Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Adapted from Peloubet's Select Notes.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson IV. - Oct. 27. 1 Sam 3: 1-13.

THE CHILD SAMUEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."—1 SAMUEL 3: 9.

THE SECTION includes the first six chapters of 1 Samuel.

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL.—1. The two books of Samuel, like the two books of Kings, originally formed an undivided whole. All four were called by Jerome "The Books of the Kings."

2. "Their name." The books are called books of Samuel because they record the life and ministry of the great prophet and judge. They are called books of Kings because they record the introduction of royalty among the Israelites.

3. "Their author." It is generally agreed that the book is "a compilation" from different sources, including the writings of Samuel himself (1 Sam. 10: 25), the book of Nathan the prophet, and the book of Gad the seer (1 Chron. 29: 29; 2 Chron. 9: 29).

4. "The time of the history." The "time" included in the history of these books cannot be exactly defined, from lack of any chronology in them. But it may be estimated roughly at 130 years; B. C. 1145-1015.

EXPLANATORY.

SAMUEL CALLED OF GOD.—Vs. 1-10. 1. "And the child Samuel." Josephus (Antig. 5: 10, 4) says that Samuel was twelve years old. This was the age at which Jesus went up to the temple at Jerusalem (Luke 2: 42). "Ministered unto the Lord" (Jehovah); in such services as a child could perform, such as lighting the lamps (v. 3) and opening the doors of the tabernacle (v. 15). He was also the personal attendant and aid to the aged and dim-sighted Eli, as is implied in his sleeping near him and his readiness to respond to his call. "And the word of the Lord was precious," because it was rare. Not the written word, but messages and communications from God. We read of only two prophets in the days of the Judges (Judg. 4: 4; 6: 8), and only other spoke to Eli (1 Sam. 2: 27). But the people had the past revelations of God, their past history, and God's present providence. Every judge was a messenger from God. "There was no open vision." Rather, "there was no vision published abroad." These was no publicly acknowledged prophet, whose "word came to all Israel."

2. "At that time," when God was about to reveal himself to Samuel. The remaining words of verses 2 and 3 form a parenthesis, and describe the circumstances under which Samuel's call took place. (1) "Eli was laid down" to sleep. It was in the night. (2) "His eyes began to wax dim" from infirmity and age. Hence, when Samuel heard a voice calling him, he naturally thought his aged friend needed assistance. (3) 3. "Ere the lamp . . . went out." The golden candlestick with its seven lamps was to be trimmed and lighted every evening (Lev. 24: 2-4), and it continued to burn through the night. Hence the time was toward morning. (4) "In the temple" the sacred tabernacle of Moses, with the buildings around the court. (5) "And Samuel was laid down to sleep," in one of the rooms around the court, not in the tabernacle proper.

4. "That the Lord called Samuel." By an audible voice, pronouncing his name. In the Septuagint version, the name is repeated twice; he "called Samuel, Samuel." "And he answered, Here am I." The regular answer to one calling; literally, "Behold me."

6. "And he ran unto Eli." Unacquainted with the visions of the Almighty, he took that to be only Eli's call which was really the call of God. Such mistakes we make oftener than we think. In Samuel we observe a quick attention and unwearied diligence; he hears and runs at every call; he stays not to be twice called before he goes. He murmurs not, he argues not, he complains not, he delays not. It is to such a child as this our Lord requires us to be like, for of such is the kingdom of God. "He went and lay down." Thinking, probably that he had been dreaming.

7. "Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord." He did not recognise his call, he did not know how God communicated his will to his prophets. This was his first experience, as is stated in the last part of the verse.

FAILURES TO RECOGNIZE GOD'S CALL. "The witness of the Spirit in the hearts of the faithful is often thus mistaken, by which means they lose the comfort of it; and the strivings of the Spirit with the consciences of sinners are likewise often mistaken, and so the benefit of their convictions is lost: "God speaketh once, yea, twice, but man perceiveth it not" (Job. 33: 14)."

8. "The third time." God kept repeating his call. For he knew it was not from unwillingness to hear and obey that Samuel did not answer him, but from inexperience. Indeed, Samuel's prompt obedience to Eli's supposed call was the assurance that he would answer God's call whenever he recognized it. Obedience to parents and teachers is one proof of obedience to God. "And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child." Because there was no other explanation of the repeated calls.

