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The Christian Messenger.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1876.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES. SUNDAY, April 16th, 1876. - Peter's Defence.—Acts ii. 12-28.

COMMIT TO MEMORY : Vs. 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT .- " Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." 1 Peter

DAILY READINGS .- Monday, Romans x. 11-17. Tuesday, Joel ii. 28-32. Wednesday, Mark xiii. 14-27. Thursday, Titus iii. 5-7. Friday, 1 Peter i. 3-12. Saturday, 1 Peter ii. 1-10. Sunday, Psalm xvi.

ANALYSIS .- I. Astonishment expressed. Vs. 12, 13. II. The believers defended. Vs. 14, 15. III. Prophecy fulfilled. Vs. 16-21. IV. Messiah proclaimed. Vs. 22-28.

NOTE UPON PETER.—Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, had been trained, first by the Baptist, then by the Lord, for the great work of his life. His character had been elevated by special privileges, and chastened by humiliation, on account of personal weakness. The first part of the Acts of the Apostles is occupied by the record of transactions, in nearly all of which he stands forth, not as an appointed or authorized, but still as a recognized leader and speaker. He labored faithfully and long in Palestine, baptizing the first converts, and opening the gates of the church, as in the case of Cornelius, to the Gentiles. He was a wise master-builder, yet not of Paul's wisdom; which, as an unlettered lay man of Galilee, he greatly admired. 2 Peter iii. 15, 16. In his own beautiful figure, however, he bore testimony to the chief Corner-stone (1 Peter ii. 6), and later in life, according to his Lord's prophecy (John xxi. 18, 19), was crucified (tradition says with his head downward) under Nero, at Rome, about the time of the martyrdom of Paul, A. D.

Exposition. - I. Astonishment ex pressed .- Verse 12 .- They were all, etc. This verse, probably, refers mainly to the foreign Jews and proselytes who spoke other than the language of Palestine, and hence knew the miracle of tongues to be genuine, and not spurious. All these, or these as a whole, that is, in the main, and in the mass, were astonished just because they knew the miracle to be genuine. The more honest of the home Jews must also have had the same conviction of genuineness from the concurrent testimony of the rest, and hence have shared their wonder. The astonishment was the first impression of the miracle. The "doubt," or perplexity, came afterward, in thinking on the matter, and trying to make out how and why and for what it had been. The main question in dispute, was. What does this mean?

Verse 13 .- Others. Those confirmed enemies to the truth, the Jewish and Jerusalem leaders, "Scribe and Pharisee hypocrites," who had persistently, with chronic malice and malignity, sought and gained the Lord Jesus Christ's crucifixion. They were uncured and incurable. Full of new [sweet] wine. The sweet wine was an old wine, but preserved

without fermentation. II. The believers defended .- Verse 14. -Peter. Of his whole speech he gives only two brief verses to the defence of the disciples' character, and to the refutation of the slander, and he does even this little not from mere personal reasons, but in order to vindicate Christ, and assert for the Spirit his just claims. The apostles everywhere preached, not themselves, but Jesus and the resurrecand somewhat noisy at first. To home and foreign Jews, boldly, and "with

authority." Verse 15 .- Not drunken. Denies the slanderous charge, but with no scornful, wrathful epithet. As ye suppose. What we wish we think. Disbelief comes largely from dislike. Seeing. Literally, "for." Third hour. That is, about 9 A. M. This was the first hour of public prayer, at which time the morning sacrifice was offered in the Temple. "During these festivals the Jews con-

than this, still worse to drink wine. III. Prophecy fulfilled .- Verse 16 .-See Joel ii. 28-32. Spoken by the prophet. More exactly through the pro-

phet, coming as it did from God. Prophecy was any divine message coming through an authorized, qualified messenger. Matt. xi. 13.

Verse 17 .- In the last days. In the time after Christ's coming, this era Pour out my Spirit. The Spirit is God and hence the Person. His operation is upon many hearts at once, and appears as an influence, which word means inflow. So Christ is said to be "put on in baptism. All flesh. All mankind, viewed as frail and sinful, in contrast with the power and holiness of the lifegiving Spirit. At the beginning all classes and conditions were brought under the Spirit's power. xxi. 9; 1 Cor. xi.

