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BIBLE PICTUR

FOR
LITTLE PEOPLE

Illustrating
Old Testament Scenes & In

BY
UNCLE HARRI

Second Series









AT HOME WITH AUNTIE.

BIBLE & **P**ICTURES



FOR

LITTLE PEOPLE.

Illustrating Old Testament Scenes and Incidents

BY UNCLE HARRY,

AUTHOR OF "BUY AN ORANGE, SIR," "DON'T SAY SO," "TIM THE NEWSBOY,"
"AWAY FROM HOME," &C.

SECOND SERIES.



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P R E F A C E.

WE all should be much happier if we tried to do God's will; He knows what is best for us, and He only desires us to do that which will give us the greatest amount of pleasure and happiness.

But most people, young or old, like to do as *they* please, and so there is much sin and misery everywhere.

In this second volume of "BIBLE PICTURES FOR LITTLE PEOPLE" you will find many bright pictures—beautiful examples of those who, through good report, served God faithfully and obeyed His commands; but there are also some very dark ones, showing what comes of constant neglect of God's word and worship;—what troubles they bring to themselves who disobey and even despise His holy law.

The history of the kings and people of Israel and Judah, of which this volume chiefly consists, sets before you the cause of all the miseries and distress of the Jewish nation.

Their pride and disobedience led to their city being destroyed by the Chaldeans, together with the splendid Temple which Solomon had built for the worship of God; while the Jews themselves were carried away captive into Babylon.

For many hundred years they were warned by God's servants of dreadful things that would happen if they continued to rebel against their Maker. But they would not hearken: they despised and mocked at the warnings and faithful messages that were sent, and cruelly treated the prophets who delivered them.

PREFACE.

At last, God could not bear with them any longer, and allowed kings to come up with great armies against Jerusalem, and set fire to their buildings, and carry away men, women, and children, and make them their slaves for seventy years.

Sin is the destroyer of cities, of happiness, of men's souls.

But while you learn this from our little volume, look very carefully at the bright pictures of the happiness which true religion gives, and of the conduct of God's servants in times of trial and difficulty. Strive to copy the example of David in returning good for evil, and caring for the house of God; of Jonathan's friendship; of Obadiah's kindness to God's servant; of the unselfishness of the little Captive Maid; of Josiah, in early service to God; and of Daniel, and the three Hebrew Youths, all of whom were full of holy courage, and would not give up their religion nor bow down to the idol which Nebuchadnezzar set up.

Treasure up God's word; let it have a place in your heart; obey its precepts; let it be your companion and your guide. Do nothing which you think nothing, say nothing, that the Scriptures tell you is wrong; and you will find that "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."



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DAVID RUNS FOR HIS LIFE.

ONE day, Saul told those about him that they must find David, for he must be put to death. The king's son, however, had a private talk with his father about this cruel command, and said plainly that David had done nothing that was worthy of death: on the contrary, that he had done

nothing but good for Saul and his people. The king then said that he should not be put to death. But he soon became very jealous of David, and broke his promise, because David was becoming such a favourite with all the people. He tried again to kill him, but David once more escaped. Saul then sent men to watch David's

house, and seize him when he came in the morning; but David's wife let him down through a window; and he fled for his life to Samuel the prophet, who lived in Ramah. As soon as the king found that David had got away, he sent messengers after him; but he did not succeed



nothing but good for Saul and his people. The king then said that he should not be put to death.

But he soon became very jealous of David, and broke his promise, because David was becoming such a favourite with all the people. He tried again to kill him, but David once more escaped. Saul then sent men to watch David's

in his wicked design, for none of his messengers returned. They stayed in Ramah, and joined the young prophet there in the service of God.

Saul then went himself, and joined David in the service, hoping to make David believe that he was too good a man to wish to do him any harm! But David dare not trust him.

HOW JONATHAN HELPED DAVID.

WHILE Saul was with the young prophets, at Naioth, David found out his friend, Jonathan; and told him he was afraid the king would soon kill him. Jonathan said he hoped not; but he would try to find out what his father meant to do.

So Jonathan gave David leave to be absent from the next feast of the new moon, saying, "If the king is angry

and took his bow and arrow, and went out into the fields. He knew where David was hiding, and had told him he would shoot an arrow, and say some words which were to be a sign that his life was really in danger.

Look! Jonathan is shooting the arrow. The lad stands ready to pick it up. He hears the words, "Is not this



about it, I shall know that he means to kill you if he can get hold of you."

On the first day of the feast, the king did not take much notice: but on the second day, he said that David should die for this slight. Jonathan made an excuse for his friend; but the king pointed a javelin at *him*.

Jonathan saw that his father was angry: so he left the feast at once;

arrow beyond thee?" He does not know what they mean—(but David does). Jonathan sends him away. As soon as he is gone out of sight David comes out, and bids his dear friend Good-bye,—to meet but once more in this world;

What a true friend was Jonathan! but we have a truer Friend, even Jesus.

GOOD FOR EVIL.

DAVID next went to a place called Nob, where a servant in God's house treated him very kindly, and gave him and his friends some of the bread used in the tabernacle worship. (For this kind deed Saul soon afterwards ordered him to be put to death. Jesus Christ, when He was on earth, spoke in praise of this very deed.)

Adullam, where his family and four hundred men came to him, made him their captain. Here prophet Gad came to him with command from God that he go at once into the land of Judah. David hurried away till he reached the forest of Hareth, where he had an opportunity of returning good



When David left the city, Ahimelech gave him Goliath's sword, which had been kept at Nob. David next fled to Gath, but although the king received him kindly, he did not stay long, because the people did not like having among them the man who had killed their giant-defender.

David found shelter in the cave of

evil. Some enemies of Saul attacked the city of Keilah, taken away the corn that the people were threshing and winnowing. David first asked God what he should do, and then, at His command, cleared the place of the Philistines.

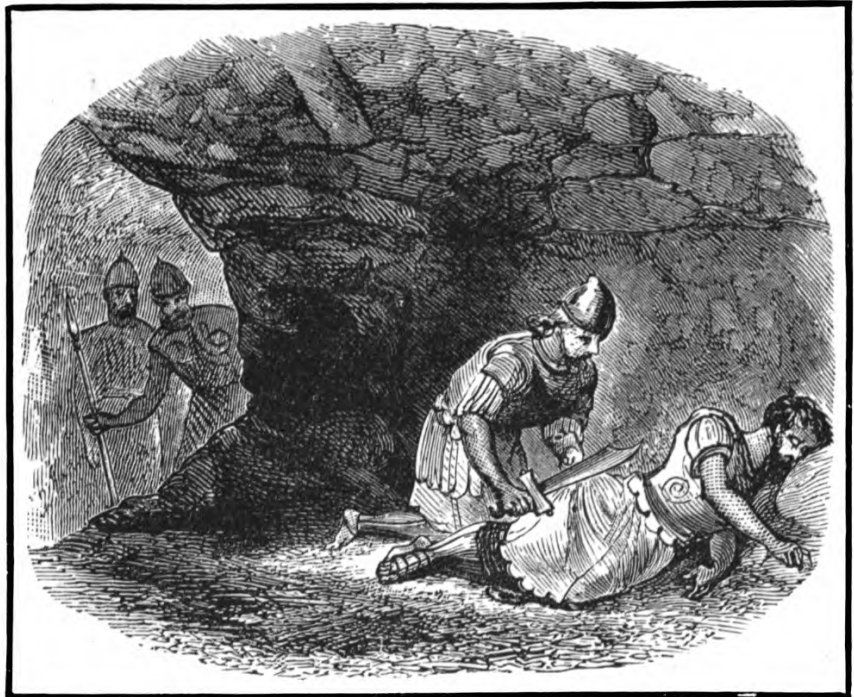
But would you believe it? Saul tried to kill David!

SAUL'S NARROW ESCAPE.

IN a forest in the desert of Ziph, David for the last time met his friend Jonathan. Jonathan said, "I promise always to be your friend ; and, better still, God will never forsake you."

Saul still wanted to kill David, and being told that he was hiding where

not let them. He had a better way of treating an enemy. He would not kill his cruel temper with kindness. So he went very quietly, while the king was asleep, and with a sharp sword cut off a piece of Saul's coat. Soon afterwards Saul woke, got up, and went away without knowing what had



the wild goats loved to roam, he went after him with three thousand men. As he drew near to the place, he grew very tired, left his soldiers for a while, and entered a large cave, where he laid himself down to sleep. David and his men were at the other end, where they could see but not be seen. They wanted to kill Saul, but David would

not do so. But David went after him, and showed him the piece of his coat, so that he might know what a narrow escape he had had. The proud king's heart seemed melted. He confessed he had done wrong : and asked David, when he became king, to be kind to his family. David said he would. And David kept his word.

DAVID AGAIN SPARES SAUL'S LIFE

NOTWITHSTANDING all his promises, Saul's wicked temper again became his master, and he set out with three thousand picked men to seize David.

Fancy you see this large company. They have come a long distance, and are stopping to rest. In the midst of a pile of baggage, hastily put together for his shelter, lies king Saul asleep.

Abishai would like to kill Saul with his own spear, and thus once and for all get rid of his uncle's enemy. But David will not allow it; he would rather leave him in God's hands, who has said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay."

David took the spear and the shield, and got away without being seen or heard by the king or his people. He then went to the top



His armed men are fast asleep too.

David's men, who were on the lookout, see them; and their captain, with his nephew, at once steals into the camp. Walking noiselessly among the unwary sleepers, he comes to the very pillow of the king, as he lies with a cruse of water near his head, and his spear stuck in the ground.

hill at a distance, and with a loud voice called to Abner and the people, telling them what he had done.

When Saul heard how kind David had been, he said he was quite willing to come, and said he would be good to him in future, and would not touch him any more. So he went home, while David went on his way.

A SAD END.

SAUL'S course is at an end. The Philistines have risen against him. A number of Israelites meet on Mount Gilboa, while the enemy swarms in the plain below. A terrible conflict rages: arrows fly thickly through the air; numbers are wounded and die. Saul is full of despair. He has forsaken God, and now God has forsaken him.

What a sad end! Truly, as the Bible says, "the way of transgressor is hard."

David was very grieved when news of the death of Saul and Jonathan reached him. He did not, as some would have done, rejoice in Saul's death. He had always behaved well to the king, although Saul had been



There is no hope for him—all is lost!

His army is beaten. Two of his sons are slain. An arrow has gone through the joints of his own armour, and he is sorely wounded. But he is too proud to fall into the enemy's hand, so he falls on his own sword, and kills himself!

kind to him, and he could not be charged with having been a disobedient subject. What most grieved David was the fact that Saul would not obey God's law. On one occasion, we know David said, "Rivers of waters run down my eyes, because they keep not Thy law. Are we always sorry when men disobey God?"

DAVID MADE KING.

WHEN Saul was dead, God told David to go to Hebron, and there he would be made king; for it was His will that David should only be king of Hebron, while Abner, captain of Saul's host, and Ishbosheth, a son of Saul, lived.

David had promised to be kind to Saul's family; and hence, but chiefly

round about. And the king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and hewers of stone, and they built David a house.

But the Philistines were jealous of David's power, and began to raise large armies against the city of Hebron, at once prayed to God, who helped him in a wonderful way. God sent



because he loved God, he was quite willing to be king of only a small part of the land of Judah while Saul's son and captain lived.

When they were dead, the tribes resolved at once to make David king over Israel. David took the stronghold of Zion, and dwelt in the fort, and called it "the city of David." And he built

wind, which made such a rattle at the tops of the mulberry trees in the valley, that the Philistines thought the noise of an army on the march, and fled. The Israelites followed, and broke up their ranks, and smote them!

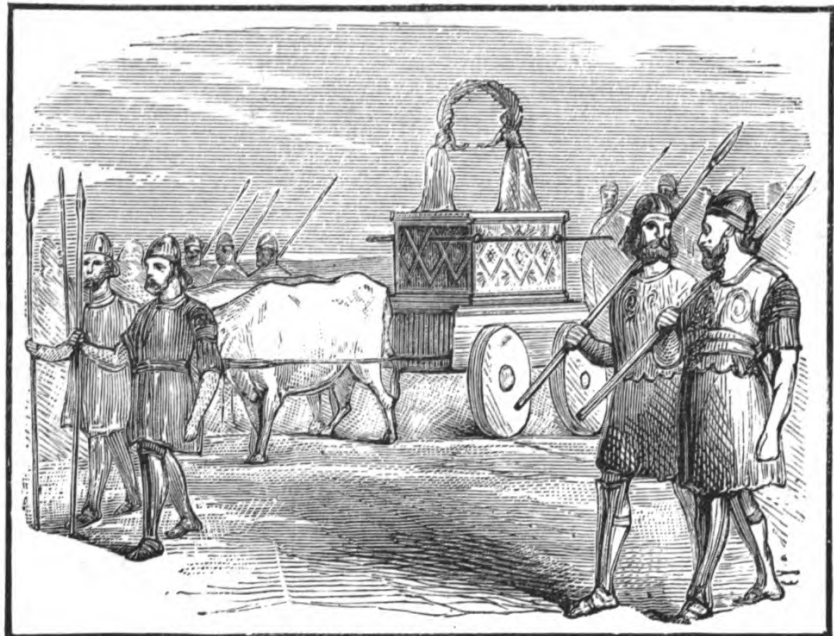
"Happy is the man who has called on the God of Jacob for his help."

UZZAH AND THE ARK.

AS soon as David was settled at Jerusalem, he made up his mind to have the Ark, which was the symbol of God's presence, near him. He did not send the priests for it, but he went himself to Gibeah, to bring it with music and rejoicing.

to a certain threshing-floor, when an oxen stumbled and shook the Ark. Uzzah, one of the drivers, put out his hand to steady it. He should not have done this: and God was very angry, and Uzzah fell down dead.

This sad event made David afraid



On the way back, a sad event occurred. God's own directions had been forgotten. The Ark, which should have been carried on men's shoulders, was put upon a new cart, and oxen were made to draw it.

All seemed to go well till they came

take the Ark any further; so he left it at the house of a good man named Obededom, where it remained three months. And God blessed Obededom all the while the Ark was in his house, and nothing but good came to his family.

THE ARK BROUGHT TO ZION.

WHEN king David saw how happy Obbedom's family was while the Ark was in their home, he felt how foolish he had been in neglecting to treat it with proper reverence when he fetched it from Gibeah. So he made up his mind to carry out his intention of taking it to Jerusalem at once.

distance, the bearers stopped while David offered a sacrifice to show gratitude to God, and to atone for former error. After this, the procession moved forward. The king was so glad that he danced for joy. The trumpets sounded, and the people shouted songs of praise. Everybody was



Every care was now taken to bring the Ark into the city in the proper way. The Levites carried it as God had commanded, the staves of the Ark resting upon their shoulders: they did not touch it with their hands. The captains, soldiers, and people, accompanied it.