10. "And the Lord came, and stood." The Hebrew is emphatic; "presented himself." In a vision, or in personal presence as the Angel of the Lord (comp. Gen. 18: 17, 20, 21, 33; Judg. 6: 14; Rev. 1: 1; 22: 16).

GOD CALLING THE YOUNG. God is calling every child as he called Samuel. It is an individual call, by name, for "he calleth his own sheep by name."

God calls (1) by his Word; (2) by his own loving, attractive, character; (3) by what he has done for us in Jesus Christ; (4) by the influences of the Holy Spirit; (5) by various providences; (6) by conscience; (7) by Sabbath and religious services; (8) by the invitations and influence of friends; (9) by the living water which satisfies every thirst of the soul; (10) by the attractions of goodness and of heaven; (11) by warning, and the fruit of a life of sin.

EARLY PIETY. Like Samuel, we should answer God's calls by, "Here am I." (1) It is easier to be a christian in youth. (2) Then it gives us a much longer time in which to serve God. (3) We may not live to be old, and thus by putting off our duty we may fail altogether. (4) We escape many evils and dangers. No one can sow wild oats in youth, and not reap a harvest of evil. There are some spiritual blessings which can come only to those who have grown up in the Christian life.

THE HARD DUTY.—Vs. 11-13. 11. "And the Lord said to Samuel." Through Samuel, whom Eli loved, God sent a terrible message, similar to one which he had previously sent by a holy man (1 Sam. 2: 27-36), but which did not have sufficient effect to enable Eli to compel his sons either to live a different life, or to leave the pure service of God. "At which both the ears . . . shall tingle." With horror and alarm. As a loud, sharp, discordant note thrills one's ears with pain, so the bitter tidings of Israel's woe in the judgment about to fall on Eli's house would shock all Israel.

12. "All things which I have spoken." By the mouth of the man of God, as recorded in chapter 2: 27-36. "When I begin, I will also make an end." I will perform thoroughly, I will go through with the performance from first to last. It was twenty years before God fulfilled his warning. Thus giving abundant time in which both Eli and his sons might change their course and avert their punishment. Like all God's warnings, these were the messages of infinite love; they were barriers in their downward course; they were angels of mercy entreating them to turn back.

13. I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity," etc. See above under heading III. "He restrained them not," and therefore he was in a measure responsible. He probably had not trained and disciplined his boys sufficiently when young. And now the wild and active young men were too strong and impetuous to be restrained by the infirm old man, without a faith and courage he did not then possess.

SAMUEL BEARS THE MESSAGE. It was a very hard thing for Samuel to make known to the aged Eli the message God had delivered to him. He was so young to seem to reprove one so old. He would have to give great pain to one who loved him and had done much for him. But Eli pressed and even adjured Samuel to tell him all, and Samuel "told him every whit."

VALUE OF HARD TASKS TO THE YOUNG. God often lays hard duties upon us at the very threshold of the new life. They are needful as a test, a revelation and a defence; a test to God and man whether we really have given ourselves wholly to God; a revelation of our true condition to ourselves; and a defence against temptation. A French writer has said that a wise attack is the best defence. The same truth is expressed in the proverb about "carrying the war into Africa," derived from Scipio's defence of Rome against Hannibal by attacking Carthage. So now the best defence of the young against intemperance is to set them actively at work for temperance. The best defence against the temptations to any evil is to marshal them to an attack upon that evil. Hence God sets his children to work against evil; he gives them hard duties to perform, hard battles to fight. And this prepares them for their life's work.

VI. THE LOST BATTLE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.—Chap. 4. Twenty years were given as space for repentance. But every effort to restrain these wicked sons of a good man proved unavailing. Then the doom came, sudden and irresistible.

The Philistines set themselves in battle array, and defeated the Israelites.

Then the people tried to regain their loss cause by resorting to the forms of religion without repentance and return in heart and life to God. They persuaded Eli's sons to bring the ark of God from Shiloh to the battle field at Ebenezer, near Aphek, at the pass of Bethhoron, twenty miles southwest of Shiloh. Brave and desperate as the Israelites were, they were defeated with great slaughter. God would not defend the symbols of religion when the spirit of religion had departed. (See Psa. 78: 56-64). Hophni and Phinehas, in case of the ark, were slain in connection with the holy service they had defiled. The news came to Eli as he watched by the gate for news of the battle; and when he learned that the ark of God was in the possession of the enemy, and that his sons had perished, he fell backward from his seat and was killed by the fall.

