

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1879.

SUNDAY, March 30th, 1879.

FIRST QUARTER REVIEW.

DAVID'S LIFE.

May be conducted between the Superintendent, six classes, and whole school.

1st. David's Parentage and Youth.—1 Sam. xvi. 17.

2nd. David's Early Trials.—1 Sam. xviii. 5-16; xix. 1-7; xx. 21; xxi. 10-15; xxii. 1, 20; xxiv. 1-16; xxvii. 5, 6; xxxi. 8.

3rd. David's Reign at Hebron.—2 Sam. Chaps. 1, 2, 3; 1 Chron. xii. 23-40.

4th. David's Reign at Jerusalem.—1 Chron. xi. 4-9; 2 Sam. v, vi, vii.

5th. David's Noble Deeds.—1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4; xxiv. 1-8; xxvi. 2 Sam. i. 17-27; ix. 1-13; xviii. 33; xxii. 1 Kings ii. 7.

6th. David's Lord.—Matt. i. 1; ix. 27; xxi. 9; Psalm cx. compared with Matt. xxii. 41-46; Luke i. 32; John vii. 42; Acts ii. 25; xiii. 22; xv. 15-17; Rom. i. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 8; Rev. v. 5; xxii. 16.

QUESTIONS.—1st. Who was David's father? Which of his eight sons was he? Who anointed David? What beasts did he kill in his youth?

2nd. What did people say of David after the death of Goliath? What passion did this arouse in Saul? Why did he seek David's life ever after this? Who befriended David at this time? What town was given to him? In what battle was Saul slain?

3rd. Who directed David to Hebron? What tribe anointed him there as king? How long did he there reign? How many thousands in all were in David's army?

4th. Who helped David to build a house in Zion? What old enemies did he defeat. What sacred relic did he bring up to Jerusalem? What was he forbidden to build? Why? Who succeeded him?

5th. How many times did David spare Saul's life? To what invalid boy did he give a living at his table? What benefactor did he care for in his last days?

6th. Whose Son is Christ said to be? Whose throne does Luke say he shall fill?

QUESTIONS FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL.—Who was David's great-grandmother? What elder brother treated him scornfully? Before what king did he pretend to be mad? In what two caves did he hide? What was the name of his oldest son? By whom was this eldest son killed? What three men recorded David's acts? How old was David when he died? What Psalm of his is most penitential? What Psalm is most sublime? What Psalm is most comforting?

TO TEACH THE LESSON.—1. A simple plan is, to have the scholars, learn and recite the Titles and Golden Texts of the quarter, and make these the centres around which you gather briefly, and draw out from the scholars the salient points of the lessons, with personal applications.

2. Or, give to each scholar, beforehand, one lesson or more, and have him recite Title, Golden Text, and sum up himself, briefly, the chief teachings.

4. Or, some law of association will aid in grouping the lessons, to aid the memory. Thus: Six lessons are in Ezra and Nehemiah; six in the Psalms. Of the first six, two are about the second temple, two about building the wall, two about religious observances. The second six are by David. One Psalm, penitential. Three Psalms, running over with joy, in describing the happiness of the righteous. One tells of his "way," another of his "joy in forgiveness," and the third, of his delight in God's house.

While many prefer to study the life of David, it is possible that some may wish to go over the lessons actually studied.

I. Questions.—When did Judah's captivity begin? When did it end? How many returned? Who ordered it? What led him to do it?

Notes.—Judah's captivity was limited to seventy years. (Jeremiah xxv. 9-11), from Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Judah (B. C. 606) to the decree of Cyrus (B. C. 536), or from the final destruction of Jerusalem (B. C. 588) to the order of Darius for the completion of the second temple (B. C. 519). The return was the Revival, the Second Birth, the Second Exodus of the nation. It probably took four months, as Ezra's did subsequently (Ezra vii. 9) from late spring to early fall. It was conducted by Zerubbabel the Moses, and by Joshua the Aaron, the leader and the priest of the people.

The whole nation however did not return, only about 50,000, including slaves and singers (Ezra ii. 64-65).

II. Questions.—What did the Jews at once build on their return? Why this before the temple? What did they then proceed to build? Who made them trouble? How? How did the second temple compare with the first? What prophet encouraged the builders?