When the Levites had gone a short

distance, they had God's presence with them now. The king, having seen the Ark safely placed in a new tent, gave God's blessing on the people, and he gave them all some refreshment. He returned to his palace, while the people turned to their homes having spent a happy day.

A GOOD DESIRE.

ONE day, as David was sitting in the splendid house which had been built for him by the servants of the king of Tyre, he said to himself, What a difference there is between my house and God's! Mine is a fine house of cedar; God's is only a large tent made of poles and bars, which are covered with curtains, and yet it is a

him to build a beautiful temple for His service.

David spoke to Nathan the prophet about it. At first Nathan said, Certainly; but the next night God commanded him to tell David that it would not do for a man of war to build His house; but as it was in his heart to do this good work, He would take it as



place where God comes, and His glory is seen, and prayer is made.

This is not as it should be. God's house ought to be grander, more glorious than mine or any man's: it should be more splendid than the palace of any king. And then he said he would use the great wealth which God had given

he had really done it. David was doubt much disappointed, but he was quite ready to yield his will to God's.

He was very much cheered, though, when Nathan told him that God had promised that one of his sons, who would be a peaceable man, should build His house.

JONATHAN'S LAME SON:

ONE day, as David sat with his court attendants around him, ready to do whatever he ordered them, he asked if there were any of Saul's family left, to whom he could show kindness for his friend Jonathan's sake.

Ziba, Saul's old servant, said, There is Jonathan's son, who is lame in both

do even now, he would have put relations of the former king to rest, lest they should try to reign in his stead. But no; king David sent for this young man, and told him he should have all his grandfather's land. He said that he should always eat at his table, and that Ziba and his sons and servants should till the land for him.



his feet. He was left an orphan at five years old. When the news came of the death of Saul and Jonathan, his nurse took him and fled. As she hurried along with him he fell, and became lame, but the woman adopted him as her son.

If he had done as many then did, and

Mephibosheth—for that was the young man's name—was very grateful and said he did not deserve such kindness. It was kind of David; but it was right in the sight of God, and David had promised Jonathan to do as he had said. So, over, it was another way of showing how he forgave injuries.

A TROUBLESOME SON.

HANDSOME, but proud—a great trouble to his father, was Absalom. Once he ran away from home, and went a long distance, lest he should be put to death for killing his brother Amnon. After three years he came back, but did not live with the king at first.

to return. But it was not long before he appeared in his true colours.

He wanted to be king himself and he made friends with a large number of people, and soon the terrible news came to David: 'Your son, whom you love so much,' is coming to fight against you; to turn you out of your



He used to get up early and stand by the city gate, and when any were coming up to the king for judgment, he would stop them, and tell them that he cared more for the people than his father did. He told lies to his father, pretending that he was very anxious to get home that he might be able to worship God. He was at last allowed

palace and kingdom; to slay you, if he can!

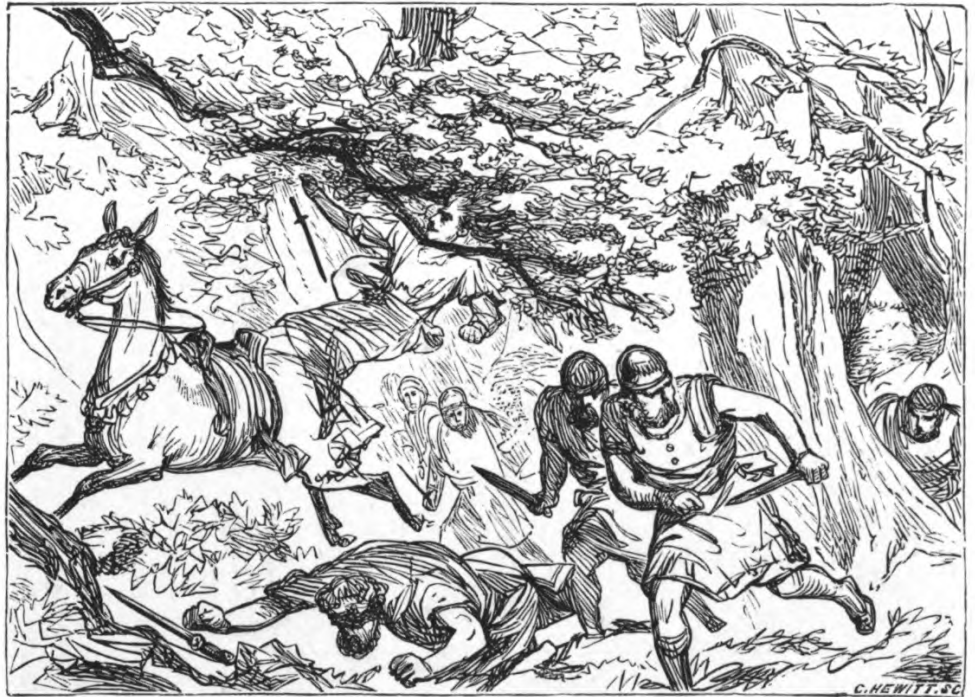
What could the king do? He could not get an army together in time; he would not stay to see his people slain; perhaps he could not bear to fight against his son. So he fled. What a sad picture—a father fleeing from a rebellious son!

ABSALOM'S DEATH.

WHERE is David? In a town in the wilderness, surrounded with soldiers, who are daily coming to him from all parts to help him against his wicked son. Absalom? He is on the hills with thousands at his side, ready to fight.

David's friends would not let him go to the battle, lest he should be killed.

querors, and Absalom's army in directions. The Bible says, they devoured more people than they did. In their hurry to escape they fell into pits and holes, and so were killed. While Absalom was caught by a crooked branch of an oak tree, he was trying to escape on his mare. Joab and his men, in the



But David was very anxious that his captains should not hurt Absalom if he fell into their hands, for he loved him dearly, and he did not want him to be killed, although he was behaving so cruelly to him.

The battle was fought in the wood of Ephraim. David's men were the con-

killed Absalom, although David said they were not to, and he threw him into a great pit in the wood. They laid a very great heap of stones over him.

Well might David, as he thought of his son's sad end, wish that he had never been born, and that he had never have died for him.

PRIDE PUNISHED.

IN the latter part of David's reign, a professed friend persuaded him to have the people counted. There did not seem much harm in this, but pride was at the bottom of it: this made it a sin. It seemed to say, See how great we are! What wonders we are doing!

But a friend; always present with David—Conscience, soon told him he

sinned; O Lord, do not punish the people any more. It is not their fault. God heard the prayer, and told David to build an altar on the threshing floor of Araunah, an old inhabitant of Jerusalem.

David wanted to buy the threshing floor; but Araunah, knowing the trouble he was in, offered to give him



had done wrong. The prophet Gad, too, was commissioned to tell him to choose one of three ways in which he would be punished—by war, pestilence, or famine. David said, Do not let me fall into the hands of men. God sent a pestilence of which thousands died.

David then said, It is I that have

all that was needed. But David said, *I must pay for it; I cannot offer God what has cost me nothing.*

The ground was sold to David: he built an altar, offered sacrifice, and the plague was stayed. The grand Temple of Solomon was afterwards built on this spot.

SOLOMON PROCLAIMED KING.

DAVID had scarcely got over the great trial of Absalom's death, when his eldest living son began to try to secure the throne for himself. David was told what was going on, and he was very grieved; but he knew that God intended Solomon to be king after him, so he sent for the right officials, and told them that this must

manded, and blew the trumpet. All the people said, God save Solomon! A procession was formed, and the people followed Solomon, who rode on David's mule through the city, playing music, and shouting for joy, so that the streets rang again with the sound of their voices. Solomon was then placed on the king's throne,



be at once made known to all the people.

The officers were then told to put Solomon on the king's own mule, and take him to a fountain called Gihon, a public part on the opposite side of the city, and there to anoint Solomon king.

Zadok, therefore, took a horn of oil out of the tabernacle and did as com-

manded, and put the crown on his head and a scepter in his hand.

The king's eldest son saw what was meant, and wisely acknowledged his brother Solomon as king. He promised that, if he behaved rightly, not a hair of his head should fall to the ground; but, if he did wrong, he must take the consequences.

DAVID'S GOOD ADVICE.

THE time was drawing near when David must leave his throne, his palace, and his kingdom, and appear before God. He had many arrangements to make, and many instructions to give; but he was chiefly anxious about the great work he had been thinking of so long. Therefore he called for Solomon his son, and in-

be a magnificent building, where people were to meet for worship, sacrifices were to be offered, and the ark to be kept in the Most Holy Place.

The good old man reminded his son that the work must be done in dependence upon God for help; he prayed the Lord to give to Solomon wisdom and understanding. He



structed him to build a house for the Lord; and committed to his care and that of the great men of the kingdom all the treasures he had collected for the Temple: costly materials—fragrant cedar-wood, gold, silver, iron, stone, ready for the building. Clever workmen, too, had been secured. It was to

told him that he would prosper if he obeyed God in all that he did. "Now, therefore, fear the Lord," said he, "and serve Him in sincerity, not to obtain the good opinion of men but "the glory of God." This was advice which all do well to follow.

A WISE CHOICE.

WHEN David died, Solomon must have missed him very much, for he had a great work to do—to build a house for God, for which he needed more experience than he as yet possessed. To whom could he go for advice and help now? To his father's God to be sure. And he did.

The Bible tells us that he went to

what blessing shall I bestow upon you?

Solomon, though a king, meekly replied, "I am but a little child"—that is, very young, and have much to learn. "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart." Many would have asked for long life, fame, wealth, and grandeur; but Solomon felt that



Gibeon on the top of a hill, seven miles off, where the tabernacle and brazen altar were, which Moses prepared in the wilderness. There he offered sacrifice and prayed to God.

In the silence of that night, as he lay in his bed-chamber, a voice said to him, "Ask what I shall give thee"—pray, speak the wishes of your heart,

first need was the wisdom which only God can give.

This was a wise choice; and God was pleased, and promised much more than he asked—riches, honour, long life.

The next morning the young king returned to Jerusalem, and publicly thanked God for all His goodness to him.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

WHEN Solomon began to build a temple, God sent him many helpers from all quarters. An architect was sent from Tyre, stone was brought from the quarries near and at a distance, cedar-wood too was floated down from Lebanon, which Solomon paid for in wheat, barley, and oil.

the floors were made of planks covered with gold, and the walls lined with cedar-wood. It was called "a house of prayer for all people" and so there was the holy place, and the most holy place: the brazen altar for sacrifices, the molten sea, supported by twelve oxen, which held five hundred



The materials were brought ready for use, and the noise of hammers and axes was not heard in the house while it was building, for it was to be a temple of the God of peace.

It was a grand building, strong too, and the wood was beautifully carved:

barrels of water for cleansing purposes, and lavers also filled with water for the golden altar for the burning of incense upon. All things within were of gold, even the hinges of the doors! Nothing was too good or costly: the best of everything was given to God.

DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

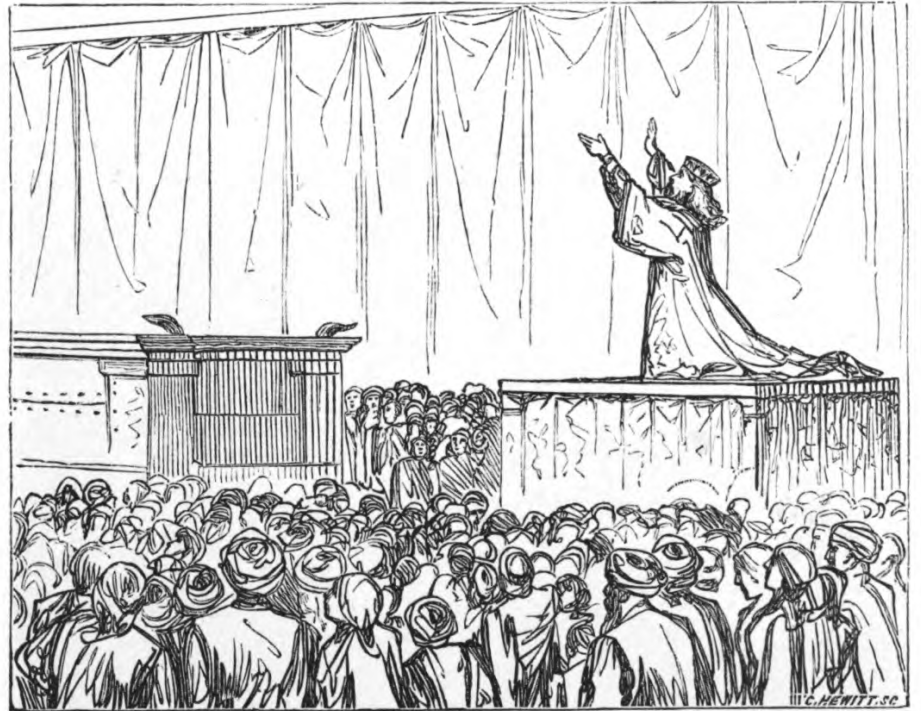
IT was a grand time when the temple was finished. The ark, the symbol of God's presence, was brought out of the "city of David" with great solemnity; the tabernacle too, with the vessels belonging to it.

The ark was placed beneath the spreading wings of the great cherubim which Solomon had made, and then there was a grand chorus of praise; a

the priests could not finish their song, and offering at the altar, for the glory of the Lord filled the house at the top of the cloud.

Solomon burst out into a song, feeling thankful that God was there.

He then stood on a scaffold of gold, surrounded by the people, and stretched forth his hands, then kneeling



hundred and twenty priests sounded trumpets over the sacrifices, and there was much other music, besides a choir of singers.

While the people sang all together, accompanied by trumpets, and cymbals, and other instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, "For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever," the house was filled with a cloud, so that

prayed for himself, for the people, and for strangers. He begged of God to answer prayer, to help the people, and offered numerous sacrifices.

When Solomon had done prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the offering, and the glory of the Lord filled the holy place, showing that God accepted the house for His worship. God honours those who honour Him.

A QUEEN'S SURPRISE.

THE queen of Sheba came to visit Solomon, and brought with her a train of servants, camels, laden with spices, gold, and precious stones, as presents. She had travelled far to see king Solomon, because she had heard of his greatness, his riches, the wonderful palace and temple that he

The queen, before she came, had heard much more than she could believe of Solomon's greatness, richness, wisdom; but now, astonished, she said, "*The half was not told me.*" She felt how happy all should be who had the privilege it was to attend upon such a wise and mighty king.



had built; but most of all because she had heard of his wisdom. What she had been told was quite true. The king was Solomon, the wisest of men.

