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BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1873.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, November 16th

The Lord's Supper.—Matt. xxvi. 26-30.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.” 1 Cor. xi. 26.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 26-28.

SUMMARY.—Until Christ comes a second time without sin unto salvation, his church in the ordinance of the communion, remember him as their sin-bearer in his first coming.

ANALYSIS.—I. The bread, vs. 56. II. The wine, vs. 27-29. III. The hymn, vs. 30.

EXPOSITION.—Preliminary.—We saw in our last lesson that Jerusalem was filling up with strangers, because the grand festival of the Passover was to be celebrated. The triumphant entry into the city was only six days before the Passover; i. e., on Sunday, the day after the Jewish Sabbath, as the Passover festival of eight days began on Thursday. On the evening of that day, the 14th of Nisan, nearly corresponding to our April, the paschal lamb was slain, and eaten by families or groups, according to the original appointment. Ex. xii. 1-28. The Saviour and his twelve apostle formed together such a group, and it is at this supper that our lesson finds him to-day. The cleansing of the Temple, as we saw last Sunday, was on Monday, and the time between that and the supper was taken up in such labors as are recorded in Matthew xxi. 23, 26; xxvi. 17. Compare, also, the accounts of the other evangelists. The Paschal Supper, as commonly celebrated by the Jews, is described as consisting of four parts: (1) The benediction, drinking of the first cup, praise, and the washing of hands. (2) Eating bitter herbs dipped in vinegar or salt water, bringing in the paschal dishes; viz., well-seasoned broth, unleavened loaves, festal offerings, and the lamb, an explanation of these things, the *hallel* or song of praise, consisting of Psalms cxiii, cxiv, and the drinking of the second cup. (3) The feast proper, in which the householder took two loaves, broke one in two, laid it upon the whole loaf, blessed it, wrapped it with bitter herbs, dipped it, ate of it, and handed it round with the words, “This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in Egypt;” the blessing and eating of the paschal lamb, thanksgiving for the meal and the blessing, and drinking of a third cup. (4) The singing of the remainder of the *hallel*, consisting of Psalms cxv-cxviii, and the drinking of the fourth cup.

Verse 26.—As they were eating. The ordinance of “the Lord's Supper,” which is also with equal fitness called “the communion,” 1 Cor. x. 16, was established or instituted in connection with the Paschal or Passover Supper described above. It would seem that the party had just completed the eating of the lamb, and that the Saviour immediately upon that proceeded to do what is here described. The fitness of such a connection appears from the fact that the paschal lamb was a type of Christ, the true Lamb of God, by whose death comes a redemption and deliverance, of which deliverance from Egypt was a shadow and prediction. A change in the feast was required, because the Jewish feast was primarily a reminder of the Jewish deliverance, but Christians would ever need one which looked immediately and exclusively to the deliverance effected by Christ. *Jesus took bread.* This was doubtless unleavened bread; i. e., bread without yeast, because none other would have been at hand, as appears from Ex. xii. 15. *And blessed it.* In Luke xxii. 19, it is said, “he gave thanks,” and there is some authority for the same reading here. The sense, however, is the same essentially in the two cases. This was a feast of deliverance, and not the less joyful, perhaps all the more joyful that it was deliverance at such a cost. There is nothing in either of the terms implying any change whatever in the nature of the bread, or of the wine. *And brake it.* Reminding of the body of Christ as broken in death for believers. See 1 Cor. xi. 24, where it is not the bread, but the body that is said to be broken. There is also the further fact shown that all the members of a church receiving the bread have their life from one and the same source. This is strongly put in 1 Cor. x.

17, where the correct translation is, “for we the many are one loaf, one body,” i. e., the one loaf symbolizes the oneness of the company which partakes of it, and that, too, their oneness in Christ. *And gave it to the disciples.* It is not anywhere said that the Saviour himself ate the bread or drank the wine. There are contrary opinions. But he gave to his disciples. He was given by the Father, and he gave himself, to become the life of those who, unlike himself, had no life in them. From Luke xxii. 19, it is certain that this act of giving was thus symbolical. It has been much discussed whether “the disciples” here included Judas Iscariot. At the beginning of the Paschal feast, and until the time of the institution of the new ordinance, “the twelve apostles” were present. Luke xxii. 14. But it would seem that before the institution of the supper Judas withdrew. John xiii. 30 and Mark xiv. 20. It has been thought, from Luke xxii. 21-23, that Judas was present; but it is easier, in harmonizing the narratives, to suppose that Luke adds the account respecting Judas after the description of the institution of the eucharist, without intending to indicate just what was the order of time. *Take.* Each for himself, each by his own act, freely. So it is in our salvation through Jesus Christ. Every man works out his own salvation. Both baptism and the communion keep clearly in view the separateness of individual responsibility, and give it the precedence to the social fellowship, the community of life, which also both ordinances reveal. *Eat.* An essential part of the ordinance, for thus the bread becomes the man's life, and the very substance of his body. This eating is the symbol of an appropriating faith. It is vital union, one in which we catch his spirit, in which the very life blood of Jesus flows into and through our hearts, our arteries, and our veins; so that Christ is our life. *This is my body; i. e., in symbol; this is that which is to remind of my body, which represents it.* The bread, because it is bread, that which nourishes and gives life, presents Christ as he became, by means of his death and after his death, a Saviour not only having life, but giving life, a mighty Saviour who by death has conquered death. The bread reminds of the death of Christ, but not of the dead Christ.

