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THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1872.

JESUS, AFTER HIS ASCENSION.

SUNDAY, March 3rd, 1872.

To the Church of Laodicea,—Rev. iii. 14-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me.

SCRIPTURE SELECTION.—2 Corinthians vii.

SUMMARY.—A lukewarm self-satisfied condition of christian people and christian churches is distasteful to Christ, and requires repentance as much as a state of wickedness.

ANALYSIS.—1. The character of Christ as given by himself. vs. 14.

2. (a) The condition of the church. vs. 16. (b) Their own estimate in contrast with that of Christ. (c) The remedy. vs. 18, 19.

3. (a) Christ's self-sacrificing love to the weak believer. vs. 20. (b) The glory and blessing in reserve for the penitent.

EXPOSITION.—Laodicea was on the river Lycus not far from Colosse, and between it and Philadelphia. It was destroyed by an earthquake A.D. 62, and subsequently rebuilt by its citizens. Its wealth arose from its trade in wool. It is now a deserted place called by the Turks Eski-hissar, (Old Castle.) There were two or three other cities formerly called Laodicea, and some doubt has existed whether one of these was not the city mentioned; but the nearness of this one to the other "Churches of Asia" leads to the conclusion, that this was the city in which the said church existed.

The epistle to the Colossians appears to have been written to this church as well as to that, Col. iv. 16. This city has been celebrated in church history. A general Council was held here in A. D. 361 at which the canon of Scripture was determined.

14. "The Amen."—The truth. This in the New Testament is equivalent to "As I live" in the Old. It can be used only by the Son of God. He would not change and waver in his purpose. Hence it was appropriate to use this term in speaking to these vacillating Laodiceans. It has been supposed that Archippus, Col. iv. 17 was the angel here spoken to, and that he was a son of Philemon.

14. "Faithful and true Witness," Trustworthy and competent to testify in consequence of seeing with his own eyes. Christ was "the beginning of the creation of God" or as in Col. i. 15-18, the beginner of all creation.

15. "Cold" meaning more than without warmth; icy cold and dead as the world outside, who had never belonged to the church. Their lukewarm state was not a transitional condition, but a settled habit of life from which they had no inclination to depart and seek any other. There would be more prospect of restoring to spiritual life and energy those who were without hope.

"Hot" fervent. They had been brought near the source of warmth and fervency, but had not been warmed into healthful activity. They were as if "halting between two opinions." 1 Kings xviii. 21. 2 Kings xvii. 41; Matt. vi. 24. "Either cold or hot" would be a more acceptable condition.

16. "Lukewarm" water is used to produce vomiting, and has no stimulating or refreshing power. A righteous loathing would follow which would result in their rejection, as in the case when the people of Canaan were driven from their country because of their abominations, and mixing up the worship of God with their idolatries.

17. Self-sufficiency is the common attendant of a lukewarm state of feeling. Their riches were not held by them as if they were stewards; but as if they were the sole and rightful owners who had obtained it by their own efforts, and were to do with it just as they saw fit. "I have need of nothing" They saw not their real condition, their riches would not confer upon them continued happiness or save them from eternal ruin.

18. "Buy;" not that their money could procure for them the hidden treasures. Their riches were not the pure gold "tried in the fire. It was but as counterfeit coin; but giving that up they would have the true riches and the real clothing, "white as wool."

Laodicea was famous for its wool, Col. iii. 10-14. The hypocrite's character may sometimes be discovered here. It will certainly be at last "Eye-salve" or a roll of ointment to anoint their eyes. In the East the eyes are more subject to disease than in these more northern and western climates. The eye is in this place used for the conscience; which perceives for the mind.

Notice that in this church and that of Sardis there is no mention of any outward enemies or foes in the church. All were probably chargeable with the same faultiness. They were at peace but it produced stagnation and pride.

19. "As many as I love," not that they had anything lovely in themselves, but they would be made so by the chastening given, Job 5, 17; Hebrews xii. 5, 6. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11-13. Love would be to them the source of affliction. This too would develop the true believers and the false professors. The scourging would bring the former closer to the merciful Saviour. "Zealous" change to a warmer zeal, and more of real life and service. "Repent" sorrow and change of habit and life.

