

How few persons sufficiently take into account the demands which are made on the blood to supply the rapid growth of a child. How often do we see them, as they advance in years, get thin, weak, and pale, though complaining little, they still fail and losing their appetite, they become dull, weak, and easily wearied. These combined symptoms are best told by themselves in their own language: "I am so tired."

DR. BAXTER'S CHALYBEATE has served such cases too well to doubt its efficacy. Sept. 18.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N. S., OCT. 2, 1872.

THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1872.

DANIEL AND HIS TIMES.

SUNDAY, October 6th, 1872.

The Captives in Babylon.—Psa. cxxxvii. 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Daniel ix. 16.

SCRIPTURE SELECTION.—Isaiah xlii.

SUMMARY.—The Jews when in captivity remember the blessings they enjoyed in their own land. When sorrow comes men value the blessings connected with religious fellowship and the worship of God more than in prosperity.

ANALYSIS.—(1.) The nature of the Babylonian intercourse with the Jewish captives, 1-3. (2.) The resolution of the Jews towards Jerusalem, 4-6. (3.) A prediction of the destruction of the heathen cities Edom and Babylon.

EXPOSITION.—Introductory.—With this lesson we begin the studies of the last quarter of the year. We need now to recall the work of the three months preceding. It will be remembered that the last two lessons took us to Jerusalem, and the last lesson was entitled, "Judah carried captive." 2 Kings 24 and 25; 2 Chron. 36. The studies on which we now begin take us to Babylon, among the captives, and very fitly is this first one general on the state of the captives.

Verse 1.—This presents to view two places, and two opposite feelings corresponding. The two places, Babylon and Zion; the two feelings, aversion and longing, and a third resultant feeling, profoundest sorrow. The exiles hated Babylon, the land of their enemies, of their conquerors, of their masters, of their servitude, of their shame; they loved Zion, the land of their birth, of their fathers, of sacred associations and memories, of fondest hopes, of liberty, religion, and promise.

We do well here to pause and note some general facts as to the captivity, which will make more clear this verse, and the rest of the Psalm, as well as the lessons to follow.

1. The place of captivity.—Says Milman, History of Jews, "Nothing could present a more striking contrast to their native country than the region into which the Jews were transplanted. Instead of their irregular and picturesque mountain city, crowning its unequal heights, and looking down into its deep and precipitous ravines, through one of which a scanty stream wound along, they entered the vast square and level city of Babylon, occupying both sides of the broad Euphrates, while all around spread immense plains, which were intersected by long, straight canals, bordered by rows of willows. How unlike their national temple, a small but highly finished and richly-adorned fabric, standing in the midst of its courts on the brow of a lofty precipice, was the colossal temple of the Chaldean Bel, rising from the plain with its eight stupendous stories or towers, one above the other, to the perpendicular height of a furlong! The

palace of the Babylonian kings was more than twice the size of their whole city. It covered eight miles, with its hanging gardens built on arched terraces, each rising above the other, and rich in all the luxuriance of artificial cultivation." "The rivers" mentioned in the Psalm may include the Euphrates, Tigris, Chebar—Ezekiel 1: 1; Ulai, and their tributaries. It is said the willow does not now grow by these rivers; but if not, it may have grown there formerly.

2. The nature of the captivity.—The captivity here in question is usually called the second. The captivity of Israel, more than a century previous, is called the first. Says W. T. Bullock, in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, "The captives were treated, not as slaves, but as colonists. There was nothing to hinder a Jew from rising to the highest eminence in the state (Dan 2: 48), or holding the most confidential office near the person of the king (Neh. 1: 11). The advice of Jeremiah (Jer. 29: 5) was generally followed. The exiles increased in numbers and wealth. They observed the Mosaic law (Esther 3: 8). They kept up distinction of rank among themselves. (Ex. 20: 1). They preserved their genealogical tables, and were at no loss to tell who was the rightful heir of the throne. The rite of circumcision and their laws respecting food, etc." were observed. Their priests were with them (Jer. 29: 1); and possibly the practice of erecting synagogues in every city (Acts. 15: 21) was begun by the Jews in the Babylonian captivity." This very clear and fair statement shows that the wretchedness of the condition was not found in oppression, but in the fact of exile for sin from their own land, and subjection to a heathen and hated power. The motive of Nebuchadnezzar in transplanting the Jews was in part, doubtless, to make easy his control over them, and in part, perhaps, to build up the home country, and so augment his own glory.

