The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1880.

THIRD QUARTER.

Lesson II.—JULY 11.

THE FALL AND THE PROMISE.

Genesis iii. 1-15.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 9-13.

All that is known of the occurrences between the events of the last lesson, and of this, is summed up in the intervening verses—namely, Gen. ii 9-25. How long the first pair maintained a state of sinlessness cannot be known. The marginal dates of the English Bible place the creation of man and the fall within the same year.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."—Romans v. 12.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

M. The Fall and the Promise, Genesis iii. 1-19.
T. Life in the Garden, Genesis ii. 8-24.
W. Expelled from the Garden, Genesis iii. 17-24.
T. The Tempter and Jesus, Matt. iv. 1-11.
F. Death by Sin, Rom. v. 12-21.
S. Standing against Satan, Eph. vi. 10-18.
S. Satan Finally Overthrown, Rev. xx. 1-15.

PARALLEL TEXTS.

With vs. 1: Rev. xii. 9: xx. 1,-2; 2 Cor. xi. 3; Isa. xxvii. 1; John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8.

With vs. 2: Psalm lviii. 4.

With vs. 4: Gen. iii. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 14; Deut. xxix. 19; Ps. x. 11; 2 Cor. ii. 11.

With vs. 5: Gen. iii. 7; Matt. vi. 23; Acts xxvi. 18.

With vs. 6: Josh. vii. 21; Eccles. vii. 29.

With vs. 7: Deut. xxviii. 34; Gen. ii. 25; Isa. lix. 6.

With vs. 8: Deut. iv. 33; v. 25; Job xxxi. 33; Prov. xv. 3; Rom. ii. 15.

With vs. 9: Gen. iv. 9; xvi. 8.

With vs. 10: Ex. iii. 6; Psa. cxix. 120; 1 John iii. 20.

With vs. 11: Gen. iv. 10; Psa. l. 21; Rom. iii. 20.

With vs. 12: Prov. xxviii. 13; Luke x. 13; James i. 13.

With vs. 14: Ps. lxxii. 9; Isa. xxix. 4.

With vs. 15: Rom. v. 19; vi. 23; viii. 1, 2; xvi. 20; 2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 John iii. 2; Rev. xx. 1, 2. 10.

THE FALL AND THE PROMISE.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The Temptation, Vss. 1-5. II. The Fall, Vss. 6-13. III. The Promise, Vss. 14, 15.

QUESTIONS.—I. Vss. 1-5.—What is meant by temptation? By whom did the temptation of this lesson come? What description of him is given? Whom are we to understand this tempter to be? How did he conduct his case? Were any statements of this dialogue false? In what respects does this temptation correspond to that of Jesus, in Matt. iv. 1-11? In what to that described in 1 John ii. 16? In what does it correspond to Satan's methods to-day? Wherein can safety from Satan be found? (James iv. 7; Eph. vi. 16.) Wherein did Eve fail of duty?

II. Vss. 6-13.—By what act did Eve and Adam fall? How could they fall by so simple an act? (Gen. ii. 16, 17.) What process of thought led Eve to this act? (Vs. 6.) What process of thought probably led Adam? What was really the root-sin in both? What effects within themselves came from the fall? What similar effects has sin now?

III. Vss. 14, 15.—To whom does the sentence on the serpent apply? What are we to understand by the enmity between the serpent and the woman? What by that between her seed and the serpent's seed? In what is this enmity seen? What intimation of suffering had the seed of the woman? What promise of victory?

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—*Verse* 1.—*Subtile.* "Cunning," "crafty." Compare Matt. x. 16: "Wise as serpents" The traditional repute of the serpent has been such, always and everywhere. *And he said.* That is, the serpent. But the indications of Scripture (see John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 8; Rev. xii. 9, and xx. 2; Rom. xvi. 20), are that the serpent was not a mere serpent, but either a serpent taken possession of by the devil for his purposes, or else the devil himself, in the form of a serpent. That the devil could thus invade and usurp an animal organism, is plainly shown in the story of the herd of swine into which the legion of demons entered; and if, as from express Scripture we know was the case, the devil could transform himself into an angel of light, it is easy to believe that he could appear under the inferior guise of a serpent. This account of the Temptation and Fall, is taken by some devout interpreters as in the nature of allegory. Of course, that interpretation may possibly be true; but the far easier way, that is, the way far less beset with difficulties, is to understand the story literally. The manner in which "the serpent" of this chapter is identified with Satan by the foregoing Scripture references, almost shuts us up to the literal interpretation. The simplest interpretation is not seldom the most profound. *Yea.* "Is it indeed true," "Is it even so," that God, etc. Observe that the tempter misrepresents the prohibition of God, as applying to *all* the trees of the garden. Observe, also, that both the tempter and the tempted call God by that single name, while the historian uses the double name, "Jehovah God."

