

The Christian Messenger.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1876.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Sunday, July 16th 1876.—Solomon's Temple.—2 Chron. iii. 1-17.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded." 1 Kings viii. xxvii.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, 1 Kings v. Tuesday, 1 Kings vi. Wednesday, 1 Kings vii. Thursday, Psalm xxvii. Friday, Matthew xii. 1-8. Saturday, 1 Corinthians iii. 16-23. Sunday, Revelation xxi.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.—The whole area of the Temple, including the walls that bounded the outer courts, formed a square of six hundred feet. But the sanctuary proper, though just double the size of the Tabernacle, was comparatively small, its grandeur consisting not so much in its outward size as in the preciousness of its materials, the richness of its internal ornaments, the excellency of its workmanship. The two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, before its porch or supporting it, were the master-pieces of one of the first of Tyrian artists. The king called him "Hiram, my father." Each of them was about forty feet in height, and six feet in diameter. The Temple itself differs from the Tabernacle in having chambers in tiers all around it, occupied by priests and their attendants, also for treasures and stores. Aside from these chambers, it was divided into three apartments—the porch, fifteen feet by thirty, the width of the main building; the holy place, or inner hall, sixty feet by thirty; and the holy of holies, thirty feet by thirty. The two holy places, therefore, exclusive of the porch, were ninety feet long by thirty wide, by forty-five in height. The whole interior was lined with wood-work, richly carved, overlaid with gold, and studded with precious gems. It glittered, as has been well said, "like the sanctuary of an El Dorado." "Great stones, costly stones, hewn stones," were laid in its foundations, as is attested by the discoveries of the present day. The top of the mount was enlarged in area by Solomon to make room for it, by raising lofty terraces from the valley beneath. Scores and fifties of thousands of strangers of the Canaanite races conformed to the religion of their conquerors, and relays of tens of thousands of Israelites themselves were for this undertaking torn from their homes, and sent off to the forests and quarries of Lebanon.

ANALYSIS.—I. Instructions followed. Vs. 1-4. II. Holy place furnished. Vs. 5-7. III. Most holy place furnished. Vs. 8-14. IV. The two pillars. Vs. 15-17.

EXPOSITION.—Verse 1.—Began to build. Actually to put up, or construct the edifice. This was not done till all the material was not only collected, but prepared, formed and framed each part for its place, so that the building could be reared without the din of stone masons and carpenters at work. 1 Kings vi. 7. In Mount Moriah. The place where Abraham offered up Isaac, in intent, was a mountain in the land of Moriah. Gen. xxii. 2. Where the Lord [Jehovah] appeared, etc. The Margin reads "which was seen of David his father," but the text in supplying the words "the Lord" had in mind 1 Chronicles xxi. 16, which very naturally suggests the supply of this name, and thus a meaning better fitting the connection Ornan. Another form of Araunah. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. "Mount Moriah was one summit of a range of hills, which went under the general name of Zion. The platform of the Temple is now or has long been occupied by the Haram or sacred enclosure, within which stand the three mosques of Ornan."

Verse 2. He began to build in the second day, etc. Comp. 1 Kings vi. 1. There the day of the month is not mentioned, but we have the intervals between the exodus and the event, viz., 480 years. The nature and importance of the event led to this minute statement of time. The permanent house of God, in place of the movable tabernacle, marked the attainment of a permanent national life in a permanent abode.

The whole hope and trust of the people centred in the presence of God with them, and so in a sense in this house and this place where his presence was to be specially manifested.

III. Measure and Ornaments.—Verse 3, Solomon was instructed. By David, who had the plan or so completely before him as to have gone far in the preparation of the materials before Solomon's reign. This plan or "pattern" seems to have been as truly and completely of God's determination as the pattern of the original tabernacle shown to Moses on the mount. 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12. The length by cubits after the first measure, etc. The cubit "of the first measure" was the old or Mosaic cubits. It is usually reckoned at eighteen inches, though it may have been twenty one. The dimensions of the temple proper are the inside measurement probably. They are double those of the tabernacle. Thus the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle was a cube ten cubits each way, in the Temple it was twenty cubits. The Holy Place, or outer hall, was ten cubits wide by twenty long, and ten high in the tabernacle. In the Temple all the dimensions were exactly doubled. The porch in the Tabernacle was five cubits deep, and in the Temple ten, its width in both instances being the width of the house. In feet, of course, each of the above numbers would be increased by one half.