Verses 19, 20 .- A rhetorical method of declaring that the final, closing judgment should be preceded by appropriate signs. The great and notable day. Reference is doubtless here made to "the end of the world," but none the less to the destruction of Jerusalem, which typified the final jndgment. Comp. Matt. xxiv. 1-31.

Verse 21 .- Whosoever shall call, etc. "The Lord" here, as usually in the New Testament, is understood of Jesus Christ, and Christians are characterized in 1 Cor. i. 2, as those that call on him. This must, of course, be a genuine hearty call, not counterfeit and heartless, as in case of those mentioned in Matt. vii. 22. We may pray to Father, Son, or Spirit, or simply to God. Shall be saved. The Christian is saved in the safety of his

IV. Messiah proclaimed .- Verse 22. -- Ye men of Israel. Because the multitude is thought of as related to salvation, and "the covenant" which gave the name Israel, and which has become "the new covenant," giving new meaning to the name Israel. Heb. x. 15-17; Rom. ii. 26-29; John i. 48. Jesus of Nazareth. Literally, Jesus the Nazarene. Usually known by this name, especially among the unfriendly Jews. John i. 47. A man approved [accredited] of God among [to] you. Miracles [works of supernatural power] and won ders [works which as supernatural astonished] and signs [indicating some truth, either as to the one working, or as to the truth which he would establish] which God did by him. Christ often said that his works and words were from the Father. The leaders of the Jews had often tried, but never successfully, to prove Christ a deceiver in both words and works.

Verse 23 .- Him. " Literally, "this one." Being delivered by the determin ate, etc. "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Sacrificed eternally in the loving purpose of Eternal Love. "Delivered" [given out] by Judas to the Jews, by the Jews to Pilate, but first of all, and in a quite contrary manner, by the Father. The divine permission made possible their action. Y [Jews] have taken. Human agency, not destroyed, nor invaded by the sovereign counsel. And by wicked [lawless] hands. The Romans, who trampled on law by crucifying one whom Pilate declared guiltless, while setting free one whom he and all the rest knew to be a criminal. Crucified and slain. The whole guilt of that shame is put on those who cast it on the Son of God."

Verse 24 .- God [the Father] hath raised up. That is, from the dead. This was the crowning endorsement of Christ and his work. Loosed the pains. As though the pains of death followed one into the grave, and these are viewed as cords or chains, binding the dead. God breaks the chains. Not possible. Blessed

impossibility. Verses 25-28.-Ps. vi. 8-11. Forsaw means here, saw in front of me, before in place, not time. Tongue glad. As responding to the heart, and telling its tion. Lifted up, etc. A great crowd, joys. Flesh, as mortal. In hope even in the grave. Hell. The place of the

> Questions.—Was Peter's prominence among the apostles personal or official? Where did he labor faithfully and long? When, where, and how did he die?

Vs. 12. Who were these mockers? How do unbelievers often misjudge revivals of religion now? Can the unrenewed understand the work of the Holy Spirit? 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Vs. 15. What made the accusation of these enemies impossible?

Vs. 17. What is meant by the exsidered it unlawful to take food earlier pression "the last days"? What by the phrase, "I will pour out. . . . upon all flesh "? When the Spirit of God is given to a man, what follows as a result? Ans. Titus iii. 4, 6. What is meant by the words, "shall prophesy?"

Vs. 19. To what do these wonders refer? Are they to be literally expected? Vs. 21. What is meant by calling on the name of the Lord? Meaning of the name Jesus?

Vs. 23. Where have we the doctrine of election in these words? Where de you find the doctrine of free-will? Is not a great change manifest in Peter? How do you account for it?

Val 25. Does not the argument of Peter show that the Old and the New Testaments are agreed upon the person and work of the Messiah? What doctrine did the early church steadfastly avow? See Acts i. 22; ii. 24. -Baptist Teacher.

Sunday, April 23rd, 1876 .- The Early Christian Church.-Acts ii. 37-47.

YOUTHS' DEPARTMENT.

Where is the sweetest pet, The brightest birdie yet? Whose are the prettiest eyes, Most loving and most wise? What form of fairest mold Is worth its weight in gold? You can't imagine? Well, Ask mother—she can tell!

Where is the sunniest gleam That makes her life a dream? Where are the rosy toes, And blessed little nose, And dimpled hands and feet, The models all complete, Which nature can't excel? Ask mother—she can tell!