Notes.—Compare Ezra iii. 1-13. The temple begun B. C. 535 was soon hindered by the Samaritans (iv. 4), descendants of the heathen colonists sent by Assyria at the time of conquest and the removal of the ten tribes B. C. 721 (2 Kings xvii. 6, 23, 24). Their origin, religion, and early relation to the Jews explains the permanent enmity as described in John iv. 9. The dimensions of the second temple were in excess of the temple of Solomon, nearly a third, though in some respects less. Ezra vi. 3; 2 Chron. iii. 4.

III. Questions.—What work remained to be done after the completion of the temple? Who came from Artaxerxes to do it? What led him to come? What requests did he successfully make of the king? How long was his first stay in Jerusalem?

See Nehemiah i-iv.—Nehemiah executed his commission with success for twelve years, but about A. C. 432 returned to Babylon for a short time (xiii. 6-7). His second administration terminated about A. C. 405, when he was between sixty and seventy years old. iv. 7. "So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days (vi. 15).

IV. Questions.—What gathering is described in Neh vii. 1? What law did the people ask to have read? Was it also explained? (viii. 8). How long did the meeting last? (viii. 3-18).

Notes.—Ezra was a "scribe" very learned and highly respected. Hence he was naturally looked to, to have charge of the reading and exposition of the law. For services so extended, it was of course, necessary to associate with him, as he did, other able and godly men. viii. 7.

V. Questions.—What is the fourth commandment? Was it faithfully obeyed at Jerusalem after the law was thus read? How was it treated? xiii. 15-16. Who tempted the Jews to this desecration? What did Nehemiah do about it? To what measures did he afterward proceed? xiii. 19-22.

Notes.—To break the Sabbath was to disregard the whole arrangement for worship, as it was all framed on the Sabbathical idea which ruled in the ordinary and extraordinary services. The Tyrrians tempted to the desecration for the sake of gain, but if the Jews had feared God and regarded his word, the temptation would have accomplished nothing. Hence the rebuke was far more for the Jews than for the Tyrrians.

VI. Questions.—How many Psalms are there? How many is David supposed to have composed? What is meant by a Messianic Psalm? Which are the Messianic Psalms?

Notes.—The book of Psalms is the most miscellaneous of the sacred books, containing 150 compositions, each complete within itself and varying in length from two verses (117th) to 176 (119th). As classified by authors one is ascribed to Moses, seventy-two to David, twelve to Asaph, one to Ethan, and eleven to the sons of Korah. More than fifty are anonymous. The Messianic Psalms are those in which the predictive reference to Christ is prominent. Such are the 2nd, 16th, 22nd, 45th, 72nd, and 110th.

VII. Questions.—What is the lesson of the first Psalm? In what character does the 2nd Psalm represent Christ? What is the nature of the 51st Psalm? Who is its author? What is thought to be the occasion of his writing it? What are some of the doctrines taught in the Psalm? What is the chief thought of the 32nd Psalm? What is meant by tabernacles in Psalm 84? Why did the Psalmist so delight in God's house? What is the doctrine of the 139th Psalm? To whom are God's omniscience and omnipresence a joy? To whom a terror?

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, April 6th, 1879.—Sanctified Affliction.—Job xxxiii. 14-30.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him."—Heb. xii. 5.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

These twelve lessons which we have been learning for the past three months should help us in building up our temples for God, each Sabbath we should have laid a good stone, and all the week made it firmer. We will name each one of these twelve stones with one word from each lesson, that it may help us to remember more about it, and each month shall stand for a pillar in the temple. Thus in January we learned most about Building; in February about God's laws; in March about what God does.

The twelve stones may be ranged thus: 1. Praise. 2. Dedicate. 3. Ask. 4. Watch. 5. Bible. 6. Sabbath. 7. Way. 8. King. 9. Penitent. 10. Forgiveness. 11. God's house. 12. Eye. Use these as a basis for questions, enforcing a practical application.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 12.

- ADAM—EDEN. Gen. 3. 1. A dvocat e.....1 John ii. 1. 2. Davi d.....Matt. i. 1-17. 3. A postl e.....Luke vi. 13. 4. Ma n.....Phil. ii. 7-9.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 13.

- 1. The pangs of painful death I bring, More fatal than the scorpion's sting, To husband, child, and wife; And now my image takes my place, And turns, in every gazing face, The ebbing tide of life. 2. Hundreds of years have rolled away, The sinning heart begins to stray, And duty's path forsakes; Wisdom would guard the great and small, And lest her erring children fall, My courted image breaks.