Verse 4.—The porch etc. Or portico, extending the whole width of the house on its east or front end, making an imposing entrance. As to the height, however, most think the text should read "twenty instead of one hundred and twenty, as the latter height (one hundred and eighty feet.) would be four times the whole height of the Temple, and disproportionate to the base area. Overlaid it within with pure gold. Making at the outset the impression of costliness.

Verse 5.—And the greater house. The larger room, or Holy place, as we saw above, thirty feet by sixty, and thirty feet high. Ceated with fir tree. Covered the massive stone walls and the floor with fir tree boards (1 Kings vi. 15-18) which in turn were overlaid with gold. Thus corresponding to the porch. Set thereon palm trees and chains. Carved on the fir boards representations of palm trees and of flowery wreaths or garlands. The gold leaf was placed over the carvings. 1 Kings vi. 32-35.

Verse 6.—The insertion of precious stones in the wall for ornamentation seems to be intended. See on his procurement of these. 1 Kings x. 11. Parvaim. Where or what was this place is unknown.

Verse 7.—The house. As in vs. 5, the Holy Place.

Verse 8.—The most holy house. House here means apartment. On its dimensions see above on vs. 3. Six hundred talents. Equal in amount to near \$18,000,000, according to one estimate, and to about \$30,000,000 according to Dr. Smith's tables.

Verse 9.—The nails. For tacking on the gilding. Fifty shekels, or about two hundred and seventy-five dollars, according to Smith. And he overlaid the upper chambers, etc. A parenthesis. On the side chambers, see 1 Kings vi. 5, 6.

III. The Cherubim.—Verse 10.—Two cherubims. These large figures, each fifteen feet high, and fifteen feet in spread of wings (1 Kings vi. 24) must not be confounded with the small cherubim made at Sinai, and we need not think of the latter as displaced. They were apparently a permanent and inseparable part of the ark. But in a room of such increased dimensions, the harmony of impression required these larger symbolic figures. On their construction see 1 Kings vi. 23-28. The exact symbolism is still in question.

Verse 13.—Their faces were inward. Marginal reading "toward the house"—i. e., toward the Holy Place, "fronting the veil between the Holy and the Most Holy Place.

Verse 15.—Thirty and five cubits. In 1 Kings vii. 15 it is eighteen. The change was doubtless an error in copying, which would be very slight, the substitution of one letter for another similar.

Verse 16.—Oracle. Another error in copying. By a mere transposition of the Hebrew letters, the word meaning collar or chain is formed, and may here have been the original.

Verse 17.—Jachin. "He shall establish." Boaz "In it is strength."

QUESTIONS.—Who aided Solomon in building the temple? What do you know of the character of this assistance? How much larger than the tabernacle was the temple? Did the glory of the temple consist in its size? If not, in what? How long was it in building? How many worked to complete it in Lebanon? Did it go up with confusion and noise?

Vs. 3. Aside from the porch, how large was the temple?

Vs. 4. How large was the porch? Did it have a tower 180 feet high?

Vs. 5. What and how large was "the greater house"? How was it adorned?

Vs. 7. What did these cherubims symbolize?

Vs. 8. How much was 600 talents? How large was the most holy place?

Vs. 10. Will you describe these colossal cherubims? Size of wings? How they faced? vs. 13.

Vs. 15, 16. What was the probable height of these pillars? What is meant by pomegranates?

Vs. 17. How were these pillars placed? Meaning of their names? Who was their architect? 1 Kings vii. 13, 14.

—Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, July 23rd, 1876.—The Temple Dedicated.—1 Kings viii. 5-21.

YOUTHS' DEPARTMENT.

The Counterfeit Shilling.

A boy named Charles Harris, in a country town in England, had a counterfeit shilling given him, one day, by his cousin, Thomas, Downs, who was a clerk in a store. It looked so much like a good shilling that hardly one person in a hundred would have noticed that it was not a good one. In coming home from school the next day, Charles showed the shilling to some of his companions. They asked him why he didn't pass it. He said he would not do that, because it was not right. The boys laughed at this, and asked him to come to old Dame Jones's little shop, at the corner of the lane, and spend the shilling in nuts and candy. "You may be sure the Dame will never notice it," said Harry Morgan, the biggest boy in the company, "for she can't see very well, and then you can treat us all round, and that will be jolly."

