

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson VII.—NOVEMBER 13.

THE FEAST OF TABERNALES.

Leviticus xxiii. 33-44.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 41-44.

The entire connection between this lesson and the last is made up of laws and regulations of a ceremonial character. See Chaps. xvi. 31 to the opening of this lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT—"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefit."—Psalm ciii. 2.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Feast of Tabernacles, Lev. xxiii. 33-44.
T. Other Feasts of the Lord, Lev. xxiii. 1-32.
W. Mercies Remembered, Psa. ciii. 1-22.
T. Jesus at the Feast, John vii. 1-40.
F. Offerings at the Feast, Num. xxix. 12-40.
S. Ezra's Feast of Tabernacles, Neh. viii. 1-18.
S. The Nation's Redemption Commemorated, Lev. xxiii. 33-44.

THE NATION'S REDEMPTION COMMORATED.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The Time of Commemoration, Vss. 33, 34, 38, 39. II. The Manner of Commemoration, Vss. 35-37, 40-42. III. The Object of Commemoration, Vss. 43, 44.

QUESTIONS.—What is meant by "tabernacles"? For what other feasts are orders given in this chapter?

I. Vss. 33, 34, 38, 39.—In what month was this feast kept? For how many days? Beginning on what day?

II. Vss. 35-37, 40-42.—What is the first day of the feast called in vs. 35? What is a "holy convocation"? From what did all abstain on this day? What was required on each of the days? What was the requirement as to the number of offerings each day? (Num. xxix. 12-40).

III. Vss. 43, 44.—What was the chief object of this commemorative feast? What other object did it include? (Deut. xvi. 13-15). What lesson did Jesus proclaim at this feast? (John vii. 37-39).

Of the three great religious festivals of the Hebrews,—the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles,—this was the last of the year, and was, pre-eminently, one of joy and thanksgiving. It began five days after the Day of Atonement, on the fifteenth of the seventh month (Tisri), or, rather, on the evening of the fourteenth, and extended, strictly speaking, seven days, (Deut. xvi. 13); but an eighth day was added (vs. 36), with special services, as a solemn close of the whole circle of yearly feasts. This feast derives its name from the fact that, during its observance, the people were required to dwell in booths, or temporary habitations, constructed of the boughs of trees, as a reminder of their tent life in the wilderness, and to teach the lesson of a spiritual pilgrimage. It was also a Thanksgiving festival, as it came in autumn, at the close of the season of the vintage and of fruits, and ended (Ex. xxiii. 16) with the feast of ingathering.

From the days of Joshua to the time of Nehemiah, the special feature of dwelling in booths seems to have been neglected (Neh. ix. 17), and it was reserved for the feeble remnant which returned from the Babylonian Captivity to restore it. The feast itself appears to have been observed with unusual festivities, at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. See 1 Kings viii. 2. This feast could not be kept in the wilderness. It was reserved till they entered into the Promised Land.

NOTES.—I. Its Appointment, (33-38.)

Verse 33.—The Lord [Jehovah] spake. A constantly recurring phrase, showing that these laws and institutions did not originate with Moses, but with God. "The law was given (transmitted) by Moses, but grace and truth came by (originated with) Jesus Christ," (John i. 17).

Verses 34, 35.—Fifteenth day of the seventh month. The number seven seems to be the key number of the Festival Calendar. "The seventh day in the week is the Sabbath; the seventh new moon is the feast of trumpets; the

seventh year, the sabbatical year; seven sabbatical years bring the year of jubilee; two weeks of seven days each, from the first day of the seventh month, bring the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasts seven days; and all of the festivals are included in the first seven months of the year." This seventh month corresponded with the end of our September and the beginning of October. All the harvests of fruits, oil, and wine had now been gathered. As the months were lunar months, the fifteenth day would be the time of the full moon. Feast. Or festival. All of the three great feasts were seasons of rejoicing; but this was especially so. Tabernacles. Booths. This feast reminded them of their pilgrimage life in the wilderness. Unto the Lord. A religious festival. Religion and festive rejoicing are not opposed. The service of God is full of joy; and, whether we eat or drink, it should be to the glory of God. See 1 Cor. x. 31; Phil. iv. 4.