Who is the grandest king, Or queen, or anything That may be great or high? Who wandered from the sky, The best of girls or boys, To be her joy of joys? You guess-the baby? Well, Ask mother—she can tell!

The Dying News Boy.

A number of benevolent gentlemen in Cincinnatti, started a home for the "News Boys." After the most persistent efforts, they established a well organized Sabbath-School.

The singing was in charge of one of the most experienced and accomplished singers-his whole soul was in the work, and the result was, that after a few months they had good singers.

But there was one little boy that was taken sick, and for a long time he was too | She did not like to get up, and she hated ill to sell papers. His voice was no longer the Commercial and Gazette, morning edition!"

The best medical skill was employed. Kind friends nursed and cared for him -but his disease was not to be stayed -it went on until he was near the gates of eternity. He was informed that he had not long to stay-he replied, "I am ready-it is good news."

The dews of the dark valley were beaded and cold upon his fair young brow. He asked to see his singingteacher-they sent for him, and he was soon at his bed-side. Poor Mike McCune was singing a can-

ticle of triumph over death. "I am near-er home, near-er home,

our blessed, happy home-Where grief and sin can never come. Near-er home, near-er to my blessed, happy home."

Mr. F. his teacher, took him by the hand and said, "Mikie, you are very happy." "Yes," was the quick response, "I am happy, and I am going home to see Jesus, and be more like him." Then after a pause, he added, "I wanted to thank you for your deep interest in me -for teaching me so many sweet songs -songs that have led me to give my heart to Jesus. I shall soon be with the angels and sing with them."

And in a little while the poor news boy was struggling with the waves of the Jordan of death. But he continued to repeat over and over the refrain, " ham nearing home, I am nearing home," until he was there. Let Jesus be in the songs of children-may this true story give encouragement to all; do not get weary if the way is rough, "smooth it with hope and cheer it with song."

One Hundred Years Ago.

One hundred years ago there were no disputes about impoliteness of street car

One hundred years ago people did not enjoy the inestimable pleasure of growling about gas bills.

One hundred years ago, a young lady did not lose caste by getting her hands wet in dish-water, or rubbing the skin off her knuckles on a washboard.

One hundred years ago, the physician who could not draw every form of disease from the system by tapping a vein in the arm, was not much of a doctor.

One hundred years ago, farmers did not cut their legs off with mowing machines. What is to a row on with must were

One hundred years ago, mothers did not worry over disordered sewing machines, and I fliv anderson , sixiz

One hundred years ago, our fathers did not light their pipes with matches, but carried fire in their pockets in the shape of a piece of punk a piece of steel and a flint. I that open all of theses

One hundred years ago, a public officer or other citizen could not steal enough to make the act respectable, and insure the actor a prominent position in - primaret to the "first circles."

One hundred years ago, the condition of the weather on the 1st day of January was not telegraphed all over the continent on the evening of December 31st Things have changed.

One hundred years ago, people did not worry about rapid transit and cheap transportation, but threw their bags of grain across the backs of their horses, and uncomplainingly "went to the

One hundred years ago, every young man was not an applicant for a position as clerk or book-keeper.

One hundred years ago, false teeth were not considered preferable to the original grinders.

One hundred years ago, time and tide waited for nobody, and now nobody waits for time or tide.

One hundred years ago, kerosene lamps did not explode and assist women to shuffle off their mortal coil.

One hundred years ago, men did not commit suicide by going up in balloons and coming down without them.

The fate of a Face-Maker.

It was once upon a time, -- but what time I cannot say,-That there lived a little girl who had a naughty way

Of making ugly faces whenever anything teased her, And, to make the matter worse, nearly everything displeased her.

to go to bed; heard in the streets, crying, "Here is She did not like to read, and she hated She did not like it to rain, and she hated

the sun to shine; At last he was confined to his bed. She was never ready for dinner, and,well, she did like to dine.

> Her loving parents thought some fairy had bewitched her They reasoned with her long, and finally

> they switched her; But the more they switched and reasoned, the worse their darling grew, Until they owned-to each other-they didn't know what to do!

It was just about this time she went for a walk one day, Because she had been told on no account

Outside the palace-garden, -you've read in many a rhyme That folks always lived in palaces, "once upon a time."

