

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1880.

FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson IV.—JANUARY 25.

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

Matt. iv. 1-11.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”—Heb. ii. 18.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Temptation of Jesus, Matthew iv. 1-11.
T. Temptation of Adam, Genesis iii. 1-13.
W. Temptation of Job, Job i. 6-22.
T. Temptation of Peter, Luke xxii. 31, 32, 54-62.
F. Temptation for All, Eph. vi. 10-17.
S. Temptations surmountable, 1 Cor. x. 1-13.
S. Deliverance assured, Psalm xxxiv. 1-22.

PARALLEL TEXTS.

- With vs. 1: 1 Kings xviii. 12; Acts viii. 39; Gen. iii. 15; John xiv. 30; Heb. ii. 18.
With vs. 2: Ex. xxiv. 18; Ex. xxxiv. 28; Deut. xviii. 18.
With vs. 3: Job i. 6; Luke xxii. 13; 1 Thess. iii. 5.
With vs. 4: Deut. viii. 3.
With vs. 5: Neh. xi. 1; Isa. lii. 1.
With vs. 6: Ps. xci. 11, 12; Heb. i. 14.
With vs. 7: Deut. vi. 16; Ps. xc. 9.
With vs. 8: Esth. i. 4; Dan. iv. 30; Rev. xi. 15.
With vs. 9: Ps. lxxii. 11; Prov. viii. 15; John xii. 31; 1 Cor. x. 20, 21.
With vs. 10: James iv. 7; 1 Peter v. 8, 9; Deut. vi. 13, 14; Josh. xxiv. 14.
With vs. 11: Matt. xxv. 63; Matt. xxviii. 2-5; 1 Tim. iii. 16.

THE TRUE KING AND THE FALSE.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The Meeting. Vss. 1-3. II. The Temptation. Vss. 3-10. III. The Victory. Vss. 11.

QUESTIONS.—I. Vss. 1-3.—Of whose meeting are we now to study? Where did they meet? Who led Jesus to this meeting? For what purpose? What bearing has this meeting upon Gen. iii. 15? Where afterward did Jesus and Satan meet? In what ways do the Lord's people now meet Satan?

II. Vss. 3-10.—What did Jesus do for forty days? (Vs. 2.) Was this an entire fast? (Luke iv. 2.) What did the devil do during these days? (Mark i. 13; Luke iv. 2.) In what condition was Jesus at the end of these days? Why had he endured such a fast? What was Satan's first appeal to Jesus? What harm would there have been in doing this? What was the reply of Jesus? Where is this written? What was Satan's second appeal? Was his quotation of Scripture correct? What harm could have come from doing this? What good might have come from it? How did Jesus reply? Where are these words written? What was Satan's last appeal? How could Satan give these to Jesus? How did Jesus answer this appeal? Where is this written?

III. Vss. 11.—What command to Satan did Jesus give? (Vs. 10.) Was it obeyed? May we have such power over Satan? (James iv. 7.) What ministry did Jesus then receive? May we have the same? (Heb. i. 14.)

Augustine says, “The entire history, moral and spiritual, of the world revolves around two persons, Adam and Christ.” Adam, tempted, fell, and with him our race; Jesus, tempted, was victorious, and regains for us more than Adam lost. Light is thrown upon this scene by Heb. ii. 17, 18; iv. 15. Great spiritual heights are often followed by great temptations. The equipment (Baptism) comes before the conflict.

I. The Battle Ground (vs. 1, 2.)

II. The conflict (vss. 3-10). Only the closing temptations given. These all addressed to one point—namely, to avoid the path of suffering, and to use his power for a temporal, earthly kingdom; to follow man's will, aside from the Father's will.

