

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1882.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson IX.—MAY 28, 1882.

FOLLOWING CHRIST.

Mark viii. 34-38; ix. 1.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 34-37.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."—Mark viii. 34.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Lesson, Mark viii. 34; ix. 1. T. Following Christ, John xii. 20-28. W. Result of Gaining the World, Luke xii. 13-21. T. Losing Eternal Life, Luke xvi. 19-31. F. Giving up all for Christ, Phil. iii. 7-21. S. Waiting for Jesus, 1 Thess. chap. i. S. The Present and the Future, 2 Cor., chap. iv.

THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The Cross Now, Vs. 34-37. II. Life Here and Hereafter, Vs. 35-37. III. The Coming Glory, Vs. 38; Chap. ix. i.

QUESTIONS.—Vs. 34.—Whose words are these? What three things are essential to discipleship? Give the meaning of each one? Can a man be saved who loves himself supremely? Whose will must we make the law of our lives? How did Jesus bear his cross? Why? How is this an example to us?

Vs. 35-37.—What must a Christian be willing to lose for Christ? If one chooses the present life and world as his portion, what will he lose? Would this be a good bargain if he had gained the whole world?

Vs. 38; Chap. ix. 1.—What are the rank and character of Christ? What has he done for us? What do you think of being ashamed of him or of his words? How does this shame lead persons to act? How will Christ come the second time? How will he then treat those who have been ashamed of him? What if caught this solemn prospect to have on professed disciples? On the unconverted?

Special Subjects.—The cross inevitable in this present world. What it means for us. Annihilation of the wicked? unscriptural and unreasonable. A large place for the doctrine and hope of the Second Coming.

NOTES.—I. Terms of Discipleship, (Vs. 34, 35)

Vs. 34. Called the people. Who were standing near. Even when Christ sought retirement, the multitude was not far off. With his disciples. He had just been unfolding high spiritual truths to the Twelve, which the people were not prepared to receive; but now he has practical teachings important for, and intelligible to, both classes. Whoever. All must travel the one way. "There is no difference," (Rom. iii. 22). Deny himself. Jesus strikes the very citadel; for selfishness is sin in its essence. It is not, "Let him deny himself some pleasure, or profit, or gratification"; but deny self in its wholeness; renounce self-interest as the controlling power. Take up his cross. There is but one direct mention of the "cross," by our Lord, previous to this. It is found in Matt. xi. 38. In both that expression and this, while there may not be a specific announcement of the manner of his death, there seems to be, at least, such reference to it as we see in John iii. 14. The people were familiar with this Roman method of execution; and had, most likely, seen victims who had been condemned to the cross carrying the instruments of torture to the place of death. Jesus had just announced to his disciples that he was to "be killed." Henceforth he was as one doomed to the cross, and was bearing it with him on the way. Those who would "come after" him, must shoulder the cross and join in the procession, as dead to the world, and "crucified with Christ." Follow me. Voluntarily, through the path of shame and suffering. The idea is not that a disciple of Christ must be willing to endure a few inconveniences, and to be crossed now and then in his inclinations; but that he is to accept joyfully even shame and suffering for Christ's sake.

Vs. 35.—Whoever will save his life, etc. A contrast between the two senses of life. He who is intent upon gaining the lower, loses the higher; but he who loses the lower from loyalty to Christ, gains the higher. Lose it. Upon, at least, four occasions, Jesus gave this solemn warning: (1) In this and in the corresponding passage in Matt. xvi. 25; Luke ix. 24. (2) Matt. x. 39. (3) Luke xvii. 3. (4) John xii. 25. Whoever shall lose his life. That is, surrender his life; not recklessly throw it away. There is no warrant for one to seek martyrdom. See Paul's view on this point, (Acts xx. 23, 24). For my sake, etc. Notice this clause of limita-

tion. Many a man loses his life for the world's sake. The ranks of fashion, gain, and pleasure, are full of martyrs. Shall save it. See Phil. iii. 7-11; 2 Cor. ix. 18.

II. Profit and Loss. (Vs. 36, 37.)

Vs. 36.—What shall it profit? Rather, "what does it profit?" for the present tense is used. Is it a paying transaction, here and hereafter? Lose his own soul. The word for lose is not the same as in vs. 35; and is properly rendered forfeit in New Version. But the word translated soul is the same as is rendered life in the preceding verse. It would be a profitless thing for a man to forfeit his life here, in gaining the whole world; it would be infinitely greater folly to forfeit, for the world, the higher and endless life, which is a loss of his soul, or (as in Luke) of himself.

