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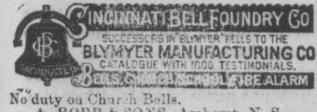
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BY E. H. SHANNON. To-day is mine! To-morrow, who can know? The future I shall never find, God wills it so.

To-day some spirit droops In sadness and distress: God gives me power to speak, Perhaps to bless.

To-day I live; To-morrow, I may stand Rebuked, or with a song, At His right hand. Chris. Advocate.

The Sabbath-School

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Third Quarter-LessonIII.-August 18. SAUL REJECTED BY THE LORD .-1 Sam. 15: 10-23.

SAUL'S PROBATION: THE FIRST

Test.—13: 2-15. (Two years after Saul began to reign, 13: 1.) The the Israelites, and were enabled to keep the people in partial subjection, and to make raids upon the harvest fields. One of these was at Geba, pass of Michmash, three miles from Saul's capital at Gibeah. Jonathan, the whole Philistine nation, who assembled the Israelites at Gibeah, nor people dared make a move with-

out the sanction of God. Samuel had agreed to come within seven days and offer sacrifices and make known the will of God. Six days had their own interests in view, had gone, and the seventh day was passing; yet no Samuel appeared. To a commander like Saul, who saw that the enemy might swoop down intolerable. The temptation was strong to be his own priest, to offer the offerings, contrary to God's law. and press into action. He yielded to the temptation, and had offered the burnt offerings, when the venerable prophet appeared. Saul had failed in the hour of trial. He dia not trust God. God wished to establish Saul's kingdom but it was impossible to confirm the kingdom to a man who would not obey the commandments of God and the principles on which his kingdom

was founded; and Samuel announc-

ed the consequences to the king.

He was not deposed; but the king-

dom could not continue in his

family. But the people were not

to suffer destruction; and God gave

them the victory over the Philis-

tines at this time. SAUL'S PROBATION: THE SECOND TEST.—Ver. 1-9. God gave Saul one more opportunity. On the southern borders of Israel dwelt one of their most harassing enemies, "the Amalekites." Samuel brought a commandment of the Lord to Saul that he should declare war against the Amalekites, and utterly destroy them and all their possessions. Israel could have no peace and prosperity so long as these marauders devasted their borders. They had shown by a long course of enmity that they would not change their conduct. The kingdom of God could not extend according to God's promise, unless these people were either peaceful or out of existence. They would not be peaceful; therefor they must pass out of existence. The riches of the wandering Amale-

kites consisted largely in their flocks and herds. Not one of these was to be retained by the Israelites as spoil. It was very hard for king and people to let slip out of their hands such vast wealth. The command seemed unreasonable and

SAUL'S FAILURE - Vers. 10, 11. Saul led 210,000 Israelites against the Amalekites and nearly annihilated them; but he spared their king, probably to grace his triump on his return; and with his consent the people brought home alive for their farms the best of the cattle and sheep. Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel: Before Saul had returned the Lord made known the fact of his disobedience. It repenteth me. God's repentance is the sorrow of divine love at the rebellion of sinners. His repentance is not to be understood as though he who foreknows all hings regretted his action; nor is it a sign of mutability. A change in the attitude of man to God necessarily involves a corresponding change in the attitude of God to man. And it grieved Samuel. His feeling was one of indignation,

mingled with grief, at Saul's con-

duct. And he cried unto the Lord

all night. He prays that Saul may

be forgiven; that the threatened

this great evil.

