

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson XIII.—DECEMBER 25.

PUBLISHING THE NAME OF THE LORD.

Deut. xxxii. 1-4.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: VERSES 2, 3.

This lesson is the opening portion of the song of praise uttered by Moses before he went up into the mountain to die.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“I will publish the name of the Lord.”—Deut. xxxii. 3.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

M. Publishing the Name of the Lord, Deut. xxxii. 1-4.

T. Nature and Revelation, Psa. xix. 1-14.

W. Go and Teach, Matt. xxviii. 16-20.

F. Sowing the Seed, Matt. xiii. 3-9; 18-23.

E. Publishing Essential, Rom. x. 1-15.

S. Teaching Profitable, 2 Tim. iii. 14-17.

S. The Word Fruitful, Isa. lv. 1-13.

PUBLISHING THE NAME OF THE LORD.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Attention Called, Vs. 1. II. Method Stated, Vs. 1-3. III. Theme Announced, Vs. 3, 4.

QUESTIONS.—What is meant by the name of the Lord? What is it to publish this? What method of publishing is implied in vs. 1? What methods in vs. 2? When should men employ these methods personally? When should they combine to do it? Why is the printing-press one of the mightiest agents for publishing God's name? What should be done to promote its efficiency?

What is included in “the name of Lord”? What must be ascribed to him? What is he? What is his work? What are his ways? What sort of a God is he in vs. 4 declared to be? Are all these views of God to be published? What did Jesus command his disciples to teach the world? (Matt. xxviii. 20).

This lesson is the introduction of the song, or ode, written by Moses, and recited by him and Joshua to the people, just before the great law-giver went up Mount Nebo to die. See Lesson 11. Some one has said: “Let me make the songs of the people, and I care not who makes the laws;” but Moses, as a wise legislator, made both laws and songs. See the magnificent song of praise composed by him, and sung by the people after crossing the Red Sea, in Ex. xv. See also Psa. xc. The prophetic song, of our lesson, seems to be based upon the foreknowledge of the people; and Moses here gives testimony, in a form in which Israel may remember it, to the perfections of Jehovah, declaring that though Israel may act perversely, that the Lord is blameless and righteous in his doings. The whole song bears out the title of the lesson, and is given to “Publishing the Name of the Lord.”

I. Attention Called, (Vs. 1).

Give ear. The song of Moses opens with a summons to heaven and earth to hearken to his words; for they were worthy of their attention, and they concerned both heaven and earth; i. e., the whole universe. Moses vindicates and justifies God before the heavens and the earth for whatever may befall Israel. The words of my mouth. Consider the power of words, right words, God's words as spoken by us; also the privilege of uttering saving words, and the duty of publishing them abroad.

II. Method Stated, (Vs. 1-3).

Doctrine . . . speak. An instance of Hebrew parallelism, the two words meaning the same, and referring to the song, or ode. As the rain . . . as the dew. The “fiery Law,” was accompanied with thunders and the smoking mountain, which, like the storm, awakened terror, (Ex. xx. 19). But Moses desired this summary of instructions and declaration of God's righteousness, to fall gently, like the dew or rain, upon their hearts. It is not the torrent or tornado which refreshes and fertilizes the soil, but the softly falling raindrops, or small rain. So the gospel comes. The law kills, but the gospel brings to life. The tempest may uproot the tender herb, but the dew, and rain enliven and nourish it, and cause it to

grow. I will publish, or proclaim, or preach. The preacher of the gospel is but a proclaimer of God's Word. Of all the high duties to which Moses was called, there was none more exalted than this of publishing the name of the Lord. Lord; i. e., Jehovah. The name stands for the Being, and for all the truth which he reveals to man. Ascribe ye. The ye emphatic. Moses was not content to proclaim or praise the Lord by himself; he would have the hearer of the song join him in the work. Greatness. Equivalent to the term glory in Psa. xxix. 1, 2; xcvi. 7, 8. Men are to glorify God by words and conduct, to celebrate his greatness and goodness, and to publish abroad his blessed revelations concerning himself in Jesus Christ.