20. "I stand." What condescension! "knock" Sol Song vs. 2. Love to men has been exhibited by God taking the most earnest forms of entreaty, and the lowest humiliation. He first knocks at the door of our hearts before we feel inclined to knock at his door. Sol Song v. 4, 6 "My voice," He not only knocks but enters. Not perhaps audibly, but by the still small voice of the Spirit. "If any man hear" is equivalent to receiving the message. John vi. 44. "I will come in" as a sympathizing friend, and hold fraternal relationship. John xxi. 9-13.

21. "Sit with me,"—What a change from the threat in vs. 16. Instead of being condemned his repentant servants shall be princes, and participate in his government. 1 Cor. vi. 2.

There is order in the promises given in these seven letters to the churches. Corresponding with the historical development of the church. In this letter it is a condition of conquest and glory; the crowning of the whole.

Trench notices this order as follows:

"To the faithful at Ephesus. (1) the tree of life in the Paradise of God is promised (ch. 2, 7), answering to Genesis, 2. (2.) Sin entered the world and death by sin: but to the faithful at Smyrna it is promised, they shall not be hurt by the second death (ch. 2. 11.). The promise of the hidden manna (ch. 2. 17) to Pergamos (3) brings us to the Mosaic period, the church in the wilderness. (4.) That to Thyatira, viz., triumph over the nations (ch. 2. 26. 27), forms the consummation of the kingdom in prophetic type, the period of David and Solomon characterized by this power over the nations. Here there is a division, the seven falling into two groups, four and three, as often, e. g., the Lord's prayer, three and four. The scenery of the last three passes from earth to heaven, the church contemplated as triumphant, with its steps from glory to glory. (5.) Christ promises to the believer of Sardis not to blot out his name out of the book of life, but to confess him before His Father and the angels at the judgment day, and clothe him with a glorified body of dazzling whiteness (v. 4, 5). To the faithful at Philadelphia (6.) Christ promises, they shall be citizens of the new Jerusalem, fixed as immovable pillars there, where city and temple are one (v. 12); here not only individual salvation is promised to the believer, as in the case of Sardis, but also privileges in the blessed communion of the church triumphant. (7.) Lastly, to the faithful of Laodicea is given the crowning promise, not only the two former blessings, but a seat with Christ on His throne, even as He has sat with His Father on his Father's throne (v. 21).

QUESTIONS.—Tell something of Laodicea as it was. And of its subsequent history. And its present condition. What significance is there in the names here given to Christ? Why "the Amen"? What is the import of the beginning of the creation of God? What was the state of the Laodiceans? What had this effected? What would occasion their being rejected. What did they suppose respecting themselves? What was their real condition. What was the advice given? How could they "buy"? What would be the effect of a clearing of their consciences? (using eye-salve)? What would be the source of their being rebuked and chastened? What would be the proper results of this? Christ at the door gives invitations to whom? From what might individuals obtain encouragement, although the rest refused to hear? What would be the ultimate condition of the faithful? Name the seven stages in the unfolding of God's kingdom as they relate to the promises given in these seven epistles? See ii. 7; ii. 11; ii. 17; ii. 26, 27; iii. 4, 5; vs. 12; vs. 21.

Scripture Catechism, 19, 20.

Temperance.

For the Christian Messenger.

Dear Editor,—

Seeing you leave a corner in your paper devoted to temperance, I forward an extract from an old paper, which I hope may be the means of leading some who would like to give up the evil habit of drinking and have hitherto failed, to look to Christ for the strength to overcome the same.

How much good will be accomplished by those who hold positions of trust, and who employ many men, would they do as Lyman Jenkins did, would they be teetotalers on Bible principles and be able to tell to their company their reason without shame or fear.

It seems sometimes that every one gets cold-hearted in the Temperance cause, their zeal flags, and even the minister in the pulpit, the doctor and the lecturer seem to fear to speak out boldly lest they should give offence by using too strong language.

But surely no language can be too strong and no earnestness too great, when reference is made to a sin of such magnitude, and to evils so dire and widespread as are involved in the use and abuse of intoxicating liquors.

WHY LYMAN JENKINS BECAME A TEETOTALER.

BY REV. J. JAY DAMA.

Lyman Jenkins was a master-builder, and employed many hands. His home was in U—; but he often had jobs in several places at a time. He had a few experienced workmen upon whom he could rely to oversee the work, and employed men under them, while he had a general supervision of the whole. Each gang of hands called him the "old boss," to distinguish him from those under whose immediate direction they performed their labors.

