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BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1875. INTERNATIONAL SERIES. Heroes and Judges.

SUNDAY, June 6th, 1875.—Samuel the Judge.—1 Sam. vii. 5-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted."—Prov. xi. 11.

THE CONNECTION.—The ark, which the Philistines took, brought disaster to the heathen wherever it came; thus the divine presence is ever terrible to incorrigible sinners. God vindicated the ark, but not in the way which his rebellious people had expected, ch. iv. 3. The Philistines, though reluctant to part with their trophy, at length determined to send it to the Israelites, accompanying it with a propitiatory offering to Jehovah. But in order to determine beyond doubt whether the plagues by which they suffered were really the visitations of its angry God, or the mere result of chance, they placed it on a cart, and attached to this a yoke of milk cows, unaccustomed to such service, and naturally inclined to stay with their calves. They then left these animals to themselves without a driver; and when they observed that they went towards the territory of Israel, though lowing for the calves which they had left behind, they were convinced by the miracle. When the ark was brought among the Israelites its presence was found still terrible to the irreverent and profane, seventy persons being smitten for having looked into it. The "fifty thousand" of ch. vi. 19 is probably an error of a copyist. At length it was brought to Kirjath-jearim, eight miles north-west of the fortress which afterwards became Jerusalem. It was not taken to Shiloh, which perhaps was in the hands of the Philistines, or else was so defiled by memories of Hophni and Phinehas as to be unfit for it. Twenty years passed while it remained at Kirjath-jearim. The people in those years had been brought, by their sufferings and by the teaching of Samuel, to see their sins. This long period of twenty years elapsed between the incidents of the last, and those of the present lesson.

EXPOSITION.—Verse 5.—Samuel said. He called this assembly, having perceived the penitence of the people, vs. 2-4. All Israel. They would be the men, chiefly, Mizpah. The Tabernacle was now deserted, having no ark, Samuel was permitted to perform acts of worship at a place which, under other circumstances, would have been illegal; selected, perhaps, as central, and as best adapted to furnish accommodation to the immense throng.

Verse 6.—Drew water, and poured it out. The East is the land of symbolic actions. This ceremony represented the outpouring of the heart in penitential grief; see ch. i. 15; Sam. ii. 19; Ps. xxii. 14 xii. 8. We have sinned. An expression of penitence. Judged. Having the people all together, he decided such difficulties as had arisen among them, taught them the law of God, and rebuked them for their sins.

Verse 7.—Philistines. See on Judg. xvi. 27. Heard. The Israelites probably came armed as best they could; in those troublous times, they would not travel unarmed. Lord of the Philistines. This indicates a general military movement, led by the chief men of the nation. Went up. Philistia was on the sea-coast; Mizpah in the highlands. Feared. Remembering that their last attempt at resistance, twenty years before, had been disastrous, they had grown timorous. They were certainly unaccustomed to the operations of war.

Verse 8.—Cease not to cry, or crying. The word indicates the intense earnestness of the pleader.

Verse 9.—Sucking lamb. More than seven days old, Lev. xxii. 27. The one who presented the offering was said to offer it, and also the priest who officiated, Mat. viii. 4; Mark i. 44; Luke v. 14.

Verse 10.—Thundered with a great thunder, or voice. Thunder was regarded as the voice of Jehovah, Ps. 29. Discomfited them. It probably beat in the face of the Philistines, not only dismaying, but putting them at such a serious disadvantage that their defeat was easy. The Israelites being aided by the storm.

Verse 11.—Went out. Their battle was at first defensive, within the walls. Encouraged by the disorder and retreat of the foe, they assumed the offensive.

Verse 12.—Eben-ezer. Stone of help. To remind Israel that the victory was by

God's help. The place was that where the ark had been captured twenty years before, ch. iv. 1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.—The Lord may delay long to visit his people; but if so, it is because they are not in a proper state to receive him, vs. 2, 3.

When we thus earnestly seek Jehovah, he will be found, for he also earnestly seeks us, vs. 2, 3.

We should not hesitate to ask the prayers of good people that our sins may be pardoned, vs. 8.

It is our duty, also, to pray for others, vs. 5.

When God's people are active in seeking him, the world will be most hostile, vs. 7.

When the church is consecrated to the service of God it has victory, vs. 9, 10.