Verse 27.—*And he took the cup.* It has been thought by some to be the third cup of the Paschal feast (see above), and by some the fourth. It need not be thought to be either; but, instead, using indeed the cup and the wine present for use in the Paschal feast, he does what with the loaf he had done; creates a new rite, like, yet unlike, the other; related, but not identical. The word “cup” here, of course, means a filled cup, a cup of wine, not an empty cup. *Drink ye all of it.* Or, making the translation just as free from ambiguity as is the Greek, “Do ye all drink of it.” It has been often and justly remarked that the word “all,” here, as in Mark xiv. 23, seems to have been inserted with that divine foresight of the course of history which makes the Bible so truly and fully the book of all time, and of all times. It is the sentence of condemnation pronounced beforehand upon the Papal church which refuses to “the laity” the cup, and allows them to take only the bread, while “the clergy” take also the wine. The apostles were gathered now as representing the church, and as is also clearly apparent from 1 Cor. xi. 25-29, every member, whatever the sex, age, or condition, was to receive the cup not less than the bread.

Verse 28.—*This is my blood.* See above on the words, “This is my body.” That wine was chosen to represent the blood was doubtless partly because of its color, partly because of the invigorating properties of “the fruit of the vine,” and partly because it had been used in the Paschal Supper, and was now at hand. *Of the New Testament.* Or covenant, or this in contrast with the former covenant with Israel as a nation raised up and delivered, and led by the Lord, whose covenant mercies were vividly set forth in the Paschal feast. The Lord has bound himself to save his people; and if he fail, he is not God; he loses more than they can lose; his glory, his throne, his character, his very nature. *Which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* Christ says, “is shed,” not “was shed,” because though at the time not shed, the blood was very soon to be shed; and it is in the wine seen as having been shed. The words employed by the Saviour were to serve in the celebration of the ordinance through all time, to be often repeated, and hence adjusted to that permanent use.

Christ adds that the blood was shed, “for many,” having doubtless in mind especially believers of all ages, as those who would be saved through his blood. The words, “for [or unto] the remission [i. e., forgiveness] of sins” refer, it will be noted, not to the drinking of the wine, but to the shedding of the blood. There is no power in either baptism or the communion to work a saving change in man.

Verse 29.—On this verse Dr. Schaff says: “It implies that the Lord's Supper has not only a commemorative and retrospective, but also a prophetic and prospective meaning. It not only carries us back to the time of the crucifixion, . . . but it is also a foretaste and anticipation of the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb which he has prepared for his church at his last Advent.”

Verse 30.—*When they had sung a hymn.* Perhaps Psalms cxv-cxviii. *They went out,* etc. For a fuller account, compare John xiv-xvii.

QUESTIONS.—On what day did Jesus enter Jerusalem in triumph? John xii. 1. How did he spend the time between that and the Feast of the Passover? Chap. xxi-xxv. What was the Passover? Ex. xii. 1-28. Where did Christ and the twelve keep the Passover? Vs. 17-20. Why should the Lord's Supper have been instituted in connection with the Passover?

Vs. 26. Explain the words, “as they were eating.” What did Jesus take? Ex. xii. 15. What is meant by the words, “He blessed it”? Compare Luke xxii. 19. Why did he break it? 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 21. What is represented by his giving it? John iii. 16; x. 11. What “disciples” were present? Vs. 20; John xiii. 30. Compare Luke xxii. 21. Who are now to partake of the Lord's Supper? What fact as to our relation to Christ is shown by taking the bread? What by eating it? Compare John vi. 51, 60. In what sense is the bread of the Supper Christ's body? What is the Papists' view? Does this ordinance remind us only of a dead body? Vs. 27, 28. What was in the cup? Vs. 29. Who were to drink of the cup? What is the Roman Catholic custom? What does the wine represent? What is the New Testament? What the Old Testament? For whom was Christ's blood shed? To gain what?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 152.

