

The Christian Messenger.

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BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1874.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES. SUNDAY, December 6th, 1874. The Denial.—Mark xiv. 66-72.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—1 Cor. x. 12.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 66-72.

SUMMARY.—"The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

ANALYSIS.—I. The first denial. Vs. 66-68. II. The last two denials. Vs. 69-71. III. The repentance. Vs. 72.

EXPOSITION.—Introductory.—The temperament of Peter was impulsive. Forward to speak and to act. He really loved Christ. The Saviour, at the Supper a few hours before, had solemnly warned Peter against denying him.

In the garden, Peter, as we saw, was one of the favored three taken along with Jesus near to the spot of the Lord's awful agony. He soon mastered courage to follow the "multitude" that rudely took away Jesus to the city, but he "followed him afar off" (Matt. xxvi. 58). He had begun in great self-confidence; but affairs were taking such a strange, unexpected, unpromising turn!

Verses 66—As Peter was beneath in the palace. The words "beneath in the palace" do not mean on a lower floor of the building, but in the open court which was lower (by a few steps) than the adjacent room in which was Christ. Matthew says, "Sat without, in the palace," that is, in the court out of the room where Christ was. But in whose court was this, that of Caiaphas, or that of Annas? From John xviii. 12-14 it seems that Jesus was first taken to the house of Annas, though Caiaphas and not Annas was the acting high priest that year. This was because of the high personal character and reputation of Annas, and his relation to Caiaphas as father-in-law. John further says (vs. 24) that Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas. It is usually assumed that the preliminary trial mentioned by John (vs. 19-24) was before Annas and not Caiaphas; and hence that Peter's denial was, at least for the first time, in the court of his house. Some think that Annas and Caiaphas, being relatives, lived in the same house, occupying different parts of it; and hence that there was but one court for the two. John very carefully distinguishes Caiaphas from Annas by calling him the high priest, and then speaks of the examination as before the high priest. He never elsewhere calls Annas by that title. The statement in John xviii. 24 is thrown in to explain what had just before been stated. On this view Peter and John, "that disciple" who "was known unto the high priest" and who "spoke unto her that kept the door and brought in Peter," did not go into the court of the residence of Annas, but only into that of Caiaphas, the high priest. Vs. 54; Matt. xxvi. 58; Luke xxii. 54. There cometh one of the maids of the high priest. The door-keeper, who at John's request, let Peter in. (John xviii. 16). He had lagged behind and come up late. The maid probably objected to his request for admission, suspecting something wrong. She was the maid-servant of Caiaphas, and the other disciple (probably John) would seem to have escaped challenge, and to have had influence because of his acquaintance with her master. For another instance of the employment of a woman as door keeper, see Acts xii. 14.

Verses 67.—When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him. It was a cold night (or, rather, morning, between one and two, a. m.), and they had built a fire of coals in the open court, and a crowd of "servants and officers" were gathered about it. John xviii. 18. It was the first week of April, when even in Palestine there would be cold nights. The maid's look at Peter was a searching, inquisitive one, as Luke says (xxii. 56) "He sat with the rest by the fire," or, rather, "the light" (vs. 54), which probably shone full in his face, and revealed its features and workings. She had an official reason for her curiosity, for as a door-keeper she could allow no improper admissions. Thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. "Jesus the Nazarene," in contempt. According to Luke, she said to those present, "This man was also with him." This she might

well do before speaking directly to Peter. John gives her words as a question.

Verses 68—I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. As Luke gives it, "Woman, I know him not." A flat denial. He has been taunted for great weakness in fearing only a maid. It must be remembered his fear was not of the maid, but of that power which now had his Master, and which he saw only too clearly from what had taken place and was now going on, would mercilessly kill his Master. To own Jesus now would, he suspected, be death to him also; or if not, it would be to encounter scorn, ridicule, abuse, single handed, from those about him. This was Satan's hour and power. It was a frightful trial for Peter; all the greater because as yet he did not understand fully the Gospel, and that his Lord must needs thus suffer. We wrong Peter if we think of his trial as slight. He went out into the porch. Apparently, very soon after the denial. Was it from uneasiness, the fear of discovery, with the thought, quickly changed, to get out and be gone? Possibly. And the cock crew. Did Peter hear it, and remember the prediction?