The Philistines took possession of the ark, but the Lord would not permit them to retain it. Their idol Dagon fell before it. The people were smitten with severe sickness wherever the ark was sent. Finally it was restored to Israel, but was never taken again to Shiloh.

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B. Y. P. U.

OUR OBJECT.

The unification of Baptist young people; their increased spirituality; their stimulation in Christian service; their edification in scriptural knowledge; their instruction in Baptist history and doctrine; their enlistment in missionary activity, through existing denominational institutions.

OUR FELLOWSHIP.

All Young People's Societies of whatsoever name in Baptist churches and Baptist churches having no organizations are entitled to representation. We depend for our unity not upon any young people's name or method. Our common bond is in the New Testament, in the full affirmation of whose teachings

WE ARE ONE PEOPLE WITH ONE MISSION.

Kindly address all communications for this column to Rev. G. O. Gates, St. John, N. B.

Prayer Meeting Topics for Oct. 20.

B. Y. P. U. Topic.—"Am I about my Father's business," Luke 2: 47-49.

C. E. Topic.—"Christian Patriotism what does it require of us?" Isa. 62: 1-12.

(Bible readings recommended by B. Y. P. U.)

Monday Oct. 21.—"Moab overwhelmed with disaster," Isa. 15. Compare Jer. 48: 1; Ezek. 25: 9-11.

Tuesday Oct. 22.—"Inhospitality one cause of defeat," (vs. 4-6). Isa. 16. Compare Judges 8: 4-9; 13: 17.

Wednesday, Oct 23.—"Chastisement restoring the conscience," (v. 7). Isa. 17. Compare Mic. 7: 9; Jud. 6: 4.

Thursday, Oct. 24.—"Jehovah's ensign in Sight," (v. 3), Isa. 18. Compare Isa. 11: 12; 31: 9.

Friday, Oct. 25.—"Future consummation of salvation," (v 25), Isa. 19. Compare Isa. 49: 6; 52: 10

Saturday Oct. 26.—"Threats against Israel's would-be allies," Isa. 20. Compare Isa. 30: 1-3; 31: 1.

BIBLE READER'S COURSE.—We heartily recommend every one taking the *Baptist Union* to carefully read what Prof. Price has to say of the Books we are reading.

THE CONQUEST COURSE for October will be read with interest by all students fond of church history. What a pity that the good work early begun in Africa has not been carried on in the same manner. The simplicity of the church organization is not a defect. Man made changes have never advanced the best interests of the church.

THE SACRED LITERATURE COURSE is opening splendidly. What a feast is in store for those who will give thought and study to this great preparation. We hope our pastors will leave no stone unturned to make this winter's course a success in their respective churches.

We are pleased to hear from societies and we hope our column will, every week, have reports of what is being done in our young peoples constituency. The report from one society will stimulate another.

ST. MARTINS, Sept. 30.—The Baptist Young People's Union in connection with St. Martins Baptist church held its annual meeting for election of officers Friday evening, Sept. 20: President, Robert Lewis; Vice Pres., E. A. Titus; Sec., Ralph E. White; Cor. Sec., Mrs. A. W. Fownes; Treas., Miss Ollie Love. MRS. A. W. FOWNES, Cor. Sec.

The B. Y. P. Union of Queens County N. S., held a rally at Milton, Sept. 19 and organized a B. Y. P. U. Queens County Association. President, Enos D. Ford, Milton; Vice-Pres'ds., J. M. Trueman, Greenfield, Lettie Wolfe, Port Medway; Sec. Treas., Emily K. Trueman, Milton. The afternoon was devoted to business and the reading of reports from each society; the evening to addresses from the three pastors present, Revs. Mr. Fash, of Liverpool, Vince of Greenfield, and H. S. Baker, of Milton, and papers by Lettie Wolfe, of Port Medway, and Mrs. H. S. Baker of Milton. There are four Senior Societies and one Junior in the association. The meeting closed with a consecration service, and all went home with a new incentive for work.

