

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1880.

FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson XIII.—MARCH 28.

SELECTED LESSON.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. None Righteous, Rom. iii. 9-20.
T. Children of Wrath, Eph. ii. 1-13.
W. God's Righteousness, Rom. iii. 21-31.
T. Righteousness by Faith, Rom. iv. 1-16.
F. Fruits of Faith, Rom. v. 1-11.
S. Fullness of Salvation, Rom. viii. 1-17.
S. Abundant Entrance, 2 Peter i. 1-11.

SALVATION NEEDED AND PROVIDED.

- 1. What is the natural condition of man in respect to holiness? (Gen. vi. 5; Eccles. vii. 20; Isa. liii. 7; Rom. iii. 23; 1 John i. 8.)
2. What is the penalty for sin? (Gen. ii. 16, 17; Ezek. xviii. 4; James i. 15; Rom. vi. 23, 1st clause.)
3. Who fixed that penalty? (Prov. xxvi. 10; 1 Pet. iii. 12; Heb. x. 31.)
4. Are any exempt? (Rom. v. 12; xiv. 10, last clause; xiv. 12; Rev. xx. 12.)
5. Who only could provide a way of escape? (Isa. xliii. 11; Hos. xiii. 4.)
6. Is such a salvation prepared? (Isa. lxiii. 11; Ps. lxxxix. 19; Luke ii. 11; John iii. 16; 1 John v. 11.)
7. Is there any other way possible? (1 Tim. ii. 5; 1 Cor. iii. 11; Acts iv. 12.)
8. On what conditions may salvation be received? (Ezek. xviii. 21; Mal. iii. 7; Luke xiii. 3; Acts iii. 19; 1 John i. 9; Rom. x. 8, 9.)
9. Will it be full and complete? (Col. i. 19; John i. 16; Eph. iii. 19; iv. 13; Col. ii. 10.)
10. Who may be saved? (Luke xix. 10; Isa. lv. 1; John vi. 37; Acts iv. 39; x. 34, 35.)
11. When is salvation to be secured? (Isa. lv. 6; Josh. xxiv. 15; 2 Cor. vi. 2; Heb. iv. 7.)
12. What if we simply neglect it? (Heb. ii. 3, 1st clause; James iv. 17; Mark viii. 36; Jer. li. 20.)
13. What if we deliberately reject it? (Mark viii. 38; Luke xii. 9; Prov. i. 24-31.)

HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON.

Seek some simple illustrations for the various points, and make it your earnest prayer that your class may at once accept the "salvation provided."
I. Salvation Needed. From what? Try to awaken the sense of need. If I rush up to one walking along the road and say, "I will save you," he naturally inquires, "What is my danger?" If you can convince him that he is going directly into the jaws of death, and a few steps will take him there, he is willing to hear about salvation. Num. xxi. 6. Show that to be saved, is to be saved from sin (Matt. i. 21). One is not saved in the fire, from burning; or under the water, from drowning.
II. Salvation Provided. 1. God's love the starting-point (John iii. 16).
2. Jesus Christ the one only, all-sufficient Saviour. Why called Jesus? (Matt. i. 21).
3. How he saves. Not by disregarding the law, which demands the sinner's punishment (Ezek. xviii. 4; Rom. vi. 23); not by a general proclamation of pardon, or with a word, as in creation. Why could he not do this? But by bearing our sin (1 Pet. ii. 24), becoming sin for us (2 Cor. v. 21), taking away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. ix. 26).
4. Not, therefore, by our works (Rom. iii. 20; Titus iii. 5).
5. This provision is complete. Illustrate what he has done for us. The work is a finished one.
6. It is a free salvation (Isa. lv. 1; Rom. iii. 24).
7. It is a present salvation (John iii. 36; v. 24).
8. It is for you, and for you now.
9. Beware how it is neglected. Tell how neglect covers farms with weeds, brings a man's business to ruin, etc., and press the question of Heb. ii. 3.