The queen tried Solomon's wisdom by many hard questions, some very hard ones: but the king was not puzzled at all; he answered every one.

How far happier we who may grow
One wiser, greater than Solomon.
We have not far to travel to find Him:
He is near to every one of us. And even
little children may learn of Him.

Lord draw our youthful hearts to Thee
And when this life shall end,
Raise us to live above the sky
With Thee, the children's Friend.

FOLLOWING BAD ADVICE.

WHEN Rehoboam came to the throne, the people asked him to make things easier for them, for it had cost so much to keep up the splendour of Solomon's reign that they felt the very heavy taxes were a great burden to them.

The king did not give an answer at once, but first asked the opinion of the

and sports, what he should do. To please *him*, said, "Don't let the people at all."

Rehoboam took this foolish advice and told them that instead of taking away their burdens he should put them a great deal worse than they were in his father's time.

Those who use rough language



old men who had been his father's advisers. They said it would be wise to do what the people wished, for too much was being spent by the court in things which were not necessary.

Rehoboam was too proud to do this; so he asked those who had been his companions in costly pleasures

sure to use it to their own hurt. It turned out; for the people rose against Rehoboam, and ten out of the twelve tribes would have nothing more to do with him, but made Jeroboam king. He not only lost most of his friends, but worse still, he lost the favour of God.

THE KING WHO MADE ISRAEL SIN

JEROBOAM after he became king, fixed upon two cities—Dan and Bethel—as the places where the people were to worship God, instead of at Jerusalem. He said that it was too much trouble for them to go so far; but the truth was, he was afraid that if they got in the habit of going to

not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in earth beneath: thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them.”

The Levites only, of all the people, had the courage to refuse to do



Jerusalem they might not think enough of him.

Jeroboam made two golden calves. These images were placed, one in Bethel, the other in Dan. “When you look at these,” he said, “you will be reminded of the true God, whom you are to worship.” But he forgot God’s commandment: “Thou shalt

Jeroboam wished, and continued to go up to Jerusalem and worship God at His temple. The king found others to carry on the service, contrary to God’s command, and he himself conducted worship at Bethel in his own way. So he became known ever afterwards as the man who “made Israel to sin.”

DISOBEDIENCE SURE TO BE PUNISHED

ONE day, as Jeroboam stood by the altar at Bethel to burn incense, a man of God warned him that God would punish him for his sin, and that the bones of those who joined with him in disobedience would be burned on this very altar, and the altar itself be broken down.

In anger the king tried to lay hold

persuaded him to return and eat some refreshment. But in anger he disobeyed God.

On his way home a wild lion bit and killed him. The ass on which he rode was not hurt, neither did it eat his body, but stood by, looking on. Some men passing by saw this in sight, and told the old man



of the prophet, but his arm became paralysed, so that he could not draw it back again. When, in answer to the prophet's prayer, Jeroboam's hand was restored; the king wanted to reward him, but he would take nothing, and went away.

An old man, who professed to serve God, followed him, and by telling a lie

enticed the prophet to disobey God. He went and fetched the bones and buried them at Bethel among the bones as God had said. But years after when Jeroboam's altar was broken down, and the bones of those who were buried there were burned, the prophet's grave was not alluded to or touched.

PRIDE BROUGHT DOWN.

THE Scriptures say of Rehoboam, "He forsook the law of the Lord." This is true; for he encouraged the worship of idols, and neglected God's house. He built strong cities to defend his land, but did not ask God to defend it.

No wonder that God permitted Shi-

advise Rehoboam and the people to humble themselves before God. They did so, and God granted them deliverance for a little while, so that Shishak spared the people and their city for a time, although he took away the gold treasures of the temple, and the shields of gold which Solomon had made.



shak, the king of Egypt, to invade it, to destroy the fenced cities, and to surround Jerusalem with hosts of armed men.

When the people saw how hopeless their position was, they asked Shemaiah the prophet what they should do. He

To part with the treasures his father had given to God's house, was a great punishment. But Rehoboam deserved it. His sorrow did not last. It was not true repentance. It was like that of some children, who are only sorry through fear.

ASA, THE GOOD KING.

ASA, third king of Judah, served God. He destroyed the images and idols, and cut down the groves, and wished the people to worship God alone. An enemy came against the people—thousands of soldiers. Asa asked God's help. His prayer was answered. The Ethiopians were

will forsake you"—leave you without help even when trouble comes.

The king called together the people who agreed to serve God only, and it was made high treason to forsake the worship of the true God.

But, alas! when Baasha, king of Israel, made an attack on Judah, A



destroyed, and Asa and his people rejoiced, and obtained great riches.

As he returned, proud of his success, he was met by the prophet Azariah, who faithfully cautioned him: "The Lord is with you while ye be with Him; but if ye forsake Him, He

forgot how God had helped him, and purchased help from Benhadad, king of Syria, with treasures that belonged to the temple.

In consequence of this, troubles came upon him, and he learned that they are secure who trust in God always.

A STRANGE MESSAGE.

WHEN Ahab became king of Israel, things grew worse than they had ever been before. He married a wicked woman, a great idolater; and to please her, worshipped her ugly idol called Baal, and built a temple for it in Samaria, and made the people worship it too.

A number of prophets spoke against

the hairy garment, and delivered a short but decided message: "There shall be no rain nor dew these years, but according to My word,"—not rain but sunshine—great heat, all the year, and every day the grass and corn wither and the brooks be dried.

Having delivered his message, the prophet left the palace as suddenly as



the worship of an idol, but the queen caused them to be put to death. One hundred of them, however, were kept and fed in two of the caves of the land by a good man who had not forgotten his God, although a servant in the house of this wicked king.

One day there suddenly appeared in the palace a man clothed in a rough,

hairy garment, and went no one whither. The king and queen were so taken by surprise that at first they said and did nothing. But as soon as they got over it a little, they made up their minds to seize and kill the prophet if they could. But he got far away to the banks of the Jordan under the protection of the King of kings.

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS.

AFTER Elijah had told Ahab that "there should be neither rain nor dew;" he was directed by God to hide by the brook Cherith, near the river Jordan. He did, and there he remained according to God's command; and neither friend nor foe knew where he was. By a brook which

who sent him there will supply his needs. Perhaps the birds which fly about the palace may bring some of their prey to Ahab's kitchen. The Bible says that "ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank of the brook;" but this is all.



became less and less every day, Elijah sat under the shadow of a great rock. No sounds met his ear, except the gentle trickling of the water at his feet, and the croaking of the ravens above his head.

What is he to do for food? God

But the water is failing! the brook is gradually drying up! What is he to do now? Although he has been told that he will die by the hand of a cruel king, he may yet die of thirst! No; God tells him, do not fear—you shall not die. All you need elsewhere!

ELIJAH AND THE BARREL OF MEAL

WHEN the water at Cherith was nearly dried up, Elijah was told to go to a foreign land, where dwelt a widow who would give him food. He went forward at God's command, and after a weary journey, came in sight of the smoke of the "city of Zarephath." Just outside was a poor widow gathering some sticks. Hungry and faint, Elijah

and son, before they died of starvation. The hungry man was a stranger to her, and she looked doubtful; but Elijah said, "Fear not; go and do as I have said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son, for God had said, "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the c



asked her to give him a little water to drink. As she was starting off to fetch it, he added, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand."

She replied, she had not any to spare—only a handful of meal left in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, and she was gathering a little wood that she might prepare the last meal for herself,

of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

The woman believed the message, for she loved him, and whom she would obey, and trust, cost her what it might. She did as she was told, and the meal and the oil lasted as long as Elijah said they would.

OBADIAH THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

OBADIAH was a good man, and "feared the Lord greatly." Neither Ahab's smiles nor Jezebel's frowns could make him worship idols, or frighten him from serving the one living and true God. It was Obadiah who hid the hundred prophets in caves, and fed them every day.

One day, when there had been no rain

So king Ahab went one way, Obadiah another. Obadiah had gone far before he saw a man coming along, who looked very much like Elijah. Could it be he? Yes, it was he! and almost the first words he spoke were, "Go tell thy lord, behold, Elijah is here." Obadiah was afraid to go at first, for he said that search



for three years, and the pasture lands were all dusty and stony, the cornfields yielded nothing, and men, women, and children, and cattle were dying with hunger and thirst, the king said to Obadiah, "Let us go and see if we can find some patches of grass somewhere, that we may save some of our horses and mules alive."

been made everywhere for Elijah, and that the king had been told that he was nowhere to be found. He would be sure to put some of them to death for deceiving him.

Elijah said he need not be afraid, he would certainly appear before Ahab that day. So Obadiah went and told Ahab.

ELIJAH MEETING AHAB.

GOD commanded Elijah to go and meet the angry king, and therefore he was as safe in his presence as by the lonely brook, or in the widow's house, in the little far-off city of Zarephath. And no doubt he travelled more boldly because he had good news to tell.

prophet a very gracious reception he asked—"Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" thus doing as many try to do now-a-days, shifting the blame on others that had taken place on some one else.

Elijah boldly answered—"No, not I, but thou and thy father's house are the cause of all the sorrow



One message which he had to take to the king was, that there would soon be rain again, and the grass be green, and the terrible famine would soon be over.

The king, however, did not give the

trouble that has fallen upon the people. Your sins and the sins of your fathers have brought evil upon you. You have no one to blame but yourselves."

But Ahab would not confess the truth.

THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

WE have now to tell you of the great meeting of Elijah with the prophets of Baal, the sun-god. Ahab agreed to call the people together to Mount Carmel, to try which was the true God: Baal, or the God whom Elijah worshipped.

One side of the mountain overlooked

nobles, and crowds looking on. The priests sneer, but the people are silent as death. Elijah says: Let altars be built for each of us, and let us prepare a sacrifice, and then each of us call upon our God, and see which will send fire from heaven to burn the sacrifice.



the blue sea, the other looked far and wide toward the land, all parched and dreary for the want of rain.

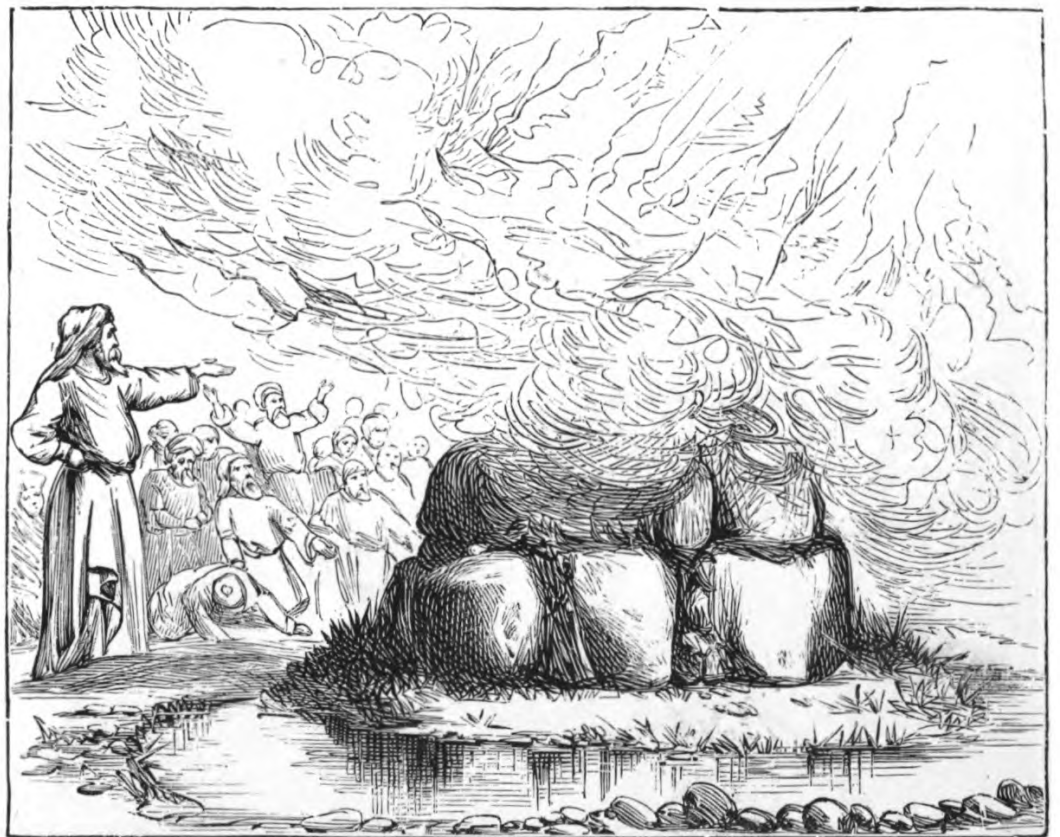
Fancy you see the mountain side, facing the land, covered with the prophets of Baal, the king and his

All day long the priests of Baal cry earnestly to their god: jump, dance, cut themselves with knives, leap upon the altar; but Baal does not move, does not hear, no answer comes: he cannot be God!

JEHOVAH IS THE TRUE GOD.

AS Baal did not answer those who called upon him, when the sun was going down, Elijah stepped forward, calm and certain, and prepared to call upon his God and our God. The people watched him closely as he built God's altar, laid the wood, and then placed the slain bullock, cut in pieces,

listened; and how they wondered when, as he ceased for a moment, a lightning flash came from the cloudless sky, and burned up, not the sacrifice, but the wood, and the stones, and the dust round about! Their shouts then rent the air, as they cried out, "THE LORD, HE IS



upon it. They took notice, too, how careful he was to pour water over everything three times, so that the water filled the trenches that had been dug around the altar, that the people might see he was not playing them any trick. As he prayed to the Lord God of heaven, how eagerly they

GOD; THE LORD, HE IS THE GOD

Yes—now they felt sure that the God whom Elijah worshipped was the true God, and that He alone had power to save or to destroy. This God is our Father now; and it is to Him we say—“Father.” He alone can help and bless us.

THE LITTLE CLOUD,—RAIN COMING

IT was good news for Ahab and his people, when Elijah turned to the king and said that plenty of rain was coming: he was as sure of it as if he heard the sound of it already.

Ahab went up to some place in the side of the mountain where a tent was pitched, that he might rest and refresh himself. Elijah went a great deal

out over the deep sea, but as many times came back to him with the report, "There is nothing." At the seventh time he saw a cloud, as big as a man's hand, rising out of the sea.

As soon as Elijah heard this, he said to the king, "Make haste home." Had not Ahab been very haughty, he would have given the prophet a ride in



higher up the cliff of Carmel, where he could get a view of the Mediterranean sea. He then told his servant to go higher still, and look toward the sea. The prophet then fell on his knees, and bowed his head in token of deep humility and earnest prayer that God would remember His people, and send rain to refresh the thirsty earth. Six times did the prophet's servant go and look

chariot, instead of letting him ride before him like a common footman.