3. The duration of the captivity.—Seventy years was the predicted duration, Jer. 25: 12; 2 Chron. 37: 21; Lev. 26: 27-35. The captivity was virtually ended B. C. 536, when Cyrus issued his decree of liberty. Ezra 1: 2. To make exactly seventy years, the beginning would have been B. C. 606. The two main transportations were not until a few years after the latter date; but Daniel, according to the more obvious meaning of his words, makes one as early as B. C. 607. Dan. 1: 1, 2. This period covered two generations of men, though of the forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty who are said by Ezra to have returned (Ezra 2: 64), some had most likely been in the first company that was torn away from Jerusalem.

4. The termination of the captivity.—It was due, under God, to Cyrus, as we have seen. Cyrus was a Persian, and made war against Babylon, and overcame it after a siege of two years. His victory, however, was by a stratagem. He turned the river from its course by canals, and in the night, when the king and the whole city were securely carousing, Cyrus and his army entered by the bed of the river, took possession of the city, and gave to the sword defenseless multitudes. The city was subsequently destroyed utterly, according to the prediction of Jeremiah. Jer. 50-52. It is now a perfect waste. Rawlinson writes: "The great city, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, has emphatically become heaps." Jer. 51: 37. Her walls have altogether disappeared; they have "fallen" (51: 44), been "thrown down" (50: 15) been "utterly broken" (51: 58). "A drought is upon her waters" (50: 38), for the system of irrigation on which in Babylonia fertility altogether depends, has long been laid aside; "her cities" are everywhere "a desolation" (51: 43), her "land a wilderness," "wild beasts of the desert" (jackals) "lie there," and "owls dwell there." The natives regard the whole site as haunted, and neither will "the Arab pitch tent, nor the shepherd fold sheep there." So exactly does God fulfil his word. And the reason of his destruction of that nation was the reason that the Jews were carried captive.

How natural and graphic the expressions, "rivers of Babylon" "sat down," as tokens of sorrow and grief. Esther 4: 3; Job 2: 8. "We wept," strong men showing the depth of sorrow. "When we remembered," more natural from one carried away from Jerusalem, and that in mature life, rather than from one born in Babylon. The attachment to country is with most men very strong; with the Jews particularly strong. What a judgment, that for the centuries since the crucifixion

they have been wandering, suffering exiles! Does not God rule nations?

Verse 3.—The Babylonians were highly civilized, and exceedingly fond of music and skilled in it, it would seem. Dan. 3: 5; and they wished to hear the music of the new comers. Not necessarily, or probably in derision, but in curiosity. "Songs of Zion," such as they sang in their worship at home, especially, on feast days. Such as we have in the Psalms of David, and others. Sweet songs, too little sung or chanted in our worship—displaced by the hymns of uninspired poets.

Verse 4.—"How shall we?" Impossible! The occasion, the place, everything forbids. As well sing a love-song for a battle hymn, as "the Lord's song" among heathen, the Lord's enemies.

Verse 5.—Notice the address. He speaks to Jerusalem, his mother, his beloved—"forget thee, O Jerusalem." What mighty love swells out in those words, what vehemence of devotion. What holy fire of passion. Forget thee? perish the thought; nay, perish myself, if that might be. "Right hand," because that is the work-hand, the music-hand, and by habit, seems to do of itself: so that if that were to forget ("its cunning," not in the original), it would bespeak the total loss of memory or sense.

Verse 6.—"Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," never again to utter speech. Let me say nothing, if I have no heart to speak of my love of Zion. "Jerusalem above my chief joy." See margin of the Bible. So would that we might think of our Jerusalem, the church, the heavenly city, the home of the soul, the light of our life, the seat and centre of our worship. Affection ought thus to centre with strength in Jesus and his people, and his church, and his heaven.

Verses 7-9.—No verses in the Bible have given more offence to men. They have been denounced as savage and damnable. But we must remember that the Psalmist speaks not in his own, but in God's name, and that he expresses in language, which the facts of the day gave him, the Divine approbation of the destruction of those who wickedly came up against Jerusalem. The fact is, God did destroy those nations thus, and if it was right for him to do it, it was right for him, through his servant, to express beforehand his approval of the doing. These verses are not meant to encourage cruelty, either in war or peace.

