

The Sunday-School.

THIRD QUARTER, LESSON VII.—Aug. 16.

SAUL TRIES TO KILL DAVID.

I SAMUEL 18: 5-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.* Psa. 46: 1.

Learn by heart Vs. 12-14; Ps. 91: 4, 5; Heb. 13: 6.

THE LESSON.—The entire chapter, exhibiting Saul's treachery toward David.

HISTORICAL SETTING. — *Time.* — B. C. 1063, or about 1020 B. C., according to the Assyrian Canon. Soon after the last lesson.

Place.—Gibeah of Saul, also called Gibeah of Benjamin, or Geba, where was Saul's royal residence. Gibeah was about four miles north of Jerusalem.

Persons.—Saul, the king, about 53 years old, and in about the fifteenth year of his reign. Jonathan, Saul's oldest son, was about 35 years of age, and David 22 or 23.

And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him... on military expeditions. *And behaved himself wisely. Over the men of war.* As a public reward of bravery, Saul advanced David to a command. *Accepted in the sight of all.* The entire nation was pleased with David. *And also in the sight of Saul's servants.* These courtiers might have become jealous of David, and envious. That they did not speak volumes for the tact of the future king.

SAUL'S JEALOUSY.—He now returns to describe what happened immediately after the war with the Philistines. *As they came.* The army may have spent some time in the pursuit of the fleeing Philistines. *The women came out of all cities of Israel.* They went to meet the army, and express their joy at the national triumph. This is a characteristic trait of Oriental manners. *Singing and dancing.* The singing and dancing were not separated; they sung as they danced. Dancing was the usual expression of rejoicing upon occasions of national triumph like the present. The dances were, as a rule, confined to women. *With tabrets, timbrels or tambourines. With joy.*

PRACTICAL.—The dance, as here shown, was originally a sacred ceremony or a public triumph; nothing in the Bible excuses the modern "dance hall," which is one of the most prolific sources of modern impurity and crime. *And the women answered one another; one group of singers chanting the first line and another group replying with the second. Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.* These words were, no doubt, the favorite refrain of an old national or folk-song.

Saul was very wroth. . . . What can he have more but the kingdom? Probably ever since Samuel had foretold his loss of power, Saul had been looking for the appearance of his destined successor. *And Saul eyed David.* The suspicious, sidelong glances of a jealous man are implied.

SAUL'S MURDEROUS ATTEMPT.—Vs. 10, 11. Jealousy, like all evil passions, breaks out in evil deeds. It was so in the case of Saul.

On the morrow. The day after the celebration of David's victory by the women. *The evil spirit of God came upon Saul.* The anger and jealousy excited by David's triumph brought on a return of Saul's mental disorders. It is to be an evil spirit, because (1) God permitted it, and (2) God used it as a punishment. *And he prophesied.* The word *prophesy* describes an ecstatic condition. *In the midst of the house.* The two were alone in the chamber. *As at other times.* As was customary. *A javelin in Saul's hands.* This short spear was the symbol of royalty, a kind of scepter. *Saul cast the javelin.* Saul merely made a threatening gesture. Later, however (1 Sam. 19: 10), he actually hurled the weapon. *For he said, I will smite David even to the wall.* Had he succeeded the act would have been ascribed to his madness. *And David avoided out of his presence twice.* That is, Saul thus threatened David, and each time the young man withdrew.

DAVID'S GROWTH IN HONOR.—Vs. 12-16. Saul's sin had four immediate results. *And Saul was afraid of David.* Saul began to be terrified. Thinking that his arm had become powerless, or that the son of Jesse bore a divinely protected life. *Because the Lord was with him.* A higher power was watching over his rival's life.

The second result of Saul's sin was that the Lord was departed from Saul. To lose his presence is the sum of all losses. *Therefore Saul removed him from him.* He was afraid to have his rival in attendance as his armor-bearer. *And made him his Captain over a thousand.* Probably chief of one of the principal towns of Judah, each containing, roughly, a thousand men. This was done by Saul, partly to get David out of his sight, and partly (verses 17, 25) in the hope that his dangerous rival might be killed in the battle.

Thus the fourth result of Saul's sin was that it made David conspicuous, *he went out and came in before the people.* The nation had a chance to know more of David. *And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways.* The wisest course in time of danger is to do faithfully our duty, and leave our case with God. *And the Lord was with him,* bringing him success and prosperity. *Saul . . . was afraid of him.* He stood in awe of him. *But all Israel and Judah loved David.* David, though from Judah, was popular also in Israel. *Because he went out and came in before them.* He led then in war, he was active in the conduct of affairs, and so they came to know him and to love him.

The remainder of the chapter gives further evidence of Saul's jealous and treacherous dealings with David. Offering to the young warrior the hand of his elder daughter Merab in marriage, he changed his mind and gave her to another suitor, thinking perhaps that David in his wrath would do some rash deed. And then, perceiving that an affection had grown up between David and his daughter Michal, Saul was pleased with it, thinking thus to ensnare David in some evil. So he bade him earn the dowry (which in those days was given by the man and not the

woman) by conquering one hundred of the Philistines. This task David accomplished doubly, slaying two hundred Philistines. And Saul was obliged to give him Michal for his wife. Yet he feared and hated him more than ever.