And Samuel rose early to meet Saul. unto, or transgression of, the law He went in the direction from of God. which Saul must return. Saul If we change in character, our recame to Carmel. A city seven miles | lations to God must change. behold he set him up a place : a dignant at sin, but are grieved over monument. And is gone about: sinners, and pray for them. taken another road than that by The worst sinners are often unwhich Samuel had come. And gone conscious of the depth of their down to Gilgal. In the same place | wickedness. where Saul's kingdom had been confirmed it was to be taken from him; fruits of sin will make it known. and where the disobedience was to | Sin is apt to be mean as well as be pronounced. And Saul said un- wicked. to him, Blessed be thou of the Lord. Obeying a portion of the comformed the commandment of the Lord. tute for disobeying other commands. He had destroyed Amalek; and There can be no substitute for yet he added falsehood and hypo- obedience; no gifts, no forms of crisy to disobedience. What mean- worship, can atone for a refusal to eth then the bleating of the sheep? obey God. Saul is convicted of falsehood by the . Those who by disobedience prove voices of the animals which he has themselves unfit to be kings, lose 30 GOLDEN TEXT .- Because thou hast spared Samuel's mode of citing their kingdom. rejected the word of the Lord, he hath them against him has an air of holy also rejected thee trom being king .- humor and cutting irony.

Saul makes points in excuse of his under by divine grace and holy livconduct. He did not disobey in the ing, develops and flourishes under Philistines held strongholds among main. He went on the expedition the influences of a sinful life. as commanded, and almost exterminated the enemy. He thought that he had improved on God's plans, and saved much for the good cause on the southern side of the rocky that would otherwise have been wholly wasted. The people were to blame and not himself. For the Saul's son, attacked this garrison reople spared the best of the sheep, and conquered it. This act aroused etc. Every word uttered by Saul seems to indicate the breaking sembled in great numbers. Saul as- down of his moral character. There is something mean in his attempt but they were poorly armed and to shift the responsibility from his were so terrified by the array of the own kingly shoulders to those of Philistines that many deserted and the people. To sacrifice unto the hid in caves and thickets or fled Lord thy God. The falsehood and across the Jordan. Neither king hypocrisy of these words lay upon the very surface; for even if the cattle spared were really intended as sacrifices to the Lord, not only the people, but Saul also would have since the flesh of thank-offerings was appropriated to sacrificial meals. And it is not at all probable that this was any more than an excuse. upon them, such delay was almost They would atone for sparing the wealth for themselves, by devoting a part. And the rest we, etc. Saul claims a part of the virtue of the obedience, but disobedience wholly upon the people. SAUL'S EXCUSES UTTERLY VAIN.

-Vers. 16f23. Stay, I will tell

thee what the Lord hath said to me.

His word had power and authority

because it was God's word. And Samuel said, etc. Samuel reminds the king that he owed his exaltations and power wholly to the God whom he had disobeyed; and that his humility then was one reason why he had been selected. Destroy the sinners the Amalekites. Here is indicated the reason why the Amalekites were destroyed, Didst fly upon the spoil. Covetousness here, as well, as the pride shown in in verse 12, led to the sin of disobedience. Yea, I have obeyed. Saul still persists in justifying his conduct. Agag the king. Agag was probably an hereditary official among the Amalekites. Samuel said. In this answer it would seem that the Spirit of the Lord descended upon Samuel. Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying, etc. Disobedience can never be made a virtue, even though attended by thousands of sacrifices. Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.. There is an absolute repugnance between love to him and de spising his commands. Than the fat of the rams: the choicest part of the sacrifices. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, etc. Opposition to the will of God is as bad as divination by the help of evil spirits: and stubbornness: obstinate resist-

ence is in fact idolatry, because it elevates self-will into a god. THE FRUITS OF SAUL'S SIN. -- Ver. 23. Because thou hast rejected the hard. But he had the plain com- hast shown thyself utterly unfit to word of the Lord. Because thou be king of God's people, whose only hope of prosperity lay in obedience. He hath also rejected thee from being king. The words of Saul were rendered still more effective by the incident of rending Saul's garment. Saul still held the throne by suffer-

ance to him; is no better than

iniquity and idolatry: Disobedi-

iniquity, blasphemy. ops into all sins and crimes; it leads | them to efforts of self-improvement. us to all manner of miseries. So, laws, God will reject them.