III. The Victory (vs. 11.) Gained by repeated strokes of this sword: It is for us. See the promises, James iv. 7; Rom. viii. 37.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—Then we know, from Mark i. 12, that there was no interval. Mark says “immediately.” The desert, hideous with wild beasts (Mark i. 13), is more hideous now with the intrusion and company of the devil, whispering temptation. Led. It was a positive influence exerted by the Holy Spirit. Mark describes it as a

“driving,” i. 12; (Luke iv. 1); adds was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. There was no improper reluctance on Jesus' part, but he no doubt experienced an almost irresistible loathing and horror of the contact which he was about to endure with evil. To be tempted of the devil. Matthew alone, of the three evangelists who give an account of this temptation, distinctly states that the purpose of his being led into the wilderness was that he might be tempted by Satan. Observe, he did not go, that he might be tempted—he was led for this purpose. The devil means “slanderer,” “traducer,” “accuser.” There is but one being in the universe, Scripturally called “the devil.” “Satan,” or “the devil,” is the chief of bad angels or evil spirits, a personal being, of limited but indefinite power and knowledge, intensely active and purely malignant. He appears throughout the New Testament as peculiarly roused to effort against God by the incarnation and ministry of Christ. The beginning and the end of Christ's ministry are both of them signally marked by desperate onslaughts of Satan against him. He could not atone, if he did not first perfectly obey. Satan would prove whether Jesus would, indeed, fulfill all righteousness.

Verse 2.—Comparing the three parallel accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we conclude that the temptation lasted throughout the forty days and nights. Fasted. Probably, this denotes here entire abstinence from food (Luke iv. 2)—though the word might be used of a partial abstinence. Ex. xxxiv. 28. (1 Kings xix. 8.) Afterward a hungered. Became hungry. The fast had been absolute.

Verse 3.—The hungering of Jesus is mentioned as furnishing occasion for the particular temptation now to be related. The tempter came. Means just as it says, the stones might somewhat resemble loaves. Bread means “loaves.” The temptation was double. It tempted Christ to sinful doubt.

Verse 4.—By appeal to Scripture. Deut. viii. 3. Jesus says substantially: “I do not need bread to sustain me. My life is from God, and God can continue my life without bread as a means.”

Verse 5.—The order of the temptations is varied by Luke. There is no contradiction, however. Taketh him up. There is no up in the Greek; no thing to suggest a flight through the air. A pinnacle of the temple. The pinnacle, rather, “Wing” is a better translation than “pinnacle.” Josephus describes a point on the south side of the temple whence the fall would be frightful. This may have been the spot.

Verse 6.—Satan skillfully quotes Scripture as if he said: “You go by Scripture. Very well, Scripture you shall have. You have great faith in God. Now exercise your faith. Throw yourself down from here. There is Scripture for it that you shall not be hurt.” Whereas before, Satan tempted Jesus to distrust, now he tempted him to presume.

Verse 7.—Jesus meets the tempter with Scripture again, quoting Deut. vi. 16: “Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God.” He changes the “ye” to “thou,” and might be interpreted to mean Satan. Jesus was proof against presumption, as he had been proof against distrust.

Verse 8.—He had been tempting Jesus on his religious side, first to doubt, and then to presume. This time he will boldly try whether after all there may not be in this singular being, apparently so devout, a point of pure worldliness with which he can find contact. Up. This word, as before, is supplied by the translators. The panorama displayed, supposed to be actual, not ideal, could have been seen only through supernatural means. Somehow the lofty point of view was attained, and somehow the splendid panorama commanded. The speciousness of the temptation lay in the fact that Satan offered Jesus exactly what Jesus came to obtain, namely, mastery of the world. You wish to be king of men,” Satan said. “Very well.” I will make you king at once. Do me homage, and all is accomplished. It may be understood simply as the homage due to a superior. Luke is careful to note that the vision was instantaneous, “in a moment of time.” Luke iv. 5. It came upon Jesus in the most overpowering manner. “Get thee hence, Satan.” Thou shalt worship the

Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” See Deut. vi. 13; but Jesus uses the freedom that belonged to him, in quoting without literal exactness. The discomfited devil takes his leave—“for a season,” Luke adds. The devil gone, other visitants appear. Angels come and minister to Jesus. In what way, we know not. Perhaps by bringing him food, compare 1 Kings xix. 5-8; perhaps by refreshing his spirit, and so recruiting his strength without food. A similar sequel attended the final temptation. Luke says: “When he had ended all the temptation,” or, rather, “had finished every temptation.” Jesus did not leave Satan; Satan left Jesus. The devil's discomfiture was complete.

Do not seek temptation. Be prepared to expect spiritual dangers soon after spiritual exaltation.

