son to her. In like manner will His faithful ones be rewarded, when, at His coming, death loses its sting, and the grave is robbed of the victory it has claimed. Then will He restore to His servants the children that have been taken from them by death."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 239.

16. What experience with poisoned pottage evidenced Elisha's power from above? Verses 38-41.

NOTE.—"Like the Saviour of mankind, of whom he was a type, Elisha in his ministry among men combined the work of healing with that of teaching. Faithfully, untiringly, throughout his long and effective labors, Elisha endeavored to foster and advance the important educational work carried on by the schools of the prophets. In the providence of God, his words of instruction to the earnest groups of young men assembled were confirmed by the deep movings of the Holy Spirit, and at times by other unmistakable evidences of his authority as a servant of

Jehovah. It was on the occasion of one of his visits to the school established at Gilgal, that he healed the poisoned pottage."—Id., p. 240.

17. In the time of famine, what miracle in providing food for the people again gave evidence of his divine calling? Verses 42-44.

NOTE.—"It is the grace of God on the small portion that makes it all-sufficient. God's hand can multiply it a hundredfold. From His resources He can spread a table in the wilderness. By the touch of His hand He can increase the scanty provision, and make it sufficient for all. It was His power that increased the loaves and corn in the hands of the sons of the prophets. . . . A fuller sense of God's relationship to those whom He has purchased with the gift of His Son, a greater faith in the onward progress of His cause in the earth,—this is the great need of the church to-day. Let none waste time in deploring the scantiness of their visible resources. The outward appearance may be unpromising; but energy and trust in God will develop resources. The gift brought to Him with thanksgiving and with prayer for His blessing, He will multiply as He multiplied the food given to the sons of the prophets and to the weary multitude."—Id., pp. 241-243.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. God provides for the families of His faithful servants in their need.
2. The Most High sympathizes with our legitimate natural desires and often grants them though He may test our gratitude for the gift bestowed. Do we bear the test?
3. The blessings of the Lord come not merely to witness to His power, but to supply some human need. Coming thus they prove His love and watchcare. Do we recognize them as they come into our lives?

Lesson 12—June 21, 1930

Naaman the Syrian

MEMORY VERSE: Ps. 103:2, 3.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 244-253.

INTRODUCTION

"Ben-hadad, king of Syria, had defeated the armies of Israel in the battle which resulted in the death of Ahab. Since that time, the Syrians had maintained against Israel a constant border warfare; and in one of their raids, they had carried away a little maid, who, in the land of her captivity, 'waited on Naaman's wife.' A slave, far from her home, this little maid was nevertheless one of God's witnesses, unconsciously fulfilling the purpose for which God had chosen Israel as His people."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 244.

"To-day in every land there are those who are honest in heart, and upon these the light of heaven is shining. If they continue faithful in following that which they understand to be duty, they will be given increased light, until, like Naaman of old, they will be constrained to acknowledge that 'there is no God in all the earth,' save the living God, the Creator."—Id., p. 253.

THE LESSON

1. In the days of Elisha, what Syrian leader had God permitted to deliver his country from their foes? From what physical infirmity did he suffer? 2 Kings 5:1.

NOTE.—"By him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria." This strange statement may be understood by the fact that the victory was over Ahab, Israel's wicked king, the destruction of whose house had been foretold by one of the prophets at God's command.

2. Among the captives taken, who is especially mentioned? What was her work? Verse 2.

3. In the sympathy of her childish heart, what did the maiden say to her mistress? To whom were the maiden's words repeated? Verses 3, 4.

NOTE.—"The conduct of the captive maid, the way that she bore herself in that heathen home, is a strong witness to the power of early home training. There is no higher trust than that committed to fathers and mothers in the care and training of their children. Parents have to do with the very foundations of habit and character. By their example and teaching, the future of their children is largely decided. . . . The parents of that Hebrew maid, as they taught her of God, did not know the destiny that would be hers. But they were faithful to their trust; and in the home of the captain of the Syrian host, their child bore witness to the God whom she had learned to honor."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 245, 246.

4. When the king thus heard of the prophet in Israel whose God could heal, what plan did he immediately make for Naaman? Verse 5.

5. To whom did he send his messengers? How were they received by the king of Israel? Verses 6, 7.

6. When Elisha heard of the perplexity of the king, what message did he send? Verse 8.

NOTE.—Israel's king was here given an opportunity to acknowledge the power of Israel's God. The prophet of God, Elisha, dwelt in Israel, and through him God had wrought wondrously. The captive maid had knowledge of him and God's ministry through him. The king thought only of a possible plot to make war upon the nation. In this moment of perplexity at the court, God sent word to Elisha, and Naaman was called to him. But the king had lost his opportunity to recognize God's power in the midst of Israel.