E. K. TRUEMAN, Sec.

Milton, Sept. 28 '95.

At our monthly consecration and business meeting, Friday evening, Sept. 27, the first resolution at it recess in the B. Y. P. U. column of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of Sept. 11th, was adopted. We have formed a class in the S. L. Course, with our pastor as leader. For "special work," the church has given to us the work of collecting monies for the Convention fund, also the raising of two hundred dollars for necessary repairs on our vestry. Will make it known, later, what measure of success attend our efforts, and the means used in achieving that success.

MRS. A. C. HAINES, Cor. Sec.

Hebron, Oct. 1, '95.

TEMPLE CHURCH, B. Y. P. U.—The yearly meeting of our Union was held on Friday evening, Sept. 13. The officers elected for the ensuing year are: President, Mrs. P. D. Kinney; Vice Pres., Alfred Haley; Sec., Lizzie Haley; Treas., Stella Phillips. On Friday evening, Sept. 27, pastor White, who had just returned from his vacation, gave a short report of the convention, and outlined the work for the coming winter. Readings and appropriate music make up the program for the evening; more than the average number were present and there was a general feeling that our Union had reached low water mark and that the flood had set in. "Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus."

LIZZIE HALEY, Sec.

Yarmouth, N. S., Sept. 30, '95.

Mr. Editor, as it is customary for our B. Y. P. U., to send a report to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, I might say that our Union is progressing as well as can be expected in proportion to our workers. We have no pastor at present which keeps us from progressing as well as we might, and we have no young men active members at all, but we hope, however, to have a pastor soon. The officers are, Miss Maud Davis, who was President at the first of the quarter, but has since gone away, and Miss T. O'Brien was appointed President in her place; Sec., Miss Ada Douglass; Treas., Miss Evangeline Kelman.

Yours truly,
BERTHA V. CAMPBELL, Cor. Sec.

St. George, Oct. 2nd, '95.

Maritime Union.

"Up and at it," is the motto. This is the fourth year of Christian Culture Courses and instead of reporting 413 examinations May next, let us say 1000. Why not? What is there to hinder? One thing is sure, that unless we pull a very strong oar all along the line, Pennsylvania will take the Banner. A gentleman from Philadelphia, who attended the B. Y. P. U. convention, congratulated the president on the Maritime Unions holding the banner three years, but said he, "Pennsylvania is after you; we are organising." Now while the Banner is not so much, yet the honor of winning it four years in succession is a great deal—and the only way to bring the Banner back is for every one taking the course to pass the examinations and send the papers into headquarters at the appointed time, and then we run no risk, we will have done our part in helping and if we lose we we will not upbraid ourselves of neglect. We must bring the banner back, "so all together pull." Now enough said on that point. Organization. Whilst we are glad to report over one hundred Unions, and twenty-seven new ones organized last year, yet there is much to be done. It is impossible to get any correct knowledge as to our strength, until all our Unions respond to the call for statistics and fees. The secretary reports only 48 reported statistics and 46 paid annual fee. We cannot believe that the remaining Unions are not in full fellowship, in harmony working together, no, no. Some one has blundered in not sending in reports. Now remedy this, you who are officers, that is all. In order that 400 Unions shall be organized this year the convention resolved to mail organization literature free, and by this mail we send you a package, in this we say "up and at it," and at once enter the C. C. C. by ordering the October number of the paper. Remember our younger boys and girls are important people in this world, and to lose sight of these, means to rob our denomination of a large measure of service and strength. Hence we would emphasize the word organize Junior unions, begin now. Our convention is passed and every one now to work. You who attended the convention meetings enthuse your Unions into greater ability, see the MESSENGER AND VISITOR for resolutions passed and act upon them, heartily and promptly. Yours in the work. GEO. A. MCDONALD, Maritime Pres.

Hints on Organization

"What is worth doing, is worth doing well", is an old and true proverb.

Is the work of the B. Y. P. U. worth doing? What is its work? From Article II. of its Constitution we learn that its work is to secure the unification of our Baptist young people; their increased spirituality; their edification in scripture knowledge; their instruction in Baptist doctrine and history; and their enlistment in all missionary activity, through existing denominational organisation. Surely this is a work whose import is as high as heaven, as deep as hell and as far reaching as eternity.

