

The Christian Messenger.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1876.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.
SUNDAY, May 14th, 1876.—Christian
Courage.—Acts iv. 8-22.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The righteous are
bold as a lion." Proverbs xxviii. 1.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Luke xxii.
54-62. Tuesday, Mark xiii. 9-11. Wed-
nesday, Psalm cxviii. 19-29. Thursday,
Ephesians ii. 13-22. Friday, 1 Peter
ii. 1-10. Saturday, 1 Corinthians i.
18-31. Sunday, 1 Peter iii. 12-17.

ANALYSIS.—I. Peter's answer. Vs. 8-12.
II. Judgment of council. Vs. 13-18.
III. Reply of Peter and John. Vs. 19, 20.
IV. Final charge. Vs. 21, 22.

THE SITUATION.—At eventide of the
very day on which the notable miracle
of the healing of the lame man was
wrought, Peter and John were appre-
hended and "put in hold unto the next
day." Then the Sanhedrim was con-
voked, to judge and punish the offence
of the apostles. The scene was one
well fitted to inspire awe and fear.
Every face of the august council of
seventy-one scowled wrath and menace.
But Peter, not quailing now, stands be-
fore it, conscious of strength from on
high, dignified and calm, with heroism
of speech sufficient to be the accuser in-
stead of the accused.

EXPOSITION.—Peter's Answer.—Verse
8.—Then Peter. "Then," when the
question in verse 7 had been asked.
The time is thus noted because it was
a moment of such supreme importance
—a critical moment. Filled with the
Holy Ghost. The Greek word translated
Ghost is the same as that translated
Spirit, and we may always substitute
"Spirit" for "Ghost." The word "filled"
indicates that Peter was fully under the
Spirit's power, and hence able to meet
the occasion. He fell when trusting his
own strength; he now stands because
upheld. Ye rulers of the people. In
the Sanhedrim was all the authority
conceded by the Romans to the Jews.
Elders, etc. Indicating more the char-
acter of the men to whom was com-
mitted the authority.

Verse 9.—If we, etc. The pronoun
"we" is emphatic, as the Greek shows;
whether to express surprise that they
should be thus arraigned, or to draw a
contrast between their views and that of
the council, or to hint that as Jesus, not
they, had really wrought the miracle,
Jesus, and not they, was responsible.
The good deed. Such, undeniably, was
the cure of the lame man, but what a
charge on which to arraign a man!
What a court, to treat beneficence as a
crime! There is a delicate but powerful
rebuke in this word. By what means,
etc. See vs. 7.

Verse 10.—Be it known. Now comes
the direct testimony, and it is very direct
and bold. It is no time and no place
for soft words or evasions. Unto you all.
The members of the council who had,
in the name of law, against all law, con-
demned Jesus, and who were still of the
same mind and purpose. And to all the
people of Israel. All the people were
represented, and Peter gives to them
God's message. By the name Jesus
Christ of Nazareth, [the Nazarene.] To
know what heroism it was to speak that
name then, one must make vivid to
himself the scene of the trial of that
same Jesus. Whom ye crucified, whom
God raised. The same sharp, terrible
contrast as in the last lesson between
them and God; their judgment and
God's; their treatment of Christ, and
God's. By him. Repeated for em-
phasis. Doth this man stand. That he
could now "stand" was proof of the
change, and so of the almighty power
of the Crucified One.

Verse 11.—This [viz., Christ] is the
stone, etc. See Ps. cxviii. 22; Matt.
xxi. 42; Luke xx. 17. The church of
God is often compared to a building in
which each member is a "living" stone.
The head-stone of the corner is "prob-
ably not the cap-stone, but the one
which lies at the foundation of the
edifice." 1 Peter ii. 6; Isaiah xxviii. 16.

Verse 12.—Neither is there salvation,
etc. Salvation from sin, of which the
lame man's cure was a type. Neither
they nor any other than in all the world
can escape eternal ruin, and have ac-
ceptance with God, save through Jesus.
None other name. "Jesus only." Under

heaven. In all this world, where are the
lost, and where the lost are to be found
and saved, if saved at all. Given. God
so loved the world [of earth-born, sin-
cursed men,] that he gave his Only
begotten Son. A "good and perfect
gift." Whereby we must be saved. That
is, if saved at all. How can we escape
if we neglect so great salvation? Im-
possible.

II. Judgment of the Council.—Verse
13.—When they saw the boldness, etc.
The arraignment council had been arraigned
before the divine tribunal. The
criminals were the prosecutors, and the
judges were judged. A new thing for
the Sanhedrim to be thus confronted,
and they might well be confounded.
Unlearned and ignorant. [Private per-
sons.] Not educated as doctors of the
Jewish law, and not occupying public
and official station. No plea for igno-
rance can be drawn from this. Took
knowledge, etc. Supposed to mean that
they now remembered having seen
Peter and John with Jesus before, and
at the trial of Jesus.