Elijah was no enemy to Ahab. What he opposed and spoke against was the king's sin in forgetting God. The prophet only went to the gate of the palace, and then himself retired to some private place where he could quietly think about God's goodness.

ELIJAH UNDER THE JUNIPER TREE

WHEN the wicked queen Jezebel heard that the prophets of Baal were dead, she said she would kill Elijah; but in her passion she sent a warning to the prophet, so that he was able to get out of her way. Elijah was surprised at the queen's ingratitude, but knowing what a cruel woman she

as bad as ever, and that he was a v unprofitable servant of God.

Weary and tired he had dropped to sleep, but was awoke by a messenger from God, who bade him "Arise and eat." He arose and saw a cake of bread which had been baked upon hot stones and a jar of water. The prophet



was, he did not feel safe until he had got to Beersheba, some ninety miles away. Here he left his servant while he went on alone into the wilderness. He then lay down under a tree, beautiful with white blossoms and thick foliage, and began to despair, thinking that after all he had done, the king and queen were

and drank, and lay down again. God's messenger soon touched him again, and told him to "Arise and eat" because he had yet a great work to do. Elijah arose and ate, and went on with the strength of that food for forty days. How kind God is to His people, when they are fretful and peevish!

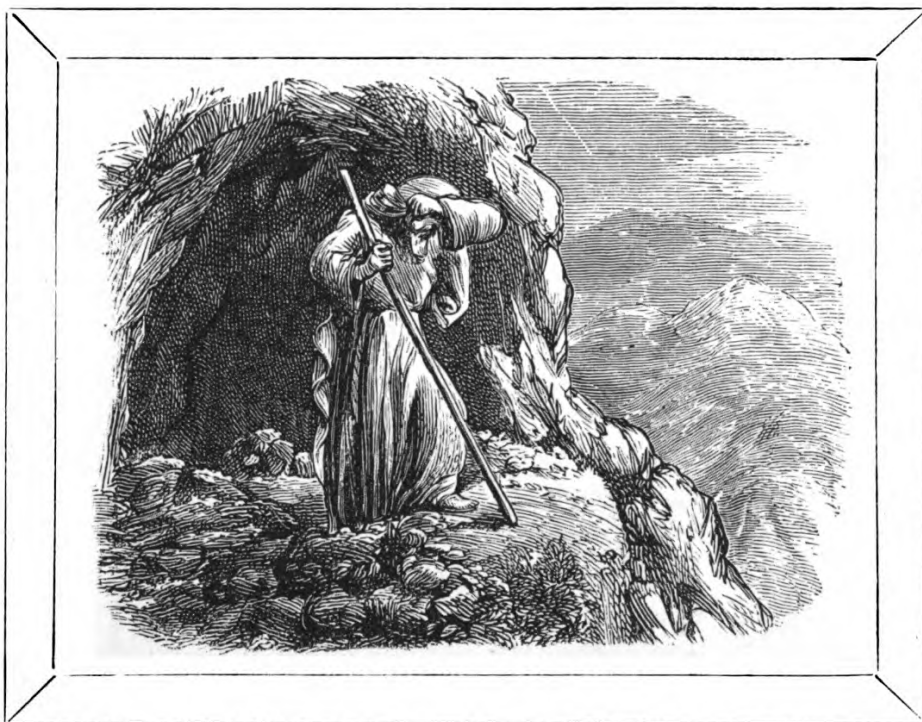
THE STILL SMALL VOICE.

ELIJAH went on his way, crossing sandy plains and rocky heights, till the dark masses of Horeb were in sight. Here he found a cave, which was a shade from the heat by day, and a shelter from the cold by night.

But God had not sent him here. No wonder, therefore, that he should hear a voice, asking, "What doest

there were many more than he were workers in God's cause, and not by any means alone in God's

Elijah was then told to come to the cavern and to stand on the mountain before God. And, behold, the fire rushed through the mountain pass, but the Lord was not there. An earthquake threatened to fill the valley



thou here, Elijah?" God knew: but the question was put to set Elijah thinking. Elijah tried to excuse himself. He said he had been very jealous for God, but all seemed of no use. The people were growing worse and worse, and there was no one left to speak for God but him, and the people were seeking his life to take it away. But

desolation, but the Lord was not there. The fire threatened to complete the ruin, but the Lord was not there. Elijah was not humbled by these things, but when the still small voice came, it brought Elijah to his senses, and he learned that more often be done by gentleness than by rougher means.

THE COVETOUS KING.

GOD was so good to Ahab, and sent fruitful showers upon the land, and made grass to grow for his cattle, and corn for his own use; yet the king was not satisfied, but wanted to have his neighbour's property. Naboth would not sell it to him. This vexed Ahab very much; and like a peevish child who cannot

Wicked men did as Jezebel wished, and Naboth was stoned to death.

As soon as Naboth was dead the wicked queen went joyfully to Ahab and said, "Now the land is yours." While he and his officers were taking possession and planning how the land should be laid out, Elijah made his appearance. Ahab's conscience troubled



have his own way, Ahab refused to eat, and was cross with everybody about him. The queen, Jezebel, who was more wicked than Ahab, said he should have what he wanted. So she paid some people to say that Naboth had spoken blasphemy against God and the king, and therefore he must be stoned.

him he had done wrong, and in great fear he said to Elijah "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Elijah was not his enemy, but he hated his sin, and he told him that for this terrible wickedness he would die an awful death, which took place not long afterwards.

THE TRUE AND FALSE PROPHECY

IN a large open space near the gates of a certain city sat two kings—Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, and Ahab king of Israel. A great company of citizens, soldiers, and country people, had met together to hear about a war one of the kings wished to begin. Shall the army march or not? This question was asked of some people who pro-

phesied in the name of the Lord; and he wished that prophet might be asked. There was only one—Micaiah—and he was in prison already for telling the truth. Besides, Ahab said it was of no use to ask him, for he always foretold bad things. However, Micaiah was brought before them. He said, "The battle will be fought, and the king slain." Ahab was very



fessed to know God's will. Four hundred of them in shaggy mantles, with wild looks, shouted in a kind of chant, "Go, and you will conquer." But they said this to please the king: they knew nothing about it.

The other king was not satisfied—for he worshipped God, and knew that these men were not prophets of the

and had him put in prison again. He was fed on bread and water, as if to prevent the words of the prophet from coming true. God from becoming true!

Ahab went to battle dressed as a common soldier, thinking to escape this way. But the arrow from the enemy, drawn at a venture, pierced his back, and wounded him so that he died.

THE GOOD KING JEHOSHAPHAT.

JEHOSHAPHAT, king of Judah, walked in the ways of God's commandments, and removed the high-places and groves out of Judah, and sent men through the land to teach the people the Scriptures, which had been neglected. He honoured God, and so God honoured him and gave him riches in abundance.

The kings round about did not make war upon Judah; but some of them

the rebuke, and set to work to make things better.

The Moabites, invaded the country, the king proclaimed a public fast. The rulers, the princes, and the people crowded the temple courts, joined heart, if not in voice, in the king's prayer to God for help,—the women, young children, whole families, all men and prayed together.

God answered their prayers. The



brought him presents of silver, and thousands of sheep and goats. He became a very great king, and built palaces and store-cities.

But Jehoshaphat did a very foolish thing when he joined Ahab in battle against Ramoth-Gilead, and narrowly escaped with his life. The prophet Jehu reprov'd him for helping the ungodly king. Jehoshaphat profited by

were told that the men would even have to fight. God's word was enough: instead of fighting they sang praises to God; and as for their enemies, they killed each other, and the people of Judah obtained great spoils, which it took three days to gather.

The people offered thanks to God and returned to Jerusalem with solemn rejoicings.

ELIJAH TAKEN TO HEAVEN.

LONG before Elijah went to heaven God told him to go and find Elisha, and he found him, and for eleven years Elisha lived with the prophet. No wonder, then, that when his beloved master talked about going to be alone, Elisha should be loth to leave him.

Elijah went to bid farewell to the

As they went along, Elisha asked that he might have a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elijah said, if he saw him going up to heaven, he should.

While they talked together, God's messengers, bright and shining, came to fetch Elijah: they looked like a chariot and horses of fire, and the two good men were parted asunder, and Eli-



sons of the prophets at Bethel; but they, too, did not like saying good-bye, and they followed at a distance to see what would happen. But Elisha went with him. When they came to the river Jordan, Elijah struck the waters with his mantle, and the waters divided so that he and his servant were able to walk across the river's bed.

was carried up as by a whirlwind into heaven. Thus did God honour the man whose words kings of the earth despised.

As Elijah went to heaven his mantle fell and Elisha caught it, and he used it to make a path across the Jordan. He then returned to his home.

HOW ELISHA HELPED A WIDOW.

ONE day a widow came to Elisha in great trouble. When her husband died there was a debt owing, and she had no money to pay it with, and the creditor wanted to take her two sons as slaves in payment of the debt.

Elisha asked the widow what she had in the house that she might sell

could, and then with her sons go to her house, and, when she had shut the door, take her little pot and pour oil from it into the many jars which her neighbours had lent her.

The widow did as the prophet told her, although she could not see how her little pot of oil could fill all



and pay the debt with, and she said, "Nothing but a pot of oil," but she could not get enough money for that to pay what was owing. Elisha made a way for her to do it.

He told her to borrow of her neighbours all the empty jars and cups she

jars; however, she began to pour and the oil kept coming and coming until the jars were every one of them full. She went to Elisha, and he said, "Go, sell the jars and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest."

THE LITTLE CAPTIVE MAID.



THE armies of Syria often oppressed the people of Israel. God permitted this as a punishment for their sin of worshipping false gods. One day, the Syrian soldiers sent from her native land a little maid, whom their commander-in-chief, Naaman, took to his home to wait upon his wife.

The girl did not forget her home, and, better still, she did not forget the God whom her parents had taught her to worship. Far away from home and friends she remembered Him who was ever ready to help those in trouble; she trusted in Him and did her best to serve Him. But what could a little girl all by herself, do for God, among a people who worshipped idols?

She had learned to pray to Him, and knew that if she prayed to Him now, He would help her and others too. Her mistress was afflicted with a troublesome disease which no one was able to cure. She thought, how sad for him, and she prayed for him very much.

“Alas, poor master!” once she said,

“I only wish that he were living in Samaria’s land, where once I used to live.”

And she told her mistress of the prophet Elisha, of whom she had heard so much. She was sure he could cure her mistress of his leprosy.

Her mistress believed her: and one went in and told Naaman the words, that the little maid whom they had brought from the land of Israel, had spoken.

The king of Syria thought so highly of his commander-in-chief, that when he heard about it, he said some one must go and see what could be done.

NAAMAN'S LEPROSY CURED.

THE words spoken by the little captive maid led to a wonderful cure. She had never told a lie; therefore her master trusted her word and took a long journey, in the hope of finding the one person who could cure him. He first went to the king of Israel to ask him to command the prophet to

wash himself in the river Jordan, he would be made well. But with a simple thing as this Naaman's would not agree, so he went away in rage.

On the way home his servants spoke very wisely to him about the proper advice, and he saw that it was



heal him. But the king had no power to do this.

Elisha was told what Naaman wanted; and so he sent for him. Naaman went in his chariot, and made a great show at Elisha's door, and thought the prophet would come out to him. But Elisha only sent a message to the great man, telling him to go and

foolish to behave as he was now doing. So he drove towards the river. Then he took off his splendid dress, and went into the water, plunged himself seven times, as the prophet had commanded, and was restored to health. So he returned to his chariot, and came back with joy and gladness to thank the prophet.

PUNISHMENT FOLLOWS SIN.

WHEN Naaman had been cured of the leprosy, he offered Elisha a handsome present. The prophet would not take it; but bade the king, "Go in peace."

Gehazi, Elisha's servant, did not like the general getting off, as he thought, so cheaply; so he made up a lie, and

and two changes of raiment were quickly given to him, and made his servants carry them. they got to a certain tower, hid the things away in a ho sent back the men. He t "Nobody will be any the wise shall get on finely."



ran after the chariot of Naaman. The general saw him coming, and stopped his chariot, and stepped out, and went to meet Gehazi.

Gehazi's story was, that two young sons of the prophets had come in, and that his master wanted two talents of silver—about seven hundred pounds—

But as soon as he went in to his master, Elisha asked where been. He said, "Nowhere." master soon showed him that h better; and he told him that f sin, the leprosy of Naaman w upon him. And so it was. ' lips are abomination to the Lo

A BOY RESTORED TO LIFE.

ONE day Elisha saw a woman riding towards him in great haste. Who could it be? It was the woman of Shunem who had been so kind to the prophet as to have a room built for him into which he might come, whenever he was passing, and rest himself. Elisha had many times gone by the house on his way from Samaria to

of his fun and merriment, a sudden pain seized him, and he cried out, "head, my head!" He was carried home, and, ere half the day had gone, he died of sun-stroke.

This was a terrible trial to his mother, and she went to ask the prophet to help her. Elisha remembered her kindness to him and went back to the house



Carmel, looking very weary; and it was very kind of the woman to help him in this way. What brought her to Carmel at this time was this: her boy—the only child, the life of the home—had gone out in the morning well and happy, to see his father and the reapers at their work in the harvest field. But, in the midst

her. He found the boy laid on the ground in his own little room. He went to the door, shut the door, and prayed by himself. God answered his prayer—the boy sneezed, and opened his eyes. The mother was then called, to see her boy alive and well.

Oh, how full of joy and how thankful she must have been!

A WONDERFUL ARMY.

ON the hillside, at Dothan, where Joseph's brethren fed their flocks, was a little city in which once Elisha found a refuge from his enemies. But while there, one night, for some reason the prophet's servant could not sleep—so he got up very early. A strange sight met his eyes. A great company of soldiers, with horses and chariots, had come silently

more than they that be with us. His servant looked up, and saw a light which seemed to be an army riding on clouds approaching the city. They came to protect God's servant.

The eyes of the army in the night became so dim that they could see nothing. So Elisha led them to the city of Samaria, where there were not many soldiers and people enough to destroy the



in the night, and surrounded the little city. A heathen king had sent them to seize Elisha, whom he greatly feared on account of what God had enabled him to do.

Elisha's servant was frightened and cried out, "Alas my master! How shall we do?" The prophet calmly replied, "They that be with us are

army of the heathen king. In answer to the prophet's prayer for them, their eyes were opened, and they saw that Elisha had saved them from destruction. For his sake, they were treated by the king, and sent to their homes in peace, after they had seen how foolish they had been to fight against God.

A TERRIBLE FAMINE & HOW IT ENDED

IN the days of Elisha there was a great famine in Samaria. It was caused by the Syrian army, who prevented food from being brought into the city.