THE ANGEL OF THE HOUSE.

The mother, a widow, was delicate, but she worked for her child from morn till night. Before she left for school in the morning, Bessie would go to her mother and say: "I don't like the way you have done my hair—you must do it over again." Then she would pull off the ribbon and tangle her hair, and worry her mother until it was to her liking.

She would play on her way from school, and reach home at the last minute, late for dinner. Then she would call out: "Oh, mother, I must have my dinner this minute, or I shall be late for afternoon school. What is there for dinner?" And if it were not what she fancied, she would put herself into a terrible temper, and go to school dinnerless.

At last, just after Bessie's fifteenth birthday, and when her chief thoughts were of going out, reading and dressing, the doctor called her aside and spoke seriously to her: "For years," he said, "your mother has waited on you, and in this way she has increased her illness. Now she will never walk again, and it is your turn—you wait on her. There is One whom your mother knows and loves, who will take all you do for her as done for him; it is the highest service,—are you prepared to enter it?"

Bessie was ashamed. In a moment her heart was touched. "Oh! how selfish I have been!" she cried. "Oh! Dr. Blair, is it true what you say of my mother?"

"Every word of it," was the reply. "Just ponder on it."

Bessie crept upstairs weeping, with a feeling in her heart that the world had somehow suddenly come to an end.

She listened outside her mother's door and she heard her praying: "Dear Father, who lovest my child more and better than I can ever love her, soften her young heart and help her to bear this burden. O Jesus, open thine arms very wide that I may more closely lean upon Thee, for I need Thee in my helplessness more than ever."

Bessie heard, and, rushing into the room, she fell at her mother's bedside, and, in a fit of remorse, exclaimed: "Oh! mother, my heart is broken! Forgive me all the past, and by God's help I will devote myself to you every hour."

Mother and daughter became united in the sweetest bonds, for Jesus was their Saviour and Comforter, and it was beautiful and touching to see them together in the days of the mother's dependence on her daughter—the elder leaning on the younger.

"What first touched you most?" we asked Bessie.

"Mother's gentle trust in God and the way she prayed for me," was the reply, "I had often heard her pray before, but the doctor's words, 'She will never walk again,' seemed to break my heart, and I felt as if God had put her into my idle arms to fill them."

We used to watch Bessie wheel her mother into the sunshine, and the mother's happy smile would follow her as she went in and out, and

Coughing

"I was given up to die with quick consumption. I then began to use Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. I improved at once, and am now in perfect health."—Chas. E. Hartman, Gibbstown, N. Y.

It's too risky, playing with your cough.
The first thing you know it will be down deep in your lungs and the play will be over. Begin early with Ayer's Cherry Pectoral and stop the cough.

Three sizes: 25c., enough for an ordinary cold; 50c., just right for bronchitis, hoarseness, hard colds, etc.; \$1., most economical for chronic cases and to keep on hand.
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waited upon and cheered the invalid every hour of the day.

A letter came one day from an uncle in America, asking Bessie to go out to him and his wife, and they would make her heir to all they had, for they were childless. Bessie wrote: "I have a most blessed charge in a sick mother, whom I would not leave for all the wealth in the world. For fifteen years she spent her life for me, and God had to lay her aside before I could be brought to see the evil of my heart and ways, and the selfishness and uselessness of my robust health."

This so stirred up the uncle and the aunt that they came to England to see the widow and Bessie, and the perfect unity and sweet Christian life of mother and daughter won them both for Christ.

I wish you could know Bessie. But perhaps you know Bessie's Saviour? Ah, if you do, I need say no more, as your happy mothers would tell me, for "who teacheth like him?"—*London Christian.*



Distressing Dyspeptic Pains

Arising from the formation of gas owing to improper digestion, is the source of great misery to many. A very prompt and efficient remedy for this trouble is found in Nerviline. It relieves the distention instantly, and by stimulating action on the stomach aids digestion. Good also for Colic, Colds, Rheumatism, Neuralgia and Headache. In medicinal power Nerviline has a value five times greater than any other. Test it and see if it is not so. Druggists sell it.

When Christman Evans was dying he shouted, in a joyous strain, four lines of a Welsh hymn, then, waving his hand, he said, in English, "Good-bye; drive on." Such was the prophet's farewell. He was passing hence, but those who loved him must see that God's work did not fail after he had gone from the head of the host.

It is a Liver Pill.—Many of the ailments that man has to contend with have their origin in a disordered liver, which is a delicate organ, peculiarly susceptible to the disturbances that come from irregular habits or lack of care in eating or drinking. This accounts for the great many liver regulators now pressed on the attention of sufferers. Of these there is none superior to Par-melee's Vegetable Pills. Their operation, though gentle, is effective, and the most delicate can use them.