We should ascribe the honor of all such victories to God, and say, "Hitherto has Jehovah helped us," vs. 12.

Those who earnestly seek God's help shall have many Ebenezers to rear, vs. 12.

In heaven we shall ascribe all the glory of our deliverance to God, vs. 12.

—From Heroes & Judges.

SUNDAY, June 13th, 1875.—A King Desired.—1 Sam. viii. 4-9.

Youths' Department. A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

In traveling, we often meet with persons of different nationalities and languages. We also meet with incidents of a various character, some sorrowful and others joyful and instructive. One of the latter character I witnessed recently, while traveling upon the cars. The train was going West, and the time was evening. At a station a little girl about eight years old came aboard, carrying a little budget under her arm. She came into the car and deliberately took a seat. She then commenced an eager scrutiny of faces; but all were strange to her. She appeared weary, and placing her budget for a pillow, she prepared to try to secure a little sleep. Soon the conductor came along collecting tickets and fare. Observing him, she asked if she might lie there. The gentlemanly conductor replied that she might, and then kindly asked for her ticket. She informed him that she had none, when the following conversation ensued. Said the conductor, "Where are you going?" He answered, "I am going to heaven." She asked again, "Who pays your fare?" She then said, "Mister, does this railroad lead to heaven, and does Jesus travel on it?" He answered, "I think not. Why did you think so?" "Why, sir, before my ma died she used to sing to me of a heavenly railroad; and you looked so nice and talked so kind, I thought this was the road. My ma used to sing of Jesus on the heavenly railroad, and that he paid the fare for everybody; and that the train stopped at every station to take people on board; but my ma don't sing to me any more. Nobody sings to me now, and I thought I would take the cars and go to ma. Mister, do you sing to your little girl about the railroad that goes to heaven? You have a little girl haven't you?" He replied, weeping, "No, my little dear, I have no little girl now. I had one once, but she died some time ago, and went to heaven." Again she asked, "Did she go over this railroad; and are you going to see her now?" By this time every person in the coach was upon his feet, and most of them were weeping. An attempt to describe what I witnessed is almost futile. Some said, "God bless the little girl." Hearing some person say that she was an angel, the little girl earnestly replied, "Yes, my ma used to say that I would be an angel some time."

Addressing herself once more to the conductor, she asked him, "Do you love Jesus? I do, and if you love him he will let you ride to heaven on his railroad. I am going there, and I wish you would go with me. I know Jesus will let me into heaven when I get there, and he will let you in too, and everybody who will ride on his railroad—yes, all these people. Wouldn't you like to see heaven, and Jesus, and your little girl?" These words, so innocently and pathetically uttered, brought a great gush of tears from all eyes, but most profusely from the eyes of the conductor. Some who were traveling on the heavenly railroad shouted aloud for joy. She now asked the conductor, "Mister, may I lie here until we get to heaven?" He answered, "Yes, dear, yes." She then asked, "Will you wake me up then, so that I might see my ma, your little girl, and Jesus? for I do so much want to see them all. The answer came in broken ac-

cents, but in words very tenderly spoken. "Yes, dear angel, yes, God bless you." "Amen," was sobbed by more than a score of voices.

Turning her eyes again upon the conductor, she interrogated him again. "What shall I say to your little girl when I see her? Shall I tell her that I saw her pa on Jesus' railroad? Shall I?" This brought a fresh flood of tears from all present, and the conductor knelt by her side, and embracing her, wept the reply he could not utter. At this juncture the brakeman called out, "H—s". The conductor arose and requested him to attend to his (the conductor's) duty at the station, for he was engaged. That was a precious place. I thank God that I was witness to this scene; but I was sorry that at this point I was obliged to leave the train.

We learn from this incident that out of the mouth of even babes God has ordained strength, and that we ought to be willing to represent the cause of our blessed Jesus even in a railroad coach.—Christian Examiner.

SOMETHING AWFUL IN OUR FAMILY.

The following conversation was overheard the other day among a lot of school girls, who had congregated in front of a house.

Each one in turn appeared to be holding up the domestic skeleton which afflicted their several homes. One told how her little brother had broken his leg; another about how sick her mother was, and still another told about how drunk her father would come home every night. In short, they all appeared to have some grief to hold up, all but one little beauty, who seemed only unhappy to think there was nothing that she could tell to excite the envy or sympathy of the rest.