Vs. 37.—In exchange. That is, as a ransom price. Other losses may be repaired; but a forfeited life, or a forfeited self, or a forfeited soul, is forfeited forever. See Ps. xlix. 7.

III. The Coming Glory, (Vs. 38; and Chap. ix. 1.)

Vs. 38.—Ashamed of me and of my words. One of the strongest evidences that the natural heart is all awry is, that it is ashamed of Christ. There is nothing more irrational; yet no stronger or more universal sentiment exists than shame in keeping men away from Christ. Hence the prominence given in the Scriptures to confessing Christ. See Matt. x. 32; Rom. x. 9, 10. For confessing Christ is crucifying shame. Adulterous Unfaithful. Sinful generation. It was the generation that crucified Christ. Yet every succeeding generation rejects him. When he cometh in the glory. Strange conjunction of words, —cross, glory. A temporary humiliation, a never-ending glory! The contrast between the sneering, carping, wicked men, before whose frowns or jeers we shrink, and at whose behest we turn away from Christ; and the bright hosts, in whose presence the faithless shall be put to shame; is powerfully drawn. See reference to Christ's glory, in Matt. xxv. 31.

Vs. 1.—Kingdom of God come with power. The word come has the force of already come, or come in its complete sense. There is much discussion as to what event our Lord had reference to in these words. Some maintain that they point to the Transfiguration, which occurred six days afterwards, in which there was a glimpse of the essential and eternal glory of Christ. Others find in the Day of Pentecost, and the inauguration of the Kingdom through the descent of the Holy Spirit, the fulfillment of this saying. According to Elliott: "The solution of the problem is to be found in the great prophecy of Matt. xxv. In a sense which was real, though partial, the judgment which fell upon the Jewish Church, the destruction of the Holy City and Temple, the onward march of the Church of Christ, was as the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom." The essential meaning is that, before all those present should be dead, there would be some convincing proof that the Messiah's kingdom had been actually set up, as predicted by the prophets and by Christ himself.

SUGGESTED LESSONS.

Religion is not a thing of mere emotion and good feeling. It calls for self-surrender, self-sacrifice, and service. There may be easy processes of getting into a church; but there is but the one way of becoming Christ's true disciple.

Our Lord asks us to go nowhere where he has not himself gone. In saying Deny thyself, and take thy cross, he adds, Follow Me. And "he endured the cross, despising the shame."

Ashamed of Jesus! Yes, I may, When I've no guilt to wash away; No tear to wipe, no good to crave, No fears to quell, no soul to save.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

When Jesus saw Peter and Andrew fishing, as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he said "FOLLOW ME."

Jesus wants little children to follow him; that is, to try to be like him. It is not always easy to be good. When anything is very, very hard to do, what do we sometimes call it? We call it a cross.

Listen to Jesus' message about these crosses. He says that if we want to follow him, we must "take up our cross"; that is, we must do the right thing, even if it is hard to do it.

I will try to bear the cross in my youth, And be faithful to his cause till I die; If with cheerful step I walk in the truth, I shall wear a bright crown by and by.—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

When we are gloomy, and lose faith in God's goodness, and our own future, we are most liable to temptation.

Booths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 172.

Longed for too much, and owned at last in death, Oh "Son of sorrow!" Lord, let trustful love Still each rebellious longing, lest Thou prove Our wishes crosses, prayer but wilful breath.

1. What goodly shepherd band is gathered here? All of one race one brotherhood, they seem, Jealous? sayst thou? of a mysterious dream? Their strongest bond an envious, brooding fear.

2. Hate reigning, where love only should abound, Whither doth now their jealous envy tend? Whither will they the gentle dreamer send? Sold as One greater, bound as He was bound?

3. When, sick at heart, the father mourned his son, God's promise well-nigh faded from his view; What matter though his generations grew Even to this, if lost his dearest one?

4. Not lost, O stricken heart, but gone before, Gone to preserve thy life, by God's decree; After long years, his face thou yet may'st see; Hearing his voice, shalt mourn for him no more.

5. Long years have passed; plenty gives place to dearth; The sellers bow before the regal gold; Buying their life for silver or for gold; Who patient bear the purchased fruits of earth?

6. Trembling and fear pursue them on their track; The sorrowing father mourns another son; Dread falls upon the soul of every one, As each sees this disclosed, within his sack.

7. Once more they stand beneath their brother's eye; One further test he tries to prove them well, Knowing them this; then bids them haste to tell His Father's state, calling them (startled) nigh.

