Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

BY REV. J. H. VINCENT, D. D.

Fourth Quarter.

son 9.—Dec. 2. 1 Sam. 18: 1-16.

DAVID'S ENEMY, SAUL.

GOLDEN TEXT.

nd David behaved himself wisely in his ways; and the Lord was with him. Sam. 18: 14.

. *When he* [David] *had made an d of speaking.* But little of the nversation between Saul and David recorded, yet it evidently related his family, history, and position, was very proper in view of the nors promised to the conqueror of liath. *The soul of Jonathan.* The of Saul. Jonathan had met Da- before. But the boy-minstrel o drove away with music his her's melancholy seems absolutely have attracted no notice from him. *s knit.* The word "knit" (as in , 44. 30) denotes, under the figure chain, the firm union, and insep- ble unity of souls in friendship, ressing the thought that their in- lives of feeling work deeply into other, and so each has perpetu- fast hold of the other. *With soul of David.* Here was a fel- ship of souls. On the part of athan it was the more remarkable, much as David became his rival the throne. But even after this ame well known Jonathan's love er cooled, but rather warmed with nser devotion to his friend, and ften gave aid and comfort to the of Jesse in the time of his perse- on. Chap. 23. 17. *Loved him his own soul.* Besides the dis- fiture of the Philistines, David's ory had a double issue: Jona- 's love and Saul's envy, which so mixed, that the one was a edy of the other. A good son es amends for a wayward father. *Saul took him.* Took David his service, and soon afterwards nced him to positions of trust honor. *Let him go no more .* That is, to remain there in ormer occupation.

Jonathan and David. The e indicate that the proposition from Jonathan, as was suitable his rank, as well as from the ness of his affection. *A cove- .* Of friendship, love, and trust, bly with the solemnity of an it was afterwards twice re- ed. Chap. 20. 16, 42; 23. 18. *use he loved him.* True friend- in two souls must be rooted in a attitude of the heart to a loving must exhibit itself in a mutual lish devotion of heart in love h is based on a common love to Lord, and must approve itself in school of suffering.

Jonathan stripped himself. He concerned to see so great a soul, gh lodged in so fair a body, yet ised in the mean and despic- dress of a poor shepherd, and fore, takes care to put him ily into the habit of a courtier, e gave him a robe, and of a sol- for he gave him, instead of his and sling, a sword and bow, and of his shepherd's scrip, a gir- ither a belt or a sash. *The robe was upon him.* To receive any of the dress which had been by a sovereign or his eldest son heir, is deemed in the East the t honor which can be conferred subject. *His garments*—rather rmor, as the word is rendered 17. 39. This, we are immedi- told, consisted of his sword, and girdle. The giving of this and armor was the seal of the ant between them.

David went out withersoever sent him. Showing himself as l as he was bold and courage- Those that hope to rule must arn to obey. *Set him over the of war.* We have no data to mine the exact chronology of ents recorded in this verse. s appointment over the men of d his going out in obedience 's orders, are probably identi- h what is related in verses 13 *Was accepted.* Obtained nd popularity. *Sight of Saul's s.* David's winning loveliness acter is here brought out more by the statement that he did not excite the envy and jealousy of his fellow-officials at court. "He pleased even the courtiers, who are commonly envious, especially of those who have newly found favor with the king."

6. *When David was returned.* At the close of the campaign against the Philistines, in which David had played so distinguished a part, even if he did no more than kill Goliath, but the presumption is that he had earned further honors in the pursuit of the enemy, Saul returned in triumph to Gibeah. *Slaughter of the Philistine.* Rather as the margin, "the Philistines." The allusion is not to Goliath, but to one of the expeditions referred to in verse 5, in which David had gained a victory over the Philistines, the fame of which preceded him. *Singing and dancing.* According to the custom of Hebrew women after great victories. Compare Exod. 15. 20; Judg. 11. 34. *Tabrets*—or trimbels, instruments resembling the tambourine, in which music is made by shaking and striking.