Verses 2, 3.—The woman corrects the misrepresentation of the serpent, and then proceeds to make what appears to be a misrepresentation of her own, in adding, "Neither shall ye touch it."

Verses 4, 5.—Perhaps emboldened by the sign of success seen in the apparent restiveness of the woman, the tempter lies more openly. *Shall be opened.* "*Will* be opened." *Shall be as gods.* "*Will* be as gods." The opening of the eyes is to be understood in a figurative sense, as applying to intellectual and moral discernment. This is evident from the last clause: "Knowing good and evil." The temptation was to disobedience, through distrust of God, and through ambitious pride.

Verse 6.—This verse presents the woman in the act and attitude of deliberation and desire. It is a striking contrast to our Saviour's conduct under temptation. The woman dwells upon the probable luscious taste of the fruit, the beauty of it to the eye, its alleged power to confer wisdom. Comp. 1 John ii. 16. This inward state was itself sin; and the act of plucking and eating simply made the sin manifest. The verse of James (chap. i. 15), is a good commentary.

Verse 7.—Guilty shame was the consequence, not of their eating, but of their disobedience in eating. They now knew evil. It is not said that the fruit *produced* this effect, but only that this effect followed the eating.

Verse 8.—*Cool of the day.* Literally, "*breeze* of the day." *Voice.* The Hebrew word *might* mean simply "sound," as of footsteps. See 2 Sam. v. 24; 1 Kings xiv. 6; 2 Kings vi. 32. *Adam.* "The man," Dr. Conant translates, not considering the word a proper name. The instinct to hide was the perfectly natural instinct of conscious guilt.

Verses 9, 10, 11.—The intercourse between unfallen man and his Maker, would naturally be free and intimate. There is not necessarily any wisdom in regarding this verse otherwise than as a simply literal narrative of fact. The most obvious mode of communication, on the part of God, with the creature that he had made in his own image, would be through speech and hearing. If God condescended to communicate with man at all, this way would be as worthy of his greatness as any. There is nothing gained by allegorizing the plain facts away. God was, of course, not seeking information in his questions, any more than might a father in trying, through similar inquiries, to lead a son to the recognition and acknowledgment of some fault of his, already well ascertained in other ways.

Verse 12.—The meaning is not that the man was shifting the responsibility upon the woman, so much as that he was charging it upon God himself. The emphasis lies on the clause, "Whom *thou* gavest to be with me."

Verse 13.—The woman, as first in transgression, is turned upon by God with a sad severity. Verse 16 discriminates against her in awarding punishment. Paul (1 Tim. ii. 14) adverts to this original act of the woman as continuing to be a reason for her subordination to man. Note that the man does not pretend to have been deceived. For aught that appears, he sinned with his eyes open. The woman, on the contrary, pleads that the serpent "beguiled" her.

Verses 14, 15.—This curse on the serpent was addressed to the serpent, in the second person. It was therefore addressed to his intelligence, which was that of Satan. With use, accordingly, of imagery chosen from the prone and abject form and movement of the serpent, and his apparent and reputed habit (see Micah vii. 17), God does, in reality, pronounce his curse upon the Satanic Tempter. *Above all cattle.* Perhaps "of all cattle" gives the true sense. The literal meaning would then be, that all other creatures should regard the serpent with dread and avoidance. The curse was on Satan, expressed in terms drawn from the condition of the serpent. It was addressed *to* Satan in the hearing of man, who thus had, in the serpent, a lasting symbol and reminder of what was threatened to his adversary, while the very curse itself contained for man a promise of redemption by the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head. This was the first hint of the gospel of the grace of God.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

So long as Adam and Eve could eat of the fruit of "The tree of life," their bodies would never be sick or die, and their children would have shared the same blessing. Why should they not eat of the fruit of the tree? *God told them not to.* That was reason enough. He only gave them one command, but that was enough to show whether they would obey.

