

cannot be grasped by the subtlest analysis of the chemist. And nothing else is able to supply its place in the natural world. So in every inspired Scripture, and especially in the words of the Christ, there is a rare spiritual element, a force of moral life, which is for the saving of the soul. No other truth than the divine Truth has this life of the Spirit in it. This is as the bread of life which cometh down from heaven, and on it the soul feeds and lives and brings forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty. No merely intellectual truth, no truth of science will answer. All truth is in a sense divine; but there is that spiritual Truth which has for its object the conservation of the life of God in the soul, the quickening of the spiritual and immortal energies of the soul. The knowledge of this Truth is that knowledge of God which is eternal life.

The incorruptible seed of the Word which liveth and abideth forever is a prime agent in the conversion and salvation of humanity. It leads men into the kingdom of heaven. The working of God is as the wind which bloweth everywhere, and his methods are not to be too much limited. The laws of earthly admeasurement are ruled out. In the Epistle of St. James we read: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." (James i. 18). That which is of supreme importance for us is the knowledge of the Truth. By this is meant the love of the Truth and the life in the Truth.

Because of the veritable identity of the Christ and the Word, which is the wisdom of God, the pages of the Sacred Scriptures are so illuminated by the light of the Spirit which is the Comforter. For this reason they have in all ages furnished support and consolation to the poor, the weary and the afflicted children of earth. Blessed be God for this life and consolation which is in his Word!

So also has this Truth of God been able to supply the soul-needs of the great and wise in intellect. It has in it the purest and profoundest philosophy. It is of quite perennial and unspeakable importance to all men. In the word of the Truth there is not only food for the mind and food for the heart, but there is moreover the power of self-adaptation, a latent and unmeasurable fulness which is revealed to whomsoever is worthy to receive. This is because the Spirit of Truth is ever taking of the things of the Christ and declaring them unto us.

And in this connexion it is worthy of notice, that this declaration of the things of the Christ is, in the truest and broadest sense, the revelation, so far as we are capable of receiving, of the universal Truth of God. For these are the words of the Christ: "All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you." (John xvi. 15).

There are in the Word interior and spiritual senses, of which the parables of our Lord furnish one excellent illustration. We read in the Gospel by Luke: "Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke xiv. 45). And if our spiritual understandings were fully opened to the reception of the Truth, I have no doubt we should behold wonderful things in the Word, now quite hidden from us. Some one has said that a flower was once unfolded before the angels in heaven, and that with their subtle and spiritual senses, they discerned in it a whole paradise of things ineffable. So is it with the Word of God. For the Divine life is in the Word, and the truths which flow down from the highest heavens. We have not yet, I think, outgrown the Word: rather, we have not yet grown up to it. The works of God in Nature are as yet but understood on the surface. There are whole worlds of the wonderful truths of science waiting to be brought forth to the light. This is because the Divine wisdom is in the works of nature. And that is, in the last analysis, absolute and unapproachable. And all this is true of the Word, and that other work of God. And numbers of the ablest scholars and thinkers of the Christian Church are studying the Word anew to-day: and the Spirit of Truth, whose office it is to make known the saving Truth of God, is veritably working in and through them, accomplishing thereby his own wise and gracious counsels, silently and without display, yet with great and convincing power. The Universal Christ has promised to be with his children all the days, even unto the consummation of the age, unto the completion of the dispensation of the Church.

There is an abiding fellowship of the Word, the Christ, and the Spirit of truth. They live and move and have their

being in that ocean which is the Wisdom of God. In that ocean which is the Nature of God. They are of God, they are with God, and they are in a pre-eminent sense Divine. The thought which is expressed by the Word is a part of the Divine Thought. That is, the Word rests in the Universal Spirit. When we think, not of any limited or particular Word, but of the Word or Thought of God in its entirety, we then think of God. If indeed such a conception were at all possible for us.

But again, the spoken or written Word consists of the pure Thought in its human clothing. The eternal and imperishable Reason is there, but in close connexion with an external form which is perishable. The Truth of God must always be adapted to our finite understandings, that it may be Truth to us. Therefore when we speak of the oneness of the Word, the Christ and the Spirit, we mean the ideal Word, divested of its mortal clothing. We mean that spiritual Truth with which the Christ identifies himself, when he declares that he is the Way, and the Truth and the Life. Otherwise expressed, the spoken or written Word is the Eternal Reason brought down to the comprehension of man. "For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and purposes of the heart."—(Heb. 4: 12). The Gospel of St. John has been called 'The Heart of Jesus.' Let us turn to chapters 14, 15, 16 and 17. In those love-inspired words of the Master to his disciples and to us, in that saddest and tenderest farewell of the Christ, in that inimitable and never-to-be-forgotten benediction from the heavens, we are privileged to read: "Sanctify them in the Truth: thy Word is Truth."—(John 17: 17).

