THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON II, FOURTH QUARTER, INTERNATIONAL SERIES, OCT. 11.

Text of the Lesson, II Sam. vii. 4-16. Memory Verses, 8, 9—Golden Text, II Sam. vii. 16—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

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In this remarkable chapter, the whole of which we are asked to study, we have three sections—verses 1 to 3, David's purpose and Nathan's approval; 4 to 17, the Lord's message to David through Nathan; 18 to 29, David's communion with God. As David says in verse 23, Israel was unlike any other nation on earth, inasmuch as God had redeemed them to make them a special people unto Himself, to do great things for them, that through them He might be made known to other nations. "That the world may believe, that the world may know" (John xvii, 21, 23) this is the desire of God as revealed in all Scripture. Whether it be through an individual, as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Daniel, David or any other king, priest or prophet, or through Israel as a nation, or the church as the body of Christ, God desires to reveal Himself in some measure as He fully did in Christ Jesus, and the great question ever is, "Who, then, is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" (I Chron. xxix. 5).

If there is the least leaning to our own understanding there will be failure. It must be the wisdom of God, and that alone, that does so (v. 5). In our last lesson we saw how the wisdom of David and all his counselors only brought trouble, but as soon as they obeyed God all went well with them. Now, David has a suggestion which concerns itself also to the prophet Nathan, who says to David, "Go, do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee" (verse 3), but neither the king nor the prophet had the mind of God. The former received as our lesson gives us the mind of God as revealed to Nathan and through him to David, which both accepted as soon as they knew it. At this day the church is full of plans which she is laboring to work out and which may prove only wood, hay and stubble (I Cor. iii, 11-15) because they are like David and Nathan attempting to build a temple without seeking first to know the mind of God. The building of a temple was all right and commendable to pass in God's time and way, and the Lord actually gave David the pattern of it by His spirit (I Chron. xxviii, 11-19), but now David must have something more important, and God and the message of God through the prophet is, "The Lord tells thee that He will make thee an house" (v. 11) and thy throne shall be established forever (verses 11, 16). So David is told, to his great surprise, of an everlasting kingdom, and a king, the one who shall reign forever. In other words, David is told that the seed of the woman who is to bruise the serpent's head, the seed of Abraham who is to bless all nations, is to be his seed also and all upon his throne.

That David so understood it (see verse 19, and compare with it Luke i, 32, 33) we read that he went in and sat down before God and sought to learn more of the truth of God concerning the flesh. He would rather sit on the throne of God than sit on his own throne. See the prayer by the prophet David by the mighty names to be used (v. 7, 8, 9, 22, 23, 26, 27; Exod. xxxiii, 12, 17; Isaiah ix, 6, 7; Zech. xxxiii, 12, 17; Luke i, 32, 33. See also in Matt. i, 1; and Rev. xxii, 16, the Lord Jesus is one of the tribe, related, and kin to David, in Isa. lxiii, 8, 7, prayer is the fulfilling of the covenant with Israel, and to be fulfilled. When the Lord Jesus comes in humiliation the shadow has already been at hand. Israel, the people to whom He came (v. 23), and determined to fill it (v. 24), then taught them that it should be postponed till they (Luke xix, 11-15). He fulfilled it in his life and left it to us in his return because they (Matt. xxiii, 39) refused their deliverer (Matt. xxiii, 37). Our lesson is not the way of salvation, but of Christ, and of His relation to the church, and of the church for future glory.

If any object to the word in verse 14, "If he commit iniquity," as not being applicable to Christ, it may interest such to know that Bishop Horsley translates the passage, "Upon which is laid upon him," and Dr. Clarke reads it, "In suffering for iniquity." It is Christ, according to Isa. liii, suffering for Israel's and for our sins. Horsley translates the last clause of verse 19, "And this is the ordinance about the Man." Luther has written upon this verse: "Thou speakest of an eternal kingdom in which no man can be king. He meet the God and Man, for he is to be My Son, and yet he is to be King forever." Let Bible Christians consider well the three unconditional covenants of Scripture made by God with Noah and Abraham and David, and may the comfort that came to David come to all such, "Although my house be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure" (II Sam. xxiii, 5). The comfort is found in the faithfulness of God notwithstanding all our unfaithfulness. See I Cor. i, 9; x, 13; I Thess. v, 24. Concerning all the promises to us as children of God and joint heirs with Christ, by virtue of His precious blood, let our hearts say as David said, "Thou, O Lord God, hast spoken it: * * * Do as Thou hast said" (verses 29, 25). But let us not think, as many do, that God will do otherwise than He has purposed, and that to think out a seemingly good plan and then seek God's blessing upon it is all that is necessary. God Himself must ordinate it or all will be vain. Let us have free walk with Him (Amos iii, 3).

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THE ROAD PROBLEM

SHOULD UNCLE SAM ASSIST IN HIGHWAY BUILDING?

Some Views of Prominent Men For and Against the Improvement of Roads in the Rural Districts by Government Aid.

In view of the large prominence recently assumed by the movement for federal aid in road building a number of prominent men in different sections have been asked to briefly state their views on the question. From these statements it will be seen that it is decided by the prevailing opinion it is time for Uncle Sam to take a hand in the work of road making.

President Williams, of the National Good Roads association, speaking from the standpoint of a road expert, advocates of national aid, says:

Data in regard to the different states take hold of the road improvement question with more or less zeal. Some local funds with which to start the work they cannot get from the federal government to come and do a lot of money from their others. But if the people show a disposition to help themselves and to secure proper state legislation I believe the federal government will come to their aid.

Senator Latimer of South Carolina, who is a good deal of an enthusiast on this question, says:

I will tell you why we have not had any government aid in building roads during the last seventy-five years. It is because we have had no congress men who had to ride. They not little school in the interest of roads. They have the horses and cross improved. What we want is to have the principle of government aid recognized. We want the government to appropriate a small part of the money it expends in improving the roads in the Dakotas. We have a great deal of the Dakotas, but we have not got the money to do good work. We want the government to come and help us