"Edom," the kingdom of Esau's descendants which joined Nebuchadnezzar in the siege of Jerusalem. See 49: 7-22. "Remember," i. e. to punish. "Daughter of Babylon," i. e., the people. The Bible here warns us of the wrath to come. The present condition of Babylon assures us that Scripture contains no idle threats.—Condensed from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 71.

SUNDAY, Oct. 13th.—Daniel's Temperance Society.—Dan. i. 8-17.

Youths' Department.

"TELL JESUS."

BY REV. H. S. SHAPLEIGH.

John the Baptist had devoted followers. They loved and trusted him. He was the foundation of their hopes; and their interests seemed inseparable from his person. But suddenly there was a change. They saw their master cast into prison, murdered, buried, and when all was over "they went and told Jesus." They came from the grave of their dead master to Christ.

The experience of these disciples in some respects represents human experience now. It was not until the burial of their master that they had anything to tell Jesus. As long as we have other masters than Christ they will absorb our attention and draw us away from the Sinner's Friend. We shall go to them for comfort and make them our support.

God often takes away our masters and leaves us nothing here to which we can cling. Providence works to bring man into communion with his Maker; and whenever we need sympathy the gentle command is heard, "Go and tell Jesus." When all other masters have been buried, Master even Christ, then we can go to him.

But John's disciples went to him personally. They saw his face and heard him speak. This we cannot do. And yet Christ is present. He says, "I am with you always." We have his spiritual presence. "God with us." He is with us only when he can be our Master, when we can be his servants. The Christian then is

never alone, never without some one to whom he can tell his heart. And communing with his Saviour now in spirit, he looks forward to that time when he shall "see him face to face."

SOCIAL WINE-DRINKING--A CRUSHING RETORT.

At an ecclesiastical meeting, wine-drinking came under discussion. Some favored it—some condemned. At length an influential member made a vehement speech in its favor, denouncing opposers as fanatics. When he had ended, a layman asked permission to speak. "Moderator," said he, "it is not my purpose to reply to all that you have just heard. My object is humble and practical. I know a father, who was at pains and sacrifice to educate a son at college. There he became dissipated; but, after he returned to his home, its genial influences, acting upon a generous nature, reformed him. I need not tell you that that father rejoiced.

"Well, years passed. The young man completed his professional studies, and was about to leave home to enter upon his life-work, when, in an evil hour, he was invited to dine with a neighboring clergyman, noted for his hospitality. At dinner, wine was introduced—was offered to that young man—was refused; was offered again, again refused. He was then laughed at for his singularity. He could withstand appetite—ridicule he could not. He drank—he fell. From that time he became a drunkard, and long since has gone to a drunkard's grave!

"Moderator," continued the old man, with streaming eyes, "I am that father; and he who just addressed you—it was he that ruined that son!"—American Messenger.

EASTERN BEDS.

The beds of the poorer classes in India and other Eastern lands are nothing more than quilts wadded with cotton, so large as to enable the sleeper to wrap part of his bed round him whilst he lies on the rest. A pillow is sometimes used, made of fine cane-matting, stretched over a light framework of bamboo, hollow, and open at the ends.

In Syria it is often only a strip of carpet, which can be easily rolled up; the end portion is left unrolled to form the pillow.

Such beds can be easily washed and dried again; and can be rolled up like a bundle of flannel, and carried away by their owners under their arms.

The fashion and form of these beds will enable us to understand these two texts of Scripture: "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it" (Isa. 28: 20). "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk" (John 5: 8).

There were, however, "beds of ivory" (Amos 6: 4), and beds or bedsteads "of gold and silver." (Ezra. 1: 6).—Day Spring.

STANDING IN THE MARKET.

The old Eastern habits remain much the same as in Bible-times. A European traveller, in narrating a visit to the market, says:

"Here we observed, every morning, before the sun rose, that a numerous band of peasants was collected, with spades in their hands, waiting to be hired by the day, to work in the surrounding fields. This custom struck me as a most happy illustration of our Saviour's parable, particularly when, passing by the same place late in the day, we found others standing idle, and remembered His words, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' as most applicable to their situation, for on putting the very same question to them, they answered us: 'Because no man hath hired us.'"—Exchange.

