

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1880.

- LESSONS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER. 7. Nov. 14. Joseph the Wise Ruler. Gen. xli. 41-57. 8. Nov. 21. Joseph and his Brethren. Gen. xlv. 30-34; xlv. 1-8. 9. Nov. 28. Jacob and Pharaoh. Gen. xlvii. 1-12. 10. Dec. 5. The Last Days of Jacob. Gen. xlviii. 8-22. 11. Dec. 12. Last Days of Joseph. Gen. l. 14-26. 12. Dec. 19. Review. 13. Dec. 26. Lesson Selected by the School.

Lesson VI.—NOVEMBER 7.

JOSEPH IN PRISON.

Gen. xxxix. 21-23; xl. 1-8.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 21-23.

After the sale of Joseph, Jacob's family continued to burden him, Joseph meanwhile, was prospered in his captivity, until upon false accusation he was cast into prison, where this lesson finds him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him."—Psalm xxxvii. 7.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. Joseph in Prison, Gen. xxxix. 21-23; xl. 1-8. T. Joseph's Fidelity, Gen. xxxix. 1-6. W. God's Care of Joseph, Psalm cv. 1-22. T. Faithful to Duty, Titus ii. 1-15. F. Helpful to Men, Acts xx. 17-38. S. True to God, Dan. iii. 1-18. S. Jesus in Humiliation, 1 Peter ii. 18-25.

PARALLEL TEXTS.

- With vs. 21: Ex. iii. 21; Dan. i. 9; Gen. xliii. 4. With vs. 1: Neh. i. 11. With vs. 2: Prov. xvi. 14. With vs. 3: Gen. xxix. 20, 23. With vs. 8: Gen. xli. 16; Dan. ii. 11; xxviii. 47.

THE BELOVED SON IN HUMILIATION.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Faithful to Duty, Vss. 21-23. II. Helpful to Men, Vss. 1-8. III. True to God, Vs. 8.

QUESTIONS.—To whom was Joseph sold in Egypt? What was this man's official rank? (Chap. xxxix. 1.) On whose false charges was Joseph cast into prison? (Chap. xxxix. 19, 20.)

I. Vss. 21-23.—Give some proofs of Joseph's faithfulness before he was cast into prison. Give some proofs of his faithfulness in prison.

II. Vss. 1-8.—To what men was Joseph helpful while in prison? In what way did he help these men?

III. Vs. 8.—Wherein does Joseph appear true to God? When again did he act in the same way?

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 21.—With Joseph. Favorable to Joseph; on Joseph's side. Keeper of the prison. Potiphar, as captain of the life-guard, or head of the executioners, had, for an alleged offence of Joseph against his master's wife, committed the young Hebrew slave to prison, where he was in the custody of a subordinate officer, here named "keeper."

Verses 22, 23.—Joseph inspired such confidence in his own discretion and integrity, on the part of the keeper, that, while himself a prisoner, he had charge of his fellow-prisoners. Whatever they did. "They" is probably indefinite; not referring specifically to the prisoners, but to the whole company, including under-officers and servants. Good behaviour, even inspired by God, will not necessarily make the subject of it prosper, in a worldly sense of prosperity, without the positive external influence of God directed to that end. Here, Jehovah is said to have made Joseph's undertakings prosper.

Verses 1, 2.—The butler. The "butler" was, very likely, some man of high birth. The same of the chief baker. Had offended. Had committed an offence, against. The king, in consequence, was angry.

Verses 3, 4.—In ward. In custody, in safe keeping, under watch. House of the captain of the guard. The guard had, perhaps, quarters, or barracks, connected both with the prison proper, and with the residence of Potiphar, the captain. These distinguished prisoners were treated with some consideration,

while their case was yet undecided. Joseph was detailed to attend upon them.

Verse 5.—Each man according to the interpretation of his dream. That is, apparently, each had a dream, such as the subsequent circumstances of their fate showed to have been appropriate.

Verse 6.—Joseph came in unto them in the morning. This was in the course of his routine of duty. The morning after their dreams, they woke with melancholy forebodings.