8. Let see the two united once again, Father and son knit in a long embrace; They ne'er had thought to see each other's face, Now, each, on this, weeping, forgets past pain.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

386. What were the six Great Jewish feasts?

387. Who did the Apostle Paul say was chosen in the Lord?

388. I am a foreign animal of some note having an octave of letters in my name: My 1, is one third of a busy winged animal. My 2, 3, 6, 4, is a motion I seldom indulge in.

My 5, is half of a personal pronoun, third person singular, masculine gender. My 6, 7, 8, is an instructor recommended by a great king. Who am I?

389. Make two squares of words of 1. A modern farm building. 2. The most useful metal. 3. To lie down carelessly. 4. Alone.

390. 1. A shellfish. 2. A fragrant flower. 3. The ancient continent. 4. A wild animal.

Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Scripture Enigma. No. 171. End. 1 Peter iv. 7; Rev. xxii. 13.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS

374. Jeremiah—Jer. xiii. 5.

375. That the waters had abated from the face of the earth—Gen. viii. 18.

376. Deborah, Rebekah's nurse—Gen. xxxv. 8.

377. Benaiah, the son of Jehoiadab—1 Chron. xi. 22.

378. Ahab, king of Israel—1 Kings xxii. 39.

379. Micah—Judges xvii. 1-4.

380. Jehudi—Jer. xxxvi. 23.

381. Nebemiah viii. 4.

382. Macpelah—Gen. xxiii. 3-20.

383. Solomon—2 Chron. i. 16.

384. Deductions.

Cone, C one. Flour, F four. Tent, T ten. Madam M adam. Vale, V ale.

385. Reversals: 1. Reed—deer. 2. Part—trap. 3. Keep—peek. 4. Draw—ward.

Simple, sincere people seldom speak much of their piety; it shows itself in acts rather than in words, and has more influence than homilies or protestations.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Valedictory Address

FROM THE NICTAUX BAPTIST CHURCH TO REV. W. J. BLAKENEY.

Dear Brother Blakeney.—

Our feelings may be more easily conceived than expressed as we address you on the occasion of your departure from our midst. As you have felt it your duty to change the sphere of your labours, we trust it may be for the glory of God.

You came among us as a messenger of peace and God was with you. We would desire to express our thankfulness that your steps were directed to us. The gospel preached by you has been blessed to the salvation of many souls, and the edification of the church. During your stay we have experienced some precious revivals for which we thank God. As a servant of Jesus you have not failed to declare the whole counsel of God, rightly dividing the word of truth, giving to each a portion in due season.

You have counseled us in hours of adversity and sympathized with us in our sorrows. You have instructed us in public on the Sabbath, and visited us from house to house.

Friendships have been formed between you and many of us that can be severed only by death. Many of us you have lead down into the baptismal waters, and some of our dear ones you have committed to the earth to awaken we hope with Christ. You have stood at the bedside of our afflicted ones, and earnestly pleaded with God on their behalf.

We know, dear brother, there is no man on earth who is perfect, yet we believe that you have ever sought to discharge your duty faithfully and in the fear of God, to whom we must all give account in the great day. For over eight years it has been your privilege to labour in our midst rejoicing in our prosperity and sympathizing with us in adversity,—a friend and brother to all.

Your pastorate has been one of peace and good will, as we hope it will be wherever it may be your lot to work for the Master.

Dear Brother we say farewell! as the connection between us as pastor and church is severed. May the good Master whom we serve, bless you and your family with all needful good, and make you the instrument in his hand of leading many more precious souls to Christ, and when meeting and parting are done on earth, pastor and people may be found among that number whose happy privilege it may be to meet at the throne of God, and find that our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

For and in behalf of the church, F. MILES CHIPMAN, Clerk. S. MARSHALL. DEACON C. FELTCH. DEACON H. A. PARKER.

REPLY.

Dear Brethren,— Ministers are formed of the same material that you are, "We also are men of like passions with you."

We are still in the flesh and have our pleasant and painful experiences as well as all of our brethren, I suppose this is right else, how could we rejoice with you when you rejoice, and weep with you when you weep?

But while we have our joys and sorrows in common with you, we have some which are peculiar to ourselves, arising from the important work in which we are engaged. Servants of Christ are servants of the church, "Your servants for Jesus' sake."

I may say too brethren it is with feelings better conceived than expressed that I reply to your kind address.