7, 8. *Answered one another.* Chanting antiphonal responses. *David his ten thousands.* The enthusiastic throng intimate, in an exultant hour, that David's triumph is of more importance than all Saul's victories. *Saul was very wroth.* Saul could not but feel that the sort of spirit by which the youthful hero had been actuated was precisely that which on many preceding occasions he himself *ought* to have manifested, and for not doing which the doom of exclusion had been pronounced against him. *To me but thousands.* A kingdom brooketh no companion, and majesty more heavily taketh injuries to heart. *What . . . more but the kingdom.* Immediately there flashes upon him the suspicion that this son of Jesse is that neighbor of whom Samuel had spoken, (chap. 15. 28,) who was destined to supersede him on the throne.

9. *Eyed David from that day.* Watched all his movements with suspicion and jealousy, and this fact may well account for the king's failure to reward David and his father's house according to all that he had promised the one who would succeed in slaying the insolent Goliath, (chap. 17. 25.

10. *On the morrow.* The very next day after he conceived malice against David, the evil spirit from God, that had formerly haunted him, seized him again. *An evil spirit from God.* A demon like those mentioned so frequently in the New Testament, sent by permission of the Lord, as Satan in the case of Job. Job 2. 7. *He prophesied.* He utters impassioned cries, and, perhaps, falls prostrate on the floor and breathes forth his inner ravings like one holding communion with an unseen world. *In the house.* In the large room used as the place of the court. Saul's house was probably not unlike the Oriental houses of the present time. *David played.* Seeking, as before, (chap. 16. 16,) to quell the mental ravings of the king, to drive out the demon that possessed him. *In Saul's hand.* Saul seems to have held the javelin in his hand as a scepter, according to the ancient custom. *There was a javelin.* Not the lighter spear that usually goes under that name, but one much heavier than the ordinary spear, and more befitting Saul's great size and strength.

11. *Cast the javelin.* By comparing this passage with chap. 19. 10, it would appear that on the first occasion Saul did not actually cast the javelin, but only brandished it to take aim at David, and that he escaped before Saul actually cast it. The word rendered *cast* is probably capable of being so understood.

12. *Saul was afraid of David.* One would have thought, rather, that David should have been afraid of Saul, because the devil was so strong with him, than that Saul should have been afraid of David, because the Lord was with him; yet we find all the fear in Saul of David, none in David of Saul. *Because the Lord was with him.* The fact that David did not leave Saul immediately after this attempt upon the life may be explained, not merely on the supposition that he looked upon this attack as being simply an outburst of momentary madness, which would pass away, but still more from his firm, believing confidence, which kept him from forsaking the post in which the Lord had placed him without any act of his own, until he saw that Saul was plotting to take his life, not merely in these fits of insanity, but also, at other times, in calm deliberation.

13, 14. *Saul . . . made him his captain.* This is probably the same appointment as that referred to in verse 5. David was not made the leading officer over all the host, for this position Abner held, (chap. 17. 55,) but he was made commander of a regiment. *Went out and came in.* Fulfilling faithfully the various trusts reposed in him. *The Lord was with him.* He carried out military enterprises, and that so wisely and prosperously, that the blessing of the Lord rested upon all that he did.

15. *Saul saw that he behaved . . . wisely.* The word *wisely*, contains the double idea of human prudence on the one side, and of prosperity or success, which comes as God's blessing, on the other. Saul saw that David showed capacity and ability in all his undertakings; he noticed his evident success as the token of the Divine favor; he observed his growing popularity with the people, and all this made him all the more convinced that David was the man whom God had chosen for the kingdom; so that he feared and hated him more and more.

16. *All Israel and Judah.* The separate mention of the men of Judah shows how little union there was between Judah and Ephraim even at this time, a circumstance which throws light upon the whole after history. *Because he went out and came in.* They did not love him *because* he went out and came in before the people, but this circumstance explains how it was that he was known to them. Had he continued to be in Saul's household he would have been little known, but as a captain of a thousand he was brought into public life.

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