First day. Observed as a Sabbath, as in the case of the first day of other feasts. On it the people were called together in a holy convocation, for religious worship; on it no servile work,—that is, the labors of one's ordinary calling,—was to be done. It is intimated that certain kinds of labor could be performed; such as works of necessity and mercy. In this respect it differed from the regular Sabbath (vs. 3; Ex. xx. 10) and the Day of Atonement (vs. 28), when no work of any kind was permitted (Num. xv. 32-35); and was on an equality with the first and seventh days of unleavened bread (vs. 7, 8), the Day of Pentecost (vs. 21), and the day of blowing the trumpets (vs. 25).

Verse 36.—An offering made by fire. The burnt-offerings of this feast were more numerous than those of any other festival. For a full description of them, see Num. xxix. 13-34. On each of the seven days, a "kid of the goats" (Num. xxix. 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34) was to be offered as a sin-offering. The burnt-offerings were to be, daily, two rams and fourteen lambs of the first year, and a number of young bullocks which varied each day. There was the remarkable provision, that on the first day, thirteen bullocks should be offered; twelve on the second day; eleven on the third; and so on, diminishing each day one, until, on the seventh day, there were but seven offered,—the whole number, for the seven days, being seventy. On the eighth day, there was, as on the first, a holy convocation; and on it, likewise, no "servile work" was done. It was the concluding day of the yearly feasts. On it, there were offered "one goat for a sin-offering," and a burnt offering of one bullock, one ram, and seven lambs, (Num. xxix. 36-38). A solemn assembly. More properly, a day of conclusion.

Verses 37, 38.—These are the feasts. That is, those mentioned in this chapter, viz., the three great Feasts of Unleavened Bread (vs. 5-8); Pentecost, or First Fruits (vs. 10-22); and Tabernacles; at which periods all the men were required to "appear before the Lord," (Ex. xxiii. 17); and the Feast of Trumpets (vs. 24, 25), and Day of Atonement (vs. 27-32), which were observed in the homes of the people. The meat-offering went with the burnt offering, as is seen in Num. xxix. For description of it, see Lev. ii. The sacrifice mentioned here, is understood by some to be the peace-offering; but it is more likely to be the sin-offering, which often went by this general name, and as we have seen, accompanied the burnt-offerings in the Feast of the Tabernacles. It specially set forth that which is the chief end of all sacrifices,—the expiation of sin. The drink-offerings were libations of wine poured upon the altar, and were usually joined with the meat-offerings, (Num. vi. 15, 17; 2 Kings xvi. 13; Joel i. 9). These Sabbatical days and special periods of worship were not to take the place of the regular Sabbaths, nor of the service included in the usual gifts and vows and free-will offerings, but were to be beside, or in addition to them.

II. Its Observance, (39-44)
Verses 39-41.—The writer comes back to the observance of this Feast of Tabernacles, and presents other particulars. The time is again mentioned, and the season of the year indicated. It is, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land. This includes fruits of all kinds. The feast was at the close of the

ingathering of the whole round of the produce of the land. Boughs of goodly trees "Trees of ornament," such as the orange, the citron, the myrtle, the olive, the palm, and the pine, which were used for booths in Ezra's day, (Neh. viii. 15). According to tradition, each Israelite tied the branches into a bunch, to be carried in his hand, after the manner of a banner, and went in procession, singing "Hosanna." Reference to this custom is seen in Matt. xxi. 8, 9; John xii. 13; Rev. vii. 9. In vs. 42, we learn that these branches were constructed into booths. Shall rejoice before the Lord. Combining grateful praise for the harvests with joyful remembrance of God's presence and care in their wilderness journey.

Verses 42-44.—In booths seven days. These booths, made of the branches mentioned in vs. 40, were built in the open spaces of the city, on the flat roofs of houses, in the streets, and in the fore-court of the Temple itself. They were inhabited for seven days; but on the morning of the eighth they were dismantled, and the Hebrews went back to their regular homes. All that are Israelites born. The dwelling in booths was not obligatory, but was optional with foreigners living with and among the Israelites. Yet they were to join in the rejoicing of the occasion, (Deut. xvi. 14). That your generations may know. This feast, like the Passover, was a memorial institution. It told its story to all succeeding generations,—a story of God's care and protection in the terrible wilderness. It was also a reminder of their pilgrim life, and of the frailty of the bodily tabernacle in which the spirit dwelt.