III. Theme Announced, (Vs. 3, 4).

Rock. This song is called by some, “the Hymn of the Rock.” He is the Rock, as the unchangeable refuge of his people; a firm defence, a secure resort, a sure basis of salvation. His work is perfect. Perfection is the characteristic of all of God's works, whether in creation, providence, or redemption. We, who publish the name of the Lord, are permitted to preach a finished work in Christ. His ways are judgment. Rather, his ways are right. A God of truth. Without iniquity. With nothing crooked or false in his nature, like the gods of the heathen. Just and upright. Just and righteous. God's righteousness, in the New Testament, is seen to be in Christ, his method of salvation (Rom. x. 3); and God's justice is there concerned in the forgiveness of sin (1 John i. 9). Such is he whose name we are to proclaim.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

In the Old Testament, God promised that Jesus should come. In the New Testament, we read that Jesus did come. Moses wrote about Jesus in the law. Let the class repeat the foregoing sentence. After Moses had gone to heaven, God told other men that Jesus was coming. These men were called prophets. The prophets wrote about Jesus.

After Moses and the prophets had been dead a great many years, the children of Israel began to wonder just when Jesus would come. But they had to wait and wait a great many years before Jesus did come. When Jesus came, did all the people know that he was the One whom Isaiah called “Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace?” No, they thought he was only a little baby, just like any other baby. They had no room for him in the inn. Where did Jesus sleep the night he was born? Tell of some men who did know that the “wonderful” child had come. How did the shepherds know? How did the wise men know? How do we know that these wise men felt sure that the little babe was truly “the Almighty God?” Because they fell down and worshiped him. Review, in detail, the story of the shepherds and of the wise men if there is time.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 149.

- 1. Our first is the land where a garden once stood, By a Mighty One planted, and filled with all good: 'Twas enjoyed for a while by a beautiful pair, Who dwelt in all honour and happiness there; But they kept not their honour, and lost their estate, Debarred from their rest by a well-guarded gate.
2. Our second confirms what another may speak, In Hebrew or English, in Latin or Greek; No matter what language, it ever means yea, Like God's faithful promise in Jesus always; The pledge that He gives to his people is sure, Who trust in his truth are for ever secure.
3. Say thirdly, how Moses was told to undo The robes of fine linen and purple and blue, From Aaron the priest, and bestow on his son, When the term of his service and duty was done.

And men do the same who a victory gain, And take off the spoils from their enemies slain,
4. Our last in dry places we tread under feet; It spreads o'er the desert, or floats in the street; 'Twas used by our Maker our bodies to frame, And in process of time we return to the same; We should then so earnestly number our days, As to gain the true Wisdom that never decays.

The first and last letters from each take away, And the rest laid together our whole shall display— The leader of many whose clamour was loud, For the pride of all Asia, their creed they avowed! Yet Christ's humble messengers made them afraid, Lest the word of salvation should ruin their trade.

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

A BIBLICAL ENIGMA.

150. 27 letters. 10, 8, 5, 18, 16, 24, a beautiful Jewess, who was the means of delivering her people from a cruel death.

14, 13, 17, 27, the wife of Boaz. 7, 1, 26, 18, 25, 15, a prophet who reproved David.

9, 19, 22, a name applied to Christ. 23, 21, 12, 16, 11, that which Elijah poured over a burnt sacrifice.

2, 7, 3, 20, that which a faithful messenger is like.

4, 6, 15, an instrument to winnow grain, and mentioned in the Gospel according to Matthew.

The whole is one of the wise sayings of Solomon.

278. PREFIXES. Prefix to “skill” a pronoun, and have “the chief or middle part.”

Prefix to the same pronoun “to suffer,” and have “oblivion.” Prefix to “to suffer” to sound and have “a curl.”

Prefix to “to sound” a pronoun, and have a kind of fish.

Prefix to the same pronoun a small insect, and have in botany “the summit of the stamen.”

Prefix to the same small insect a certain number, and have “a dweller.” Prefix to the same number “a large bottle,” and have a domestic animal.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 148.