CENTENARIAN LONGEVITY.

SIR DUNCAN GIBB, in a paper read before the British Association on "Centenarian Longevity," makes some very interesting statements, derived from a comparison of four examples he had seen himself. Of these four, two were one hundred and three, one one hundred and one, and one one hundred and two years old. Mr. Gibb found these peculiarities in their bodily constitution:

1. The lungs performed their functions perfectly in every case.
2. The blood was well circulated by a strong heart to all parts of the body.

3. The chest was well formed, and of fair size. The cartilages of the ribs were not ossified.

4. The voice was clear, sonorous, and powerful, though tremulous in two cases.

5. The heart was healthy, and free from fatty deposits.

6. The eyes were good, and the sight excellent in every case, and no sense except hearing was impaired.

7. None smoked, chewed, or snuffed tobacco.

8. The mind was active, and the memory good.

9. The digestion in each case was excellent, and the teeth sound.

10. In each case the mind had been throughout life composed and free from care and distress.

The lesson drawn from these cases is this: that if people wish to live in health a hundred years, they must have sound bodies and take care of them. In other words, the body must receive that intelligent attention it deserves, and people must read and study the laws of hygiene in order to obey them.—Herald of Health.

A DOUBTFUL STATEMENT.

Dr. Winter in writing to the National Baptist, says:

Mr. Editor:—In a recent article of one of your contemporaries (a very good article, too), the writer says: "It is not very difficult to be a Christian in the prayer-meeting or in the church on the Sabbath." I must take leave to differ from this position of the gifted writer. However well meant it may be, I regard it as "an untenable position." Those who have the least of the Christian everywhere else, find the most difficulty in being Christians, or appearing to be such, in the "church," and especially so in the prayer-meeting. It is not difficult for one, professing to be a Christian, if a man of parts, and gifted with a free tongue, and possessing a good measure of knowledge, to make himself quite prominent among his more modest brethren, by his well-wordsed prayers and his fluent oratory. In this way he may make himself a very leading brother. Men may wait for him. But if he be not Christian in his heart; if in the family, and out in the world, he have but little of the Christian spirit, and less of Christian circumspection, it will be no easy thing, supposing him to have a conscience, just for the occasion to put on the garb of Christian sanctity and devoutness. Or, should persistent habit make it somewhat easy to himself, it will be barely possible for him to appear in the estimation of his fellow-worshippers quite as unexceptionable as he does in his own. To appear to be what we know we are not, whether in the prayer-meeting or elsewhere, requires a strong effort. Certainly it is not "easy."

He only finds it easy to be a Christian in the prayer-meeting who is a Christian everywhere else. Of all places in the world, he is there at home. He is there ready, with modest and unaffected Christian feeling, to do his part. And, whether in prayer or in exhortation, the words are "fitted to his lips." He has, more or less, "an unction from the holy One," and all bear witness to him that he walks with God. It is easy for a Christian, who is such in truth and everywhere, "to be a Christian in the prayer-meeting or in the church on the Sabbath." I doubt if the same can be as truly or as safely said of those who are Christians only there.

CONSCIENCE.

WHEN a very little boy, I remember reading of a child who was in the habit of going to an upper room or loft where there was a store of apples, but as she went from time to time to steal these apples, she met with something that greatly troubled her, for there happened to have been placed in that store-room an old oil-painting. It was a large face, the eyes of which, go to what part of the room the little girl might, seemed to follow her; and they appeared to be saying to her, as she stooped down to take up the apples: "Ah! I see you. It is very naughty. I'll tell upon you. You are sure to be found out!" Well this so annoyed the little girl from time to time, that she was determined to put a stop to this speec'hifying of these two great staring eyes; so she got a small knife, or a pair of scissors, and struck them out. Ah! but there were still the two large holes in place of the eyes, and she never could look at them without thinking of the eyes; and what they used to say to her. She had put out the eyes, but she had not, nor could she, get rid of her conscience. Moreover the very means she had adopted for sinning without rebuke only served to discover her guilt; for when what had befallen the painting came to be found out, it led to such inquiries as at the last to reveal the whole facts.—Episcopalian.