She listened to the recital of all these troubles as long as she could, and finally she expressed herself in this way:

"Well, girls, we all have our troubles. Some have sick brothers and drunken fathers, and ugly mothers. Some of us have got measles, and small-pox, and scrofula. We've got something awful in our family."

"What is it?" asked several. "My little brother Benny's left-handed." Older people can too generally claim (or borrow) a pet domestic or private trouble, without the little girl's innocence of meaning. We trust, however, that the famous "skeleton in every house" is often no worse than a left hand or a squint eye.—Era.

A RABBIT CHASE.

More than sixty years ago, in a retired New England parish, three youths met by agreement every Sunday morning, and walked together to church. One, who was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker, was an earnest Christian; another was a skeptic; and between these two, during the walk, the subject of religion was warily discussed. Each, however, remained firm in his own convictions.

It chanced one day that the apprentice was in the hay-field, looking at the men as they were mowing. Suddenly a rabbit started up among the mowers, who threw down their scythes and gave chase. The lad too joined in the pursuit, and carried away by the excitement, he unwarily set his bare heel on one of the sharp scythes. Help was immediately called for, but such was the loss of blood from the several arteries, that the surgeon gave no hope of recovery.

The young skeptic called on his companion. In the apparently dying lad he saw the power of that religion he had so often attacked. Where argument had failed, the calm confidence, the lively hope and the dying joy of his companion reached success. He went from that presence a converted soul.

The lad, however, recovered, but was a cripple for life. Giving up the thought of learning a trade, he pursued a course of study, entered the ministry, and became the well known and much loved missionary to the Choctaws, the Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury, D. D. The converted companion became the no less distinguished Dr. Joel Hawes, for so many years a preacher in Hartford, Conn. Two glorious lives dating from the chance running of a rabbit!

The truth of this story is vouched for by a son of one of the three friends, Rev. H. D. Walker, of Bridgewater, Mass.

The roses of home smell sweet a thousand miles and a hundred years.

LIGHT CARES.

What a pity 'tis that young married folks will not emulate the example of Japanese housekeepers! They are troubled very little by household cares. A few mats, a chest of drawers for clothing, two or three quilts for a bed on the floor, some simple kitchen utensils, and their houses are furnished. They have never known the use of a bedstead, a chair, or a table, as we understand these articles; and yet these people have all the virtues of civilization, and perhaps not quite all its vices. They are polite, generous, hospitable, perform their religious duties with exemplary piety, and if cleanliness be next to godliness, they are much more godly than we are, for they are the cleanest people on earth, according to the general testimony of travelers.

We have certainly much to learn before our houses can be as immaculately neat as theirs are. Their habit of doffing street boots and assuming slippers before entering a room does much toward keeping their houses cleaner than our own. A poor Japanese housewife really enjoys more ease, after her simple duties are done, than many of our wealthiest dames who are weighed down with the cares of an extravagant establishment. And as for young people just entering life—compare their lot with that of the people under discussion, and, if an ease-loving person, you will soon render a verdict in favor of Japanese housekeepers.—Rural New Yorker.

WHY SOME PEOPLE ARE POOR.

Silver spoons are used to scrape kettles. Coffee, tea, pepper and spices are left to stand open and lose their strength.

Potatoes in the cellar grow, and the sprouts are not removed until the potatoes become worthless.

Brooms are never hung up and are soon spoiled.

Nice handled knives are thrown into hot water.

The flour is sifted in a wasteful manner, and the bread-pan is left with the dough sticking to it.

Clothes are left on the line to whip to pieces in the wind.

Tubs and barrels are left in the sun to dry and fall apart.

Dried fruits are not taken care of in season, and become wormy.

Rags, string and paper are thrown into the fire.

Pork spoils for want of salt, and beef because the brine wants scalding.

Bits of meat, veg. tables, bread and cold puddings are thrown away, when they might be warmed, steamed, and served as good as new.—Cottage Hearth.

DOMESTICITY OF GERMAN LADIES.

