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Christian Messenger. HALIFAX, N. S., JANUARY 29, 1873.

THE TEACHER. BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1873.

SUNDAY, Feb. 2nd, 1873. Noah and the Ark.—Gen. vi. 13-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. Hebrews xi. 7.

COMMIT TO MEMORY.—verses 17, 18.

SUMMARY.—Mercy is mixed with God's severest judgment. He will suffer no evil to befall those who fear Him.

ANALYSIS.—(1). The announcement made to Noah, vs. 13. (2) The command, vs. 14. (3) The description of the Ark, vs. 15, 16. (4). The purpose of God to bring a flood over the earth, vs. 17. (5) The promise given and directions to Noah regarding himself and family.

EXPOSITION.—The genealogies of the fifth chapter show the relationship of Noah to our first parents, and are an indication of the length of time that had elapsed between the sad event of the last lesson—the murder of Abel by his brother. There were, doubtless, many other children born to each of the patriarchs mentioned, but it was enough to give one name to retain a record of the generations that had passed. It is probable that the one or more mentioned were not the first born or only children of the parents noticed. (See ch. v. 30). Lamech seems to have prophesied concerning his son Noah at his birth. See ch. v. verse 29, and had anticipations of good through him. This may be regarded as some indication of how the promise given to Eve was understood by him and his descendants.

The character of Noah is clearly stated, verse 8, 9. There were also many others who feared God and had died before the flood. The triumph of wickedness was as complete as in the case of Cain murdering his righteous brother. It is computed that Lamech, Noah's father, died some years before the flood, and Methuselah the son of Enoch, and Noah's grandfather, died the same year as that in which the flood came upon the earth. Noah had lived upward of 500 years, with his father and grandfather, and Methuselah had lived about 120 years before Adam died. Noah's knowledge of the Creation and Fall would therefore be obtained, orally and almost direct from Adam. It need only pass through one other person.

The descendants of Seth—sons of God, and the daughters of men—or of Cain—had intermarried and general corruption had been the result. The terrible remedy determined upon by God is given in our lesson.

Verse 13.—The destruction of man was to be accompanied with that of the earth. In verse 12 "with" may be read "from." (See margin) Doubtless Noah was startled by the announcement here made to Noah. There were at present no indications of such a violent change, and it would require strong faith to enable him to make preparations for carrying out the designs given him by God himself. The voice, doubtless an audible one, to him was sufficient to assure him, that he would have the Divine approval in obeying the command.

Verse 14.—An Ark, a hollow chest or case. Exodus ii. 3. Gopher wood probably cypress, remarkable for its durability and abounding in Armenia; rooms, or nests, or small cells; pitch, or bitumen, which would make it effectually water tight.

Verse 15.—The fashion. It was not a ship such as are now constructed but a floating house. The size here given if reckoned by the Jewish standard cubic measure of 21 1/2 inches, would be 547 feet long, near a hundred feet wide, and near fifty feet high (Illustrate this by a comparison with some well known large building).

Verse 16.—A window.—This was probably a skylight having over it some semi-transparent material which would allow some light to pass through; or a sheltered opening, so constructed as to prevent the water from coming in. A cubit shall thou finish it above, probably a slight elevation in the centre of the roof to carry off the water.

Verse 17.—Here is a repetition of the announcement of the flood, probably for the purpose of making Noah certain that it would come to pass. ch. xii. 32.

Verse 18.—The "covenant" here noticed was a guarantee that by obedience to God's command Noah would be saved, with his family. There was no hesitation in Noah, verse 22, but he proceeded forthwith to prepare for the terrible catastrophe which was to come upon the world. The nature of the covenant is given in verses 19-21, indicating concern for Noah's necessities and satisfying him of the certainty of the fulfilment on God's part of what he had promised. The discoveries of geology confirm the Scriptures, that there has been some great irruption by which what are now high mountains were formerly covered with water.