Remember that God has spoken and told you

- 1. That by nature you are "evil"—Christ's own word;
2. That you are a child of wrath, exposed to every imaginable and unimaginable evil, signified and typified by "death;"
3. That your Creator himself has decreed this penalty;
4. That you, with every fellow creature of yours, are involved in it;
5. That no one but your Maker and your Judge can be your Saviour;
6. That your Maker and Judge has offered to save you;
7. That the way he offers is the only way;
8. That to be saved you must turn from sin to righteousness;
9. That thus your salvation will be, like your Saviour, perfect;
10. That you may be saved, because everybody may be that will.
11. That the time is now, and not by and-by; to-day, and not to-morrow;
12. That simply to neglect salvation is to lose it hopelessly;
13. That wilfully to reject it, is to turn your Saviour into your Destroyer.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

A good way to explain the need of salvation, is to take a glass ink bottle, still stained with ink, and retaining the old label. Ask what made this bottle black? Was it always so? Show that God made us pure; in Eden man was sinless; then draw out, by quick questions, the story of the fall; then from the "Lesson Story" paint the picture the Psalmist saw. Do you want your hearts cleansed, the stain of sin washed away? How can it be done? Let us see what our bottle teaches. (Wash the outside.) Does this cleanse it? What does it do? It washes the outside and takes off the label. Suppose I label it Milk, would you believe it had milk in it? What has Jesus taught us about outside goodness? If I label you "Good Child," will it make you good? Will it hide the stains of sin from God?
How can we get it clean? Wash the outside? I must take the cork out and let the water in. If you keep your hearts shut up when Jesus knocks, how can he get in to cleanse them? Now wash the inside of the bottle enough to show that the black will all come off, and teach that the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin, not by dipping our hearts in, as we did the bottle, but because Jesus shed his blood, God will free us from punishment. Then, don't be afraid to come to Jesus just as you are, with all your sins, for he can cleanse you.
—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

Bible Enigma.

No. 64.

- 1. A barren island, where a disciple went for Jesus' sake, consigned to banishment.
2. A lovely home with fruit and flowers gay, from which a guilty pair was sent away. Estranged from God, o'er the wide world to roam as wretched exiles from their native home.
3. A field,—scene of a traitor's chosen fate,—Alas! for him repentance came too late.
4. An Eastern land so rich in promise given, The saints of earth use as a type of heaven.
5. A valley in this land wherein was found Grapes in luxuriant clusters to abound.

In these initial letters you will see Christ's parting gift, His blessed legacy. —Selected.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

No. 37.

Make a square word of
A sense of necessity.
A distressing disease.
Fruit well protected.
A careful examination.

No. 38.

15, 16 PUZZLE.

On a board large enough to contain sixteen numbered blocks, or cards, fifteen are placed: They are numbered consecutively. The puzzle is to place them on the board promiscuously, and then by moving from square to square, without removing them from the board, arrange them in this order:

Table with 4 columns and 4 rows of numbers: 1 2 3 4; 5 6 7 8; 9 10 11 12; 13 14 15

It will be easy enough to arrange them up to number 13, but if 15 should get into the place of 14, the puzzle is to transpose them without lifting them.

The makers of the game, the Union Manufacturing Company of Boston, offer one hundred dollars for a rule by which the puzzle can be solved. The permutations or changes of which the numbers are capable is 1,307,674,368,000.

Put away his crack-brain puzzle, He has climbed the asylum stairs; Numbers 13, 15, 14, Turned his head and sent him there.

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 63.

- 1. J ob.....Genesis xlv. 13.
2. U z.....Job i. 1.
3. D orcas.....Acts ix. 39.
4. G aza.....Judges xvi. 3.
5. E utychus.....Acts xx. 9.
6. N o.....Nahum iii. 8.
7. O n.....Genesis xli. 45.
8. T abitha.....Acts ix. 36.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

No. 36.

WOLF
OPAL
LACE
FLEE

Select Serial.

Florence Walton,

A Question of Duty.

BY MAY F. MCKEAN.

CHAPTER VI.—ETHEL AND CLIFFORD WALRAVEN.