Tell the sad story of the fall. As the story goes on, make a serpent under the tree in the form of a letter S, making one by one as you speak of them the words, Satan, Sly, Sin, Shame, Sorrow, Shut out.

How changed things now were in Eden, sin brought sorrow and shame, and made them afraid. When we disobey God, we want to hide. Did Adam and Eve really hide from God? Can any one hide where God cannot see?

God spoke to each of the sinning ones. He would not let Adam and Eve stay where the tree of life was; he shut them out from where it was; shut them out of Eden, and what would have been far more dreadful, they would have been shut out of heaven, had it not been for just one thing. God was very sorry for them, but he must keep his word, and he could only save them by having some one else die in their place. So now he made a precious promise that some day a little child should be born, who should bruise Satan, and break his power to pieces. Who was this child?

Though sin and death entered into the world by one man, life and forgiveness entered by another, even the one who was promised that day, the Lord, Jesus Christ our Saviour.

—Abridged from the *Baptist Teacher.*

Youths' Department.

Bible Enigma.

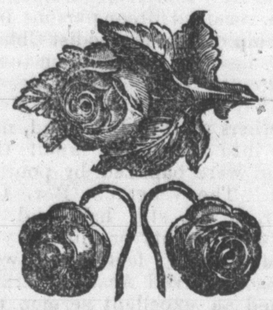
No. 79.

1. The first king of Israel.
2. His son and successor.
3. The only man found perfect; he walked with God in the year of the world 1535.
4. An ancient patriarch, called the father of the faithful and the friend of God.
5. A prophet who testified of Jesus as being "The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."
6. The first convert to Christianity from the Gentiles.
7. The man sent by Jesus to Saul, commissioned to restore his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.
8. One of a family of three in Bethany, of each of whom it is said that "Jesus loved them."
9. A source of fruitage which the Saviour employs both as an emblem of His union with His people, and the juice of its fruit to be partaken of as a sacramental resemblance of His shed blood.
10. A man who with his wife hospitably entertained Paul on his first visit to Corinth.
11. The book which closes the Scripture canon, and was a special communication from Jesus to the beloved disciple, to be transmitted by him for the benefit of the churches till He shall come.
12. The time of life in which both the Old and New Testament urge the importance of attending to the soul's salvation.

These initials name two mountains of the Old and New Testament, whereon occurred the greatest manifestation ever made to man, exemplifying the words of the Psalmist, "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—*Watchman.*

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

No. 65.



Find in the above, (1) part of a watering pot, (2) parts of a book, (3) the fore part of a ship, (4) bones in the human frame, (5) to strut, (6) part of a circle, (7) to unite, (8) the centre of life, (9) parts of apples, (10) parts of axes.

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 78.

WORD PICTURE.

Belshazzar's Feast.—Dan. v. 1-4.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

No. 59. Saul. See 1 Samuel x. 6.
60. Samuel. See 1 Samuel vii. 12.
61. Intellectual.
62. Absurdity.
63. Abraham Lincolm.
64. Words to complete the "Aunt Flora's Answers" Broken Rhymes, in *Christian Messenger* last week.

Start, tart, art,
Skill, kill, ill,
Blend, lend, end,
Smothers, mothers, others.

Select Serial.

Florence Walton,

OR,

A Question of Duty.

BY MAY F. MCKEAN.

CHAPTER XVIII.—AFTER FOUR YEARS.

Four years have passed since we left our West-town friends. But little had happened in those four years the account of which, if portrayed here, would prove otherwise than monotonous to my readers.

There had been heartaches and trials, temptations and victories, smiles and tears, sunshine and shadow—just such as needs must come to every life. We must not look for thornless roses here on earth, else we should be too reluctant to leave this for another and a better life, which, whatever of sorrow may come to us here, will but render it the more welcome.

Yet when we look upon the familiar scene again we find some changes. For nearly that length of time Dr. Ronselle had been abroad with an aged and wealthy relative, now wandering the length and breadth of that wonderfull old world, now in the bustle and din of some crowded city or beneath some humble roof of a rustic village, seeking for peace, that restful heart-ease, which the most moral life failed to yield.