QUESTIONS.—What purposes do the genealogies of the 5th chapter serve? What are the probabilities of these names, that they were the names of the only children or that they had others? What is the character given of Noah? Through whom could Noah have obtained his knowledge of the world? What is the remedy provided to clear the world of the general wickedness which prevailed? How was piety to be preserved? What were the dimensions of the Ark? What was the general character of the Ark? What was its size? Of what was it to be made? How to be rendered impervious to water? What was the central elevation in the roof? What was the covenant God made with Noah? What would be the case if any repented, whilst the Ark was being built. 1 Peter iii. 20—Is there anything to shew that the mass of the people were unbelieving. Matt xxiv. 37, 38; Luke xvii. 27. Scripture Catechism, 96.

SUNDAY, Feb. 9th.—The Bow in the Cloud.—Gen ix. 8-17.

Youths' Department.

For the Christian Messenger.

WHAT ARE YOU GOOD FOR BABY DEAR!

What are you good for baby? To gladden long homes had hearts to cheer. What is the use of those eyes so bright? To drive away care and put it to flight. But tell me the use of your mouth the while? To cry and to laugh and to coo and to smile: But what is the use of that little flat nose? To get long and pretty when ever it grows. What good are those cheeks so much like a cherry? They are soft and warm and dimpled and merry. Those fat little arms, what use are they miss? To cuddle papa when I give him a kiss. Of what use pray, are those fingers fair? To pat your cheeks and pull your hair. What use are those legs which you kick in your fun? You will know soon enough when I'm able to run. What is the good of those wee little toes? To tread in the path the Saviour shows. But if you were ill, my heart would be sad? But when I got well you would be so glad. Is that all you are good for you dear little dove? I draw you from self—and I teach you to love. J. St. J. G. P. November, 1872.

GIRLS AND GOOD HOUSEKEEPING.

"Mary Moore," in the Young Folks' Rural, says:—Mothers frequently make a mistake in the management of their children. Overburdened with labour, and needing relief, they are yet so nice and particular, so jealously tenacious, perhaps, of the domestic sceptre, that they often refuse to delegate even a minor household

duty to their daughters, forgetting that children should be early taught to make themselves useful, and to assist their parents every way in their power. A positive injury is done to the girls by this deprivation of all share in the government of the house, for it is evident that they cannot be too well instructed in anything which will affect the comfort of a family. Whatever position in life they may hereafter occupy, they need a thorough practical knowledge of household duties. Circumstances may eventually lift them above the necessity of performing much domestic work, but on this account they need no less knowledge, if it is not desired that they shall be expensive burdens to their husbands. Girls are not apt to allow to housework its due importance; but such as have experienced the thousand and one after-torments that spring from ignorance of it, can estimate it at its true value. If they show an inclination to penetrate the mysteries of the kitchen, indulge them by all means. Never mind if the assistance they render is slight, and the trouble they cause more than a counter-balance; let them cook, wash, iron, &c. They will soon learn, if it is contrived that the teaching shall be pleasant. We have in our mind's eye a little child of a child, nine years old, who made a loaf of bread—and made it well, too—every week during the winter. Her mother was kind and patient, and she quickly divined the proper quantities of yeast, salt, and flour. If she feels inclined to try her hand at the high grades of the culinary art—pastry-making, for instance—no objection is made. Indeed, she is quite a little housekeeper, carrying a big bunch of keys at her girdle, and often getting out what is necessary for the table. Where there are several daughters, the care of the housekeeping should be given to each in turn. This seems to give us an excellent arrangement, and will certainly prove to be most valuable part of their education. Girls with what are called high notions will do well to reflect that the drudgery of the kitchen is by no means incompatible with the highest degree of refinement and mental culture. Some of the most socially elegant women we have ever known have been adepts in the arts of bread-and-pie making; nay, it is not long since that we saw a talented and highly-educated lady don a pair of gloves, go down on her knees and blacklead a stove, just to show Bridget how tis done. Remember, girls, that home constitutes the very essence of a man's idea of happiness, and if you do not fit yourselves to make the homes of your future husbands bright, cheerful, orderly, and a refuge from all the world beside, how can you hope to be happy yourselves, or to make them happy? Economy in cooking has a great deal to do with making life easy. There is a lasting charm in a good housekeeper; there is a profound lesson in her attention to the little things of the kitchen. There is nothing so beautiful as a useful life. For my part, I think no girl should stand at the altar who has not first stood at the wash-tub.