Now if a christian is to do his best work he must be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The christian life is a warfare. The christian should be armed with the best weapons. The christian life is a workshop. The christian needs the best tools to work with. For work to be done well, it should be done intelligently, systematically, and, when several are engaged in the work, it should be done unitedly.

Organization is necessary to the best possible development of intelligent, united, systematic work.

The question is often asked, "How shall we organise?" Dr. Wilkins, in his catechism on organization, gives some wise suggestions along the following lines:

1. Consult with your pastor. Don't rush hurriedly into the matter. Get your pastor's opinion. Dr. Wilkins says, if your pastor is not posted in the movement, or out of sympathy with it, make up a purse and send him to the next convention. The next convention meets in Milwaukee next July. Some one suggests that you send him whether he is in sympathy with the movement or not. A wise suggestion truly.

2. Consult with the leading members of the church. Don't antagonize the church. A *united* church, without a Union, is better than a *divided* church with one. Better wait a year, and have harmony, than rush on, and have friction and disintegration.

3. Canvass your young people well. Treat all alike. Don't stir up party feeling. Get the opinion of all that are eligible to join. Let the movement be a hearty and unanimous one. "United we stand divided we fall."

4. Look up the literature bearing on the subject, well. Become thoroughly posted in the workings and history of the movement. Send to the Book Room, Halifax, or Head Quarters, Chicago, for samples. Take the *Baptist Union*, which gives helpful suggestions on organising, and also outlines in the "Christian Culture Courses."

5. Adopt the Constitution as provided by the B. Y. P. U. A. It is doubtful if you can make a better one.

6. Be careful in the selection of your officers, and chairman of committees. The success of your organization depends very largely upon their earnestness and efficiency.

Finally, I would say, "Be watchful, be prayerful, and the God of peace and salvation will make your young people's society a powerful auxiliary to the church, and a means in His hands, of honoring and glorifying His name.

Signed A. T. DYKEMAN.

THE ELIXIR OF LIFE.

The evidence of eternal life is in the sense of enduring youth which the spirit ever feels. It is only in the reaction from physical impressions and traditions of inevitable decline and decay that the mind is overwhelmed with the dread of failing powers. There is, when the years mount up, a slow-growing fear, often a sad realisation, of lessening mental and bodily activities which are increased if not, in a measure, created by a false idea of necessity. Normally considered, the accumulating years should bring larger wisdom, goodness and blessedness, and the door of exit would open to ripened, never to decaying powers. The fact that all growth stops as soon as we cease to appropriate and assimilate the nourishing food required to sustain both physical and mental life, is in itself explanation of what ever necessity of failure and decay our human thought recognizes. The mind alert and keen in its interests and desires is never likely to weaken or dull with the rust of inactivity. It is the settling down and hardening in the strata of past opinions and beliefs that impoverishes the life of the soul, and cripples one with mental rheumatism. It is ever the outreaching love for the ever-unfolding truth that feeds with the elixir of life. It is only when we relinquish the desire for growth that the blankness and desuetude of old age shuts drearily down on our human use.—Christian Work.

Literary Notes.

THE TREASURY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT for October appears with increasing strength and beauty, as it enters into the new season. Its frontispiece is an excellent portrait of the Rev. J. Balcom Shaw, D D, pastor of the West End Presbyterian Church, New York, whose sermon on Manly Integrity strikes the key-note of the need of the time. The illustrated articles are. The McAll Mission in France, by the Editor; Beginnings of the Church, by Rev. C. H. Small; Impressions of Hawaii, by Rev. G. F. Draper; Hawthrone as a Preacher, by Rev. R. O. Morse; and Sketches of Prof. W. D. Mackenzie, of Chicago, and Prof. Marcus Dods, of Edinburg. Mr. Small's article is the first of a series on Denominational Characteristics, which will extend through the season. Prof. T. W. Hunt, of Princeton University, contributes a thoughtful article on Human Limitations of Divine Grace, and will begin in November a series of Literary Life Sketches with an article on Francis Bacon. Rev. G. B. F. Hallock continues his suggestive topics for The Hour of Prayer. The "Timely Occasion" for the month is The Harvest Home, and all the minor departments of the magazine are maintained with carefulness.

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