Often, aye very often, his mind reverted to the quiet years he had spent in Westtown, and never without resting upon the unobtrusive Christian life he had met and learned to love while there. Even yet God was speaking to his heart through that conscientious life. We may safely leave him for the present in his all-powerful hand.

Florence was still the faithful, loving and well-beloved teacher at the academy. After many months of trial she had succeeded in winning back the confidence of her pupil Emily Matthews, which had been so sadly shaken by her unhappy visit to the theatre; and again, after many more months of patient waiting, during which many and earnest supplications that the wrong she had done might be effaced had ascended to the "great white throne," she was permitted to lead that beloved pupil to the foot of the cross, Faithfully she toiled on, filling with thankful heart just the nook in which He who plans every step of our way had placed her.

Yet she was not now always alone. Aunt Grace had been true to her promise made to her God, her pastor, and her own heart. Where before Florence met only with opposition she had now come to look for encouragement; nor was she ever disappointed. Aunt Grace's present life was undeniably spent very near her Saviour; and from such nearness arose the consistent harmony which no one could fail to notice. Her wealth, her position, and her natural qualifications, which formerly were devoted only to the fleeting pleasures of this world, were now directed to the advancement of the work of Him whom she delighted to honor.

For a little more than three years Ethel had been mistress of the beautiful brown stone house, corner of Main and Academy streets, surrounded, it would seem to careless eyes, by everything that wealth could purchase or heart wish; and few indeed were those who ever guessed that beneath those silken robes was ever carried a secret burden which seemed growing more and more insupportable as the months rolled by.

My readers will remember that when still a single man, Clifford Walraven sometimes indulged in "the choicest wines when society demanded it of him," and that Ethel had upheld him in it. They will remember also that he was not one of those strong ones who dared assert a truth and stand by it in the face of opposition or raillery. Whatever might be said in favor of Clifford Walraven's face and form, his wealth, his accomplishments and culture, it certainly could not be asserted of his character that "he was a strong young man."

Soon after their marriage wine had been introduced upon their sideboard. Their friends had been hospitably entertained with the ruddy beverage, and never a social gathering had they, but wine and wit flowed freely.

Clifford was a member of several "clubs," from whose meetings he never returned to his wife without the odor of wine upon his breath. To the world, even to Ethel's own particular friend, there was little difference in her husband; they saw not the changes which wrung from her heart many a weary, weary sigh. Before the world he maintained the same gracious deportment toward his wife which had ever characterized his actions, but she knew that those little attentions which render love so sweet had long since been forgotten in private; that his "club" was becoming more attractive than his home; that his hour of returning from it was gradually becoming later; that he was more and more under the influence of wine; that sometimes on these returns he spoke harshly to his waiting wife; and that once he had even raised his hand in anger to strike her.

Yet poor, weary Ethel must keep her secret all alone; she must have a smile for her friends, though her heart should break in its silence. Not for the world would she have them guess her misery. Yet she bore it without once raising her prayer to the only One who is an ever-present help in any time of trouble.

In the Hartford family there had been changes, for there the death-angel had come, bearing away with him as he departed the purified soul of little Nellie the invalid. Her life had not been altogether a joyless nor a useless one, and the appearance of the messenger was at length hailed with gladness, as releasing her from her sufferings.

She had lived long enough to see her parents move from that disreputable "Seventeen Acres" to a pretty vineclad cottage on the lower part of Academy Street; to see her father installed in the same art-store in the city where already a number of years had been passed, while, as before, his leisure time was devoted to painting at home; to see her mother a regular attendant with her father at the church, where they were both now consistent members. Then when Maggie had, with tears in her eyes, promised to meet her in heaven, she felt that her work on earth was done, and closing her eyes to earthly scenes, she peacefully slept to wake not again until it should be in the presence of her Saviour, where her poor maimed body should know of no more suffering.

Deacon Hodson too had gone to his rest. The many years of doubt and anxiety, of fear and solicitude, were past. He had gone to meet the Redeemer whose cause he had so zealously and sincerely—though oftentimes so mistakenly—endeavoured to advance. Perhaps in yon bright world Deacon Hodson may learn that there may be found, even on this sin-stricken earth, a hopeful, a joyful side to that love whose presence yields that heaven.