Charles's conscience told him that this would be very wrong, and he said he couldn't do it. But the boys all got round him and pressed him so much, that at last he yielded and did it. His conscience troubled him dreadfully when he came to the shop. He hesitated; but the boys urged him on, and he went in and passed off the counterfeit shilling for a good one. The boys thought it was nice fun. They enjoyed the treat very much. But Charles didn't enjoy it at all. He could think of nothing but the mean wicked thing he had done. When he went to bed at night he couldn't sleep. It seemed as if there was a thorn in his pillow that drove sleep away.

The next day, when he went to school Harry Morgan met him, and asked him to do his sums for him. "I can't stop now," said Charles. "But you've got to," cried Harry, "if you don't I'll tell of you for passing counterfeit money, and then you'll have to go to jail." Poor Charles was terribly frightened. How he wished he had never seen that counterfeit shilling. He felt that it was very hard for the boys who had urged him to do wrong, now to turn round on him in this way. But he saw how entirely he was in their power.

During recess there was a quarrel among the boys. One of them who felt angry with Charles said, "Pooh! a fellow that would cheat a poor old woman will do anything." This was almost more than Charles could bear. But what was he to do?

On his way home in the afternoon he suddenly met his cousin Thomas Downs, who gave him the shilling. Halloo, Charles," said Thomas, "let's see that shilling that I gave you."

"Hav'n't got it," said Charles, turning quickly away. "Stop; did you lose it, or give it away?" "No," said Charles. "Well, where is it? You haven't spent it, have you?" It was on the end of his tongue to say "No!" But Charles never lied, and great as the temptation was, he wouldn't do it now. "O," he cried, almost choked with grief and shame, "what did you give me that counterfeit piece for! It has been a dreadful temptation to me. I have passed it, and what shall I do?" and

the poor boy looked perfectly wretched. His cousin was surprised and sorry. He took him quietly by the hand, and walked down a lane where they could talk by themselves. Charley told his cousin all about it, and asked what he was to do. Thomas told him that there was but one thing to do, and that was to carry a real shilling in place of the counterfeit, and own what he had done.

"Couldn't I go and put it under the shop door, said Charley, "it will be just the same to her; she'll get it and not lose by the counterfeit."

"Just as well for her," said his cousin, "but not as well for you, Charley. You know you have done wrong. If you are really sorry, make clean work of it. Now, go like a man; be honest about it. You have injured your conscience by doing wrong; you must heal it by doing right. Here, take this shilling, I give it you for my share in your trouble. It will teach me a lesson about putting temptation in the way of my friends. Go down to the woman; own it all; ask her to forgive you, and give her the good shilling in place of the bad one."

Charley did so. When he got the counterfeit shilling he went down to the shore and threw it into the sea. Then he felt a great load lifted off from him, and said to himself, "Now I'm free again. I am not afraid of anybody now." —S. S. World.

Magic Glasses.

"I wish we lived in fairy times," said Florry Hay, suddenly as she sat looking through her mama's Birthday gift, a new opera-glass; "I know what I would wish for."

"Why, what would that be—a glass like mine?" asked mamma, smiling.

"Well, not exactly; I should want one that showed me instead of things, what people's thoughts were like; then I should always know exactly who was good or who was greedy, or silly, or—"

"I remember a story that has a moral you will soon find out, I think, on this very subject.

"Once upon a time, a man had a pair of green magic-glasses, such as you are wishing for, and on putting them on he found he could not take them off again, although they made him very miserable; for far beyond the kind eyes of even his most tried friends, he saw into their hearts, and in all were some faults and failings, which these glasses magnified so much that the kind and tender feelings hidden in the same hearts could not be seen at all—the rims blotted them out; and so he lost all faith in those who had been dearest to him, and they, feeling his coolness, wondered and grieved, and finally left him, and he sat alone, feeling that it was a bad world, and he the only good man in it.

"But behold there came a little elfin child, with pure blue eyes and soft voice saying, 'I am Love, and the Master has sent me to comfort thee; look, now, into thine own breast, and then seek a faultless man if thou darest.' It touched those glasses, and the man saw his own heart. What a black heart it was, on which was written ingratitude, envy, untruth, worse than that of his neighbors, and he shrank back in horror, crying, 'I, too, am a sinner!' and the glasses fell shattered at his feet.