Jesus bore all this dreadful assault and siege of Satan for you. Deem it a temptation of Satan when you find yourself disposed to run gratuitous risks of any sort warranted by no divine command.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Fight the tempter with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Believe heartily and thankfully in the ministering of angels to you as one of the heirs of salvation.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Teach the meaning of temptation, to persuade to do wrong.

Tell of Jesus alone in the wilderness. Explain each of the three temptations. Tell, also, how Jesus gained the victory over Satan, and in what way.

Why was Jesus tempted? The Golden Text tells us why: that he might be able to feel for us, might be able to help us.

How we should bear temptation. Show how Jesus resisted with Bible words. Think of some texts to say when tempted. “Thou God seest me;” “watch and pray” against temptation. Devil; rub out from the word D, and we have Evil; change the E to the end, and we have Vile.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 55.

The initials of the names which the following lines describe, will shew an exhortation to the Church at Ephesus, peculiarly applicable to the Church of Christ at the present day:

- 1. A prophetic name of our Saviour.
2. The Father of Moses and Aaron.
3. The place from whence a great King obtained wood, and made himself a chariot.
4. He who told his servants to ‘tarry at Jericho until their beards were grown.’
5. That which Aaron was commanded to burn that the plague might be stayed.
6. A city wherein were more than 120,000 persons, who did not know their right hand from their left.
7. The family to whom Moses before his death committed the keeping of the law.
8. A country famed for its trees, precious stones &c.
9. The father of Nablie one of the spies.
10. Where were aprons first worn.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

- No. 27. Who made the first Geographical book?
28. What town might be used to help in learning to swim?
Try and discover the correct answers, write them down and preserve them till next week when you may compare them with the answers given.

Answer to Enigma.

No. 54.

- G arlands. (Acts xiv. 13).
R hoda. (Acts xii. 13).
O livet. (Acts i. 12).
W indow. (Acts xx. 9).
I conium. (Acts xiii. 51).
N eapolis. (Acts xvi. 11).
G entiles. (Acts xviii. 6).
R rome. (Acts xxviii. 16).
A pollos. (Acts xviii. 24).
C astor and Pollux. (Acts xxviii. 11).
E uroclodyon. (Acts xxvii. 14).
GROW IN GRACE. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

- No. 25. Madam, I am Adam.
26. Thieves.

Select Serial.

Florence Walton,

OR,

A Question of Duty.

BY MAY F. MCKEAN.

CHAPTER I.—FLORENCE AND ETHEL.

(Continued.)

“Why, Dr. Ronselle, how came you here?” cried Ethel as soon as she recovered breath to speak.

“Very much as you did, I presume—that is to say, I walked,” he answered as he advanced toward them.

“Indeed! Your appearance was so quiet and so unexpected that I almost imagined you had been spirited here by some unseen agency,” returned Ethel quickly.

“Perhaps I was—by that power which youthful loveliness ever exerts upon one who is fond of the truly beautiful,” he replied, with a meaning glance toward Florence.

“A thousand pardons for my neglect. Dr. Ronselle, allow me to introduce you to my little cousin, Miss Walton, and as you are to be inmates of the same house, you must become very good friends,” she added.

Both bowed in response to the introduction, and the doctor continued with a graceful frankness: “I hope we shall, at least, I shall be most proud and happy to claim Miss Walton as my friend.”

And then they turned to retrace their steps.

Tea was waiting when they arrived at home, and after that they repaired to the front porch where we first met the two girls. Mrs. Walton and Auntie Grace came out with the young folks at first, but then, when the evening dews began to fall, the former excused herself on account of her enfeebled health, and the latter went within doors “to keep her company,” as she said.

Left alone, the three young people found it easy enough to entertain themselves, but it was not long ere they were joined by another. As Ethel had said, Clifford Walraven was their next neighbor; their front porches joined, being separated only by a moderately low railing, which could easily be surmounted by the aid of a chair on either side. It was from this source that the new arrival came—a rather good-looking young gentleman of perhaps twenty-five or six years, the most noticeable feature of whose face was a pair of sparkling brown eyes. He was tall and finely shaped, with an easy-going, nonchalant air which made him quite a hero among the fair sex of Westtown. One quite important fact about this young man was that he was wealthy. An uncle, dying a short time before our story opens, had left him the handsome brownstone house on the corner of Main and Academy streets and a snug little sum in personal property; besides which, it was well understood that he would one day be an equal heir with his only brother in his father's estate, which was so large as not to be lightly esteemed. It would be no small honor, you know, for almost any of these same girls to be mistress over that elegant home.