SUNDAY, November 23rd.—Jesus in Gethsemane.—Matt. xxvi. 36-46.

Youths' Department.

A RIDE IN A SNOW PLOW.

The N. Y. Examiner & Chronicle has a vigorous and lively writer in the person of Benjamin F. Taylor. He is writing a series of articles entitled “The World on Wheels.” His sketches of life on railroads are most racy and readable. In the last week's issue he gives a very brilliant description of a ride in a snow-plow:

Did you ever ride on a snow-plow? Not the pet and a pony of a thing that is attached to the front of an engine, sometimes, like a pilot, but a great two-storied monster of strong timbers, that runs upon wheels of its own, and that boys run after and stare at, as they would after and at an elephant. You are snow-bound at Buffalo. The Lake Shore Line is piled with drifts like a surf. Two passenger trains have been half-buried for twelve hours somewhere in snowy Chautauqua. The storm howls like a congregation of Arctic bears. But the Superintendent at Buffalo is determined to release his castaways, and clear the road to Erie. He permits you to be a passenger on the great snow-plow, and there it is, all ready to drive. Harnessed behind it is a tandem team of three engines. It does not occur to you that you are going to ride upon a steam-drill, and so you get aboard. It is a spacious and timbered room, with one large bull's-eye window—an overgrown lens. The thing is a sort of Cyclops. There are ropes and chains and a windlass. There is a bell by which the engineer of the first engine can signal the plowman, and a cord whereby the plowman can talk back. There are two sweeps or arms, worked by machinery on the sides. You ask their use, and the Superintendent replies, “when in a violent shock there is danger of the monster's upsetting, an arm is put out on one side or the other to keep the thing from turning a complete somersault.” You get one idea, and an inkling of another. So you take out your Accident Policy for three thousand dollars, and examine it. It never mentions battles nor duels nor snow-plows. It names “public conveyances.” Is a snow-plow a public conveyance? You are inclined to think it is neither that, nor any other kind that you should trust yourself to, but it is too

late for consideration. You roll out of Buffalo in the teeth of the wind, and the world is turned to snow. All goes merrily. The machine strikes little drifts, and they scurry away in a cloud. The three engines breathe easily, but by-and-by the earth seems broken into great billows of dazzling white. The sun comes out of a cloud, and touches it up till it outshines Potosi. Houses lie in the trough of the sea everywhere, and it requires little imagination to think they are pitching and tossing before your eyes. The engine's respiration is a little quickened. At last there is no more road than there is in the Atlantic. A great breaker rises right in the way. The monster, with you in it, works its way up and feels of it. It is packed like a ledge of marble. Three whistles! The machine backs away and keeps backing, as a gymnast runs astern to get sea-room and momentum for a big jump; as a giant swings aloft a heavy sledge that it may come down with a mighty blow. One whistle! You have come to a halt. Three pairs of whistles one after another, and then, putting on all steam, you make for the drift. The Superintendent locks the door, you do not quite understand why, and in a second the battle begins. The machine rocks and creaks in all its joints. There comes a tremendous shock. The cabin is as dark as midnight. The clouds of flying snow put out the day. The labored breathing of the locomotives behind you, the clouds of smoke and steam that wrap you as in a mantle, the noonday eclipse of snow, the surging of the ship, the rattling of chains, the creak of timbers as if the craft were aground, and the sea getting out of its bed to whelm you altogether, the doubt as to what will come next—all combine to make a scene of strange excitement for a land-lubber. You have made some impression upon the breaker, and again the machine backs for a fair start, and then all together another plunge and shock and heavy twilight. And so, from deep cut to deep cut, as if the season had packed all his winter-trains upon the track, until the stalled trains are reached and passed, and then with alternate storm and calm and halt and shock, till the way is cleared to Erie.

It is Sunday afternoon, and “mad Anthony Wayne's” old headquarters has donned its Sunday-clothes, and turned out by hundreds to see the great plow come in—its first voyage over the line. The locomotives set up a crazy scream, and you draw slowly into the Depot. The door opened at last, you clamber down, and gaze up at the uneasy house in which you have been living. It looks as if an avalanche had tumbled down upon it—white as an Alpine shoulder. Your first thought is, gratitude that you have made a landing alive. Your second, a resolution that if again you ride a hammer, it will not be when three engines have hold of the handle!