Verse 7.—In the ward of his lord's house. Joseph's question, "Why are your faces sad to-day?" betokens the friendly standing with them.

Verse 8.—They had an impression of some calamity signified. Joseph modestly suggests that interpretations belong to God; thereby implying that God can impart them to whomsoever he will. His asking to have the dreams reported to him must, in the sequel of such a suggestion on his part, have been understood to imply that he would himself undertake to interpret them.

Recognise in the history of Joseph a striking illustration, if not type, of the history of the Redeemer.

Consider that, as Joseph saved his brethren that sold him, so Jesus is willing to save us that crucified him.

God is able, if he will, to give you favor in the eyes of the world.

Never imagine that, if you are shrewd and discreet, you can get along without the presence of God to make you prosper.

Joseph separated from his brethren, was not separated from God.

If you are truly righteous, God will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noon-day.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Imagine Joseph as he trudges along with his Midianite owners, with hands fettered, and perhaps urged on by the slavedriver's whip, with none to pity or to care for him. See him crossing the hot, sandy desert, then entering Egypt, where everything is new and strange.

Instead of the hills and valleys of Canaan, the whole land was flat and green; instead of scarcity of water, canals and ditches cut here and there all over the land: these had water let into them from the river Nile at certain seasons; instead of the simple stone altar of his father, immense temples and armies of priests. He passed also the huge stone pyramids of which you have read. He was taken to Memphis, the capital of Egypt, right into the court of Pharaoh. He had probably never been in a house before—at least, anything better than a mud hut; here the houses were large and handsome, with many ornaments and rich colors and fine furniture. Strange ways, strange language—yes, and strange sins—were all around Joseph. He was bought by a high officer named Potiphar, who probably had Joseph's hair shaved and a close skull-cap and loose linen frock put on him. We do not know just what Joseph's work was, but it took him into the house of his master instead of into the open fields. And we know that he served his master well, and that Potiphar watched him and saw that everything he did succeeded. He even knew the cause, for he "saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made everything to prosper in his hands."

The Lord gave him strength to resist strong temptation, but he was charged with sin and thrown into prison the same as if he had really been guilty. This seems like a bad time, but God works good out of evil, and Joseph might have been a slave all his life if his master's ear had not been poisoned against him. Even in prison the Lord was with him, and his new master soon liked and trusted him fully.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

A Sunday school has been opened at Wittemberg, in the church to whose door Luther affixed his ninety-five theses. At first it had seventy scholars, but it grew so rapidly that it was soon found necessary to use another part of the school. The scholars now number 400, of whom three-fourths are girls. Five of the teachers are men and eight women.

Booth's Department.

Bible Enigma.

No. 96.

In the initials of the following described words and names, find the blessed condition of all Christian people:

- 1. An instrument for carrying a burden; 2. an old prophet who did not sufficiently correct his sons; 3. he whose offering was accepted in preference to his brother's; 4. the former mistress of the world; 5. the first bride; 6. Israel's youngest son; 7. He who hid the prophets in a cave and fed them; 8. the first husband of Bathsheba; 9. the man who "cared for none of these things"; 10. a beautiful hill in Palestine; 11. a pattern Christian woman; 12. a name of Christ, in John i; 13. the good man who loved his "profane" son better than his brother; 14. a city on the Mediterranean Coast; 15. Benhadad's successor; 16. the most easterly city of the desert; 17. the island to which John was banished; 18. the one of the twelve brothers who shewed most favor to Joseph; 19. a province east of Palestine; 20. one of the most wicked of ancient cities; 21. one of the devil's most expressive names.

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

No. 127.

PRIZE PICTURE.



Here is another picture. This one has in it but one figure, and yet it is made up of a number of parts which a sharp eye may discover. The eyes that are not very sharp too may be sharpened by a little care and effort in trying to puzzle out what may be found in it. Try then and see in it

- 1. Timid people on ice; 2. frisky young animals; 3. the frame of a window; 4. 24 inches; 5. the opening of a river to the sea; 6. a shiver; 7. four-fifths of a crystal; 8. fastenings of doors; 9. a work of high art; 10. efforts to get in good supplies; 11. four-fifths of a seat; 12. a distinctive mark of human beings; 13. what often prevents speed; 14. an act which may be performed alike by men, animals and liquids; 15. an onward motion; 16. the lower part of an animal's covering.

