

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson VIII.—NOVEMBER 20.

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

Leviticus xxv. 8-17.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 10-12.

Laws with an illustrative incident make up the connection between this lesson and the last. See Chap. xxiv. 1 to xxv. 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound."—Psalm lxxxix. 15.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Year of Jubilee, Lev. xxv. 8-17.
T. Restitutions of the Jubilee, Lev. xxv. 18-38.
W. Restitutions of the Jubilee, Lev. xxv. 39-55.
T. The Spiritual Jubilee, Isa. xxxv. 1-10.
F. The Spiritual Jubilee, Isa. lxi. 1-11.
S. The Heavenly Jubilee, Rev. v. 1-14.
S. Jubilee of the Redeemed Nation, Lev. xxv. 8-17.

JUBILEE OF THE REDEEMED NATION.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Time of the Jubilee, Vss. 8-10. II. Blessings of the Jubilee, Vss. 10-17.

QUESTIONS.—Vss. 8-20.—What are the Israelites here commanded to number? What is meant by a sabbath? How many years did this numbering include? By what act was the beginning of the jubilee proclaimed? Why should its beginning be placed upon the day of atonement?

Vss. 10-17.—What blessings of the jubilee year are presented in v. 10? From what bondage was liberty then proclaimed? (Vs. 23-28, 39-42). What blessings are proclaimed through the gospel? From what bondage are believers in Jesus made free?

According to the Hebrew Sabbatic system, every seventh day was a day of rest for man and beast; every seventh year a Sabbatical year, or a year of rest for the land, during which the soil was to lie fallow, (see vs. 1-7); and at the end of every seven Sabbatical years came a more solemn Sabbatical year, called the Year of Jubilee,—a year, not only of rest for the land, but of social and political restoration, in which society was reorganized after the state of things in the beginning; and the people, released from certain disabilities, took a fresh start.

NOTES.—I. The Jubilee Trumpet.

Verse 8.—Seven Sabbaths of Years. The term "Sabbath" is used in the sense of a week, and a Sabbath of years is seven years; hence "seven Sabbaths of years" are forty-nine years, as is explained farther along in this verse. Seven Sabbatical years intervened between the Years of Jubilee, and therefore the Jubilee was to be celebrated every fiftieth year. Thus, twice in a century, the ground was to lie fallow for two successive years.

Verse 9.—The Trumpet of Jubilee. The horn of some animal or a metal tube curved like one. The proclamation should be to all the people. This was to be on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement. While the beginning of the ecclesiastical year had been changed to the month Nisan, the civil year remained unchanged, and began upon the first of the seventh month. The Year of Jubilee, strictly speaking, began on the first day of this month; but the proclamation was not made until the tenth,—the Day of Atonement. Most likely, the proclamation was made in the evening, after the work of atonement was over. "The contrast between the humbling quiet of the day and the sudden outpouring of the sound which proclaimed the year of freedom, must have been most thrilling and impressive." Thus restoration and liberty were seen to rest upon the blood of expiation.

Verse 10.—Hallow the fiftieth year. Set it apart to sacred uses. The acts of restoration for which the year was appointed, were to be sacredly performed as unto the Lord. Liberty throughout all the land, etc. To all Israelites who, through poverty, had sold themselves as slaves to their fellow Israelites, both to those whose ears were bored (Ex.

xxi. 6), and were to serve forever, (the forever ending with the Jubilee), and also to those whose six years (Ex. xxi. 2) were not ended. The Year of Jubilee put an end to their servitude, no matter how long or short had been the period of their slavery. This act of emancipation did not extend, however, to the bond-men and bond maids bought of the heathen. See vs. 44-46. Jubilee is understood to mean a loud and joyful sound. Unto his possession. Upon entering the land of Canaan, the tribes and families of the Israelites had their portions of the territory assigned to them by lot (Num. xxxiii. 54), but the proprietorship never passed out of Jehovah's hands. He said, (vs. 23): "The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is mine." When an Israelite was pressed by poverty and sold his possessions, no one could buy for a longer period than till the next jubilee, when it reverted to its original possessor or descendants, before the jubilee it could be redeemed (vs. 26, 27); but if the man was unable to redeem it, the jubilee redeemed it for him. Houses "in a walled city" (vs. 30), were not restored "in the jubilee." These were considered in the light of personal property, but "houses of the villages which had no wall round about them" (vs. 31) were counted "as the fields of the country," and went out "in the jubilee." The houses of the Levites in the forty-eight cities given them, (Num. xxxv. 18); were under the jubilee law; for they were to them as lands, the Levites having no inheritance.