The feast of the Lord. The mingling in of traditions, and the corrupt heart, made them afterwards simply "the feasts of the Jews," (John v. 1; vi. 4).

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

A feast of thanksgiving was kept many years ago by the children of Israel. This feast of thanksgiving lasted for a week, not a day only. The children of Israel did not keep this thanksgiving feast while they were out in the wilderness. God told Moses that it was to be kept every year after they were settled in their new homes in Canaan. What did they live in while they were in the wilderness? Nothing but tents. God wanted them all to remember that, and said that every year, when the "thanksgiving week" came, all the people should build little houses with branches of trees. Where would they build them? Out in the street, or in their yards, or even on the tops of their houses. God said that they should eat and sleep in these little houses during the week of thanksgiving, to make them remember their tents. At that time of the year, October it was very pleasant in the land of Canaan. It was called the "Feast of Tabernacles." God meant that the "Feast of Tabernacles" should be a time of great joy for all the people. (Read vs. 40).

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Booths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

- No. 143.
1. My first once caused an aged man, with all his house, to travel.
2. My next "almost persuaded" sat while Paul did truths unravel.
3. There stands a place where Greeks and Jews were unto God converted.
4. Then he who showed a sentence had upon the judge reverted.
5. What queen of Egypt nursed a babe, her sister's duty sharing?
6. What did our dear Redeemer say was "easy" in the bearing?
7. What place with pleasures granily fair and perfect joy abounded?
8. Upon what sea did Jesus walk, with majesty surrounded?
9. Whose palace home was turned at night into a house of mourning?
10. What soldier like the rest would sleep, selfish indulgence scoring?
11. What maiden costly gifts received, from one for marriage pleading?
12. On whom did shine a wondrous light, his second birth preceding?
13. Whence went the patriarch with his father forth at God's own willing?
14. Who "dugged again the wells" that envious Philistines were filling?
15. Who innocent was stoned to death, the victim of ambition?
16. Who pleaded for a sign from heaven, then prayed for an addition?
The initials in due order placed, an admonition show,
For warriors weak with warfare, still harassed by the foe.

- CURIOS QUESTIONS.
Historical.
257. Who first discovered the law of gravitation, and by what means?
258. Who discovered in steam a useful mechanical power, and by what means?
259. When and where was the first weekly newspaper published?
260. From a word right-angled triangle of these six described words:
Indian money.
On the ocean.
A place of business.
A deep hole.
Two-thirds of fun.
A half of me.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

- No. 142.
1. T obiah.
2. H aman.
3. I shmaelites.
4. N adab.
5. K obath.
6. E liezer.
7. T atnat.
8. H ezechiah.
9. N ehemiah.
10. O thniel.
11. E sther.
12. V ajeratha.
13. I bzan.
14. L ot.

"THINKETH NO EVIL," 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- Intellectual Amusement.
255. Album—Alum.
Donor—Door.
Fiend—Find.
Matin—Main.
Route—Rote.
256. Clock—lock.
Heel—eel.
Harrow—arrow.
Master—aster.
Share—hare.

Why his Hair turned White.

A TEMPERANCE STORY.

A rough looking man? Yes, perhaps I am. We ain't all of us responsible for our outside husk, no more than a horse, chestnut or a hazel nut is. The kind of life I lead can't be lived in white kid gloves and dress coats. I wasn't brought up with many advantages, and I'm only a brakeman on the Rensselaer & Saratoga line. Old Jones was telling you about me, was he, sir? He'd better hold his tongue. There's more profitable subjects of conversation than I am. But old Jones means well enough, and I he told you to ask me how that stripe of white hair came on my black mane, I ain't the man to go back on him. Oh, you needn't beg my pardon, sir! I don't mind talking about it now, though the time was when I couldn't speak of it without a big lump coming in my throat.

We hadn't been married long, Polly and me, when it happened. Polly was as trim and bright-eyed a slip of a girl as ever you'd wish to see. She was one of the waitresses in the Albany lunch room; and the first time I ever set eyes upon her I made up my mind to make that girl my wife. So, when they raised my wages, I took heart and asked her if she would have them with me, with a wedding ring thrown into the bargain.

"Do you really mean it, Jake?" said she, looking me fully in the face, with those dark blue eyes of hers, that are like skies in the night.

"I do really mean it, Polly," said I.