Verse 14.—Beholding the man, etc.
Had there been any fraud in the miracle,
it would have furnished an escape. This
escape was cut off, both by their own
concession in verse 7, and by the pres-
ence of the man.

Verse 15.—Whether any save mem-
bers of the council remained is not
stated.

Verse 16.—What shall we do, etc.
Not "to be saved," as in ii. 37, but "to
these men," to stop salvation, to drive
God and his grace out of the world, back
again from "under heaven," into heaven.
How, by fair or foul means, can we put
down these men and this cause. We
cannot deny it. Why, because it is true?
Oh no; but because it is universally
known to be true. Hence to deny it is
to lose popular confidence.

Verse 17.—That it spread no further.
It had been already proclaimed quite
too publicly to suit the council. Strictly
[strictly, or literally "with a threat"],
threaten them. In the exercise of arbi-
trary power, without having convicted
them of any wrong. That they speak,
etc. They would keep shut the mouths
which God had opened.

III. Reply of Peter and John.—Verse
19, 20.—A noble answer, prompted by
the Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Lord, had
commanded them to speak as explicitly
as the Sanhedrim had forbidden them.
They could not hesitate.

IV. Final Charge.—Verse 21.—Find-
ing nothing, etc. Though greatly de-
siring it. The only reason was "the
people." The council were more
hardened and desperate than the nation
at large. For all men glorified God,
etc. "All" here is used, as often else-
where, to denote a multitude, and possi-
bly few.

Verse 22.—The older the man, the
more striking the miracle, and also the
more widely known as a beggar. For
both reasons it was a hard case for the
council.

QUESTIONS.—What was Peter's con-
duct in the presence of this council on
a former occasion? How do you account
for the change that has taken place in
his character? Luke xxii. 31, 32.

Vs. 8. Recall the promise made by
Jesus to his disciples to strengthen
them when on trial? Mark xiii. 9-11.
Does the promise hold good now?

Vs. 10. Where is their boldness of
speech in this verse? Where is there a
defeat of human wickedness?

Vs. 11. To what do Peter's words
about "the stone" refer? Is it applied
anywhere else than in the Psalms to the
Messiah? Isaiah xxviii. 16; Matt. xxi.
42; Rom. ix. 33; Eph. ii. 20. What
awful warning is in place here? Matt.
xxi. 44.

Vs. 12. What is meant by salvation?
Matt. i. xxi. Acts v. 31; Rom. viii. 21.
How can salvation be said to be given?

Vs. 13. Does this verse infer that
learning is of little value? If not, just
what does it teach respecting the power
of the gospel?

Vs. 14. Was the reality of the miracles
wrought by our Saviour or by his ap-
ostles ever successfully denied?

Vs. 19. Has the State any right to
control in questions of religious belief?
For what did our Baptist forefathers
gloriously contend? Ans. For the full
liberty of conscience in religious matters.
—Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, May 21st, 1876.—Christian
Fellowship.—Acts iv. 23-37.

Passover comes on Sunday this year.
for the first time in twenty-two years.

Indiana wheat has been badly dam-
aged by cold weather.

YOUTH'S DEPARTMENT.

A Newfoundland Dog.

The American brig Cecilia, Capt.
Symmes, on one of her voyages, had on
board a splendid specimen of the New-
foundland breed named Napoleon, of
magnificent size, with an intellectual
head, broad white chest, white feet,
and white-tipped tail, the rest of his
glossy body being black.

He was owned by a man named Lan-
caster, who was naturally enough very
fond of him.

Captain Symmes, however, was not
partial to animals of any kind, and had
an unaccountable and special repug-
nance to dogs—so much so, indeed, as if
all his ancestors had died with hydro-
phobia, and he dreaded to be bitten
like his unfortunate predecessors. This
dislike he one day developed in a most
shocking manner; for as Napoleon had
several times entered his room, and by
wagging his great banner of a tail
knocked paper and inkstand off his
desk, on the next occasion the captain
seized a knife and cut half of the poor
animal's tail off. The dog's yell brought
his master to the spot, and seeing the
calamity and the author of it, without a
moment's hesitation he felled Captain
Symmes to the cabin-floor with a sledge-
hammer blow which, had it hit the
temple, would have for ever prevented
the captain from cutting off any more
dogs' tails.

One morning, as the captain was
standing on the bowsprit, he lost his
footing and fell overboard.

"Man overboard! Captain Symmes
overboard," was the cry, and all rushed
to get out the boat, as they saw the
swimmer strike out for the brig, which
was at once rounded to; and as they
felt especially apprehensive on account
of the white sharks in those waters, they
regarded his situation with the most
painful solicitude.