And yet even about this young gentleman there was something that struck unpleasantly a chord in Florence's nature. She acknowledged the introduction which followed his arrival with her usual grace, though even then a slight shiver ran almost unconsciously through her frame. But the evening passed quickly and pleasantly, and it was not until they found themselves alone in their own room that Florence spoke of her impressions of her new acquaintances.

Very carefully did the thoughtful daughter attend to the wants of her parent, making her comfortable for the night, and then she returned slowly to her own room—that is, their room, as Ethel and she were to occupy the same.

“What do you think of Clifford?” was Ethel's first eager question, asked as soon as the door was closed.

“I don't know exactly what I think of him,” was answered very slowly and thoughtfully.

“Don't know? Why, everybody thinks he is splendid. I imagined I should hear you raving over him by this time; but perhaps you like Dr. Ronselle better? What do you think of him?”

“He is very nice; he has excellent

conversational powers, and, I should judge, is an agreeable companion.”

“Ha! I see you have lost your heart in that direction. That is the reason you have no appreciation of Clifford's merits,” laughed Ethel merrily.

“Not so fast, Cousin Ethel,” Florence replied very demurely, but for all that she flushed deeply. And then, after a little pause, “Is Dr. Ronselle a Christian?”

Ethel laughed a little at first; it was quite a new idea to her, this asking if a person were a Christian or not. She herself was one of that sort—specimens of whom are upon every side—who think that if they manage to gain an entrance into the pearly gates themselves, it is none of their concern as to any one else. But then, as she looked into her cousin's earnest face, the merriment faded from her own as she answered,

“I don't think he is; at least, I never heard him speak of religion one way or the other.”

“And you never spoke to him of it?” There was a volume of surprise in the look and tone.

“Why should I? He is nothing to me,” Ethel answered carelessly.

“Why should you not?” asked her cousin as she opened the clasp of her Bible and turned to the chapter for this evening. Ethel seemed in no haste to reply, so the former went on with her reading. The chapter was the sixth of Second Corinthians. She read through the wonderful exhortation contained in the first part, and almost started when she came to the fourteenth verse—the very one she had quoted that evening—

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or what communion hath light with darkness?” She had not remembered that those words were found in this chapter, and just now they came to her with more force than ever before. She sighed a little when she stopped to think about them, but then she finished the chapter and closed the book.

In the mean time Ethel was somewhat disturbed, feeling quite undecided as to what course it was best to pursue just now. When Florence had opened her Bible to the place indicated by the little blue ribbon-marker, it had called to her mind the time when she too, every evening before retiring, had read most carefully a portion of the Scriptures; but it had been many a long day since the habit had been given up. Now, should she again resume that practice? or should she go on just as she had done of late? Would it be best for her to reach down the hand somely-bound though little-used Bible from the top shelf among her books, and turn over its beautifully tinted leaves as if that same had been done every evening of her life? or did she suppose that after a few months of this new mode of life Cousin Florence would outgrow some of her puritanic views—which very properly belonged to a quaint rural life among the hills—and would give up the idea herself, perhaps even laugh at her former strictness?

As she was thinking of this she gazed into the face of her cousin to see if she could find anything there to warrant such a conclusion; but there certainly was nothing whatever in that sober, thoughtful expression to quiet her conscience on that score. She therefore busied herself about every little trifle she could advise to engage her attention and take up her time, while she soliloquized after this style: “Why, yes, to be sure. It does seem right and proper that a member of the church should read a chapter, or at least a part of one, every evening. I suppose the Bible was given us as a guide, and how is one to be guided by that she knows nothing about? How stupid of me! Of course I ought to read it.”

Ethel walked quietly over to her book-shelves, and took therefrom her long-neglected Bible with the air of one who had done the same every night since she could remember. She was quite relieved, when she sat down by the table with it in her hand, that Florence had left her place there and was kneeling by the snowy bedside, for there upon the beautiful covers of that volume was dust—yes, unmistakable dust. Every one knew that Friday was sweeping-day, and if Florence had seen that, how could she explain satisfactorily the fact of dust being there on Satur-