Pilate, Roman procurator of Judaea, asked that memorable question, "What is Truth?" But in these words the Christ had already answered it in anticipation, "Thy Word is Truth." But the Christ himself is the Word, and therefore verily is himself the Truth of God. Is he not indeed the universal Divine order in our world? The Truth ought to be considered in the most real and high sense, as spiritual substance, spiritual power, spiritual order. It is no phantom, no mere name. Is it not that universal being, in which and by which all good subsists? The Christ is the light and the life of our world: he is the Truth.

In the ancient commission of Jehovah to his servant Joshua, appointed leader of the children of Israel from the Plains of Moab, east of the Jordan, on to the conquest of the Land of Promise, there is to be observed the same exaltation of the Word or Will of God. Joshua is commanded to meditate in the law of God day and night, so as to do according to that which is written therein, to the end that he might make his way prosperous and have good success. This is that same law which the Christ came, not to destroy but to fulfil, preserving its true moral import, re-writing it more gloriously in the Sermon on the Mount. It is now as then by a constant meditation in the Word of God that its spirit and affluence of strength are to circulate through us, and take possession of us, and make us free. On this line only is there the assurance of success in all our spiritual warfare. There is an eternal contradiction between the truth of the Word and the evil of the world.

In the Book of Deuteronomy the law of God given through his servant Moses, is rehearsed and summarized. Therein we find these words: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good and death and evil."—(Deut. 30: 11-16). In all times it has been a custom of the Great God to write his Word on the fleshy tablets of the heart. We owe unto that man who is profaning the holy of holies within him and doing despite unto the Spirit of grace!

"To you O men I do I call, And my voice is to the sons of men! O ye simple ones! learn Wisdom, And ye fools, be of an understanding heart! Hear, for I speak excellent things, And my lips utter that which is right. For my mouth speaketh Truth, And wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words in my mouth are in uprightness; There is nothing crooked nor deceitful in them;

They are all plain to the man of understanding, And right to them who find knowledge. Receive my instruction and not silver, And knowledge rather than choice gold! For Wisdom is better than pearls, And no precious things are to be compared with her." (Prov. 8: 4-12).

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are my ways higher than your ways, And my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow descend from heaven, And return not thither, But water the earth and make it bear, and put forth its increase, That it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So shall my Word that goeth forth from my mouth; It shall not return to me void; But it shall bring to pass that which is my pleasure, And it shall accomplish that for which I send it." (Isaiah 55: 8-12).

In the large sense, the true and universal Revelation is the actual manifestation of the life of God in all human history. The true and universal Revelation implies the presence of God, through the Christ educating all peoples, moulding all circumstances under the Old Testament dispensation. It includes all the facts of the Incarnation, all its bounteous laws, processes, truths, its redemption, its wonderful words of wisdom. The universal Revelation of God means also the whole coming of the Son of Man since the Incarnation, the whole manifestation of the Spirit of Truth, leading the Church of the Christ into all the truth, in the fulfilment of the eternal purposes. Our Sacred Scriptures are an attestation, a declaration of this larger Revelation of God to and through the whole world. And this revelation within the grand Revelation has, in the letter, been subject to all the ordinary mutations of literature. Yet in the Spirit it is of God. In the large spiritual sense, the Word of God is in all the heavens, and all the wisdom of the angels is thence derived.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1884.
FOURTH QUARTER.
Lesson V.—NOVEMBER 2, 1884.
THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.
1 Kings viii. 22-36.
COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 22-24.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee."—1 Kings viii. 27.

DAILY HOME READINGS.
M. David's Desire to Build God a House. 2 Sam. vii. 1-16.
T. The Raising of Means to Build It. 1 Chron. xxix. 1-20.
W. The Temple Built.—Last Lesson.
T. Solomon's Prayer at Dedication.—The Present Lesson.
F. The Prayer Answered.—1 Kings ix. 1-9; 2 Chron. vii. 1-3.
S. Daniel at Prayer.—Dan. ix. 3-23.
S. Christ's Intercessory Prayer.—John xvii. 1-26.

ANALYSIS.—I. Praise and Prayer for the Fulfillment of God's Promise, Vs. 22-36. II. Blessings Asked Upon the Temple, Vs. 27-30. III. Three Special Petitions, Vs. 31-36.