So she strayed away from home as far as ever she could, And found herself at last in a dark and dismal wood,

When all at once she saw, -you may think she was afraid,-Lying loose among the trees, all the faces she'd ever made.

There was the face she made to frighten her little brother; And a worse one still she made when she

would not mind her mother; And as she looked around they still grew worse and worse,-

There was every single face she had ever made at her nurse!

And many more beside,-she'd done it for years, you see,-So the place was just as full of faces as i could be.

She turned and ran, poor thing, as wel as she could for fright, And when she did get home they found she was crazy, quite.

They sent her to an asylum at once; but there, alas! By way of amusing her, they gave her a

looking-glass. When they opened her door next day, there was nothing in the place But a broken looking-glass, and a terribly ugly Face!

Margaret Vandegrift, in April, WIDE

The people of San Francisco show growing fondness for reading. Twenty thousand books have been stolen from A great proof of superiority is to bear the Mercantile Library in one year.

"Aunt Betsey's Prayer-Meeting."

BY JULIA A. MATHEWS.

I've been to-night to a meetin', Our own church meetin' for prayer : I knew it wouldn't be Christian To wish I wasn't there; But somehow I felt quite different From what I'd felt before went with John and the children Into the old church door.

went feeling chirk and happy; I'd had a good bright day; Father'd been rakin' the meadow, The boys were cutting hay; And the smell came up so pleasant, Just like a sweet wild rose, had to sing at my bakin', And as I damped my clothes.

And all the day had been shiny-Indeed, days mostly is; I think when they go to meetin', Folks don't remember this. It's often so in our meetin's ; They go and sing and pray, But scarcely ever seem thinkin' Of the brightness of the day.

To-night there was many prayin', And many speakin' too; Yet there was a something wantin' When they had all got through. The prayers was real good and earnest, And there was wise words said, But somehow even the Scriptur' To me fell cold and dead.

They told the Lord of our failin's, Of all the cares he'd sent, Of our troubles and our trials, (Ownin' 'twas kindly meant;) And they prayed for help and comfort-I know it was quite right, But all the while I was wishin, They'd thank him more to-night.

We'd had such a real nice sunset The clouds was gold and red, And lay on the blue so restful, I wanted one word said To thank the Lord for its beauty; He did it to make us glad; But never one real thanksgivin' For that fair sight, He had.

Oh, no; they only just thanked him In a gen'ral kind of way; I wish they would speak out plainly, Of flowers, the new-mown hay, The birds, the sky, and the sunset, And all our sweet home-joys; Would tell him of all the pleasure We have in our girls and boys.

There they talked so of our failures; Enough to fright a soul! We want some measure of courage To keep faith bright and whole; If you should be always tellin' Your boys of their faults and sin, Your strivin' to make them better It wouldn't be worth a pin.

I know I'm a vexin' sinner, But I don't feel I am "vile," If I did, I'm sure I shouldn't Think it was quite worth while To tell all my friends and neighbors; I'd be so much ashamed, 'm sure I couldn't lift my head If I should hear it named.

I'd just get close to the Master, To breathe it in his ear; know he'd be watchin' for me, Waitin' my tale to hear. But I don't believe he'll ever Let me be "lost" or "vile," For his own strong arm can hold me Close to him all the while.

So I came straight home this evenin; I did not fret a mite To John, or the boys, of the meetin'; They'd think it wasn't right, For they're all strong meetin'-goers, And they don't seem to see The want there is in prayers and things That is so great to me.

Warm Food for Lambs.

Here is an anecdote told by one minister about another. A certain Presiding Elder, who was noted for seldom being up to time, seldom very animated, and seldom very brief, once kept a congregation waiting a long time for his appearance, and when he did come he preached them a very prosy sermon of unusual length, on the text, "Feed my lambs." He had not yet finished when that original old minister known as "Camp-meeting John" rose from a seat in the congregation, and said, "Brother, I have had some experience in raising lambs myself, and I have found that the following rules are absolutely essential to successful lamb raising: First, give them their food in season; second, give them a little food at a time; and third, give it to them warm." | 01 family od

Engaging child:-" Oh, Mr. Jenkins, do let me see you drink?" Mr. Jenkins:+" See me drink! What for, my child?" Engaging child:-"Oh, mamma says you drink like a fish !"

with impertinence.