7. To whom did Naaman immediately go? What instruction was given him? How did he receive it? How did he reason about the matter? Verses 9-12.

NOTE.—"The proud spirit of Naaman rebelled against following the course outlined by Elisha. The rivers mentioned by the Syrian captain were beautified by surrounding groves, and many flocked to the banks of these pleasant streams to worship their idol gods. It would have cost Naaman no great humiliation of soul to descend into one of those streams. But it was only through following the specific directions of the prophet, that he could find healing. Willing obedience alone would bring the desired result. . . . The faith of Naaman was being tested, while pride struggled for the mastery. But faith conquered, and the haughty

Syrian yielded his pride of heart, and bowed in submission to the revealed will of Jehovah."—Id., p. 249.

8. How was the wrath of the Syrian captain overcome? What was the result of his simple obedience? Verses 13, 14.

9. What acknowledgment did his healing bring from Naaman? What did he offer to give Elisha? What was Elisha's attitude? Verses 15, 16.

NOTE.—"Centuries after Naaman returned to his Syrian home, healed in body and converted in spirit, his wonderful faith was referred to and commended by the Saviour as an object lesson for all who claim to serve God. 'Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet,' the Saviour declared; 'and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.' God passed over the many lepers in Israel, because their unbelief closed the door of good to them. A heathen nobleman who had been true to his convictions of right, and who felt his need of help, was in the sight of God more worthy of His blessing than were the afflicted in Israel, who had slighted and despised their God-given privileges. God works for those who appreciate His favors and respond to the light given them from heaven."—Id., pp. 252, 253.

10. What request did Naaman make of Elisha? What counsel did he seek? What reply did he receive? Verses 17-19.

NOTE.—"Naaman next asked humbly for as much of Israel's soil as two mules could carry,—earth which, surrounded and held up by stones, would make the nucleus of an altar to the true God in a heathen land. Thenceforth, the general promised, he would offer sacrifice to Jehovah alone. 'He had formerly despised the waters of Israel; he now desires its dust and stones.' Every time Naaman looked at this earth he would be reminded of his wonderful cure, his heart would go out in thanksgiving, and his loyalty to Jehovah would be quickened."—Peloubet's Select Notes.

11. What plan did Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, make? How completely did he carry it out? Verses 20-24.

12. What did Elisha ask Gehazi on his return? How did the servant reply? Verse 25.

13. How did Elisha reveal his knowledge of the wrong course taken by Gehazi? What words of reproof did the prophet speak? Verse 26.

14. What punishment was meted out to the covetous servant? Verse 27.

NOTE.—"Solemn are the lessons taught by this experience of one to whom had been given high and holy privileges. The course of Gehazi was such as to place a stumblingblock in the pathway of Naaman, upon whose mind had broken a wonderful light, and who was favorably disposed toward the service of the living God. For the deception practiced by Gehazi there could be pleaded no excuse. To the day of his death he remained a leper, cursed of God, and shunned by his fellow men."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 252.

15. What words of praise should we continually express? Ps. 103:2, 3.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. We should realize that the eye of God watches over the honest in heart even among the heathen.

2. Are we so related to God that when one in physical need comes to us we can take him to the Great Physician for healing?

3. Do we allow avarice to enter into our service for God as did Gehazi?

Lesson 13—June 28, 1930

The Swimming Ax; The Invading Syrians; Siege of Samaria

MEMORY VERSE: Ps. 34:7.

LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 254-260.

INTRODUCTION

"Called to the prophetic office while Ahab was still reigning, Elisha had lived to see many changes take place in the kingdom of Israel. Judgment upon judgment had befallen the Israelites during the reign of Hazael the Syrian, who had been anointed to be the scourge of the apostate nation. The stern measures of reform instituted by Jehu had resulted in the slaying of all the house of Ahab. In continued wars with the Syrians, Jehoahaz, Jehu's successor, had lost some of the cities lying east of the Jordan. For a time it had seemed as if the Syrians might gain control of the entire kingdom. But the reformation begun by Elijah and carried forward by Elisha had led many to inquire after God. The altars of Baal were being forsaken, and slowly yet surely God's purpose was being fulfilled in the lives of those who chose to serve Him with all the heart."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 254.

THE LESSON

1. When the dwelling of the sons of the prophets became too small for them, what did they request of Elisha? Where did they go? For what purpose? 2 Kings 6:1-4.

2. While felling trees for the building, what accident occurred? Why was the accident particularly unfortunate? How was the ax head recovered? Verses 5-7.

NOTE.—God is interested in the affairs of His children even in little things. Not a hair but is numbered; even the fall of a sparrow has His recognition. The loss of a borrowed ax head proves to be the occasion of a miracle. Every day God is performing miracles which more often than not are unrecognized by those for whom they are performed. There is nothing which affects the welfare of His people in which He is not a sympathetic Father. Yet we too often fail to see the provision that He makes or thank Him for His constant care.