Select Serial.

Ponape; or, Light on a Dark Shore.

BY MRS. HELEN S. THOMPSON.

CHAPTER XII.—The Parsonage in the Prairie.

It was a pretty room—one to take comfort in. I know you would say so, reader, if ever so fastidious, could you just enter with John Saybrook as he closes the door to shut out all the world from his Eden. But we are fairly in behind him, and, best of all, unseen. Though we cannot view the sweet domestic picture through the camera of love, yet we have not traveled through this world for weary years without seeing domestic pictures not one half so bright, and that, too, in quarters where we might expect far more.

The chance traveler over that broad prairie, where neither wood nor stream, shrub nor vine, often breaks the monotony of the vast plain covered with coarse grass, would pause in wonder as he neared John's parsonage, querying by what witchery fruit trees had found a footing there, vines been coaxed into climbing the latticed veranda, and a garden of vegetables and flowers induced to vegetate and bloom.

Does my reader fancy that all prairies bud and blossom with immortal flowers and possess wealth of soil that scarce needs overturning to produce everything. There have been endless charming tales about the beauty of the western prairies, but the home missionary who settles on the plains of Wyoming or in parts of Colorado must submit to a desolation of nature, drought, and blinding simoom of dust, unless, indeed he possess the combativeness and energy of a John Saybrook to do battle with difficulties. He brought from the East those treasures of nature wherewith to redeem the dreary waste of the spot chosen for "home," and with infinite labour and pains nursed them into life and growth.

Before settling in this new western field, no one else among his people had tried to supply this lack of beauty; but when John's labor had built and adorned first his own home, then the church and churchyard too, the infection caught and spread like fire. Others were stimulated to copy what was truly admirable, and the aspect of the wide-awake town was rapidly changing for the better, as a care for future enjoyment had been taken amidst the hurry for wealth.

But really, reader, I have just kept you standing just inside the door of the little home too long. This is the family sitting-room, parlor, and drawing-room, all in one—the "green room," as Hattie calls it. The walls are hung with green the floor covered with a bright ingrain carpet of the same refreshing hue. There a lounge and easy-chair and ottoman of a like color, and one window, mantel, and pictures are draped with the dark green of the ivy. Pictures of home friends adorn the walls, while wreaths of moss and pressed autumn leaves carry one back to New Hampshire hills and glens.

Hattie is seated at the centre-table, sketching a mountain scene near John's old home. Beyond is the supper-room, one corner of which serves the sweet fairy of domestic mysteries as kitchen and bakeroom, but no unsightly vision protrudes itself; by some strange sorcery, unknown to all but adepts, everything offensive to eye and taste is hidden from sight, and the dainty table, spread with simple care, is waiting its lord and head before the preparation of the waffles, toast, and tea so inviting to good cheer.

Hattie's Madonna-shaped head, with its fair hair and thoughtful brow, is poised first on one side, then the other, in critical survey of the sketch before her.

"I wonder if John will think it is like?" said she, half aloud, smiling with secret satisfaction at the surprise she had in store. A shade of care passes over the gentle face as if some more serious thought had triumphed over the lighter mood. Just "one plait between the brows," John had said, "to show her self-forgetfulness." But none need wonder; poor child! she had passed through much since coming to the far West. Not that she felt one thought of regret—not she. What if she had spent her first winter on that desolate prairie in one room, while the house was built over her head and the little veranda boarded up for a bedroom, which gave free ingress to snow and gales of wind? Did she not save her husband and the "Board" many hundreds of dollars, and stay up the hands which but for her would some time have grown weak and weary? To be sure, she had suffered with the cold, and had had a slight cough ever since, but "all would come right another summer." She did confess to John once that she was "tired," after months of unfeeling attendance upon Sunday School prayer-meeting, mite and literary societies. You see there was no Bridget to relieve the young-missionary, all unused to the daily round of domestic toil; and smile ever so brightly, or call it but "playing" work, she grew hand and foot sore, and a "little worn" with outside claims. Our Hattie had no grand ideas of "the woman question." To many of our public spirited women she would seem very tame, and, if noticed at all, pitied as falling far below her high calling. To such we would say, Do not pity her because she chose to leave a home of luxury and ease to join hands with the poor home missionary and accept a lot of toil and care. There are many who are living coveted surface-lives that would gladly take her place. What wife will not say that she has her compensation for all—if indeed she needed any beyond the well spring of devotion within her breast—as she glances over her husband's shoulder while he pens these lines to be sent to the Hammond home:

DEAR MOTHER AND ALL: We dedicated our church yesterday, and raised five hundred dollars, which furnishes it complete except a bell. I had no help, but Christ was with us, and we are rejoicing. One brother who had only thirty dollars in the world gave twenty of it to the Lord.