By the time the boat had touched the
water their worst fears were realized,
for at some distance beyond the swim-
mer they beheld advancing upon him
the most dreaded fish in those waters.

"Hurry, hurry, men, or we shall be
too late!" exclaimed the mate. "What's
that?"

The splash that caused this inquiry
was occasioned by the plunge of Napo-
leon into the sea, the noble animal hav-
ing been watching the tumult from the
bow of the vessel. He had noticed the
captain's fall and the shout, and for a
few moments had vented his feelings in
deep howls, as if conscious of the perils
of his enemy.

His growls, however, soon changed
into those whines of sympathy which so
often show the attachment of dog to
man when the latter is in danger. At
last he plunged, and rapidly making his
way to the now exhausted captain, who,
aware of his double danger, and being
but a possible swimmer, made fainter
and fainter strokes, while his adver-
saries closed rapidly upon him.

"Pull, boys, for dear life!" was the
shout of the mate as the boat now fol-
lowed the dog, whose huge limbs prop-
elled him gallantly to the scene of
danger.

Slowly the fatigued swimmer made
his way, while ever and anon his head
sank in the waves, and behind him the
backs of the voracious animals told fear-
fully what progress they were making.

The scene was of short duration.
Ere the boat could overtake the dog, an
enormous shark had arrived within
three oars' length of the captain, and
suddenly turned over on his back pre-
paratory to darting on the sinking man
and receiving him into his vast jaws,
which now displayed their rows of long
triangular teeth.

The wild shriek of the captain an-
nounced that the fearful crisis had come.
But now Napoleon, as if inspired with
new strength had also arrived, and with
a fearful howl leaped upon the gleam-
ing belly of the shark and buried his
teeth in the monster's flesh, while the
boat swiftly neared them.

"Saved, if we are half as smart as the
dog is!" cried the mate as all saw the
voracious monster shudder in the sea,
and smarting with pain turn over again
the dog retaining his hold and becoming
submerged in the water.

At this juncture the boat arrived, and
Lancaster, his knife in his teeth, plunged
into the water, where the captain had
also sank from view.

But a few minutes elapsed before the
dog arose to the surface, and soon after
Lancaster with the insensible form of
the captain.

"Pull them in, and give me an oar,"
cried the mate.

His orders were obeyed; and the
second onset of the marine monster was
foiled by the mate's splashing water in
his eyes as he came again, and but a
second too late to snap off the captain's
leg while his body was drawn into the
boats.

You can imagine the captain's gra-
titude to the noble dog for thus saving
his life. Napoleon was a greater favorite
than ever, one of the sailors remarking
that "he was the best Christian on
board, as he knew how to forgive them
who had badly treated him."

Worshipping a heathen god.

Should any of our readers ever visit
the Church of St. Peter at Rome, before
they arrive at the great cupola they will
see, at the right hand, a brass statue of
St. Peter blessing the people. This
statue is much worshipped by all devout
Romans, especially by the clergy. The
popes worship it publicly twice in each
year. The worshippers all kiss the toe of
this statue, and invoke its blessing in
order to obtain eternal salvation. Now,
in the good old times of Rome, this self-
same St. Peter was a statue of the
heathen god Jupiter. The only change
consists in the name. The pagan-dol-
ter Romans worshipped Jupiter-Tonans,
the Papal-idolater Romans worship Jupi-
ter-Peter. Let it not be forgotten that
the church which worships a heathen
idol proposes to take charge of the gov-
ernment and people of this great Chris-
tian nation.—American paper.

A Personal Saviour.

What dying men need is a Divine
Saviour. The doctrine of the atonement
is only of value as it exhibits the Divine
Atoner. It is not the doctrine which
saves, but the omnipotent and loving
Being who laid down his life for us.
Thousands believe in the doctrine who
never believe on the Redeemer. The
most splendid preaching is a splendid
failure if it fails to point and to press
every guilty, hungry, suffering soul right
up to the Lamb of God as a personal
Saviour. That pulpit, that Sabbath
school teacher, and that volume, which
God will honor with richest success, is
the pulpit, the teacher or the book
which presents "no man save Jesus
only." Here is the clew to the best
method of dealing with awakened hearts.
We are too prone to direct an inquirer
to attend a prayer-meeting, or to read
some pungent book or tract, or to go
and listen to some arousing preacher.
All this is but offering a thirsty man a
silver cup when he is perishing for the
water itself.—Dr. Cuyler.

Each day a little life.