3. When the king of Syria came to war against Israel, what plan did he make? How was the king of Israel warned of his plot? Verses 8, 9.

4. **When Israel's king escaped his snare, of what did the king of Syria accuse his officers? Of what was he made aware? Verses 10-12.**

NOTE.—The king of Syria could not account for the revelation of his secret plans. No god of that heathen kingdom could reveal the plan of an enemy. There was in his mind but one explanation. Some one in his camp must be traitor to his cause. But one of his servants knew of Elisha, and he enlightened the king. He knew that the God of Israel could, and did reveal the whisperings of the bedchamber when necessary to Israel's safety. But the king, still misunderstanding the power that he opposed, sought the life of the prophet, God's mouthpiece, only to be foiled by the hosts of God.

5. **What plan did the Syrian form to take Elisha? Verses 13, 14.**

6. **What fear was expressed by Elisha's servant when he saw the Syrian hosts? How did Elisha express his faith in God? For what did he pray? With what results? Verses 15-17.**

NOTE.—"Between the servant of God and the hosts of armed foemen was an encircling band of heavenly angels. They had come down in mighty power, not to destroy, not to exact homage, but to encamp round about and minister to the Lord's weak and helpless ones. When the people of God are brought into strait places, and apparently there is no escape for them, the Lord alone must be their dependence."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 257.

7. **How does this incident serve to illustrate the memory verse? Ps. 34:7.**

8. **When his enemies approached him, for what did Elisha ask God? What response did he receive? 2 Kings 6:18.**

9. **To whom did Elisha lead the host? What did the king of Israel desire to do? What was done instead at Elisha's word? What was the result to Israel? Verses 19-23.**

10. **During the siege of Samaria under Ben-haded, king of Syria, what dreadful conditions came to the city? Verses 24-29.**

11. **What effect did the situation have upon the king of Israel? Upon whom did he seem to lay the blame? What plan did he form to take Elisha? Verses 30-33.**

12. **As the king followed his messenger to the house of Elisha, what message did Elisha give him? 2 Kings 7:1.**

13. **What response was made by the lord on whose arm the king leaned? How did Elisha reply? Verse 2.**

NOTE.—The doubt expressed by the lord on whose arm the king leaned is too often the attitude of men and women who should be the first to show their faith in the words of God's tried messengers. Swift punishment followed this Israelitish lord's expressed skepticism, even as the prophet predicted.

14. **Who dwelt at the gate of Samaria? To what conclusion had they come during the siege and famine? Verses 3, 4.**

15. **What did they find on arrival at the Syrian camp? What had caused the Syrians to desert their camp? Verses 5-7.**

NOTE.—"During the night of the flight, four leprous men at the gate of the city, made desperate by hunger, had proposed to visit the Syrian camp and throw themselves upon the mercy of the besiegers, hoping thereby to arouse sympathy and obtain food. What was their astonishment when, entering the camp, they found 'no man there.' "—Id., p. 258.

16. When the lepers found the camp full of spoil, what course did they take? After hiding some of the spoil, to what realization did they come? Verses 8, 9.

NOTE.—Having at first sought only to supply themselves, the lepers at last awakened to their responsibility to the famishing city, and to the household of the king. How often is a like condition found in spiritual life. Christians are content to receive, to accept of God's bounties. both temporal and spiritual, but how often they forget the obligation resting upon every Christian to impart his blessings to those in greater need. The pool of water that has an inflow, but no outflow, becomes stagnant, and is a source of danger instead of a blessing. A Christian who only receives but does not give is likewise a danger to others, for "unless souls are drawn to Christ, they become more and more unimpressionable under the influence of a formal religion."—"Testimonies on Sabbath School Work," p. 47.

17. How did the message of the lepers finally reach the king's house? What was the king's conclusion? What did he eventually do? Verses 10-14.

18. What conditions did the messengers find? What prophecy was completely fulfilled? Verses 15, 16.

19. What work was appointed to the lord who had expressed his incredulity concerning Elisha's prophecy? What was his experience? Verses 17-20.

NOTE.—"Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." The faithless and unbelieving will one day see the city of the redeemed, the hopes of the redeemed accomplished, the promises of God concerning the better land fulfilled. Among the hosts of the lost without the city (Rev. 20:9) will be those whose eyes will look upon that which they have lost because of unbelief. Yet all might have been among those who are to be given "an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts 20:32.

MEDITATION TOPICS

1. God has a care over even the little things that affect the lives of His children. Do I realize His presence in my everyday life?

2. God's hand is over His servants in the hour of danger. Do we recognize the host of God guarding us daily, and thank Him for His care?

3. Doubt of God's promises is sin. When we read His promises, do we take them in simple faith, or question His power as did the lord of Israel?

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