Eight years and seven months ago I came among you as a minister of Christ, feeling I trust something of the responsibility that rested on me in taking charge of the church as an under-shepherd. Many were my fears, and many my comforts. I shall never forget the powerful work of grace in the community shortly after I entered upon my pastorate. In the valley, on the mountains, the Holy Spirit came down with marvelous power. God's people were comforted, sinners were

converted. It was a day of God's power. Since that time I have been trying to declare the whole counsel of God and blessed be his name, the refreshing showers have descended again and again on the thirsty fields. It has been my privilege to lead down into the baptismal waters, many of the children of God, some of whom are today in glory praising His name. Many have been the changes. Fathers and mothers in Israel have fallen. Three deacons and a large number of the members have joined the church triumphant during my pastorate. I have baptised over one hundred and thirty, married sixty couples, buried in all 120 persons, of whom fifty were members of the church. Brethren, your joys have been my joys, your sorrows have been my sorrows.

Now as I am leaving you I wish to thank God for the peace and prosperity that have attended my ministry. All the tokens of kindness to me and my family. A donation of \$47 dollars during the last six months, also a handsome quilt presented to Mrs. Bleakney by the ladies at Nictaux Falls, and Cleveland, with the names of each donor upon it.

Brethren, sisters and friends, my prayers shall ever be for your prosperity, and when it is well with you, it will be a comfort to me to hear of your prosperity. "Grace be with you all! Amen."

W. J. BLAKENEY.

Educational.

The English National Union of Elementary Teachers, recently held a Bazaar at Sheffield, for four successive days, at the close of their Annual Conference, in behalf of their Benevolent Fund. The "fayre" was largely patronized. The opening consisted of a procession of sixty or seventy ladies arrayed in dresses to illustrate those of the dames of bygone centuries from the days of Chaucer. The account says:—

The old English dames and maidens, as well as the modern gentlemen who assisted them were most persevering in their efforts to obtain cash for the cause in hand; and their exertions were deservedly rewarded by the handsome total of £2000 announced at the close of the Fayre on Saturday evening.

At a meeting of the London Association of Correctors of the Press, a paper was read by Mr. George Chaloner, F. C. S., upon the subject of English Spelling, with special reference to Mr. Furnivall and his curious fancy for such forms as "rime," "spelt," "pitcht," and the like. The founder of the new Shakespeare Society having recommended printers' readers to see how such words were spelt in Chaucer, Mr. Chaloner retorted by pointing out the absurdity of the suggestion, seeing that in the Aldine edition of Chaucer (6 vols., 1866) which was contributed to by Mr. Furnivall himself, there were no less than thirteen variations in the spelling of the simple word "eyes," while many other words were spelled in different ways. Mr. Chaloner in summing up, pointed that whatever Chaucer's merits as a poet, he was of no authority as an orthographer, though he had preserved for us in a permanent form the transition English of his day.

The French schoolboys have been assembling in solemn conclave. The pupils of almost every lycée in France appear to have their grievances, and they resolved to adopt the modern form of remonstrance on the subject. Through the medium of one of the Republican journals of Montpellier, a few of them announced their intention to hold a public Conference; and in answer to their invitation, quite a shoal of letters was poured into the Café Marseillaise. "Authority," however, was invoked to prevent the proceedings. Although prevented from meeting in public, some twenty representatives contrived to find a place for the discussion of their wrongs, and their complaints, having been formulated, were duly laid before the public through the press. The young collegians object to Greek and Latin, declaring their preference for two modern languages. They are dissatisfied with the quality of their food, and would like to see it improved—a wish not unnatural in the case of youth. The concierge, who is their substitute for the swat-meat and toy merchant of the British Isles, is not a favorite with French boys, by reason of his extortionate charges for the luxuries of school-life. In the last place, the collegians have declared that some of their late comrades of the schools who had been expelled for misconduct or insubordination should be restored to the

companion-ship of their lamenting friends. This new form of asserting the wrong of youth deserves the attention of teachers. Young people, as well as old ones, are quite entitled to make a statement of their grievances; and a reasonable consideration of such a complaint is the quickest way to secure the friendly co-operation of the pupils with the teachers.

Men first made books in Babylon, where they fashioned them out of clay, and baked them like bricks, and they have been at it ever since all over the world, until the accumulated knowledge of ages has reached dimensions that are simply stupendous. Only thirteen hundred years ago there were but nine books in all England. They were the great and sacred treasures of the monks of Canterbury, and they were the germ of the first English library. There are nearly a million and a quarter of books in the British Museum, and during the last twenty years the great store houses of literature among civilized nations have nearly doubled their contents.

The most useful books in this vast estate of learning are those that serve as sign-posts to the others—the catalogues that tell where they are and what they are, and the manuals which are but book-made of books, condensed nations and concentrations of whole fields of intellectual research and observation. Without these books, our libraries would be wildernesses of literature; with them, it is astonishing how much we may learn if we be so inclined. A history of histories is an excellent project.

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