Verses 69.—And a maid saw him again, and began to say. A literal translation is, "And the maid-servant seeing him, began again to say." It thus seems to have been the same one as before—the door-keeper—her suspicions roused anew by his demeanour. Matthew, however, says, "Another maid-servant spoke to him." Luke uses the masculine, as though it were a manservant, and gives Peter's reply as beginning, "Man," etc. John writes, "They said," etc. John also speaks of the denial as though in the court, not the porch. We must remember here, as we have so often been called to do, that no one of the writers pretends to give the whole, and also that the truth of history does not consist in mere literal exactness of report.

Verses 70.—And he denied it again. Matthew adds, "with an oath." His trial would of course be more severe the longer he staid, and the more he saw and heard of bitter scorn and enmity against Jesus, and until he should master the temptation by one final stroke, the easier would it be to deny. Hence we do not wonder that he adds an oath, that he takes an oath that he does not know Jesus. Thousands, sitting safely at home, exclaim, "How could he?" who would under a like trial have done far worse. Yet it was a fearful, horrible sin. And a little after. Luke says: "About the space of one hour." The vehement and sworn denial seems to have set suspicion at rest for awhile. They that stood by. Luke says "another," and John says it was a servant of the high priest (Caiaphas, see above), and kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off. Many raised or joined in the accusation, but this man was the principal accuser. He had noticed Peter in the garden, and became convinced, by what had come out in the court, taken with his impression received thus in the garden, that this was the very man who aimed the blow at his relative's head. This would naturally make him foremost in the outcry against Peter. Surely thou art one of them. This time the charge is made more confidently than before—with great positiveness and assurance. John says he asked Peter directly. "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" This question brings out a new feature of the trial of Peter. He had resisted the authorities in their attempt to arrest Christ, and that even with an attempt to kill one of the officers—a high crime under any government. And then he knew that Jesus also condemned that act. The accusers have also very direct evidence. Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. In Matthew, it is written that they said, "Thy speech bewrayeth [discovereth] thee." The speech of the Galileans was broad and rustic. It had "a Syrian cast." Judges xii. 6. Began to curse ["to wish himself accursed"] and to swear ["to take a solemn oath"] Some one suggests that this was an old habit before conversion.

Verses 72.—The second time the cock crew. See vs. 30. Matthew says "immediately," and Luke "immediately, while he yet spake." Called to mind. This is probably the meaning of the original, which is literally "casting upon," that is, his thoughts upon the words of Christ. Some say, "casting (his eyes) upon Christ;" others, "casting (his cloak) upon" (his face); others, "casting (himself) upon" (the door), rushing out, etc. Luke tells us, "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter," that is, from the room where he was examined, and which, a

little higher than the court, enabled him to hear what there took place and also to look in. When he thought thereon he wept. Matthew and Luke say, "bitterly." Judas had a repentance which was unto death—mere remorse, without penitence. Peter's repentance was penitence, and unto life. Through grace he became truly a Peter—a rock. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

QUESTIONS.—See for other accounts Matt. xxvi. 69-75; Luke xxii. 54-62; John xviii. 15-18; 25-27.

The difference between the betrayal and the denial of Christ? How long after the betrayal by Judas before the denial by Peter? Vs. 53, 54. What warning had Peter received just before the betrayal? Vs. 26-31. What does his answer to that warning show as to his spirit? What was his temperament?

Vs. 66. Where was Peter at the time of the first denial? Vs. 54. How came he to get in? John xviii. 15, 16. Who came to Peter? John xviii. 17. With whom was Peter? John xviii. 18. What month was it?

Vs. 67. What kind of a look did the maid-servant give Peter? Why was she so interested? What did she say? Compare Luke xxii. 56; John xviii. 17.

Vs. 68. What did Peter say? Compare Matthew, Luke and John. Why did he deny Christ? Do men now deny him? How? Why? Where did Peter go then?

Vs. 69. Who then met and addressed him? Cf. Matthew and Luke. What was said to him? See John.

Vs. 70. What did Peter now say? How did he make the denial stronger than before? Matt. vs. 72. Was the temptation greater? How long after was he again challenged? Luke, vs. 53. By whom? In what words? Compare Luke and John.

Vs. 71. What did he say? What do you think of this conduct?

Vs. 72. What followed? See Luke? Why is the story of the denial recorded?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, December 13th, 1874.—The Crucifixion.—Mark xv. 22-39.

Youths' Department.

PARENT'S PARADISE.