The king of Samaria laid the blame of all this trouble upon Elisha, and went to put him to death.

Elisha was sitting in his house talking to the elders, when the king

arrived and made his complaint. The prophet was not frightened, but calm. Said he, "Hear ye the word of the Lord: To-morrow there shall be plenty of food, and cheap too." But an officer of court, on whose arm

the king was leaning, said, "Treat the message with contempt." Elisha said, "You shall see it, but for your unbelief you shall not have any of the food or treasure."

Near the gates of the city four lepers had their abode. They were not allowed to mix with other people, and depended for their living on begging. They said among themselves, "If we

go into the city no one will help us; if we stay where we are, we shall starve and perish. We will go to the Syrians and run the risk of being killed."

Before daybreak they went toward the camp. When they reached it, horses and asses were there, food in abundance, plenty of treasure, but not a man was to be seen. The lepers looked and listened, and took of the food, obtained and

away gold and silver, till they had reached the furthest part of the camp. So they did not find a soldier. God had testified the Syrians and they had fled across the Jordan.

The lepers then thought of the people

of the city, and told the good news. Food and treasure in abundance were brought into the city. People crowded to the market in their eager joy. The captain who would not believe God's word, His servant, was appointed to keep order in the crowd. But the rush was too great — he could not stand against it, and he among others was trampled to death.



KING JEHU.

JEHU was sent by God to punish the king of Israel for his own and his cruel wife's sins, and the sins of his followers. We cannot tell you many of the things he did, but you will be able to read them for yourselves some day.

This we can say—he was not a good man, although he carried out God's

did in destroying idols, and idoles, and the worshippers of Baal. He did not destroy the golden calves, the worship of Jeroboam. He boasted of his own deeds, talked much about his love for God, and for religion, but continued in sin—the sin of image-worship, which was hateful to God, because he thought the people would



threatenings against the king and people of Israel for their cruelty and idolatry.

Jehu was very proud and self-willed, and although he did what was God's will, he did it in his own way to please himself. He liked to show off. "Come, see MY zeal," said he.

Jehu made a great show of what he

him all the better for it. I think he thought only of himself in everything he did.

Jehu served God a little, and his family succeeded to the throne for several years; but because he did not seek God's glory in all parts of his kingdom was lost away.

A WONDER AFTER ELISHA'S DEATH

ELISHA was buried on the banks of the Jordan, whither he was carried by a few friends who followed in silence. A heavy stone closed the sepulchre.

A year passed by, and some had nearly forgotten the prophet, when an event occurred which brought his name once more before the people.

As soon as the attendants begin to work, spears and swords are seen glittering in the distance. A troop of Moabites is coming down upon them. What can they do? If they continue to work they will lose their lives, or expose themselves to be taken prisoners!

Close by is Elisha's tomb; they must cast the dead body of their friend



Imagine yourself in the burial ground: a funeral procession approaches. An Israelite is being carried to his long home; probably one of the quiet ones of the land who did not bow the knee to Baal. No doubt he was a poor man, for there was no hewn sepulchre ready for him — his grave had still to be dug.

into it. No sooner did the corpse touch Elisha's bones than the man moved and came forth from the tomb alive.

The God of Elisha did this wonder to show His people that they need not fear the Moabites,—they were to trust in Him, for He was able to fulfill His promises, and save them from the hands of their enemies.

PROMISES FAITHFULLY KEPT.

THE prophet Jeremiah was sent to the Israelites to reprove them for their sins; but the people would not hearken—they were disobedient.

Jeremiah told them of the obedience of the Rechabites, whose example they might well imitate.

Jonadab, the son of Rechab, had said that his children were not to cultivate fields, nor to drink wine, nor

instructions were not of superior authority—they were only good counsel. If they were not followed His wrath would not be punished; for He had not forbidden these things.

God had given commands to the people which they were bound to obey, and, unlike Jonadab, He knew they did obey, and could reward or punish as He chose.

God urged His commands,



build houses, but to live in tents; and they carried out his wishes.

The prophet, ordered wine to be set before them in the temple chamber, and they were asked to drink; but they said very firmly, "We will drink no wine." Jeremiah knew very well they would not; but he wanted to prove to the Israelites how obedient they were.

Jeremiah said to the Israelites these

sending His servants to put to the mind of their duty. He had given them their land, and the many promises and blessings they possessed.

But how did they behave? He took Jeremiah into a dungeon, for what he did! God promised the Rechabites a reward for obedience, but dreadful things happened to the Israelites.

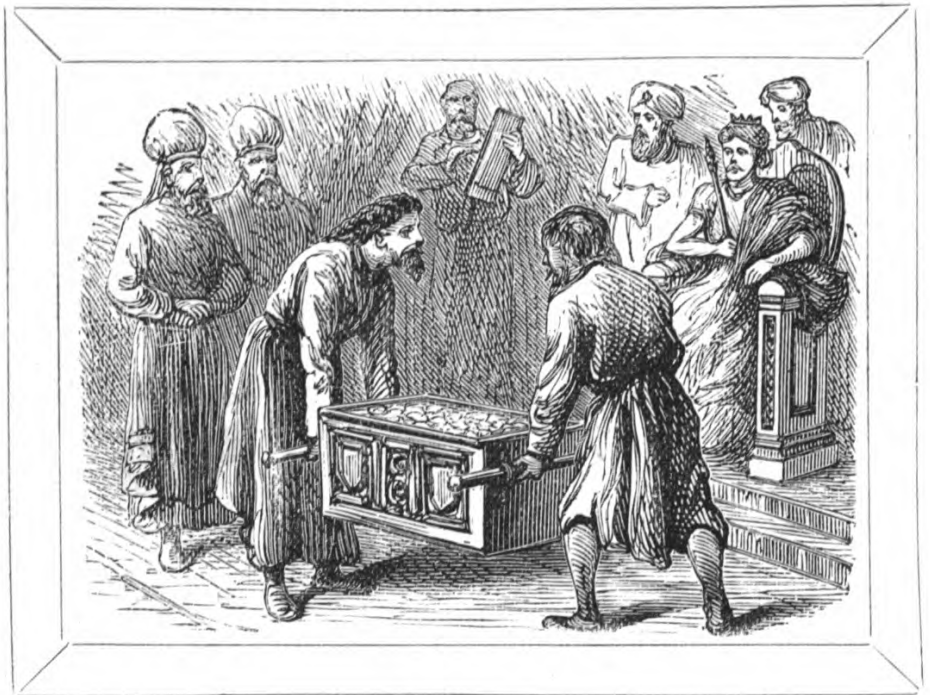
BRIGHT BEGINNING—A SAD ENDING

JOASH was the son of one of the kings of Judah. His father, and, soon afterwards, all his brothers, were killed when he was very young. A good woman—his aunt—took pity on him, and hid him for six years. He was early taught to serve God. When only seven years old, he was made king.

—they put money in a great chest at the temple-gate.

So the temple was made beautiful again, and the king and the people worshipped God.

In the course of time, some of his friends—princes—came to Joash. They were wicked men. Alas! when



Joash was too young to know what to do as king. He asked advice from a servant of God, who reminded him of the sad condition of the temple buildings, and Joash planned to work at their repair—to open it again for God's worship. The people helped

came, Joash, who had served God, listened to the men who worshipped idols. The people of Judah and the king turned away from the place of prayer and worship, and went so far as to kill God's prophets.

This came of keeping bad com

UZZIAH'S PRIDE.

KING UZZIAH reigned fifty-two years. There was much that was good in his reign, and something that was bad. He began life well: at sixteen years old, he lived in the fear of God, and in all he undertook he sought

in the welfare of his people, and everything went on well.

But as he had been so successful, he became wilful—his prosperity seemed too much for him; and in his pride he began to over-ride God's laws. God



God's will, guidance, and blessing. That life is sure to be right which puts God first.

He had God-fearing counsellors—one man especially who had the Spirit of God. What he did was well and wisely done. He took a deep interest

in the welfare of his people, and everything went on well. But as he had been so successful, he became wilful—his prosperity seemed too much for him; and in his pride he began to over-ride God's laws. God

servant told him of his wrong-doing which was bringing upon him Divine judgment. He became a leper, and thus there was disgrace, trouble and separation. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

JONAH CAST INTO THE SEA—WHY?

JONAH succeeded Elisha as the messenger of God to the ten tribes. One day God gave to him a solemn message for the people of Nineveh, which he did not like to take. Instead of doing as he was told, he went down to the sea-coast, where he found a ship that was about to sail miles away from Nineveh.

They were heathen and cried to their idols for help. But Jonah was asked, "Arise," said they, "call upon your God, perhaps He can help us." Then they asked him to tell them why all their trouble had come upon them. Jonah said who he was, that he had disobeyed God, and was trying to hide from His presence, and that was why



Jonah having paid his fare, went on board.

The Bible says that the "Lord sent out a *great wind* into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken."

The sailors did what they could to save themselves, and threw all the heavy boxes and sacks into the sea.

had sent this tempest. The best thing for them to do now, was to throw one of them into the sea, and it would then be calm, and they would be able to go on safely.

They cast Jonah overboard! Was he drowned? No—a great whale swallowed him, and in this wonderful prison Jonah was kept three days and three nights!

JONAH AT NINEVEH.

NINEVEH was a great city, with walls a hundred feet high, and fifteen hundred towers, which seemed to defy every enemy. But the people worshipped idol-gods, and did many wicked and cruel things. The prophet Nahum, tells us it was "full of lies and robbers"—he also said it was like a family of lions that filled their holes with prey, and their dens with plunder :

carry—"Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed." Sad news for the children—there were a hundred and twenty thousand of them in the city.

When the people heard Jonah's message, they felt sure from his manner that he was speaking the truth; and they left off their work and pleasure; laid aside their beautiful dresses, and even went without food



for they robbed neighbouring nations that had done them no harm, even putting innocent persons to death.

No wonder that God was angry with them, and sent Jonah a second time to warn them of the punishment which their sins would bring upon them.

Jonah this time did as he was told. It was a terrible message he had to

for a time. They thought of the consequences of their wicked ways to themselves and their children; and they confessed their sin to God. He heard their prayer.

God saw that they were not only sorry but ceased to do evil; and so He spared them and their city; and it was very much for the sake of the many dear children who lived there.

JONAH AND HIS GOURD.

GOD'S kindness to the people of Nineveh made Jonah angry. You would have thought that when he knew the lives of the people, especially of the dear children, were to be spared, he would have been very glad. But no—he was proud and sullen. He liked to have things come to pass just as he said.

He was very angry that such wicked people should be spared; besides, they would call him a false prophet.

This was very selfish. He thought more about his own honour than God's glory.

"I knew how it would be," said he. "It is just like God. I knew He was slow to anger, gracious and merciful; and I was sure it was of no

use my giving His message. That was why I did not go at first."

It is quite true of God that He does not wish anyone to perish; and that He is glad when people turn from their sins that He may spare them.

Jonah went out of the city and made himself a shady bower and sat there to watch for God's word to come to him.

As he sat there, the branches of the bower faded, and they made

little shade for Jonah. God in His kindness caused a gourd to grow up in a night and spread over it, making a freshing shade for the prophet, and Jonah was very glad of the gourd.

But almost as soon as he began to enjoy its benefit, it withered away. The next day a hot scorching wind and sun beat down on him, and he faint and complained that the people were not spared.

God taught Jonah a lesson in this way,

showed him that after caring so much for the welfare of Nineveh, it was very strange that he should trouble himself about a gourd.

God intended Jonah to feel how selfish and ungodlike his behaviour was.



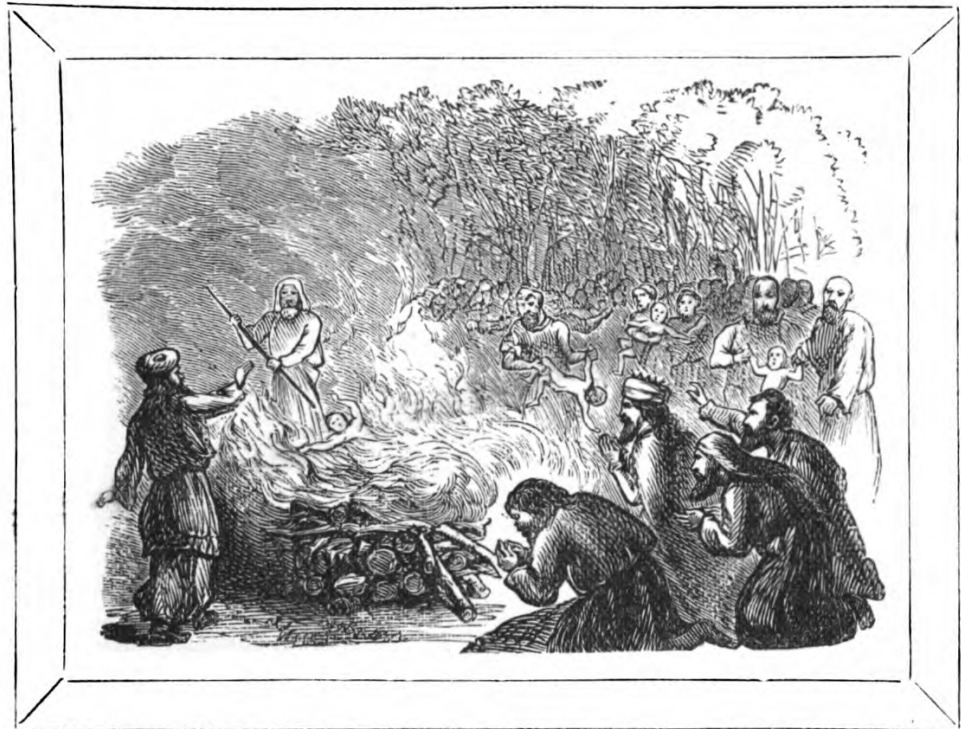
AHAZ, KING OF JUDAH.

WHEN Ahaz became king of Judah, he did not worship the true God in His temple, but offered sacrifices and burnt incense on the hills as the heathen did, and worse than that he threw his son into the fire as a peace-offering to the idol-god, Moloch.

For all this the Almighty punished

to his own and the nation's sins, robbing God's house of its treasure to buy with them the help of the king of Assyria.

But Ahaz was made to feel that the whose idolatry he had imitated, could not give any real help in the time of trouble. There was One, however, who



both him and the people very severely. He allowed the king of Syria and the ten tribes to invade the land and carry away thousands to other lands as slaves. Other enemies, too, came against Ahaz ; but for all this his heart was so hard that he would not return to God, and seek help from Him. No—he added

took pity on the king and his people. He was the Great God whom Ahaz had offended. He sent a promise by Isaiah the prophet that He was ready to pardon the king, if he would—"Cease to do evil : yet learn to do well."