The same writer proceeds to discuss the question of the effects of railroads upon climate and the rainfall:

Climate effects.—No piece of mechanism has affected so widely, diversely and powerfully, the globe and its inhabitants, as the locomotive. That a railroad should influence the weather is the very last thing that would be suspected, but it must plead guilty to the charge, for in certain regions it is almost *climatic*—a presider over climate. That being the only hard word used in the course of this series, the offence should be easily forgiven. Let some recording angel, like Uncle Toby's, be found to drop a tear upon it, if need be, and blot it out. Everybody knows how the rains have descended and the floods come in regions of the continent and in seasons, where and when little ever fell but dew. Number the facts from Utah and California that are being washed down into human understandings by heavy showers. There is no danger of our being claimed by Sydney Smith's genuine Mrs. Partington, if we say that some how—and we are not bound to tell how—the railroad brings rain. Would it not be wonderful if that brace of iron bars across the continent should literally interpret the pleasant Scripture, “And the desert shall blossom as the rose”? And it looks like it. The old devices for artificial irrigation are growing useless, and territory hitherto unproductive is beginning to do something for man. And this, not because of the pioneers to whom the railroad has made the desert possible and accessible, but because of its direct influence upon the climate. Rain-clouds west of the Rockies, that have never spoken a loud word within the memory of man, are now talking as audibly and emphatically as if thunder had been their mother tongue from baby-hood,

and rank vegetation is springing where nothing was ever before sown but fire. The vast system of iron net-work and the hair-lines of telegraphy, about enough to make a snare to catch the planet, have disturbed the electrical equilibrium, and the results are seen in the new and novel phenomena of thunder and shower. By the way, did you ever know any part of a train struck by lightning? There are three or four accounts on record of such an occurrence, but the testimony is doubtful and obscure. Running in what are generally deemed the most dangerous places, along the tall fences of telegraph poles, so often shattered by lightning, and throwing up such volumes of heat, smoke and steam, all of which are supposed to be favorite thoroughfares of the mysterious agent, it seems strange that, if our scientific facts are facts at all, many accidents by lightning do not occur upon the railway. But the direction of the bolt is determined before it leaves the cloud, and a train is nothing but a slender thread trailed along the earth's surface. What the locomotive will yet do for all kinds of man—mechanic, agricultural, scientific, moral—is an unsolved problem! A glance at the initial chapter of its history assures us that it will be as marvellous in the future as it was unlooked for in the past.

A PARSONAGE, according to Rev. Dr. John Hall, relieves a pastor of much embarrassment; for, if it is a showy or a shabby house, he knows that he is not to blame, and no uncharitable criticisms are made on his establishment. To the plausible objection that the apostles found no such arrangements made for their comfort as do sundry popular clergymen of New York in these days, Dr. Hall thus replies: “If the members of the congregations of New York to which we minister were to be seen wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins; if the happy and comfortable inhabitants of those brown-stone houses on Fifth Avenue were compelled to resort to caves and dens of the earth, being afflicted and desolate, I hope I, for one, should have grace to stand by them and to wear the sheepskin and the goatskin and to live in the caves and dens. But that, you know, is not our position just now.”

SOCIAL PROPRIETIES.

Christians, it is to be feared, too often unintentionally do great evil by overlooking what may be considered by some the mere proprieties of life. They are careful, perhaps, in respect to all the cardinal virtues, but the minor duties of the day are almost wholly neglected, and very many of those things which in general society are of good report, such as becoming manners, tastes, general deportment, social observances, and the ordinary amenities of life, are considered beneath their notice. But the truth is, this is one way in which our Christianity is to develop itself, and by which we may effectually approve ourselves before men. And unless we are essentially improved in our varied private and public relations, in our disposition, in our conduct, in all our habits, we give but little evidence of the transforming and elevating power of Christian piety.

The pat remark of a cultured old lady, whose thoughts we learned early to prize, we have often quoted, and now make bold to print it: “If religion does not make a gentleman of one, what is it good for?”

YOUNG MEN.

Most young men consider it a great misfortune to be poor, or not to have capital enough to establish themselves at the outset of life in a good business. This is a mistaken notion. So far from poverty being a misfortune to them, if we may judge from what we every day behold, it is really a blessing; the chance is more than ten to one against the youth who starts with plenty of money. Let any one look back twenty years, and see who commenced business at that time with abundant means and trace them down to the present day—how many of these now boast of wealth and standing? On the contrary, how many have become poor. Lost their places in society, and are passed by their own boon companions, with a look which painfully says, I know you not!

A little girl, who had great kindness of heart for all the animal creation, saw a hen preparing to gather her chickens under her sheltering wings, and shouted earnestly, “Oh! don't sit down on those beautiful little birds, you great ugly old creature!”