Every winter, during the holidays, he made it a point to invite all those in his employ who resided in U— to take tea and spend an evening with him. All who had families were expected to bring their wives and children with them.

He came into the shop one morning, and extended the invitation. After he left, Thomas King, who had been only a short time in his employ, said to George Atkinson.

"Are you going to the old boss's party?" "Of course I shall."

"Do they have a good time there?" "First-rate. You must be sure and go, and take your wife and babies too."

"I don't know about that. The old boss came along the other day, just after I had taken some biters, and I suppose he smelled my breath; for he said, 'King, you must look out, or you will not get that moulding right.' He added, 'Be careful never to take any thing inside which will prevent your making a straight edge.'"

"Pshaw! King," said Atkinson, "I would not stay away on that account. He cuts rather hard sometimes, but he is a good man to work for."

"True enough he is," said King; "but then you know a fellow does not like to be rasped off in that way. He is a strong teetotaler; but for my part, I think he carries matters rather too far. I believe in temperance as firmly as any man; but when I go home at night, I like a drop before I have my supper. I want a little, also, in the morning, and again about eleven o'clock. I never mean to be the worse for liquor."

Atkinson replied, "I hope you will not drink any on the day of the party, because, if he should smell your breath, he might give you a lecture on the spot. You will have fine oysters and as good tea and coffee as can be made, and you will enjoy yourself very much. I have worked for the old boss now going on for seven years, and I always look forward to the tea-party with great interest. My wife and children also consider it the greatest day of the year. I really believe they would rather miss going home to Thanksgiving, than to miss the old boss's party."

The day at length arrived. Not only the carpenters, but all in his employ were there, and all dressed in their best. They brought their wives and children. The spacious parlors were thrown open, and were well filled with the guests. Thomas King had concluded to be present. Robert O'Neill and Bridget his wife were also there. He was not a carpenter, but was one of Mr. Jenkins's hired men. He had on a black broadcloth coat, which had been purchased at a second-hand clothing store, and Bridget had tried her best to dress herself in fashion.

They acted as though they had never before seen such splendor. The house did indeed present a strong contrast to the home they had lived in in the old country, and, indeed to the garret which furnished them a lodging-place in the country of their adoption.

Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins moved around among their guests. At length they approached Robert and Bridget. Mr. Jenkins said, "So, Robert, this is your wife, is she?"

"Indeed she is. Bridget, can't ye spake to the gentleman? Mistor Jenkins, they call ye the old boss, but it's a raal gentleman ye are, every inch of ye."

Bridget made what was intended for a courtesy. Robert continued, "In my country the man I served seven years or more never did the like o' this his hands."

"No, I suppose not. But Robert, this is a free country, and we don't make such distinctions here as they do there."

"But ye were a born gentleman, were ye not?"

"Every man is a born gentleman in this country, if he only be industrious and behave himself properly."

He then passed on, and chatted with others of the company.

Bridget said, "Robert, this bates me intirely."

"Well may ye say that, Bridget, and me too; for sure it bates both of us, and all ould Ireland besides. Hurrah for Ameriky!"

In due time supper was served. After this, the company returned to the parlors, and amid the buzz of conversation Mr. Jenkins arose and addressed them:

"My Men and Friends: Some of you have been present on former occasions not unlike this. A few of you are here for the first time. I need not say you are all heartily welcome."

"I might address you upon the relation which employers and their workmen sustain to each other, but upon this I will not speak to-night. You all know that I am a staunch teetotaler. I do not know, however, that I have ever told you why I became so. Perhaps we can not better spend a few moments than for me to tell you how this came to pass. As many as would like to hear will please raise the hand."

Every hand was raised.

"I served my time in V—, as some of you know. My boss was a man who used liquor. Three times every day we were called to grog as regularly as to our meals. I got so by the time I was twenty-one that I liked liquor, and so did every hand in the shop. Soon I became a journeyman, I was married to this lady by my side. I had nothing but my two hands. We had many a hard struggle. We had children fast. I spent considerable money for liquor. Once in a while I would get over the bay, and come home drunk. The habit continued to grow upon me, till at length I became so unsteady that no one wished to employ me. I was a good workman when I was sober; I could point to work which I had done which was equal to that of any other man in the place. My wife had to take in washing to keep the family in bread while I was loafing doing nothing."

"Bridget," said Robert, "did ye ever hear the likes of that? Such a gintale lady as Mistress Jenkins doing washing!"