We were much impressed lately by the orderly behavior of a large family of children, particularly at the table. We spoke of it to our host; and he pointed to a paper pinned on the wall, on which were written some excellent rules. He said he gave each child who obeyed the rules, a reward at the end of every month. We begged a copy for the benefit of our readers. They are called—"Rules and Regulations for Parent's Paradise:"

- 1. Shut every door after you without slamming it.
2. Never stamp, jump, or run in the house.
3. Never call to persons upstairs, or in the next room; if you wish to speak to them, go quietly where they are.
4. Always speak kindly and politely to the servants, if you would have them do the same to you.
5. When told to do, or not to do a thing, by either parent, never ask why you should or should not do it.
6. Tell of your own faults, not of those of your brothers and sisters.
7. Carefully clean the mud or snow off your boots and shoes before entering the house.
8. Be prompt at every meal hour.
9. Never sit down at the table or in the parlor with dirty hands or tumbled hair.
10. Never interrupt any conversation, but wait patiently your turn to speak.
11. Never reserve your good manners for company, but be equally polite at home and abroad.
12. Let your first, last and best confidant be your mother.—Oliver Optic's Magazine.

DO YOUR BEST, AND LEAVE THE REST.

BY MRS. BRADLEY.

It was very pleasant at the farm house this morning, and nobody thought of anything to disturb its quiet ways.

But there was a messenger galloping along the road at that very time, and up he came presently, in a cloud of dust, to say that Grandmother Green had had "a stroke," and they were all distracted about it over at the Hill Farm, and Jessie's mother must go back with him without any delay. That was a disturbance for a quiet morning! And Jessie's mother knew very well that she must go; for it was her own daughter who lived at the Hill Farm, and her own mother who was ill; and they would all look to her for help and comfort in the trouble. There was no time to lose; either; for the hired man had stopped for

her on his way for the doctor, and she was to go back in the gig with him.

So there was hurrying to and fro, for a few minutes. Jessie ran nimbly about to find the things her mother would need to take, and made no complaint at being left behind to do the hard work. She had always helped, and she was willing and unselfish.

"I hate to leave you all alone," her mother said; "and it's hay-time, and all the men to cook for. I don't know how you'll ever get along with it. You'll just have to do your best, and leave the rest."

"Well, so I will, mother; and I'll get on somehow. Don't you worry!" said Jessie, cheerily.

So her mother went away, and Jessie set to work. She was only a little thing, with all her courage; and she had to climb on chairs and stools to reach what she wanted; and she cut her fingers, peeling the potatoes; and she scorched her face, in her hurry to see if they were boiling properly. But these were trifles to her willing spirit. What she lacked in size and strength she made up with patience and cheerfulness; and so it happened that when twelve o'clock came, everything was ready, and she ran out gaily to blow the horn for dinner. Hungry men come quickly at that sound. Father and Joe, and Ned and Hiram, soon came trooping in, and the first question was, "Where's mother?" For it was a queer thing not to see mother setting the dinner on the table.

Jessie told them what had happened, and the farmer's face grew sorer. Grandmother Green was ill, and "a stroke" was likely to go hard with her.

It was a pretty hard week for the little girl, for it was hay-making, and nobody could be hired to help her. Her father and the men did what they could; but they must be in the field all day, and Jessie had the work of the house to manage. She did it all bravely, and made few mistakes, and never complained; but she was glad enough when her mother came home on the Saturday night.

Jessie felt more than paid for all her hard work, by her mother's pleasure; and she is quite sure that "Do your best and leave the rest," is a capital rule to work by.—Young Reaper.

UNLAWFUL PLEASURES.

"O my father," said a boy who was suffering the punishment due to his disobedience, "if I am ever well again I will never more give way to temptation."

"Wisely said, my son; and with you it is possible to be wise in time. Yet remember, there are many who only gain experience when they have lost all hope."

"But I will fly from pleasure, to avoid temptation: thus I shall be secure."

"There you are in error again; for you are running into extremes. Distinguish between pleasures that are lawful and those that are unlawful."

Unlawful pleasure resembles a bee—it has honey, and it has also a sting. Grasp it, take its sweets and its pain; but remember the taste of the honey will be gone in a few moments, though the sting and its poison will fester for days.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Write upon pages of a single size. Cross all your t's, and neatly dot your i's; On one side only let your lines be seen—Both sides filled up announce a Verdant Green.