"Every day is a little life, and our
whole life is but a day repeated, whence
it is that old Jacob numbers his life by
days; and Moses desires to be taught
this point of holy arithmetic, to number
not his years but his days. Those,
therefore, that dare lose a day, are
dangerously prodigal; those that dare
to mispend it, desperate. . . . All days
are His who gave time a beginning and
continuance; yet some He hath made
ours, not to command, but to use. In
none may we forget Him; in some we
must forget all beside Him."—Bishop
Hall.

Elephants at Work.

A correspondent of the New York Ob-
server writes:

"I was surprised to witness the intel-
ligence of some of these useful animals.
They are employed on the public works,
and their enormous strength enables
them with apparent ease to draw stones
of great magnitude, and, what is more,
to place them where needed. They are
used in the construction of bridges, and
will work in the water all day. They
will push a stone as carefully as a gang
of men. It is interesting to see these huge
animals move about until they get a se-
cure place to stand, and then exert their
amazing strength in moving a stone
just as the mason waves his hand. In
the large timber yards of India these
useful animals are very extensively used.
It is only necessary to watch one for a

little while to be satisfied of the wonder-
ful strength as well as sagacity of these
animals. They are employed in draw-
ing and fitting the huge logs used in
ship-building. They will draw large logs
over very rough roads from the forests.
They will take up a log weighing two
tons on their tusks and hold it in its
place with their proboscis, and carry it
apparently with more ease than fifty
coolies would. When one of these sag-
acious animals has brought you a log from
a pile, you may send him for the next
log by merely pointing at it, and he will
toil patiently all day, and make piles of
logs and as nicely as a gang of men could
do. They are always very careful not
to injure their tusks, especially not to
break them near their heads. One man,
who had a large lumber and timberyard,
said it took over a year to teach his ele-
phant the lumber business; but, he ad-
ded, he never forget. These trained ele-
phants will sell in India from 500 to 3000
rupees each, depending upon the sagaci-
ty of the animal.

With Brains.

Brains are always valuable in all en-
terprises and occupations; but they
produce better results in farming than
in anything else. As an illustration of
the difference between farming with or
without brains, the Massachusetts Plough-
man gives the following: "Two men,
both of correct habits, both industrious,
settled on farms adjoining: each had
about the same landed area. The one
had his farm given him; the other bought
his and paid \$100 down and a mortgage
note for the balance. Twenty years af-
ter found the gift farm checked with
mortgages and the occupants compelled
to move off. The other had paid for his
farm in full, educated three boys, built
a new house and a model barn, and had
a respectable sum of money in mortgage
notes. Both stuck to the farm; but the
difference was evident. One put a good
share of brains into his plans; the other
farmed it blind."

Western ideas have not as strong a
foothold in India as many have supposed.
A Brahmin of high rank, a member of
the Bengal Legislative Council, Baboo
Juggadanund Mookerjee by name, en-
tertained the Prince of Wales at his
house, and introduced him to the wo-
men of his family. For this latter act
he has been violently attacked by almost
the entire native press, being called a
traitor to his co-religionists and a dis-
grace to the Hindoo community. Some
of the papers have gone so far as to call
upon all Hindoo tradesmen to refuse to
serve him, and all Hindoos of equal rank
to refuse further communication with
him.

One of the Church organs reports,
with a naïveté singularly provocative of a
smile, that the inmates of the Islington
workhouse have petitioned the guard-
ians to select for them "a chaplain who
could really read, not in a painful monotonous
or querulous way, which obscured
the meaning, and who could really give
an interesting address." Only think of
that; and paupers, too! Stern mea-
sures must be adopted with such recalcitrants,
or no Church dignitary will be
safe for a moment. It would probably
be but bare justice to behold them "right
away," as Mr. Moody would put it; but
as there might be some little difficulty
in this benighted age in applying so de-
sirable a remedy, some other sternly re-
pressive expedient must be devised.
Such an ungrateful lot of paupers was
surely never heard of before! Why next
we shall have the very parishioners of
fat livings sending up to the bishop with
the absurd request that he will appoint
clergymen who can at least read—if only
MS. sermons at five shillings a dozen!
Pshaw! such impertinence must be stop-
ped, and at once, or there is no know-
ing what may be the outcome.

THE WESLEYS.—The sculptured mem-
orial of John and Charles Wesley, which
has been placed in one of the aisles of
Westminster Abbey has recently been
unveiled by Dean Stanley. The gentle-
men present included the President of the
Conference, Sir Francis Lytett, Mr.
Alderman McArthur, M. P., Mr. A. Mc-
Arthur, M. P., Mr. J. C. Clarke, M. P.,
Dr. Johnson, Mr. Bunting, Dr. Punshon,
and many other members of the Wesleyan
denomination. After an explanatory
speech by Dr. Johnson, the Dean pronoun-
ced an eloquent eulogium on the labours
of the two Wesleys, and the tablet was
subsequently unveiled.