II. Rest to the Land, (vs. 11-12)

Ye Shall not sow, etc. As in the Sabbatical year (vs. 4), the land was to lie fallow in this jubilee year, subject neither to tillage nor ingathering. Whatever grew spontaneously was common property, belonging alike to the poor and rich, and was not to be seized upon and laid up as wealth. Thus for two years successively the soil was left uncultivated. God made provision for this in his special blessing upon the sixth year (vs. 21), which should bring forth enough for three years. This law of rest for the land is in accordance with the nature of things. Continuous cultivation exhausts the soil. Rest recuperates it. In modern times, the need of rest to the land is offset by scientific fertilizers, as well as by rotation of crops. Thy vine undressed, i. e., unpruned; thy Nazarite vine; the figure being taken from the unshorn locks of the Nazarite. Hence, consecrated to the purposes of the jubilee. Ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field, i. e., the spontaneous products, which, with the supply mentioned in vs. 21, would be ample for all their needs.

III. The Jubilee Return, (vs. 13-17.)

Verse 13.—The return of each man to his possession, as noticed under vs. 10; and here repeated, was necessary in order that the tribes and families might be kept distinct until the coming of the Messiah, who was to be known, among other signs, by his tribe and family; also to set bounds to the avarice of some and the prodigality of others; to prevent the accumulation of land on the part of a few to the detriment of the whole community; to guard against the extremes of great riches and great poverty.

Verse 14-16.—Ye shall not oppress one another. Over-reaching in bargaining was forbidden, and the temptations to it were, to a great extent, removed by this law. According to the number of years. This was a rule of equity which regulated prices according to the number of years to the jubilee. The number of years of the fruits, i. e., the number of harvests, only the fruitful years, deducting the Sabbatical years, would be reckoned in the transaction.

Verse 17.—Thou shalt fear thy God. It is only the power within, the love of Christ constraining us, that can bring us up to the high standards presented in God's word.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Our lesson is about joyful sounds. Begin by singing the most joyful hymn you; know for example, "I am so glad." Our lesson is about a time when the children of Israel blew on trumpets and made very joyful sounds.

God told Moses, that after the children of Israel reached Canaan, there should be a Year of Jubilee every fiftieth year.

How often? Then, if a little boy was five years old in the Year of Jubilee, how old would he be before there would be another Year of Jubilee? I suppose you want to know why the people were so glad when the Year of Jubilee came. God told Moses that in the Year of Jubilee every one who was a slave, or in prison, should be set free. Every one should be allowed to go to his own home; for if any man had sold his house, or his land, the man who bought it must give it back when the Year of Jubilee came. God said that in the Year of Jubilee the people should let the land rest, just as if it were a Sabbath for the land.

What do you think God meant by letting the land rest? He meant that the people must not dig it, nor sow seed in it. They could not even cut their grape-vines. Sometimes fruit grows out of the ground without being planted. God said that the farmers must not gather even such food, but must leave it for the poor and for strangers.

The Year of Jubilee began on the Day of Atonement. The priests blew the trumpets first, and then up and down the hills, all over the land of Canaan, the people joined in making the joyful sounds.

How did the children of Israel feel when they heard the joyful sound? Our Golden Text tells us. —Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 144.

- 1. The cause of our Saviour's not doing many mighty works in His own country, and which also prevented His disciples from casting out a devil.
2. The righteous man whose belief in God's word moved him so to act as to secure his own and his household's safety.
3. That treasure more precious than "choice gold," the key of which our Saviour accused the lawyers with having taken away.
4. A master in Israel who came to the Great Teacher for instruction, being deficient in the knowledge of spiritual truths.
5. The command which God gave the Israelites in respect of the voice of the promised angel, and to do which "is better than sacrifice."
6. That gift "more precious than rubies" which it pleased God to bestow upon Solomon because he asked it rather than riches.
7. As many of the cleansed lepers as returned not "to give glory to God" for the act of mercy performed on them.