Eagerly had Florence watched the progress of these meetings in the hope of discovering some interest manifest in those with whom she was immediately connected. With joy had she watched some of her pupils among the anxious, and then, when two of them came to her with the tidings of hearts resting in happy confidence in the power of Jesus' cleansing blood, her own heart had almost overflowed with gratitude.

But those by whom she was surrounded in the home-circle, and for whom her heart most yearned, seemed least interested. It was true Auntie Grace and Ethel were Christians, but they seemed a great deal more interested in the shade of the ribbon on Maud Glennings' new hat, or the probable cost of the elegant new diamond ring which Julia Davidson wore, than in the salvation of any human soul.

It was true also that Clifford Walraven sometimes wore a serious air, and Florence was sure once that she saw him hastily brush aside something like a tear, but when next they met he was always his old polite yet merry self again.

In Dr. Ronselle she could perceive not the slightest degree of feeling. Always kind and thoughtful, he was considerably deferential to that religion which bore the stamp of sincerity, and haughtily indifferent to the semblance of it. When he had no special professional calls he attended the meetings with Florence, always glad to accompany her there. It would seem as if, were Ethel still looking for the change she had prophesied would come over her "pious little cousin," she would be likely to be disappointed. Florence was occupied in watching the progress of the good work and laboring and praying for its spread. One can find enough to keep one's head and hands busy if she will but look about her.

But of late a new dread was creeping into Florence's heart. Her mother, so long in delicate health, was failing. She blamed herself for not noticing before how much more feeble her step was than formerly, and how frequently her terrible headaches returned, confining her to her room sometimes for days.

What could Florence do without her mother? But no, she could not think of that. She would nurse her back to health and strength again. And so it happened that she could not always attend the evening services; only when she was not there you might be pretty certain of finding her at her mother's side.

"Are you going to church this evening, Ethel?" Mr. Walraven had asked as he took a seat near the fire in Miss Markwell's cozy sitting-room.

"I suppose so; I believe I've nothing particular to do this evening, and I might as well go there as to stay at home doing nothing," answered that young lady as she laid aside a volume of Dickens. "Unless," she added as an

afterthought, "you think Maud and Charlie might call?"

Clifford dropped his head on his hands without returning an answer.

"Do you know if Miss Florence intends going this evening?" asked the doctor standing in the doorway.

"I do not know, but I'm going up stairs, and I'll ask her," returned Ethel as she rose and left the room.

"I say, Cliff, what makes you look so gloomy?" the doctor asked as he advanced and took the seat made vacant by Ethel's departure.

"Do I look gloomy? Well, I believe I feel so," said Clifford with a sorry attempt at a laugh. "But the truth is, I was just thinking what if—if—" and his voice sank lower, while the solemn, awed look crept back again—"what if all this is true? what if we are in such terrible danger as they would make us believe? Do you think it can be, Ronselle?"

The doctor looked very grave: "I am sometimes almost tempted to believe that there is, after all, some truth in this religion. If you are conscientious, in your convictions, I would advise you to search it out. I am not at present enough settled in my own mind to attempt to lead any one else."

There was for a few moments silence between the two men; then it was Clifford who spoke: "Well, I'll tell you how I'll test the matter. Ethel is a member of the church. She certainly cares for my welfare—I am sure she does—and she would not let me go to destruction without so much as asking me to turn. We will go this evening, and if she confirms what may be said by adding her plea, I will think of the matter; if not, I shall let the subject drop entirely," said the young man thoughtfully.

There was just the slightest perceptible hint of a smile lurking under the corners of Dr. Ronselle's moustache; 'twas evident he thought this a doubtful test. A slighting, sarcastic reply arose to his lips, but he checked it before it was spoken. He would not speak lightly of a person who was not present to defend herself.

A few moments later the two cousins entered equipped for the street. The pale moon threw an icy glare of light over the snow-enwrapped earth, but a few moments' brisk walk brought them to the church.