A recent visitor to the rural retreat of Prince Bismarck made a morning call and expressed himself much surprised at being introduced to the wife of the great statesman, with a bunch of keys hanging from her girdle. But she was quite as proud of these while attending to her domestic duties as of her diamonds when receiving the diplomatists of the world, in her evening receptions while at the capital. And he who is privileged to see the empress herself during the morning hours would most likely find her engaged in arranging or dusting her private apartments; for this duty she is said to attend to regularly. It is no wonder, therefore, that any system of bringing up young girls which would render these good customs obsolete is received with disfavor. The general feeling of the Germans of the better class is decidedly adverse to the wife and mother having any duties outside of the house, except those of general benevolence and of charity, in which woman's hands and presence are most effective. But while demanding this, they are by no means in favor of confining their mental or moral activity to narrow limits. The instructress and example for the children, and the guide of youth, has a task that is by no means compatible with any internal narrowness.

There are some things which cannot be postponed to a more convenient season; they must be done now or never. There are opportunities of doing good which, if not improved as they are presented, now, pass by for ever. Save that young man, that young woman now, it may be now or never. We must improve this moment NOW or NEVER.—Christian's Pathway.

The door-sill of home is the threshold of heaven.

ROSES ON THE "SWITCH."

The "rod wreathed with flowers" is often named as the poetical symbol of authority, at once firm and tender; but we never heard it quite so neatly or so literally put as here: A bright little boy in Nashville, just three years old, is, like most little chaps of his age, sometimes refractory. In order to curb him and make him a good little boy, his mother often threatened him with a peach-tree "persuader." The little fellow has come to understand any allusion to the peach-tree, and usually subsides when it is spoken of. A few days ago, since the flowering of the fruit trees, a slight reference was made to this same tree, when the little fellow made peace for that day by looking up and saying, "Why, mamma, the switches are covered with roses."

VIRTUE IN WHISTLING.

An old farmer once said to us that he would not have a hired man on his farm who did not habitually whistle. He always hired whistlers. Said he never knew a whistling laborer to find fault with his food, his bed, or complain of any little extra work he was asked to perform. Such a man was generally kind to children and to animals in his care. He would whistle a chilled lamb into warmth and life, and would bring in his hatfull of eggs from the barn without breaking one of them. He found such a man more careful about closing gates, putting up bars and seeing that the nuts on his plow were all properly tightened before he took it into the field. He never knew a whistling hired man to kick or beat a cow, nor drive her on a run into a stable. He had noticed that the sheep he fed in the yard and shed gathered around him as he whistled, without fear. He never had employed a whistler who was not thoughtful and economical.

DEBT.

A weary traveller, with his money all gone, slowly but surely follows the downhill path. Before him lies a 'muddy pool,' deep and wide; but 'gold' is on the other side. He must reach it though he is penniless; but how? Borrow. Turn, O friend, while there is life and energy. Follow the banks; wait; the Lord will help those who help themselves. Do not take it in your own hands; do not borrow; do not, for your life, attempt to cross the pool of debt. He heeds not; he borrows, and the first step is taken. Again, and he sinks deeper; but gold is on the other side. He can soon reach it; all will be paid. Again he borrows, to keep life while he goes on. Now he is midway. In vain he looks back, he cannot return; and he finds himself sinking deeper, deeper. Soon he is beset on all sides, and with the cry, 'Pay me' ringing in his ears, he sinks to rise no more.—Selected.

A good word is an easy obligation, but not to speak ill requires only our silence, which costs nothing.

The proper study of mankind is man, says Pope; but the popular study is how to make money out of him.

SPICEY.

On a street car, the other day, a boy made a sudden grab among the straw, caught something, and, as he straightened up, he inquired, "Who's lost a fifty cent piece?" Seven men held out their hands to him, and four more wanted to but felt afraid. There was a painful pause, and then the boy unclasped his hand and exhibited a pants button. Seven men suddenly sank back to meditate, and the other four indulged in winks.

"Are the young ladies of the present day fit for wives?" asked a lecturer of his audience. "They are fit for husbands," responded a feminine voice; "but the trouble is that you men are not fit for wives!" The applause was great, and so was the discomfiture of the lecturer.

The other day a postmaster on entering his office, had his factory nerves disagreeably assailed. On questioning a boy in the office as to the cause, the facetious youth replied, "I don't know, sir; but perhaps the smell comes from some of the dead letters."

The spelling schools that are spreading all over Ohio are said to have demonstrated the fact that a woman can spell five times better than a man.

"I wish I was a pudding, mamma!" "Why?" "Cause I should have such lots of sugar put into me."