A Prize! A Prize!!

If any of our young readers will send us the correct answers to the above question, No. 127, before November the 10th, we will send the latest book now published by the Baptist Publication Society, "PICNICS AND PARTIES" noticed on another page, to the one who first sends the correct answers, with this or her age. If there be more than one with correct answers then the preference shall be given to the one that is in the neatest hand-writing, in consideration of the age of the writer.

We will give the answer and the name of the successful competitor on the 17th of November.

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 95.

TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

H e A r T
A b A v A
D e R e B (Derbe)
A p O l O
D o N o R

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- 121. Carpet. 122. Coffee. 123. Camomile. 124. Ought, nought. 125. Offer, coffer. 126. Crew, screw.

Faith is the root, and assurance is the flower. Doubtless you can never have the flower without the root; but it is no less certain you may have the root and not the flower.

I learned that he that will be a hero will barely be a man; that he that will be nothing but a doer of his work is sure of his manhood.

All God's providences are but His touches of the strings of the great instrument of the world.

A Rift in the Cloud.

Andrew Lee came home at evening from the shop where he had worked all day, tired, and out of spirits—came home to his wife, who was also tired and out of spirits.

"A smiling wife and a cheerful home—what a paradise it would be!" said Andrew, to himself, as he turned his eyes from the clouded face of Mrs. Lee, and sat down with knitted brows and a moody aspect.

Not a word was spoken by either. Mrs. Lee was getting supper, and she moved about with a weary step.

"Come," she said at last, with a side glance at her husband.

There was an invitation in the word only, none in the voice of Mrs. Lee.

Andrew arose and went to the table. He was tempted to speak an angry word, but controlled himself and kept silence. He could find no fault with the chop, nor the sweet, home-made bread, nor the fragrant tea. They would have cheered the inward man, if there had only been a gleam of sunshine on the face of his wife. He noticed that she did not eat.

"Are you not well, Mary?" The words were on his lips, but he did not utter them, for the face of his wife looked so repellant that he feared an irritating reply. And so in moody silence the twain sat together until Andrew had finished his supper. As he pushed his chair back, his wife arose and commenced clearing the table.

"This is unbearable!" said Lee to himself, as he commenced walking the floor of their little breakfast-room, with his hands thrust desperately away down into his trousers' pockets, and his chin almost touching his breast.

After removing all the dishes and taking them into the kitchen, Mrs. Lee spread a green cover on the table, and placing a freshly trimmed lamp there on, went out, and shut the door after her, leaving her husband alone with his unpleasant feelings. He took a long, deep breath as she did so, paused in his walk, stood still for some moments and drawing a paper from his pocket, sat down by the table, opened the sheet and commenced reading. Singularly enough the words upon which his eyes rested were, "Praise your wife." They rather tended to increase the disturbance of mind from which he was suffering.

"I should like to find some occasion for praising mine." How quickly his thoughts expressed that ill-natured sentiment. But his eyes were on the page before him, and he read on—

"Praise your wife, man; for pity's sake, give her a little encouragement; it won't hurt her."

Andrew Lee raised his eyes from the paper, muttered, "Oh, yes; that's all very well. Praise is cheap enough. But praise for what; for being sullen, and making her home the most disagreeable place in the world?" His eyes fell again on the paper.

"She made your home comfortable, your hearth bright and shining, your food agreeable; for pity's sake, tell her you thank her, if nothing more. She don't expect it; it will make her eyes open wider than they have been for ten years; but it will do her good for all that, and you too."

It seemed to Andrew as if this sentence was written just for him and just for the occasion. It was the complete answer to his question, "Praise for what?" and he felt it also as a mistake. He read no further, for thoughts came too busy, and in a new direction. Memory was convincing him of injustice towards his wife. She had always made his home as comfortable for him as hands could make, and had he offered the slight return of praise or commendation? Had he ever told her of the satisfaction he had known or the comfort experienced? He was not able to recall the time or the occasion. As he thought thus, Mrs. Lee came in from the kitchen, and taking her work basket from a closet, placed it on a table, and sitting down, without speaking, began to sew. Mr. Lee glanced almost stealthily at the work in her hands, and saw that it was the bosom of a shirt, which she was stitching neatly.