Correct—yes, re-correct—all that you write, And let your ink be black, your paper white;

For spongy foolscap of a muddy blue. Betrays a mind of the same dismal hue. Punctuate carefully, for on this score Nothing proclaims the pretensed writer more.

Then send it off, and, lest it merit lack, Inclose the postage-stamps to take it back; But first pay all the postage on it too, For editors look black on "two pence due," And murmur as they run the effusion o'er, "A shabby fellow and a wretched bore!" Yet ere it goes, take off a copy clean—Poets should own a copying machine; Little they know the time that's spent and care

In hunting verses vanished—who know where? Bear this in mind, observe it to the end, And you shall make the editor your friend.

Let prudence always attend your pleasures; it is the way to enjoy the sweets of them, and not be afraid of the consequent.

Virtue will catch as well as vice by contact; and the public stock of honest, manly principle will daily accumulate.

True merit, like a river, the deeper it is, the less noise it makes.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

ONTARIO CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CONVENTION IN LONDON, GREAT LIBERALITY AND ENTHUSIASM. MR. VARLEY THE EVANGELIST MR. McLaurin AND THE NEW FOREIGN MISSION. MR. BLAKE'S DISTURBING SPEECH. IMMIGRATION. THE ICELANDERS &c.

I am not sure whether I ought to plead guilty to a charge of neglect of duty in not sending before this some account of the recent Anniversary Meeting of the Baptist Home Mission Convention of Ontario in London. But, having been unable to attend any of the sessions of this year's Convention, I could have done little more than condense from the full reports in the Baptist of the proceedings in connection with the various societies, and that could be done by the Messenger without my aid if thought desirable. Moreover knowing that one or more good Nova Scotia brethren were present on the occasion I have been hoping to see something from another pen, that would at once more than supply my lack of service and give any little qualms of conscience on my part. I will now only say that the meetings seem to have been in every way most encouraging. If the contributions for our various religious enterprises can be taken as a gauge of the spirit of the delegates and friends in attendance, and that spirit may further be regarded as a fair sample of that pervading the Denomination generally, there is surely every reason to thank God and take courage. The enthusiasm and liberality at both the Home and Foreign Missionary Meetings seem to have been almost unprecedented. The sums of, in round numbers, \$2,300 for Home Missions, and \$2,800 for the Foreign, were contributed or pledged in a short time. The present seems thus to be full of life and energy, and the future, of hope. The resolution taken to secure the services permanently of an evangelist upon the Home field, seems to promise still greater progress in this work in the future, while the determination to accord Bro. McLaurin a hearty support in his great undertaking amongst the Teloo-gos, is all that could be desired. Speaking of Evangelists I am reminded of the great amount of attention just now being drawn to the preaching of Mr. Varley, an evangelist belonging to the Baptist body, though eschewing, I believe, Sectarianism in his public ministrations. Originally a butcher, he has felt constrained to abandon his old pursuit in order to give himself wholly to the work of an Evangelist. In this his labours have met with success so marked that even the Globe is fain to turn aside a moment from hot political contests to give a very favourable account of his straightforward, manly, earnest addresses, and to marvel at the mystery of so many powerful preachers springing up from the time of Bunyan downward, in the ranks of the insignificant Baptists.

In regard to our Foreign Mission, the fact above alluded to would seem to go far towards sustaining the views of those who looked for a marked increase of enthusiastic interest to follow the organization of an independent mission. A letter recently received by the writer from Bro. McLaurin in Coconada, while manifesting a good amount of hopefulness, is evidently written under a clear sense of the greatness and responsibility of the work. He urges many reasons why an effort should still be made to have the forces of the Baptists of all the Dominion concentrated on this great battle-ground, but as his arguments are in many respects similar to those being now urged in the columns of the Messenger by "An Oriental," and by the former Secretary of your Mission, I refrain from entering, even by proxy, into the discussion of so serious a question. One fact seems to be established, that whatever may be the case in Siam, the Mission to the Teloo-gos will not fail for the want of a numerous population, tolerably accessible, and to a large extent ready and anxious for the truth.

Turning for a moment to secular matters, the recent speech of Mr. Blake, in which he strikes out boldly for Canadian Independence, Minority Representatives, Further extension of the Suffrage, &c., has created quite a sensation. Those who care more for statesmanship than politics and who are more anxious for wise legislation and pure administration than for party tactics and triumphs, are scarcely able as yet to know the true interpretation of the omen. Of course the view of by far the ablest man in the party and probably in the Parliament, thus a-tride the traces, has not