"Oh!" cried the man, rapturously, 'what is this that makes all things so fair? Let me go and tell others of this great bliss!'

"Do you understand my fable, Florry? and are you not content to see people's faces through my opera glass, and to leave their hearts alone?" Young Reaper.

Prayer-Meeting Hints.

Sit near the front.

Hold sacred the evening of your prayer-meetings.

"Boil it down." A great deal can be said in three minutes.

Welcome strangers who drop into the meeting. A kind word to such has often done great good.

Did you ever hear any one complain that the prayers were "too short" in a prayer-meeting?—Sowing and Reaping.

An old song of the American coloured Baptists runs thus:

If sprinkling is convenient, It has no claim to truth, It may be good for babies, But it will not do for youth. And to glory we will go, &c.

Scraps.

"Mamie," said a mother to a little six-year-old, "If I was a little girl like you, I would pick up all those chips." "Well, mamma," said the little one, "ain't you glad you are not a little girl?"

Not long ago two young gentlemen were gravely discussing the social problem whether or not etiquette demands that a young lady upon parting with her gentlemen callers at the gate or hall door shall ask them to call again. One insisted that such an invitation was the proper thing to do. The other denied it, "because," said he, "I go to see a young lady who knows what politeness requires, and she never asks me to call again."

The late Dr. Winter Hamilton, of Brighton, one day went into the town to buy some fish. The fishmonger was a female member of the Society of Friends. Having made his purchase, he requested her to send it to his house. "What is thy address?" asked she. He replied, "Direct to the Rev. F. Hamilton," at such a place. She hesitated a little, and then taking a card and pen and ink, she handed them to him, and said, "Perhaps thou wilt reverence thyself?"

A HIGHER HAND.—A little boy sat in front of his father, and held the reins which controled a restless horse. Unknown to the boy, the reins passed him, and were also in the father's hand. He saw occasion to pull one of them. With artless simplicity the child looked round, saying, "Father I thought I was driving, but I am not, am I?" Thus it is often with men, who think they are shaping a destiny which a higher hand than theirs is really fashioning. They do their own will, but they also do the will of God. A stronger hands guides them—a mightier holds the helm of their vessel, and saves from rock and wreck. Happy are they who quietly yield to the Almighty!

DR. SMITH'S PATIENT.—When Dr. Nathan Smith began his career as a Medical Professor (at Dartmouth), certain individuals planned a practical joke which it was expected would entirely demoralize the young instructor. A messenger summoned him to set a broken limb, but on reaching the house the Doctor found that the patient was a goose, whose leg had been broken by a sharp-shooting gamin. The "friends" of the "patient" looked to see the Doctor beat a hasty retreat; but he gravely examined the fracture, opened his case, set and bound the limb, promised to call the next day, and bade them good evening. The Doctor duly appeared in the morning, and for several succeeding days, till he pronounced the "patient" in a fair way of recovery. At his last visit, Dr. Smith produced a bill of considerable dimensions, and the family found that their little joke had cost them dearly. The level-headed Professor escaped further intrusions.—Harper.

DIARY OF A PROCRASTINATOR.—Sunday.—Day of rest; of course nothing can be done. Monday.—Being early in the week, don't be too precipitate in beginning anything. Tuesday.—Determine not to let the week go by without achieving something brilliant. Wednesday.—Resolve on vigorous measures for to-morrow. Thursday.—Mature yesterday's deliberations. Friday.—Rather too late in the week to do anything. Saturday.—Give yourself up to society and consult friends (who know best) what is to be done next.

THE COLORED RACE.—According to the last census 1871, the people of African descent in Nova Scotia were 6,212. In 1851 the number was 4,808, the women preponderating, and in 1861 there were 5,927. There has been no perceptible gain of the colored race in New Brunswick between 1840 and 1871, but in Nova Scotia it will be seen there has been considerable.

The old man looks down, and thinks of the past. The young man looks up, and thinks of the future. The child looks everywhere, and thinks of nothing. And there are a great many children in the world.—Standard.

The more dew there is in a flower's cup the lowlier hangs its head. The more grace there is in a human heart the humbler it will feel.