"Then," said she, putting both her hands to mine, "I'll trust you. I've no living relative to advise me, so I can only take counsel with my heart."

So we were married. I rented a little one-story house, under the hill on the height that overlooked the Hudson—a cosy place, with a good-sized wood pile at the rear, for winter meant winter in those parts, and the snow used to be drifted up even with our door-yard fence many and many a cold gray morning. And everything went smooth until Polly began to object to my mates at the White Blackbird, and the Saturday evenings I spent with the boys, after my train was safely run on the side track at the junction.

"Why, Polly, girl," said I, "where's the harm? A man can't live by himself, like an oyster in its shell; and a social glass never yet harmed any one."

"No," said Polly, "not a social glass, Jake, but the habit. And if you would only put every five cent piece that you spent for liquor into our little Bertie's tiny savings bank—"

"Pshaw!" said I, "I'm not a drunkard, and I never mean to become one. And no one likes to be preached to by his

wife, Polly. Remember that, my girl, and you'll save yourself a deal of trouble."

I kissed her and went away. But that was the beginning of the little, gray shadows that grew on my Polly's face, like a creeping fog over the hills, and that she has never got rid of since.

It was a sore point between us—what the politicians call a vexed question. I felt that Polly was always watching me, and I didn't wish to be put in leading strings by a woman. So—I shame to say it—I went to the White Blackbird oftener than ever, and I didn't often count the glasses of beer that I drank, and once or twice, of a particularly cold night, I let myself be persuaded into drinking something stronger than beer; and my brain wasn't the kind that could stand liquid fire with impunity. And Polly cried, and I lost my temper, and—well, I don't like to think of all these things now. Thank goodness, they are over and gone.

That afternoon, as I stood on the back platform of my car, with my arms folded, and my eyes fixed on the snowy waste of flat fields through which the iron track seemed to extend itself like an endless black serpent, I looked my own life in the face. I made up my mind that I had been behaving like a brute.

"What are those senseless fellows at the White Blackbird to me," muttered I, "as compared with one of Polly's sweet, bright looks? I will give the whole thing up. I'll draw the line just here now. We shall be off duty early to-night. I'll go home and astonish Polly!"

But as night fell, the blinding drift of a great snow storm came with it. We were belated by the snow which collected on the rails, and when we reached Earldale there was a little girl, who had been sent on in the care of the conductor, who must wait either three or four hours for a way train in the cold and cheerless station, or be taken home across a snowy field by some one who knew the way.

I thought of my own little children. "I'll take her," said I, and lifting her up, I gathered my coarse warm coat about her, and I started for the long, cold walk under the whispering pines along the edge of the river.

I honestly believe she would have frozen to death if she had been left in the cold station until the way train could call for her. And when I had left her safe in charge of her aunt, I saw by the old kitchen time-piece that it was ten o'clock.

"Polly will think I have slipped back into the Slough of Despond," I said to myself, with a half smile; "but I'll give her an agreeable surprise!"

Ploughing down amid the snowdrifts through a grove of pine trees that edged a ravine at the back of my house, I sprang lightly on the door-step; the door was shut and locked. I went around to the front. Here I effected an entrance, but the fire was dying on the hearth, and little Bertie, tucked up in his crib, called out:

"Papa, is that you?"

"Where is mamma, my son?" I asked, looking eagerly around at the desolate room.

"Gone out with the baby in her arms to look for you," he said. "Didn't you meet her, papa!"

I stood for a moment in silence.

"Lie still, Bertie," said I, in a voice that sounded strange and husky even to myself. "I will go and bring her back."

And I thought, with dismay, of the blinding snow-storm outside, the treacherous gorges which lay between there and the White Blackbird, the trackless woods through which it was difficult enough to find one's way even in the sunshine of noonday, and—worst of all—the lonely track, across which an "express" shot like a meteor a few minutes before midnight. Oh, heaven! what possible doom might I not have brought upon myself by the wretched passion in which I had gone away that morning!

The town clock sounding dim and muffled through the storm, struck eleven as I hurried down the hill. Eleven—and who knew what a length of time might elapse before I could find her? And like a fiery phantasmagoria before my mind's eye, I beheld the wild rush of the midnight express, and dreaded—I knew not what. For all that I could realize was, that the storm was growing fiercer with every moment, and Polly and the baby were out in its fury!

As steadily as I could, I worked my way down toward the track, but more