This interruption caused all to turn their eyes toward Robert and Bridget, and Robert said, "I beg your pardon, sir."

Mr. Jenkins resumed: "They were about to build the States-house in S—, and a reward of several hundred dollars was offered for the best plan of a building suitable for the purposes for which it was designed. At the time this advertisement appeared I was sober, not because I had ceased to love liquor, but because I was too poor to get it. My wife knew that I was a good architect, and she encouraged me to try for the reward. She said she knew I could get the reward if I would only keep sober. She said, 'Lyman,' (she used to call me by my christian name then,) 'if you will only keep sober a week, you can get that reward as well as not.' 'Well,' said I, 'to please you I will try.' I knew I must have a clear head to make my plans, and a steady hand to make draughts; and so I shut myself up in a room with my instruments and paper, and in a few days I had it all finished and sent to the committee."

"Several others had tried, but the committee were unanimous in pronouncing my plans superior to all the rest. I ought to have said that I had also made estimates of the cost of the building, from the foundation to the top-stone. None of my neighbors knew what I was doing, for my

wife and myself determined to say nothing to any one.

Among others who tried for the reward was a son of my old boss, who was then carrying on business at V—. He and I never had agreed very well. He was known quite well through all the region, and he confidently expected to obtain the reward.

But, as I have said, the committee awarded it to me. One of them was acquainted with the son of my boss, and was passing through the place on his way home. My competitor was of course anxious to know who was the successful man. The gentleman replied, 'A man by the name of Lyman Jenkins, who lives here in V—.' 'What!' said he, 'has that poor miserable cuss got the reward? He is drunk every day of his life.' As to that,' he replied, 'I know nothing. Drunk or sober, he has surpassed all the others. I am now going to see him and find out whether he will take the job of building it.'

"I knew nothing about this then. I was at home, splitting wood in the back-yard, and my wife stood over the wash-tub. One of my little girls was on the back-door step, studying her Sunday lesson. She was committing to memory the verse, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.' All at once it came into my head, Christ has strengthened me to abstain ever since I commenced drawing the plan. He can do it still. I will trust trust in Him and drink no more. Before this I had thought that, if I obtained the reward, I would have a good spree, and make up for the days I had been without liquor."

"Full of this new idea, I went into the house, and wrote on the fly leaf of the Bible, 'Through Christ who strengtheneth me, I will never drink any more liquor. Amen!' and signed my name to it. I held it up for my wife to read. She burst into tears. I put away the Bible, and went into the back-yard, and worked at my wood."

"I had worked but a few moments when the member of the committee rapped at the door. He inquired if Lyman Jenkins lived there, and was shown in. My wife came and told me. When I entered, he said, 'Is your name Jenkins?' I told him it was. 'Did you draw up these plans?' He handed me the result. He added, 'Your plans exhibit a good deal of genius. I was instructed by the committee to engage you to superintend the construction of the building. Since I came to the place, however, I have learned that you are intemperate and unreliable, and this leads me to question whether I ought to engage you.'

"Try him," said my wife, 'he isn't going to drink any more.' I could say nothing. She got the Bible and opened it to where I had written my pledge. He read it, and said, 'Mr. Jenkins, do you mean that?' I replied that I did. 'Well, then,' said he, 'we will try you. Here are five hundred dollars for the plan. Your salary will be two thousand dollars per year. You will go and engage stone, and timber, and men; and we shall have the foundation laid this fall. But remember that if you break that pledge, you will lose your job.'

"He went away. This is how I became a teetotaler. That was more than twenty years ago. I haven't drunk a drop since, I have the same pledge here in a book, and I hope those of you who have not signed it will do so."

King walked up and signed it.

"I am glad to see your name there, King."

Robert O'Neill then presented himself, and said, "Mistor Jenkins, it's not the likes of me that can write, but ye may put my name on, and by all the saints I'll kape it."

Mr. Jenkins put his name on, and said, "Robert, if you keep that, it will be the making of you." He was followed by all the others who had not previously signed. Soon the tea-party, which had been so pleasant and profitable, broke up, and the visitors returned to their homes.—National Temperance Advocate.

It is not so much what you say,
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use,
As the tones in which you convey it.

The words may be mild and fair,
And the tones may pierce like a dart;
The words may be soft as the summer air,
And the tones may break the heart.

A knowledge of our weakness creates in us charity for others.