"I am going to write a letter soon describing the wonderful girl you have sent out to this frontier. She gained me this donation, helped me to build the house in real pioneer style, and is making friends of all she meets in all denominations. How can I thank God enough for giving me such a wife?"

But Hattie's picture is finished, and now she draws some needle work from the basket beside her which whispers of at least a part of her graver thoughts. Hattie is glad, so glad, that maternity is before her. "Is it not woman's beautiful mission?" She said to herself a

hundred times. But then it was an untried experience, and she was far from kindred. No wise physician or faithful nurse could be procured in that locality but at fabulous prices.

"Your heavenly Father careth for you," whispered a voice within. "Yes, and John too," uttered the practical wife, and so the gentle soul rested as all trustful ones can.

She started and flushed a little as John hastily enters. "How do you like my picture, John?" placing it in his hands as he draws near the table. "Is it like home a little?"

"It is perfect—beautiful," cried the young minister, with genuine pleasure. "There is the exact spot where I used to fish; and what fish they were, wife! I have never tasted any such since; and I have spent many a Saturday afternoon on that mountain side picking berries and shooting game; and there is the veritable thicket where you and I read 'Kathrine.' Why, dear, you're a witch.

"Don't spoil me till after supper, John; but come while I hold court in my kitchen, and help me bake the waffles. Tell me about the sick man. Is he better?"

"Yes, more comfortable, and very thankful for the comforts you sent. But I'm tired and half sick, wife, with what I have seen to-day in the saloon and that gambling-den. A strange place for a minister to be, surely; but you know they all came to hear me preach last Sunday, and I have been following up that sermon all the week. I want to reach those men; and if I can get ever so slight a hold, with God's grace I will not let go my grip. But, Hattie, you know that I think some one else can do the work here as well as we, and that we are needed more among the perishing, eager millions of Japan or China?"

How Maud kept watch.

"Why, Rover, I'm surprised at you! I've got too many things to do To waste my time in play, so now You needn't come with bow-wow-wow To tempt me. It is time, you see, For papa to come home to tea; And I must warm his slippers and His dressing-gown, you understand!

"You cannot help me, ha-ha-ha! What vain old things some doggies are! You'd go to sleep before the fire! You do not know what folks require When they come home all tired at night, I'm papa's girl. I know what's right. I'll keep a bright lookout, you'll see, Till my papa comes home to me.

"For it would hurt his feelings so If no one watched for him, you know. I wouldn't trust you, Mr. Rover, To watch for him. You just go over And lay down there till I am through. O dear! I've got so much to do! For mamma said she'd trust to me To welcome papa home to tea.

"There, now, lie rest in papa's chair; There is a half an hour to spare Before he comes. O Rover, dear, Isn't it nice and warm in here?—Do you feel sleepy?—well, I knew There'd be no sense in trusting you. I wish my papa— Mamma said—"

Down dropped the curly, nodding head, And over eyes so soft and blue Down dropped the golden lashes, too, While very quiet grew the room, Fast filling with the twilight's gloom. And thus the minutes hastened past, Till—some one's step was heard at last. But it was Rover, don't you see? Who welcomed papa home to tea! —Mary D. Brine, in March Wide Awake.

Hero Coasting.

"Hero, Hero! where can that dog be? Oh, here he comes," said Fred. "Now, Hero, we will go and have a coast." Hero knows very well what his master means; and at sight of the sled, jumps up and down, and wags his tail to show his joy.

"Jump on, Hero!" and at the word, Hero jumps on the sled and sits on his haunches, while Fred runs along as fast as he can with such a big load of dog to drag after him.

"Now, Hero, I have pulled you far enough. You must take the sled!" Hero, jumping off, seizes the rope in his teeth, and with some help from Fred, tugs the sled up the hill. When they come to the top, Hero takes his seat on the front part of the sled, and Fred gets on behind to steer.

Now they are all ready. Off they start in fine style, and much to the surprise of all the bystanders, glide swiftly to the foot of the hill, without once falling off.

Is not this good fun for Fred and Hero?—Nursery.