The initials of the above described words shew the name which the Athenians gave to the Deity whom they ignorantly worshipped.

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- 261. Imperfect Poetry. Add a word to each line, making the alternate lines rhyme: Oh, make thy life all pure and —, Fill it with deeds of high —; Be brave to dare, be strong to —, That which thy God approveth —. Let patience, gentleness, and —, Crown e'en thy name with thoughts of —, So shalt thou walk all fear —, [ —, A woman in thy rich —.
262. Who was told to put bands and yokes upon his head?
263. What prophet saw a hole in the wall, and when he had digged came to a door?
264. Where is it written that the Lord will feed His prophets with worm-wood?
265. Where is it written, The mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills flow with milk?
266. Add a young lady to moving air, and make part of a ship.
267. Add a number of men in church relationship to a preposition, and make an animal having a small connection of its parts.
268. A CHARADE. Sometimes I am hard, at others, soft; In various shapes, you see me oft. I'm round and square and oval too, Or any pattern named by you. Both large and small, each size between, In colors numerous I'm seen. You tread on me when out you walk; I'm sometimes near akin to chalk. Men give to me a kind of grace; In every town, I have a place, Wherever houses may be found; But I'm not always on the ground. I tower high above your head, And yet I'm on the ocean's bed. Oft am I thrown by girl or boy; Much prized and valued as a toy. A weight I am, well known in trade; In fruit I'm often found, 't is said. Yet to be mineral, I claim, And ask you now to give my name.

Answer to Scripture Enigma. No. 143.

- 1. Famine...Gen. xlv. 6; xlv. 1-8.
2. A grippa...Acts xxvi. 28.
3. I conium. Acts xiv. 1.
4. Nathan...2 Sam. xii. 1-7.
5. T ahpenes. 1 Kings xi. 19, 20.
6. Y oke.....Matt. xi. 30.
7. E den.....Gen. ii. 8-10.
8. T iberias..John vi. 1; 16-20.

- 9. P haraoh. Exodus xii. 30.
10. U riah....2 Sam. xi. 11.
11. R ebekah. Gen. xxiv. 53.
12. S au.....Acts ix. 1-16.
13. U z.....Gen. xi. 31.
14. I saac....Gen. xxvi. 18-20.
15. N aboth...1 Kings xxi. 9-14.
16. G ideon...Judges vi. 36-40.

"FAINT, YET PURSUING. Judges viii. 4.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

257. Sir Isaac Newton, in 1680, by seeing an apple fall from a tree.

258. Watts, in 1874, by seeing it lift the lid of a tea-kettle.

259. In 1622, at Venice.

260. Word right-angled triangle.

W A M P U M
A M A I N
M A R T
P I T
U N
M

A touching Incident.

The quiet influence of a child has been the means of saving the parent. I remembered a little history related to me many years ago by a Christian abstinence. He said he would give me the facts that led to his reform, and the circumstance that arrested him in his career of sin.

Two maiden ladies who lived in the village often noticed a scantily clad girl passing their house with a tin pail. On one occasion one of these ladies accosted her.

"Little girl, what have you got in that pail?"

"Whiskey, ma'am."

"Where do you live?"

"Down in the hollow."

"I'll go home with you."

They soon came to a wretched hovel in the hollow, outside the village. A pale, jaded, worn-out woman met them at the door. Inside was a man, dirty, maudlin, and offensive. The lady addressing the woman, said:

"Is this your little girl?"

"Yes."

"Does she go to school?"

"No, she has no other clothes than what you see."

"Does she go to Sunday-school?"

"Sunday-school—in these rags! Oh, no!"

"If I furnish her with suitable clothes, can she go?"

"It is of no use giving her clothes. He would steal them, and sell them for whiskey. Better let the girl alone; there is no hope for her or for us."

"But she ought to go to school."

An arrangement was entered into whereby the child should call at the lady's house on Sunday morning, be clothed for the school, and after the school was dismissed, call again, and change her garments for home.

The little creature was very teachable and soon became a favorite with her teacher, who gave her a little Testament, probably the first gift the child had ever received. She was very proud of her Testament, exhibiting it on all occasions with the delighted exclamation:

"That's my little Testament—my own."