PRACTICAL HINTS. God has given us great opportunities and possibilities.

will bring good in some way out of The great question of life is whether we will obey God or not. Samuel's Reproof. - Vers. 12-14. | Sin is any want of conformity

south south east of Hebron. And The truly good are not only in-

Sin is sure to be revealed. The

A form of salutation. I have per- mands of God is no excuse or substi-

The worst fruit of sin is more sin. Many an evil tendency in the heart, SAUL'S Excuses.—Vers. 15, 20. which would wither and die if kept

Stung But Not Disheartened.

When Salmon P. Chase was a student ln the boarding-school of his uncle Bishop Chase, he was a stoop-shouldered, shambling, slouchy lad, and had a bad impedient to his speech. As he was walking one day along the road, two rail-splitters by the road-side, struck by his odd appearance, stopped working and gazed upon him with curious eyes. "What awkward fool is that?" asked one of them of his fellow. "That's the bishop's nephew," replied the other, with a sneer of contempt, "and he hasn't enough spunk in him to amount to anything!" Young Chase heard this uncomplimentary speech, and it stung him sorely; but, instead of allowing it to depress him, he let it serve as a spur to efforts to conquer his defects. He submitted to severe gymnastic training until it made his person erect. dignified, and even majestic. He practised speaking until, like Demosthenes, he conquered his imperfect speech. He studied with unresting diligence until he mastered the science of law, and finally won distinction as Chief-Justice of the United States Sup- A reme Court. To that youth who is burdened with defects of person or lack of culture, the voice of Justice Chase cries as from the dead, ', Be not disheartened by rebuke, by scorn, or by difficulties!" Resolve to be all that is possible to your capacities! Work hard. Persevere, trusting in God and you will of life."

A Medical View of Nursery Disci-

that awakened in my mind a train | the undersigned. of thought which, though not in any sense new, impressed me strongy. In the practice of the medical Department of Indian Affairs, profession we see a side of life which is not so prominent from any other standpoint. I was called to attend a child of eight years severey ill with that most deadly and contagious disease, diphtheria. In the treatment of this malady it is a well-known fact that the expedients for relief and for promotion of recovery, in the way of sprays, gargles and kindred applications, are as multifold as they are valuable. This little girl had been allowed her own sweet way in all things, and now, when she most needed to be controlled, she was absolutely uncontrollable. A request to open the mouth, even, was answered by an outburst of passion; medicine, however pa'atable, was rejected; in fact, nothing could be done for her relief, unless the means met her approval, without such a struggle benefit derived from the treatment was nearly or quite counterbalanced by the fatigue entailed. Under these circumstances, the outcome of the case and the result of the treatment can be easily guessed by any one who had any experience with this disease. - Dr. Edwin A. Clarke, in Babyhood.

A Good Name. What is more valuable in any ance, but this was the decisive hour pursuit than a good name ? It is which determined that the kingdom often the key note of success in was to be taken from his house. your calling. It is worth ten times Saul gradually lost his kingly nature its cost to its possessor during life and power. The divine influence and, after death, what more precious was withdrawn. His faults devel- legacy can be left for children? oped,-treachery, vanity, selfishness | Besides, the value of a good name does not accrue to yourself and This story comes with great force children alone. The whole comto us as individuals, and as a nation. | munity is benefitted thereby. Your Disobedience is the certain way to noble traits of character remain as lose the kingdom of God. It devel- a stimulus to others, encouraging

To a young man, ambitious for a too, the nation which disobeys God position of honor and profit in the is doomed. If they reject God's business world, a good name is of the first importance. Without this no one is wanted in any position of

What you spend money on, God tests and tries us, whether shows what you believe in .- The danger may be averted; that Gol we are fitted to use and enjoy them. Highway.

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L. VANKOUGHNET, Deputy Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs. Ottawa, 11th May, 1889.



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