- 1. H ira m...1 Kings vii. 13.
2. E bon y...Ezek. xxvii. 15.
3. A rara t...Gen. viii. 4, 20.
4. V anis h...Eza. x. 36.
5. E beneze r...1 Sam. vii. 12.
6. N eb o...Is. xvi. 1; Jer. xlvi.
7. I jo n...1 Kings xv. 20. [1, 21, 22.
8. S apphir e...Exodus xxiv. 10.
“HEAVEN IS MY THRONE.” Isa. lxvi. 1.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

276. B-LEA-T. B-EAR-D. B-ARM-Y.

277. E. E. V. E. R. Y. E. R. A. Y.

Winter Friends.

“Agnes! Agnes!” rang out a clear, pleasant voice through the cold, sharp air.

But Agnes was thinking. Her mind was far away; so what wonder that though she heard with her ears, she did not understand?

It was only a week to Christmas, and Agnes, like many another little maiden, had puzzled her head anxiously about ways and means for the family Christmas tree. Cousins Jule and Will were always there at Christmas, since their mother died; but it wasn't quite settled yet what else they'd do. So Agnes was still in a puzzle, and likely to be, she thought; for there seemed to be no settling of family plans.

The snow-flakes were falling, this morning, for the first time; and grandma said they made her feel gloomy.

Not so Agnes. She was gay; and, putting on her hat, ran out into the “lovely snow,” the feathery flakes falling all about her, and lighting on her hair and shoulders.

Out she ran to the farm-yard, and leaning over the rude fence to look at the meek old cows, who blinked away at the snow that blew in their faces, she saw inside the fence, perched on a twig that swayed in the breeze, dear little Chippy.

Chippy knew Agnes, for she had fed him over and over again. So now she chirped and talked to him, while he fearlessly listened. Then she brought him some food; for, of course, Chippy must have food provided for him, now the snow covered the ground. Then she fell to thinking.

Chippy wasn't like the rest of the birds. The others flew off as soon as the cold weather came, and not a song nor a sight of their plumage would they give us. Chippy was a real winter bird, staying not only through the pleasant, sunshiny summer months, but now when the wintry winds had come, here he was still, looking bright and cheery as ever, as much as to say: “I'm a friend who stands by, you see.”

Just then the voice came again, calling, “Agnes!” She heard this time, and, running through the snow flakes to the house, she carried her thoughts with her.

“Folks ought to be as good as birds,” she said. “Birds can't do much but stay round and look pretty and bright; but folks can do heaps more than that—so I think they ought to.” All of which Agnes told over to her mother, when she went in.

“Winter don't seem so much like winter, you see, mother, with the bird round; and I think if folks would be more like Chippy, and do all they can as he does, lots and lots of people wouldn't have to dread the winter, as you say they do.”

“Why not remember this at Christmas?” said mamma.

Agnes clapped her hands, and danced about like a crazy girl. Then, for hours, she and her mother planned “such lovely things!” Agnes said, if papa, when he came in to supper, would only say “Yes,” they'd have “just the nicest times!”

Papa said yes, as usual, to mamma's proposals; and Agnes was happy.

Then, what busy times there were in the farm house, till Christmas came! And Christmas-day itself was busiest of them all. By four o'clock everything was ready. The big kitchen was festooned with loops of evergreen, and wreaths and mottoes made it look like a festive hall, as it was.

Soon the people began to come; some on foot and some in the farm-house sleigh, which big Brother Ben drove around for the aged and infirm, and the children; and by five o'clock they were all there.

Such a supper as was spread in that kitchen, few of them had eaten for many a year; and many were the stories that were told, as the old folks drank their tea, and the younger ones their glasses of rich milk.

Then came the reading of God's Word, a hymn and a prayer by the good pastor, whom they had invited to be present.

After that the parlor was lighted, and all gathered around the Christmas tree. Not one had been forgotten, from lame old Uncle Joe, who needed the warm flannel for his rheumatism, down to sweet little Mamie Willis, whose new cloak, fashioned out of one Agnes had outgrown, made the way clear for her to go to Sunday School.

The very last thing taken from the Christmas-tree was a warm dressing gown for the pastor, and a soft, fine winter dress for his good wife.