THE SAILS OF A VESSEL.

One fine Sunday afternoon, Clara and her father were seated on the balcony of a hotel overlooking the sea. They had come to spend a few weeks, and they enjoyed watching the great ocean, the waves of which broke at their feet. Vessels of all shapes and sizes were sailing before them—some going north, some south—some lighted up by the sun others under the shadows of the clouds, but all in movement.

"Father," said Clara, "I never could understand how the wind should drive the vessels in more than one direction at the same time. Look, there are two with their sails filled, and yet one is coming nearer to us, while the other is going away from us."

"Everything depends upon the way in which the sails are set," said her father, and he explained the various ways of setting the sails. Clara became very much interested in the directions in which the different vessels in view were sailing, and her father, pleased by her attention continued.

"It is just the same with men and their lives in the world. Some are going toward heaven, driven by the same wind that drives others toward ruin. To become rich makes one man generous and another mean. Sorrow hardens some and softens others. I have been thinking of poor Fred Merrill who appeared to learn so much that is bad, in the same school in which our Edmund was taught only good."

"I understand now," said Clara; "I remember going to church with one of my friends, and I was much interested in the sermon. I came out of church full of what I heard, and resolved to practice it. I was astonished when my companion said, 'What a stupid sermon! I thought it would never end!'"

"Yes, my dear," said her father; "the gospel itself eaves some, and condemns others. It is a solemn thought that every good we refuse is no good to us. Every warning that we attend to is a bent fit; but if it is neglected we only grow hardened in evil. Every gift of God is good if we use it without abusing it. We ought to try to get some good out of every experience we have, and then we shall grow and be strong."—Child at Home.

LOVE WINS LOVE.

"Mother, the birdies all love father," said a little boy of five summers, as he stood with his mother watching the robins enjoying their morning meal of cherries from the old tree that overhung the house. "Dose anybody else love father, Charlie?" "Oh, yes! I love him, and you love him; but we know more than the birds." "What do you think is the reason the birdies love your father?" Charlie did not seem to hear the question. He was absorbed in deep thought. "Mother," at last he said, "all the creatures love father. My dog is almost as glad to see him as he is me. Pussy, you know, always comes to him, and seems to know exactly what he is saying. Even the old cow follows him all around the meadow, and the other day I saw her licking his hand, just as a dog would. Who can be the reason, mother?"

"I think it is because father loves them, mother. You know he will often get up to give pussy something to eat; and he pulls carrots for the cow, and pats her, and talks to her; and somehow I think his voice never sounds so pleasant as when he talks to the creatures."

"I think his voice sounds pleasant when he is talking to his little boy." Charlie smiled. "Father loves me," he said, "and I love him dearly. He loves the birds too, I am sure. He whistles to them every morning when they are eating cherries, and they are not a bit afraid of him, though he is almost near

enough to catch them. Mother, I wish everything loved me as well as they do father."

"Do as father does, Charlie, and they will. Love all living things, and be kind to them. Do not speak roughly to the dog. Don't pull pussy's tail, nor chase the hens, nor try to frighten the cow. Never throw stones at the birds. Never hurt nor tease a ything. Speak gently and lovingly to them. Feed them and seek their comfort, and they will love you, and everybody that knows you will love you too."—Tract Journal.

WHAT THE BIBLE DID.

1. For a poor fakir. One day a missionary was preaching to a large audience in India. A strange looking man approaches; serpents' bones encircle his head and neck; his hair is disheveled, his clothes are ragged and tattered, and his whole person and appearance are disgusting and utterly revolting. It is a poor fakir, a deluded Hindoo devotee. He hopes, by this absurd treatment of himself, to show his love to and win the favor of God. After he has listened to the message of the missionary, the preacher asks the wretched man if he understands what he has heard of the Word of God. The Hindoo steps aside and writes, "I have made a vow not to speak: I may listen to what you say, but I cannot answer you." For a few minutes the missionary pours instruction into the darkened mind of the deluded one, and then sends him off with a portion of the Scriptures. Some time after the man returns, no longer now what he was before. He is clothed and in his right mind. The haggard look, the ragged dress and the serpent necklace are laid aside. "I will no longer be dumb," says he, "the Bible is the Word of God." It had spoken to his soul, and unloosed his vowed tongue, and made him to know the true God. He was a new man.