Surely, he listened to this kind loving message?—No.

THE TEN TRIBES TAKEN CAPTIVE

IT is a sad thing to say of any people that they forget God who does so much to make them happy and good. And yet this is true of the tribes of Israel; to whom God had been so kind. They forgot what God did for their fathers in the days of Moses, and Joshua, and Solomon. And worse still,

and lost their land for ever! *Sin all.* It is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God.

The king of Assyria sent some of his own people to live in Samaria and in other places where the Israelites had lived. But they worshipped idols to show them their folly and their



they neglected God's commands against the worship of idols.

They became so wicked at last that God suffered the armies of the king of Assyria to take them out of their own land, to dwell among the heathen. He would not own them any more.

So the princes and the chief men of Israel were torn from their cities—all the ten tribes were carried away captive,

had power which none of their gods had, God sent lions to them. None of their gods could send lions or other living things; they had no life in themselves.

The king was afraid of the lions, so he sent some Israelites back to teach the people how to serve the living God—the God of that land as he called Him.

A GREAT CHANGE.

WHEN Hezekiah became king of Judah, he would not worship idols as his father Ahaz had done ; but he set to work at once to have God worshipped in the temple at Jerusalem. He opened the temple doors and repaired them. He gathered also the priests and Levites, and begged of them

Hezekiah then offered prayer and sacrifices to God, asking Him to turn the hearts of the people.

Sacrifices, offerings, and the worship of God began again, as in old times according to God's command. Hezekiah was glad and happy, not he alone, but all the people.



to work quickly and wisely in clearing away all that was unholy, especially idol-worship. And so, because the people were burning incense before the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, he had it destroyed.

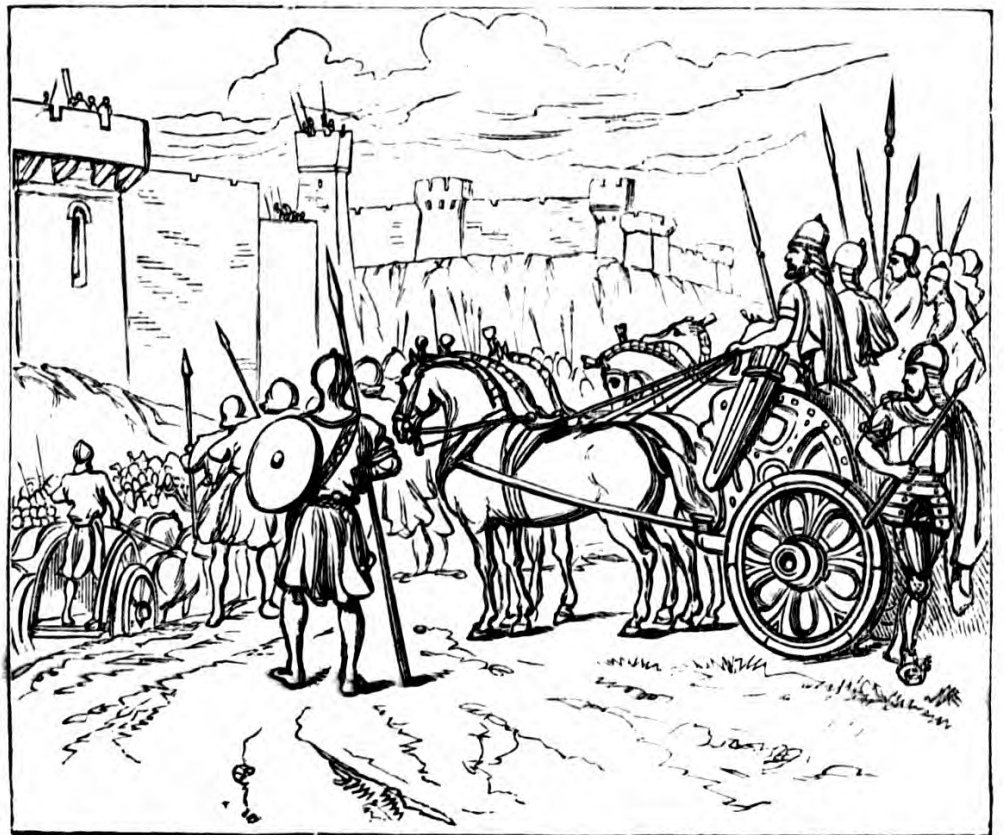
Before a month was over, all things were ready for God's worship. King

glad. While the slain beasts were offered, the trumpets sounded, the people bowed, and worshipped, and praised God. What a great change was from the worship of idols ! He seemed to be in earnest, for the king and the people worshipped the Lord God, lest the evils that had come upon Israel should also come upon

DESTRUCTION OF TYRE.

TYRE was a wonderful city, and strong by situation, trade, and ships. When Jerusalem was overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, the people of Tyre began to rejoice and triumph over its downfall. But this was wrong

supplies from the sea, and so held for a long time. Alexander, however, found a way of getting at it. He made the ruins of the city on the coast, which Nebuchadnezzar had left, and made a causeway to the city on



in the sight of God, and they were punished for it. King Nebuchadnezzar overcame them and destroyed the city, which was forgotten for seventy years. After this, the city, built on an island, became great again. Alexander, 330 years before Christ came, besieged it for seven months; but Tyre obtained

island, and thus Tyre was soon conquered.

The prophet Ezekiel many years before, said that this should happen. The place was utterly destroyed, and a few fishermen inhabit the neighborhood now, who spread their nets to catch fish on the rocks.

HEZEKIAH SPREADS A LETTER BEFORE THE LORD.

WHEN one of the captains of the king of Assyria called upon king Hezekiah to submit to him, he boasted that no nation was strong enough to stand against his armies, and that even Hezekiah's God could not deliver Judah out of *his* hands.

King Hezekiah was very sorry that

telling him not to be afraid, for would help him.

After that, the king of Assyria sent a letter to Hezekiah, telling him that it was of no use to trust in God, for he could not or would not save Jerusalem. Hezekiah opened this letter, spread it before God, in God's house, and



such wicked words should be spoken against the God of heaven and earth—the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He also prayed to God, and sent to the prophet Isaiah to tell him his trouble. Isaiah sent back a message

asked God to answer that letter by his mighty power and help. God answered it. The vast army perished in a single night!

Whenever you have any trouble 'ask it to the Lord in prayer.'

MANASSEH'S SIN AND REPENTANCE

WHEN Hezekiah died, his son Manasseh, who was only twelve years of age, was made king. But he did not serve God as his father had done. He seemed to love evil with all his heart. He reared altars to Baal, worshipped the stars, and profaned God's house by heathen rites.

The people, too, were as wicked as

Prodigal Son. As he sat in his prison, not knowing but that he might soon be put to death, he thought of his home in Jerusalem, of God's house in which his father worshipped, and, best of all, of the Almighty Friend, who alone could help him. He had forsaken God, and now he confessed that he deserved to lose his liberty and his kingdom ;



their king ; and their crimes became so great that at last God allowed an enemy to come against their city. Manasseh tried to hide himself, but he was taken and chained, and sent to Babylon.

This was the best thing that could have happened to him. For he now began to think—to “come to himself,” as is said in the New Testament of the

he earnestly asked God to have mercy upon him, and deliver him. God, who is ready to show mercy even to the worst of men, when they are sorry for their sin, heard Manasseh's prayer, and He inclined the king of Assyria to allow him to return to his own land.

He did not merely *say* he was sorry, but his after conduct proved it.

JOSIAH, THE GOOD KING.

JOSIAH was made king at eight years of age. He loved God, and God loved him, and guided him in the right path very early. He proved that he was on the Lord's side by breaking down the idol-altars that had been built in his father's reign, and destroying all the images that had been set up to be worshipped not only in Jerusalem, but in all

The king said it must be brought him and read to him. When he heard the words of the law, he was filled with shame and sorrow that the word had been so neglected; he rent his clothes to show how grieved he felt that God's law had been broken so often.

Knowing what punishment God threatened against the people



the land. He also repaired the house of God which had been suffered to go to decay.

As the workmen were repairing the temple, they found an old roll of parchment upon which the law was written, which was given through Moses to God's people many years before. Hilkiah, God's servant, sent a messenger to tell the king of its discovery.

obedience, he tried to bring them to repent of their sins. He gathered together a large number of the people in God's house, and read the law to them. When he had finished reading, all agreed that the law should be better observed.

But they did not long keep the promise. Josiah, however, served God with all his heart.

HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS.

ONE day, as Hezekiah lay on his couch very ill, the prophet Isaiah brought a message from God to him in these words: "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live."

Hezekiah was a good man, and was not afraid to die; but he wanted to live a little longer, because he had many

he was commanded to turn back, tell Hezekiah that God had heard prayer, had seen his tears, and would heal him, and add unto his life fifteen years.

God gave a sign that this would come to pass. The shadow went back on the sun-dial of Ahaz the ten degrees.



good works in hand, which he would like to finish for the good of the nation. So he asked God very humbly but very earnestly to make him well again.

God listened to him, and before Isaiah had gone far from the king's chamber,

which it had gone down. In those days everybody used to look at the sun-dial to tell the time; how strange then it must have been to see the shadow move back from figure to figure.

The word of the Lord came to pass. Hezekiah lived fifteen years longer

JEREMIAH THE PROPHET.

JEREMIAH was the son of Hilkiah the priest, who found the book of the law written by Moses. He was very young when he began to preach. When first told that he was to be a prophet to the nations, he said, "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child."

• But God said, "Say not, I am a

hated him, and persecuted him, and even put him into prison. And when they saw the troubles coming upon them of which he had warned them, they said that he was the cause of them.

The prophet was very sad when he saw how little the people cared for God's message. Still he continued to warn them, although many false pr



child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak."

It was wise of Jeremiah not to think too much of himself. Jeremiah began to prophecy in the reign of Josiah, and continued to do so for forty-two years, during the reigns of four kings.

• Jeremiah was faithful, yet the people would not believe what he said, but

phets laughed at his message and told the people it was not true. Jeremiah was so certain that what he said would come to pass that he sat down one day and seemed to fancy he could hear the people, besieged in their city, saying "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." They were not saved, because they would not hearken to God's servant.

THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON.

MANY years ago, four young men— Daniel and his three companions—were carried away as prisoners from their own land. They were Jews; but the city where they lived was taken by soldiers; the walls were broken down; the temple itself and the houses were destroyed and burnt; many of the old men were killed, and others were taken away to be made to work

could not do as those who bowed down to idols. Daniel asked the servant of the king to let him and his three friends have no wine, nor king's meat, but water and some food to eat, and to try them for ten days. Did they look well after the ten days? Yes, God blessed the common food, but He also helped the young men more.



as slaves, far away from their country, but not far away from God.

These four young men were to be fed from the king of Babylon's table daily, for three years. But Daniel and his companions objected to eat the food, though it was said that it would make them strong and good-looking. The fear of God was in their hearts. They

When at length they were called to the king's presence, they were found to be not only fairer and better looking than any of those who had eaten the king's provisions, but they were wiser and more skilful.

Wherever we are placed in God's providence, let us seek to do His will and not to please ourselves.

JEHOIAKIM CUTS AND BURNS THE ROLL.

BOOKS in the times of the kings of Israel and Judah were written on rolls of vellum or parchment, on one side only, and unrolled as the reading went on.

One day the Almighty told Jeremiah to have the words he had spoken written down on a roll and read to the people in His house; for it might

Jeremiah had better hide themselves and not let any one know where they were. They then left the roll in the chamber of the scribe and went and told the king, who sent for it to have it read to him. The king was sitting in a room where was a fire. When he had heard three or four leaves he cut it with a penknife, and then ca



be that when they heard and thought over them they would repent, and He would forgive them. Baruch, the scribe, did as he was told.

When Michaiah heard the words read, he went to all the princes who asked to have the roll brought and read to them. They were afraid when they heard it read, and told Baruch that he and

the roll into the fire till all was burnt. The king commanded that Jeremiah and Baruch should be taken, no doubt meaning to put them to death—but the Lord hid them, and told his servant to write another book with more words, to send to the king again. Jehoiakim made his crime the greater by shutting his ears against God's word.

EZEKIEL IN BABYLON.

THE Jews as captives in Babylon thought themselves to be, and they really were, in a hopeless condition. They never expected to be restored to their own land, and certainly they did not deserve it.

Ezekiel was a captive, and was beginning to despair, when he had a wonderful dream, like a moving picture. He was taken into a valley—not full

No—for he knew the great power of God, and he did not say, Yes. It was the Lord he was speaking to when he said, “O Lord God, Thou knowest, for God only could tell.

The prophet was then told to go to them in God’s name, and bid them to live. God sent the power with his word. There was a noise, and the bones came together, and flesh



of corn, or green grass, or flowers, or stones, but full of bones—dead men’s bones. He walked all round the valley, and noticed two things—that there were very many bones, and that they were very dry—clean, white, and dry. While he was looking and thinking about these bones, a voice spoke to him.

The voice asked a question: “Can these bones live?” Ezekiel did not say,

upon them, and the skin, and a wonderful to say, they stood up as an army.

The Jews deemed themselves men. Their nation seemed hopelessly destroyed. But at the word of the Lord they would be restored.

Ye shall dwell in the land I gave your fathers. I will be your God, though ye be far off, but near; not always punishing, but kind and forgiving.

THE BURNING FIERY FURNACE

NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king once set up a great image; it was many yards high, and stood in a great open space where it could be seen by thousands at once. All the great men of the land came and bowed before it. Crowds of people came also.

What were they all to do? When

Jews did not care for the king's command, and would not serve him nor worship the image.

The king sent for these three. He asked them if what he had said about them was true. Then he told them to be ready when they heard the music to fall down, or, if not, they should be burnt that same hour.



they heard the band strike up all were to fall on their faces and do honour to the idol; and the king declared that any who would not fall down and worship the golden image which he had set up, should be cast into a burning fiery furnace.

Just then some people came to the king and told him that three of the

The three Israelites refused to obey the king's command. They knew that God, who has all power, was with them, and that he could deliver them from the terrible fire.

The fire was made hotter than ever, and the men were thrown in. But Jesus Himself went and saved them. They came forth alive!

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

BELSHAZZAR was a proud and wicked king of the Chaldeans, and although Daniel often reproved him, he continued to sin. A very few hours before his death, at a great feast which he made, he used the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple at Jerusalem. These vessels had been

writing on the wall of the banquet room. The king, as he saw these mysterious words, trembled from head to foot, for his conscience told him that he had done wrong. He asked his wise men to read and explain the writing, but they could not.

The prophet Daniel was sent for. He said the words meant that the king



set apart for God's service and it was sinful to use them for any other purpose.