Every face was beaming with delight; and the very merriest among them all was Agnes, as she gathered the children together in the sitting-room for one grand romp, before they all went home.

“Let's play blind man's buff,” said Ben, who called himself a child tonight, “just to help Agnes out,” he said afterwards.

But there was Nellie Wilson with her crutch, who came near being thrown down, and had to give up playing. So they stopped pretty soon, and played more quiet games, ending up with some of Ben's Bible-stories, in which he had them guess whom each story was about.

Then he made half a dozen little fellows, who had never been to Sunday-school, promise to come, the very next Sabbath, into his class.

“Ben knows how to kill two birds with one stone,” said Grandpa Allen, who had looked in upon the young people. “He makes the children happy and tries to do them good, all in one.”

“It's the merriest Christmas I ever

had,” said Agnes, when the last load had been driven from the door.

“I think you are a real ‘winter friend,’ mamma.”

“Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord shall deliver him in times of trouble.”—Young Reaper.

The Ever-Present Help.

“I wonder if the Lord knows how poor we are?” said Hetty White, as she looked out of the kitchen window at the white world before her. “More snow last night, and the wood-house almost empty, and nothing in the house to eat. No money to buy anything, either! I wonder if the Lord knows it all, and if he cares?”

“Hetty, dear!” called a voice from the next room. “Have the children had their breakfast? I think I would like a cup of tea.”

“Yes, mother; I'll bring it directly.” Hetty poured out the tea from a very small tea pot on the stove, and put it, with a slice of thin bread, upon a tray.

“Tisn't much of a breakfast for you, mother,” Hetty said, as she carried it into the room where her sick mother lay; “but it's all there is in the house. Willy and I will have to go down to the village and get some things, by-and-by.”

“And you don't like to do that,” said her mother. “But, Hetty, you can tell Mr. Hodges that his bill shall certainly be paid as soon as I am well enough to work again. There is plenty of work waiting for me, you know, dear.”

“Yes, I know, mother; but how are you ever going to get well without anything nourishing to eat? You ought to have beef-steak, and port-wine, and jelly, and—”

“I have what the Lord sees best,” interrupted her mother, with a smile. “Don't you think our Heavenly Father could send me all those things if he saw that I had need of them? Don't let go of your faith, Hetty, dear, because you have come to a hard place. Remember, the Lord sends us trouble to prove our faith—and his love, too. ‘Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.’”

“I wish I had faith like yours, mother! But sometimes it seems as if God was so far off!”

“He is near to those that trust him, always,” said her mother, with a kiss. And Hetty went away comforted, to do her unpleasant errand. She dreaded it, because Mr. Hodges, who kept the village store, had dunned her for the money due him, the last time she was there, and she hated to go again without it. If she had known what was before her, she would have dreaded it still more; for, after her long, cold walk through the snow, Mr. Hodges refused to give her credit for the groceries she wanted.

“I can't afford to feed people for nothing,” he said, rudely.

And poor Hetty had to go away with her basket empty; but, oh, with what a full heart! This was a mortification that she had never had to bear before, and she did not know how to bear it now. There was Willy, too, crying with cold and hunger; and how could she comfort him? “It does seem as if the Lord didn't care,” she thought; “but I know he does, after all. Mother says so, and I'll believe it.”

“Here comes a sleigh!” cried Willy, as they were about half-way home. “It's Doctor Allen's sleigh, too, and he's calling us.”

Sure enough the Doctor had stopped his horses, and was calling the children to get in. “I'll give you a ride home, presently,” he said. “But I'm going to the village first, and I'll take you along, if you're not in a hurry.”

There was nothing to hurry for; so the children were soon tucked under the buffalo-ropes, and horses off on a brisk trot again. Hetty never guessed what they were going for, not even when they stopped at Hodges', and a quantity of brown-paper parcels were heaped into the sleigh. She only found out when they reached home, and the Doctor tumbled the parcels out into her's and Willy's arms. “Put 'em away in the pantry, while I go in and speak to your mother,” he said. “They'll help along your house-keeping till she gets well.”

They helped Hetty's faith as well as her house-keeping, and she never doubted again the Lord's care for his children!—J. D.