Already many were gathered there, and a subdued air from the grand organ seemed to lend solemnity to the occasion. It was a season of much interest. The opening services being concluded, Dr. Lyman's clear voice, which contrasted almost strangely with the silvery hair fell upon the waiting audience as he said:

"What I am going to say to night is only for the encouragement of believers. It is to the Lord's children, to those who have 'passed from death unto life'; and instead of taking one text as usual, I shall take several, all embracing, however, the same idea—indeed the very same words.

"The first you will find in Genesis xv. 1: 'After these things the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.' Then in the sixteenth chapter of the same book and twenty-fourth verse we find that in speaking to Isaac, used these words: 'I am the God of Abraham, thy father; fear not, for I am with thee and will bless thee.' Now let us turn to Isaiah xli. 10, and we read 'Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.' Then, as if to make this blessed assurance doubly sure, a little farther down, in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses, he repeats the same: 'Fear not for I will help thee.' The next we find in the forty-third chapter, beginning with the first verse: 'But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour. I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight thou hast been honorable, and I

have loved thee; therefore, will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not for I am with thee.' And last of all, we will look in Luke xii. 32: 'Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'

Many comforting words followed, so numerous were the reasons why Christians should not fear—sweet words of assurance to humble trusting hearts—words which fell like balm upon many a weary one.

But, suddenly turning, the speaker said in a solemn, awe-inspiring tone, "But if there be a single unbeliever in this room to-night, a single soul who has not trusted himself entirely upon the merits of Christ, thereby making these precious 'fear not's' his own, I wish to tell him that I've not been speaking to him or of him. I have no authority in this divine Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, upon which I may tell him not to fear. Fear? Why he has everything to fear—nothing that he should not fear. What does the word of God say?—'He that believeth not shall be damned.' Perhaps that is a harsh word for the refined ears of this nineteenth century, but it is the word of the eternal God, and I dear not change it. 'Shall be damned.' Think of it, unconverted ones think of it and fear."

And then, after a little breathless pause, he said, with one of those sudden changes of his—

"But let us thank God you need fear no longer. A way is provided, a ransom has been paid, and you may rejoice in its blessings if you only will. Oh my brother, my sister, you who are out of Christ, will you not come to him to-night? Will you not give him your hearts now? Will you not accept of this precious offering of eternal life? Will you not be on the Lord's side? He will strengthen you; he will help you; he will uphold you by the right hand of his righteousness. It is his own word."

Then another pause, in which heart seemed beating to heart and the very presence of God seemed to fill the house and Dr. Lyman said,

"I should like to deviate again from the course usually pursued, and ask all in the room who feel in their inmost hearts that they have nothing to fear, that they are sinners saved by grace, owing all to Christ, to rise to their feet one moment."

There was a pause, a momentary rustle, then many were standing; Florence was among that number, Ethel was not.

"Now I should like to ask those in the room who would like to feel that they were saved, that they had nothing to fear—those who wish to be Christians—to rise also."

A moment's hesitation, and here and there one and another arose, thus manifesting their wish to have the Christian's God for their God.

Clifford Walraven was deeply moved. He half started to his feet, but a slight elevation of Ethel's eyebrows determined him; he sank back again almost with a groan. Then followed a fervent prayer, and the meeting was dismissed.

Out into the cold, clear night they went, many—but, alas! not all—bearing with them the solemn presence of the house of prayer.

The first part of their walk was accomplished in silence by Ethel and Clifford. Finally, the latter spoke:

"Ethel, you are a member of the church; why did you not rise when Dr. Lyman gave the first invitation?"

"Because," she answered briskly, "I don't like such a show of religion. It is so much like saying, 'Look at me; I am holier than thou.' Don't you think so?"

"Perhaps so, though it did not appear to me in that light when he asked it so earnestly. I only wish I might have risen, but you know I make no professions."

"I know," she returned; and then a moment after, "Clifford, I almost thought you were going to rise."

Mr. Walraven made an attempt at clearing his throat in order to gain time. Should he or should he not acknowledge to her what had been in his mind? It took but a moment to decide; he had not the moral courage to do it; so he said, with a light laugh.

"It seems to me, Ethel, your mind must have been a little overpowered, that one could not even change his position without your thinking he was going to rise."

And so the subject was dropped.