"Praise your wife." The words were before the eyes of his mind, and he could not look away from them. But he was not ready for this yet. He still felt moody and unforgiving. The ex-

pression of his wife's face he interpreted to mean ill-nature, and with ill-nature he had no patience. His eyes fell upon the newspaper that lay spread out before him, and he read the sentence:—

"A kind, cheerful word, spoken in a gloomy home, is like the rift in a cloud that lets the sunshine through."

Lee struggled with himself a while longer. His own ill-nature had to be conquered first; his moody, accusing spirit had to be subdued. But he was coming right, and at last got right, as to will. Next came the question as to how he should begin. He thought of many things to say, yet feared to say them lest his wife should meet them with a cold rebuff. At last, leaning toward her, and taking hold of the linen bosom upon which she was at work, he said, in a voice carefully modulated with kindness:

"You are doing that work very beautifully, Mary."

Mrs. Lee made no reply. But her husband did not fail to observe that she lost, almost instantly, that rigid erectness with which she had been sitting, not that the motion of her needle-hand had ceased.

"My shirts are better made, and whiter than those of any man in our shop," said Lee, encouraged to go on.

"Are they?" Mrs. Lee's voice was low, and had in it a slight huskiness. She did not turn her face, but her husband saw that she leaned a little toward him. He had broken through the ice of reserve, and all was easy now. His hand was among the clouds, and a few feeble rays were already struggling through the rift it had made.

"Yes, Mary," he answered softly; "and I've heard it said more than once, what a good wife Andrew Lee must have."

Mrs. Lee turned her face toward her husband. There was light in it, and light in her eye. But there was something in the expression of the countenance that a little puzzled him.

"Do you think so?" she asked, quite soberly.

"What a question!" ejaculated Andrew Lee, starting up, and going round to the side of the table where his wife was sitting. "What a question, Mary!" he repeated, as he stood before her.

"Do you?" It was all she said.

"Yes, darling," was his warmly spoken answer, and he stooped and kissed her.

"How strange that you should ask me such a question!"

"If you would only tell me so now and then, Andrew, it would do me good." And Mrs. Lee arose, and leaning her face against the manly breast of her husband, stood and wept silently. What a strong light broke in upon the mind of Andrew Lee! He had never given to his faithful wife even the small reward of praise for all the loving interest she had manifested daily, until doubt of his love had entered her soul, and made the light around her, thick darkness. No wonder that her face grew clouded, nor that ill-nature took possession of her spirits.

"You are good and true, Mary—my own dear wife. I am proud of you—I love you—and my first desire is for your happiness. Oh, if I could always see your face in sunshine, my home would be the dearest place on earth."

"How precious to me are your words of love and praise, Andrew," said Mrs. Lee, smiling up through her tears into his face. "With them in my ears, my heart can never lie in shadow."

How easy had been the work of Andrew Lee. He had swept his hand across the cloudy horizon of his home, and now the bright sunshine was streaming down, and flooding the home with joy and beauty.—British Workman.

Talk over what you read.

Nearly forty years' experience as a teacher has shown me how little I truly know of a subject until I begin to explain it or teach it. Let any young person try the experiment of giving in conversation, briefly and connectedly, and in the simplest language, the chief points of any book or article he has read, and he will at once see what I mean. The gaps that are likely to appear in the knowledge that he felt was his own, will no doubt be very surprising. I know of no training superior to this in utilizing one's reading, in strengthening the memory, and in forming habits of clear, connected statement. It will doubtless teach others than those I have mentioned, which the persons who honestly make the experiment will find out for themselves. Children who read can be encouraged to give, in a familiar way, the interesting parts of the books they have read, with great advantage to all concerned. More than one youth I know has laid the foundation of intellectual tastes in a New England family, where hearty encouragement was given to children and adults in their attempts to sketch the lectures they had heard the evening previous. The same thing was done with books.