While Belshazzar and his wicked company boasted and insulted the God of heaven and earth by saying that their idols of wood and stone, of gold and silver, were greater and more powerful than He, a hand was seen

was weighed in the balances and found wanting, and that his kingdom would be taken from him. On that very night Cyrus, king of Persia, took the city, and Belshazzar was slain! If our thoughts, words, and actions are not what the word of God says they ought to be, we are "wanting" in what is right, and must take the consequences.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

WHILE Daniel lived in Babylon, he behaved so well and so wisely that king Darius made him governor over many of the provinces. But some of the chief men were envious of him and wanted to kill him. They could not, however, find anything against him, except that he worshipped his own God, and would have nothing to do with idols.

But Daniel "called on God times a day," as he had always done. When the people saw that he continued to pray to his God, the king that Daniel did not worship, he thought of killing him or his law.

The king was very sorry, and could not find some way for Daniel's escape. He thought very highly of him, but he could not alter the law. And



At last they persuaded the king to make a law—that no man should ask or beg of any god or man, except of the king himself, for thirty days—if any one disobeyed this law he should be thrown into the lions' den. This law was made and signed by the king; and it was intended to lead to Daniel's death.

was thrown into the den of lions, and was torn to pieces, but—

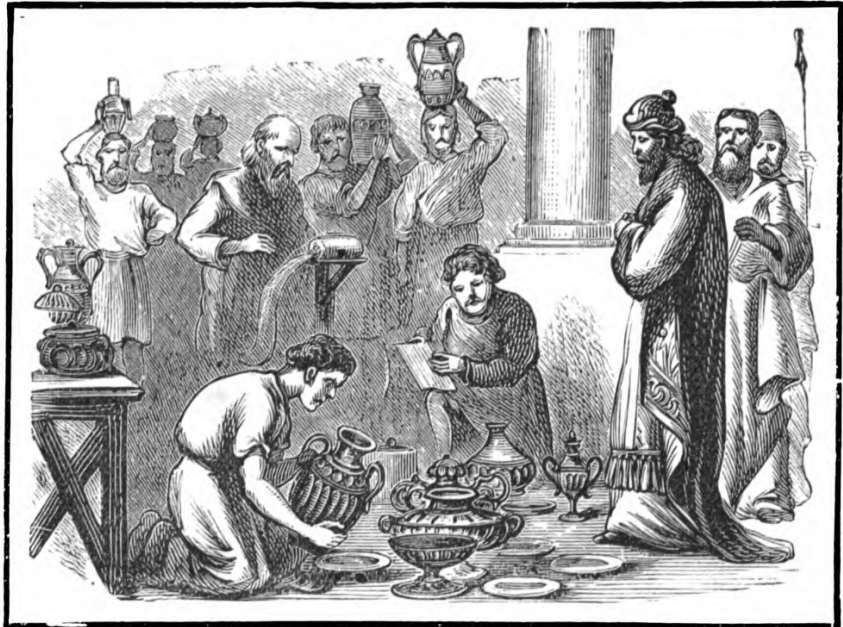
"The hungry lions did not dare to touch the holy prophet, for God had sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths. Be true to God, keep His commands—and He will always help you.

THE TEMPLE REBUILT.

WHEN Daniel and other Jews were in captivity, the city and temple of Jerusalem were in ruins. But God had said by His prophet Jeremiah that, after seventy years, the people of Judah should be sent back with gladness to build up Jerusalem, and to erect a new temple in the place of the one king Solomon

plan for giving the Jews their liberty, and he even owned that God had said years before, what he was to do.

He sent word to the Jews all over the land, whose hearts were set on God's temple and God's worship, to return to their own land, no longer captives, *free*—free to go home; this was good news to many who loved God.



had built. Isaiah also before that had said that Cyrus who would take Babylon, should give the people of Judah free leave to go back to their beloved city, and set about rebuilding the temple.

And it came to pass just as had been said: for as soon as Cyrus obtained possession of the empire he formed a

At his command, presents of gold and silver were sent; and the vessels of the temple, which years before had been carried away, were now restored. How glad the people who loved Jehovah must have been.

How should we learn to trust in God who settles what He will do by His hand.

SMILES AND TEARS—FOUNDATION OF SECOND TEMPLE LAID.

AFTER being amongst idolaters—surrounded by idol-temples, and witnessing the cruel and wicked rites of heathen worshippers—the Jews were glad to return to the city which God had chosen and in which His temple was to be erected.

But how changed the city was! As

Lebanon, floated in rafts to Joppa, thence taken to Jerusalem.

The people rejoiced and praised God. When the ruins of the old temple were cleared away, the day came for the laying the foundation of the new temple, crowds of all classes were gathered together



they unpacked their goods how strange all must have seemed to them; for they had even to set to work to build or repair houses to live in.

Workmen were next engaged to build up God's house. Neighbours were found very ready to help them. As in the time of Solomon, so now, cedar trees were cut down on Mount

Lebanon, floated in rafts to Joppa, thence taken to Jerusalem. The people rejoiced and praised God. When the ruins of the old temple were cleared away, the day came for the laying the foundation of the new temple, crowds of all classes were gathered together. Some shed tears, while others rejoiced for joy. All were happy because the building of the temple was commenced and they hoped soon to see it completed, so that they might praise God as their fathers had done many years.

THE TEMPLE COMPLETED.

NO sooner had the Jews begun to rebuild their temple than the Samaritans tried in many ways to stop their work; and after the Jews had been engaged on the work for about fourteen years, they succeeded in doing so. The king Artaxerxes said that in years gone by the Jews had made mighty kings who had conquered the neighbouring nations. Hence

the chief men of the Jews to rest work. Again their enemies tried to stop it, but in vain. God's eye was upon His people, approving their work, and He put it into the heart of Darius, king of Persia, to order the governors not to disturb the Jews, but to help them with money to go on building the temple; also with cattle, and whatever else they needed for their sacrifices.



to prevent their rising against their conquerors, he commanded that nothing more should be done in rebuilding the city until further orders. So the Jews were obliged to cease working for about three years.

After a while, two prophets of God—Haggai and Zechariah—encouraged

The walls rose higher, and higher, until, at last, all the work was completed, and sacrifices were joyfully offered upon the altar.

How glad the people were to have the privilege of worshipping in the temple again!

ZECHARIAH'S VISION.

GOD showed many things to His servant, Zechariah, in visions,—to enable him to encourage the Jews to go on with the rebuilding of His house; for, on account of the many hindrances they met with, they seemed inclined to give up the work altogether. In this way the Almighty assured him that He would have mercy on Jerusalem—that her enemies should be

ing flowed as oil to the lamps. The olive trees pictured Joshua and Zerubabel—His servants, whom He had set apart to carry out the great work of restoring to His chosen people the privileges they had before enjoyed, and even obtaining for them greater blessings.

God had withdrawn His blessing from the nation on account of their sin.



destroyed—that His house should be rebuilt, and Jerusalem enlarged; in fact, that all difficulties should be overcome.

Our engraving illustrates one of the visions which Zechariah saw. The candlestick represented the Jewish nation whom God had chosen to be the light of the world. The bowl pictured the temple through which God's bless-

and it had become like a candlestick without light. How were they to be made bright and happy again? Only by the aid of God's Spirit.

They were now a very feeble people and might well think that the work was too great for them. But the vision was to teach them that it was not by human might or power that this work could be done, but by the Spirit of God.

ESTHER PLEADING FOR HER NATION

MANY Jews lived in Persia and were very industrious. They prospered so, that Haman, a great favourite of the king, became envious of them, and hated them.

The king had ordered all the servants of the palace to bow down to the ground whenever Haman came near to them. But a certain Jew, named

the upperhand, and become masters of his kingdom.

The king gave him power to send letters in his name to all the governors throughout the land, ordering the Jews to be destroyed, no matter who they were.

Mordecai knew of this, and sent a message to Queen Esther, asking her



Mordecai, would not give to a man the honours which belong to God only; for Haman expected Mordecai to behave towards him as if he were God.

Haman, when he saw that Mordecai did not bow down to him, complained to the king that "a certain people" living all over the country, would not obey the king's laws, and that if they were not put to death they would get

to speak to the king on behalf of her nation. She did not like to do it at first, but when she thought of the danger and distress her own people were in, she said, I will go and ask him to spare them, and, if I perish, I perish. She risked her life to save her country. God, in answer to prayer, had prepared the king to listen to her, and he granted her request.

HAMAN THE PROUD.

HAMAN when he was invited to a feast with the king and queen, boasted about his honours before his wife and friends. But he could not forget Mordecai, who seemed to be in the way of his happiness, and he wished him dead.

Neither Haman nor his wife feared God. His wife advised him to make a

servant. Haman came; he was waiting to ask about hanging Mordecai. The king full of what he had just heard about Mordecai, said to Haman, "What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" Haman thought to himself, No one deserves it so well as I—so he said, "Let the crown royal be placed upon



gallows and ask the king to let Mordecai be hung upon it.

The king for some reason could not sleep that night, so he sent for some one to read to him out of the records of his reign. One thing he was surprised to hear, and it was that Mordecai the Jew had once saved his life. The king asked what honour had been given to Mordecai for this. None, was the reply. The king then sent for a chief

his head, let him be arrayed in royal apparel, and ride on the king's horse, and let one of the most noble of the princes lead him on horseback through the city and proclaim, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.'

Haman was vexed when the king said that Mordecai was the man; but he was obliged to obey, and it was a terrible blow to his pride.

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER.

NEHEMIAH, a pious Jew, was cup-bearer to the king of Persia, and so had the honour of being often in the king's presence. One day when he was waiting on his royal master, he looked very sad; the king asked the reason. Nehemiah told him that he was grieved because he had heard that the chief city of his beloved country was still in ruins.

The king asked what he could do for him. Nehemiah paused for a moment,

and that He could influence the king's heart, and make him willing that Jerusalem should become a fortified city.

Nehemiah asked the king to allow him to go to Jerusalem, and rebuild its walls and gates. The king granted him leave, and he was to fix his time for staying in the city.

He also asked that he might receive help from the governors of the province through which he passed. The



and put up a prayer to God, to enable him to ask of the king the right thing.

Nehemiah had prayed before he spoke to the king of his trouble. He had wept and mourned on account of the sins of his countrymen, which had been the cause of all their suffering.

He knew that God's might and majesty were far greater than

gave him all he asked, together with a letter to the keeper of his forests, telling him to let Nehemiah have a quantity of timber that might be needed.

It was God who inclined the heart of the king to favour him thus.

Like Nehemiah, take all your troubles to the Lord in prayer.

NEHEMIAH'S WORK OF REBUILDING

WHEN Nehemiah first arrived in Jerusalem, he acted wisely, and went about matters very quietly that he might, if possible, avoid opposition. In the night time, he went and looked over all the ruins of the city. There were with him men who walked, while he rode on a mule. And when he had seen what ought to be done, and laid his plans, he called together the chief men of the Jews and advised them at once to build up the

Spiteful, bitter words were uttered, taunts and jeers. Samballat mocked the Jews, saying, "What can such people do? will they revive the stones of the heaps of rubbish that are burned?" While Tobiah, who was standing near, said, "Even that which they build shall be a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall!"

Nehemiah did not answer them, but looked to God for help, for, said he,



wall which surrounded the city. To encourage them, he told them of God's goodness, and of his success with the king.

They were so pleased at the news, that they said at once, "Let us rise up and build." And soon were seen the rich and poor, with pickaxes, spades, and trowels, clearing away the rubbish, and all taking their share of work in building up the broken wall.

have provoked Thee to anger before the builders.

Nehemiah knew that his enemies could not succeed so long as he was on his side. And so trusted in God for strength, the people went on with building; for they "had a name to work."

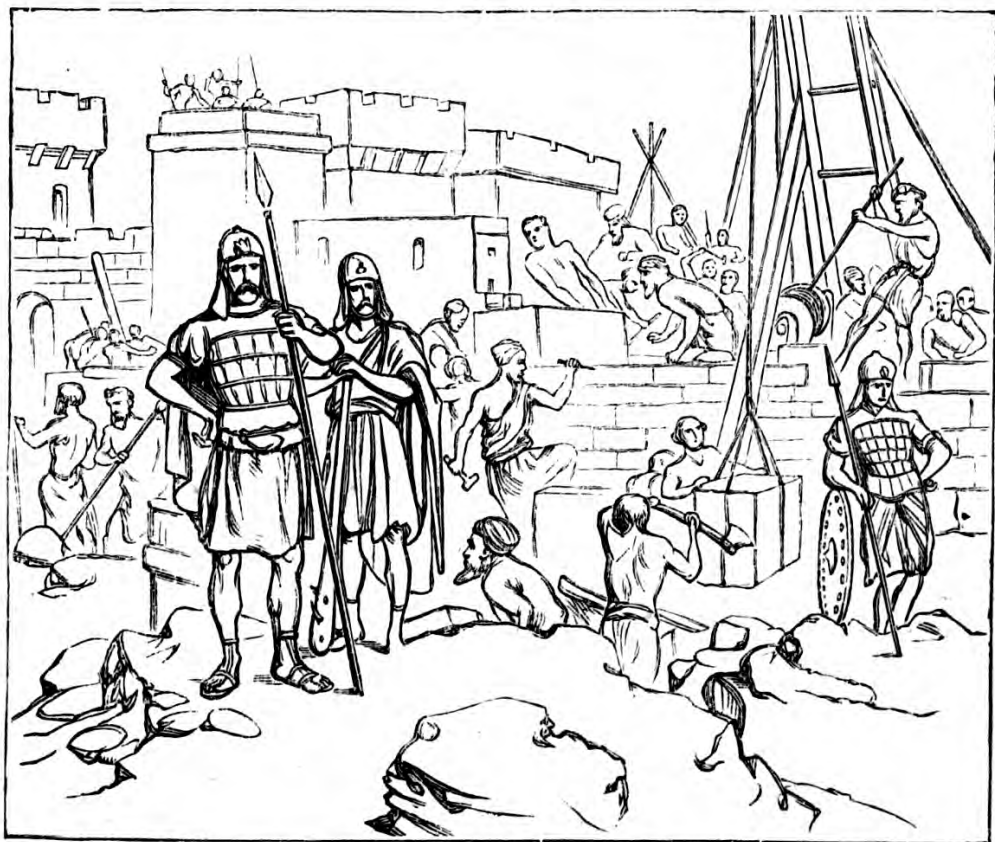
We can do wonders when our hearts are in our work.

THE BUILDERS INTERRUPTED.

JEALOUS enemies formed plans for destroying the walls of Jerusalem. They secretly agreed among themselves to go and fight against the city; and they said, Nobody shall know, nor will they see us, till we come in the midst among them,

watch night and day, so that they might not be attacked unawares.