She would take it with her at night, clasping it in her hands till she fell asleep on the wretched rags called a bed. The child was taken ill. The doctor provided by her benefactors declared she would die. Her friends furnished her with what comforts they could, and watched the father, lest he should steal them and sell them for whiskey.

The gentleman then continued the narrative in the first person:

"One day I went to her bedside. I was mad for drink. I had taken everything I could lay my hands on. I looked round the room. There was nothing left, nothing I could dispose of. Yet I must have drink. I would have sold myself, for whiskey. The little creature lay on the bed, with the Testament clasped in her hand, partly dozing. As I sat there she fell asleep, and the book slipped from her fingers, and lay on the coverlid of the bed. Stealthily looking round the

room, I stretched out my shaking hand, seized the Testament, and hastily thrust it into my bosom. I soon sneaked out, like a guilty thing, to the grog shop. All I could get for it was half a pint of whiskey. It was a poor little book. I drank the devil's drink almost at a draught, and soon felt relieved from the burning thirst. The stagnant blood in the diseased vessels of my stomach was stimulated by the fiery fluid, and I felt better. What took me back to my child I cannot tell, but I sat again by her side. She still seemed to be sleeping; and I sat there with the horrible craving stayed for the time by the whiskey I had drunk when she opened her eyes slowly and saw me. Reaching out her hand to touch mine, she said, 'Papa, listen. I am going to die, and when I die I shall go to Jesus; for he told little children to come him. And I shall go to heaven; for he said that little children were of the kingdom of heaven. I learned that out of my Testament. Papa, suppose when I go to heaven Jesus should ask me what you did with my little Testament. Oh papa! oh, papa! what shall I tell him?' It struck me like lightning. I sat a few moments, and then fell down on my knees by the bedside of my child, crying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' That half-pint of whiskey was the last drop of intoxicating liquor that has passed my lips. She died in a few days with her hand in mine, and her last words to me were, 'Papa, we shall both go to Jesus now.'—From John B. Gough's new book "Sunlight and Shadow."

Gough's account of a Negro Sermon.

Some one has said, and I think it was Mr. Moody: "I had rather have zeal without knowledge than knowledge without zeal." Now, when a man becomes a Christian and is zealous, even without education, I have heard, and so have you, some of the most wonderful speeches that were ever delivered. I hear a man who was called a plantation negro, many years ago, who could not read, who could not write, who did not know his letters, but had a considerable knowledge of the Scriptures. I heard from him a sermon that I shall never forget, never. He said: "Brethren, Ise gwine to take two texes. The first of these texes am: 'Glad tidings of great joy which am to be to all people; and tuder text is 'Hallelujah.' Now, brethren, what am glad tidings of great joy? There is a king going through the streets in his chariot, and six calico horses, like what they have in the circus, prancing along through the street. There sits the king in his chariot. Nobody touches the king; nobody spea's to the king. He sits in his chariot and the soldiers say: 'Hurrah for the king!' Nobody touches the king. And there is a nigger boy standing on the corner of the street, and he is ragged and dirty, and the hair sticking out of the holes in his cap and his toes out of his shoes, looking at the procession. Nobody cares for him. He hain't got no father, nor mother; nor no auntie. Nobody care for him, all ragged and dirty. The king sees the boy, so he says to one of his officers, 'Bring dat boy to me.' But de officer didn't want to fetch a nigger. So he says: 'Dat boy is all dirt.' Then the king, he says: 'Bring de boy to me!' He got mad, you see. Then 'ere officer, he wanted to shirk. He wanted to scare de king, and he says: 'If I bring dat boy to you, you will get something off from him.' Then the king got so mad that his face went clear up on the top of his head, and he says, 'You bring dat boy to me!' And he brought him. And he says: 'You take dat boy away, wash him up and comb his hair. Give him a new pair of shoes, and measure him for a new suit of clothes, and have him educated.' And he took the boy away. And the king came back, after awhile; and he had the same calico horses, and he asked for the boy. Everybody forgot the boy; but the king didn't. He said: 'Bring dat boy to me!' And they brung de boy; and nobody knew the boy but de king. He knew him. He said: 'Now my child, you come and sit right alongside of me. Right here. You belong here. Sit right alongside of me in this chariot. You belong in it. Why, you know I have adopted you. You are my child; you are my son, my heir. Sit right there. There is right where you belong