2. For a blind merchant. Money-mad, he had thought only of making his fortune. For this he planned and plied his powers day and night. Suddenly the hand of God is upon him. Blindness shuts the world from his view and blasts all his fondly cherished hopes. Balking in his endeavor, life seems now to him an insupportable burden. He threatens to rid himself of the burden by the stroke of his own hand. A friend dissuades him, showing from the Bible that this would be a fearful crime. "The Bible," said the merchant, "is only a human invention, made to keep the people in ignorance."

"May I ask if you have ever read it?" "Yes, when I was at school; since that time I have not."

"If that is the case I hope you will not say anything more about the Bible, for you have not opened it since you have been capable of forming a mature judgment respecting its contents." In a serious mood the merchant now requests his friend to read the Bible to him in his leisure moments. Gladly is his proposal accepted. This pious friend begins in the Old Testament, and having read the first chapter of Genesis is "taking care to point out the passages in the New which attest the fulfilment of each promise," the infidel, unable to repress his admiration, exclaimed, "I have never read anything approaching to this sublime language."

On the second day he exclaimed, "What a wretch I am to have spoken against such a book, when it was utterly unknown to me!" The readings continue and impressions deepen. The blind man's murmuring cease, he sees the hand of God in his affliction. So eager is he to hear the Bible that he can think of nothing else. He is penitent; he weeps over his long delay in respect of salvation. He thanks God for "having closed his bodily eyes, in order to open the eyes of his soul." At last he is soundly converted. This merchant still lives, is a devoted Christian "amid natural darkness he walks in the light of faith."

THE BIGGEST BEEHIVE IN THE WORLD.

The following is from the San Francisco Commercial Herald:—In Los Angeles county, on the Eastern slope of the San Fernando range of mountains, and in the immediate vicinity of the Leaming Petroleum Company's oil region, there is the most wonderful collection of wild honey in existence. The hive is located in a rift, which penetrates the rock to the depth of probably 100 feet. The orifice is thirty feet long, and seventeen feet wide; four passages. This rift was discovered to be the abiding place of a swarm of bees, that are represented as coming out in a nearly solid column one foot in diameter. Certain parties have endeavored to descend to the immense store of honey collected by these bees, but were invariably driven back, and one man lost his life in the effort. Others have at the expense of much labor and money built a scaffold 125 feet high, in the hope of reaching a place whence they could run a drift into the rock, and extract its well-boarded secrets, but finally ceased their work. Within four years the bees have added not less than an fifty feet of depth to their treasure, as ascertained by actual measurement, and it is thought that at the present time there cannot be less than eight or ten tons of honey in the rock.—A man named B. Brophy lives in a cabin not far from the spot, and obtained from the melting of the honey by the sun's heat more than enough for his family requirements. All through that region immense stores of wild honey are found in trees, in the rocks, in nearly every place where its industrious manufactures think—for bees seem to think—that it will be secure. They consume a very small proportion, as the climate enables them to keep up operations nearly every day in the year, and flowers of some sort are always in bloom. It must be a very rare case indeed when the little fellows are not seen abroad in vast numbers busily engaged in their mellifluous

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3. For a would be suicide. The Holy Spirit strives with a sinner. He finds no rest. He is filled with despair. He sees no ray of hope. He feels that his day of grace is over, that an eternal night of horror awaits him. In a fit of desperation he enters the attic, resolved upon ending his life by hanging. Pacing the floor his eye falls on a loose leaf of the Bible. Picking it up he reads, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Darkness is turned to day. Despair brightened into hope. He was a new creature in Christ Jesus. He still lives, a living Christian verging on the edge of eighty years. The word of God is mighty.

An Italian bishop, who had endured much persecution with a calm, unruffled temper, was asked how he attained such a mastery over himself. "By making a right use of my eyes," said he. "I first look up to heaven as the place whither I am going to live for ever. I next look down upon the earth, and consider how small a space of it will soon be all that I can occupy or want." I then look around me, and think how many are far more wretched than I am."

To be proud of learning is the greatest ignorance.—Bishop Taylor.