So the work went on. It was a strange sight to see masons at work with sword and trowel; labourers with spade and sword; but God helped the people; and though they were often



and slay them, and cause the work to cease. But God knew all about their cruel schemes.

Soon Nehemiah heard about it too; and he said to the frightened workers, Be ye not afraid of them; remember the Lord that is great and terrible. And they prayed to God, and set a

troubled and disturbed, they did not cease working till all was finished. Nehemiah was doing the Lord's work, and was successful in it. In less than two months, the wall was complete.

We seek a better city; some would hinder our progress there; but let us not be laughed out of our religion.

A GREAT OPEN AIR MEETING.

AND now we have to tell of a great meeting that was held in the open street at Jerusalem, because probably there was no place large enough to hold the crowd. The people met to hear the word of God read to them, they did not laugh or talk, while

from early morning to midday. I doubt Ezra had some one to help him a little. The people listened attentively, they would not lose a word, and, better still, they thought and prayed over what they heard. Some of them wept. No doubt they remembered how often they



it was being read but they listened eagerly; for some of them had not heard it read for years.

Ezra stood on a pulpit of wood, so that he could be seen and heard. He also explained to the people the meaning of what was read.

No one could say he had no opportunity of hearing, for the law was read

disobeyed God's law, and they confessed that they deserved to be punished, and they were full of joy that God had spared them, and was even now ready to pardon them. It was only a part of God's word the Jews had. We have it all; and can say—

“ Mine to chide me when I rove,
Mine to show a Saviour's love.”

NEHEMIAH AND THE SABBATH BREAKERS

NEHEMIAH being wanted at court by his royal master was absent from Jerusalem for some time. When he came back, he found that the people had shamefully abused the Sabbath; for on that day they made their wine, carried their corn, and bought wares of the Tyrian pedlars who came there.

Nehemiah reproved them all for this

He then ordered that the gates of Jerusalem should be shut from evening before the Sabbath until morning after; and as he could not trust the faithless men who had been the porters at the gates, he set his own people to keep them and see that no one entered with things to sell on the Sabbath.



sin, but especially the nobles, who ought to have used their authority to prevent it. He reminded them that they had suffered so long in a strange land because their fathers sinned in this way; and told them that their conduct now seemed like asking God to punish them again.

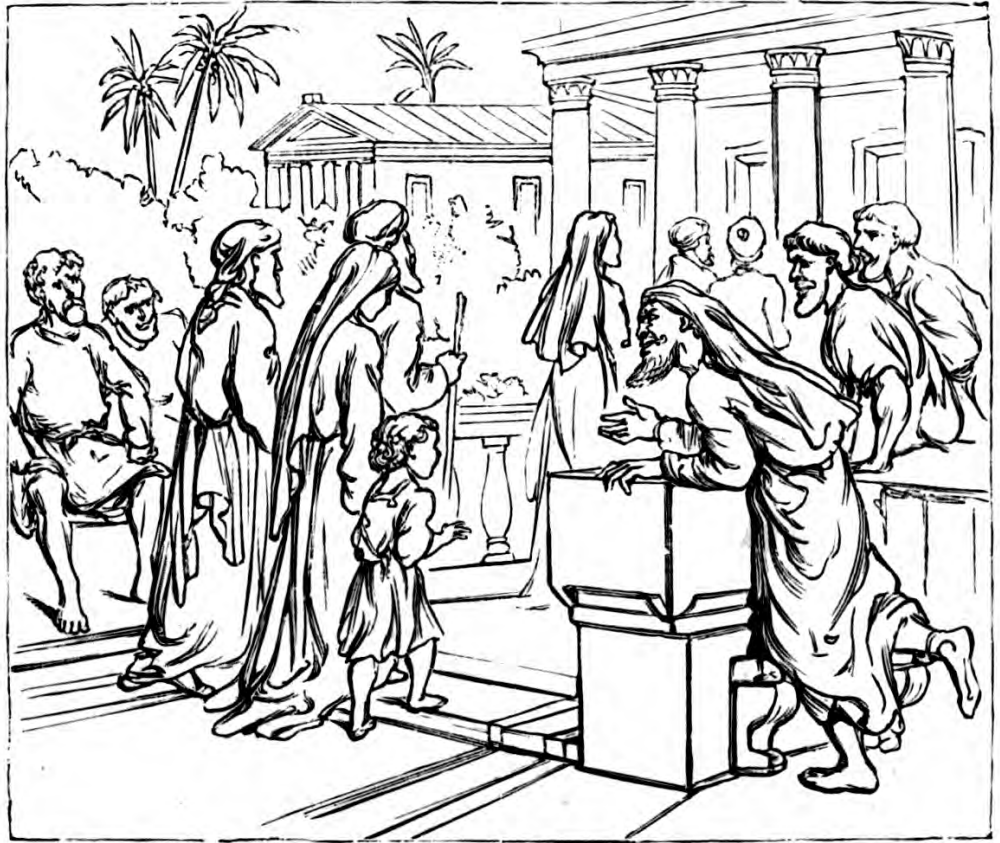
The Tyrian pedlars now were about outside, hoping to entice some to go out and deal with them. Nehemiah was as sharp as they. He said if they did so again, he would put his hands on them. This frightened them, and they did not come any more.

CHOOSE YOUR COMPANIONS WISELY.

GOD our heavenly Father wants us all to be happy, and He tells us in His word if we would be so, what to do, and what to avoid. We are not to make wicked people our companions nor to follow their advice, nor do what they bid, if it is contrary to God's word. We are not to make friends of those who

house, and are trying to obey His commandments.

Avoid the company of such, but do not act proudly; and do not act as if you thought yourselves so very much better than they. Do not treat them as they treat you. Do God's will, however much you may be laughed at for it: and pity a



constantly disobey Him; and certainly not to make companions of those who always scoff at God and His law, and jeer at religion.

See the men in our picture; they are laughing, and jeering at those who love God and go to worship Him in His

pray for those who are too proud to submit their will to His, and who despise His laws and those who keep the

Children sometimes tease one another, and laugh at those who love to go to church or to Sunday school. Do not be one of them.

JOB'S TROUBLES.

VERY many years ago there lived in the land of Uz a good man whose name was Job. He loved and served God. He had ten children and was very rich. He was an upright and perfect man. But there was one who said—Do you think he serves God for nothing? Oh no, said he, he loves God because he has happy children and is rich; take away his treasures and he

that fire from heaven had killed sheep, and the men who were with them; a third hurried to tell him the camels had been stolen and drivers slain; and worse than all that a house where his sons and daughters were was blown down, and all killed. Did Job curse or blame God? No: the Bible says in all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly.



will love God no more; "he will curse Thee to Thy face." God said Satan might try Job, and so he soon brought heavy losses upon him. In one day Job lost almost all he had. First there came a messenger to say that the Sabeans had stolen his oxen and asses, and killed his servants; before that messenger had left, another brought news

He felt it was all meant for his good and could say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord." Job knew he felt that he was dependent upon God and that all true happiness was to be found in Him alone. And he still said—God is good. It was a hard lesson, but Job learned it.

JOB AND HIS FRIENDS.

SOME friends visited Job in the time of his distress, but they were very poor comforters. They tried to make out that his sufferings were a judgment upon him for his sins.

Job said he had not *wilfully* sinned against God. But he would leave it with Him to judge. God spoke to

God approved this conduct—and rewarded Job for the confidence he had placed in Him; while He reproved Job's three friends because they spake of Him the thing that was not right.

Job's brothers and sisters and acquaintances soon visited him again



Job in a wonderful way—in a whirlwind—and soon showed him that he had much to learn, that he was helpless and even sinful in His sight.

When Job thought of what God could do, and how holy He was, he said,—“ I know that Thou canst do everything ; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

and became real comforters, and gave him many presents. Above all, God blessed him with greater wealth than he had at any time before ; and gave him a happy home with seven sons and three lovely daughters. After this Job lived a hundred and forty years. “ Them that honour me, I will honour.”

THE FORGIVEN MADE HAPPY.

KING David more than once broke God's holy law, and did evil in His sight. For a whole year he tried to hide his sins from God, and to forget it himself. But he could not; for it was like a burden which he carried with him wherever he went. He said of it, "My sin is ever before me." It made him truly wretched. His conscience would not let him rest.

was sure that God had forgiven him. He took his harp and praised God, and sang, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven."

When you have disobeyed your parents, your conscience tells you that you have done wrong, and you cannot be happy till you have confessed your fault. It is possible to hide a fault from a parent; but you are none



At last David told God all—owned to what he had done—and asked Him to forgive him. When he had confessed his fault, the burden rolled away like the bundle from Christian's back, which Bunyan tells us of in his *Pilgrim's Progress*; and David felt happy, and

the happier for it. Still less so if you try to hide your sin from God. You cannot do it: He knows all. We all need forgiveness every day; and should daily pray, "forgive us our trespasses." We cannot praise God while our hearts are sad on account of sin.

REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR.

YOU love to think of those who are kind to you. God is kind to you ; kinder than anyone else can possibly be. Then surely you will not forget Him. Remember He made all things. He made you, and gives you food, clothes, home, and friends. Every day there is something to remind you of Him. Because you are young, and

“Twill save you from a thousand snares
To mind religion young.”

That is what the old man in our picture who is watching the children at play would say, if he could speak. Give your heart to God while you are young and he will help you to keep from doing wrong. Little children sin and they need God's help. Think of God as w



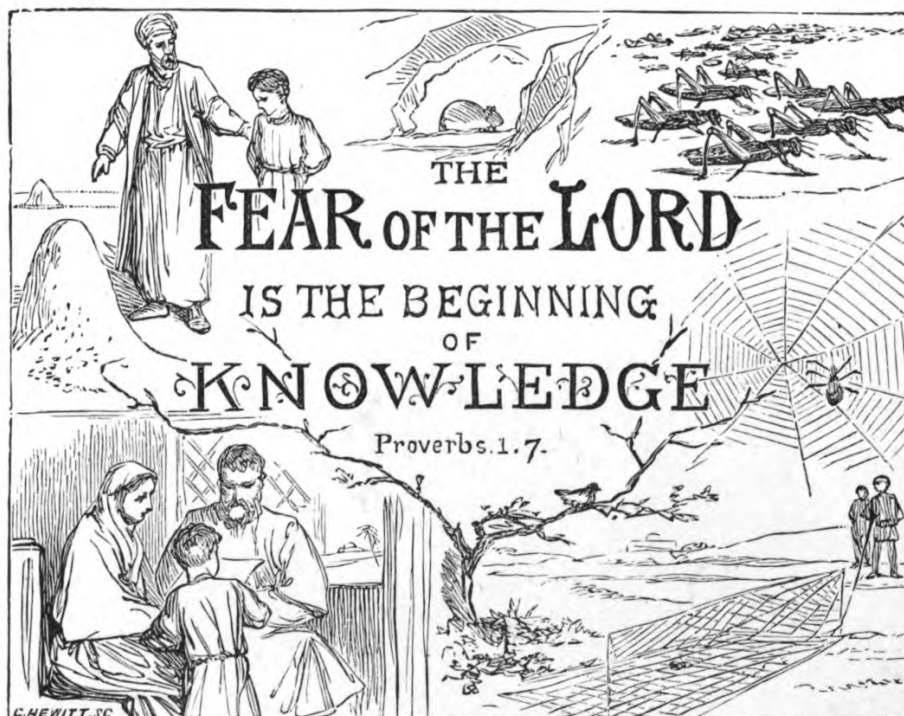
bright, and strong, and happy, and able to do so many things for yourself, you are in danger of forgetting Him to whom you owe all your powers, and that you need His help always. The wise man says, remember Him now : for it is the best time, and it is right that you should give to God your best days—

you everywhere ; as giving you all enjoy. Think of Him in your pleasures as well as in your little troubles. Think of Him above all of what He has done for you and for all the world ; how He has given His Son to die for us, that if we believe in Him we may not perish, but have everlasting life.

LESSONS OF WISDOM.

KING SOLOMON was so wise that people from all the countries around came to listen to his wise sayings. Not only did he teach his own people and the strangers who came to him, but he teaches us even now. It is many years since the people of Israel listened to Solomon's voice,

From the ant to be industrious. From the coney not to trust in your own strength, but to One who is stronger. From the locust to agree together, even though we have no leader. From the spider wisely to use our hands wherever we may be called to live. From the bird and the net, to be always on our guard



yet he still speaks, for he has left some of the wise sayings which God taught him written in a book, so that we may learn from parents or teachers the lessons which he has left for us.

In our picture there are the ant, the coney, the locust, the spider, and the bird and the net. We may learn lessons of wisdom from them all.

against those who would do us harm. It is only the bird who does not see the net being laid that is caught.

Remember above all things that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." No wisdom like it. If we would learn true and useful lessons from the creatures God has made, we must have this wisdom.

THE CALL OF WISDOM.

“MY Son, give me thine heart,” that is the call of Wisdom—what true religion says.

In the proverbs of Solomon we read very much about having the heart right with God, obeying and trusting Him in all things, and of what a good thing true religion is. We find, too, a greater than Solomon calling to us, even Jesus

ever gave his heart that has loved Jesus, too soon.

Samuel said “Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth.” Timothy early loved the Holy Scriptures, and listened to the call of Jesus. Let each search for wisdom’s voice and learn to love God with all the heart. Some give their heart to everything but Jesus



Christ, who says—“Behold I stand at the door and knock.” He is knocking at the door—listening for you to come to Him. Can you hear him? Open your heart to receive Him.

Children cannot begin too early to love Christ; the sooner they find the best of friends the better; the sooner they are happy and ready for every change the better. No child

They have no time for Him : but they are always ready to listen to the call of pleasure which lasts for a day. Children should always have their play and happiness in this alone; they should not prepare for pleasures which last for ever. Wisdom’s “ways are ways of pleasantness” and the sooner you walk in them the better.

MESSIAH'S MESSENGER.

MALACHI was the last of the prophets,—We hear of him a hundred and twenty years after the Jews returned from Babylon and four hundred and twenty years before Christ came. He prophesied of Christ and His herald—John the Baptist, who was to have the spirit and courage of Elijah. Elijah

Christ—to prepare the way before him. Great men used to have their men or heralds going before them to clear the way for them, so Jesus was to be announced to the world by a prophet, and men were to be called upon to hear, believe, and obey, and expect this great Messiah.



was zealous for God—bold in reproving sin—and active in bringing the people back to God and their duty. John the Baptist would preach repentance and reformation as Elijah had done.

He was to be the forerunner of

John the Baptist was to give notice to the people to get ready for the coming of the Lord; to call upon the Jewish nation once more to repent and return to God, from whom they had turned away again so grievously.