QUESTIONS.—Vs. 22-26.—Who offered the prayer of the lesson? Of what was it the dedicatory prayer? Give an account of the king's attitude in prayer. Also of his surroundings. How does he begin his prayer? What does Paul say about mingling praise with prayer? Phil. iv. 6.

Vs. 27-30.—What is meant by heaven of heavens? Why cannot it contain God? Does the Lord dwell in earthly Temples? What does Paul say the Temple of God is? 1 Cor. iii. 16. Is God confined to a building, like an idol? To how small a meeting of his people does the Lord come? Matt. xviii. 19. In what direction did the Jews of foreign countries afterward look, in prayer? Give an instance. See Dan. vi. 10.

Vs. 31-36.—What is the first special petition? What is meant by oath? Why is an oath specially binding? What does Solomon call the perjurer, or false swearer? What punishment does he ask to be visited upon him? What is the second special petition? Why was Israel ever smitten by their enemies in battle? What four things does the king ask for them when they should turn from their sins? Who is our intercessor? Is your heart made fruitful by rains of divine grace.

LESSON PROTINGS.—Where, in this lesson, do we find—1. The duty of praising God in prayer? 2. That God fulfills his promises? 3. That God does meet his people in houses dedicated to his worship? 4. That we should attend the house of the Lord? 5. That the Lord answers prayer? 6. That God punishes sin, but receives those who confess and plead for mercy?

True prayer praises God, pleads his promises, confesses sin, and asks for what we need, and pleads for blessings on others also.

THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES.—The Temple and its courts being completed,

the solemn dedication took place with the greatest magnificence which the king and the nation could display. It was the grandest ceremony ever performed under the Mosaic dispensation. On that day the holy and beautiful house, which had been seven and a half years in building, for which preparations had been made for a much longer period (1 Chron. xxii. 5), and on which a force of some one hundred and sixty thousand workmen had been in different ways employed; on that day of days this house of houses was solemnly dedicated to the service of Almighty God. It is an enormous concourse that is gathered in and about the holy city. From "the entering in of Hamath to the river of Egypt" (verse 65), every town and hamlet had sent up its tale of men. No Israelite who could be present—and in the seventh month the labors of the field were well-nigh over—would be absent. We must not think of the heads of the tribes alone; it is a nation keeps festival to-day. And such a nation, with such a history! And its glory culminates to-day in the dedication of its temple. The ceremony began with the preparation of burnt offerings so numerous that they could not be counted. Two processions advanced from different quarters. The one came from the lofty height of Gibeon, bearing with it the relics of the old pastoral worship, now to be disused forever. The Sacred Tent, tattered, no doubt, and often repaired, with its goats-hair covering and boards of acacia wood, was carried aloft. Together with it were brought the ancient brazen altar, the candlestick, and the table of shew-bread, and also the brazen serpent. This train, bearing the venerable remains of the obsolete system, was joined on Mount Zion by another still more stately procession, carrying the one relic which was to unite the old and the new together. The procession moved on to the sound of all the voices, and all the instruments of the 4,000 singers and musicians David had organized, arrayed in white linen, and chanting some of those splendid odes, the 47th, 97th, 98th, and 107th Psalms. The Ark advanced, borne by the Levites, to the open portals of the Temple. It can scarcely be doubted that the 24th Psalm, even if composed before, was adopted and used on this occasion. The singers, as it drew near the gate, broke out into these words: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in." It was answered from the other part of the choir, "Who is the King of Glory?" The whole choir responded, "The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory?" The Ark took its place under the extended wings of the cherubim, which might seem to fold over, and receive it under their protection.—*Milman*. The priests leave it wrapped in darkness, and at once begin their ministrations before the new shrine. At this point an outburst of music from a multitude of performers and singers presently filled the air, the innumerable spectators catching up the ever-recurring refrain, "For he is good, for His mercy endureth forever" (2 Chron. v. 13). Meanwhile the Temple was seen to be filled with a thick darkness, in which all recognized the cloud of the Presence, once the symbol of the divine glory over the tabernacle of Sinai. So dense was it that it stopped the ministrations of the priests.—*Geikie*. The dedication had thus become a true consecration. The essential parts of this consecration were (1) the solemn and formal setting apart of the edifice, and (2) the formal entry—to use the language of men—by the Godhead, concealed under the thick clouds, upon His new shrine.—*Pulpit Commentary*. Then, as if himself high priest as well as king, Solomon proceeded to perform the supreme sacerdotal act by solemnly blessing the assembled people who stood reverently before him. This ended, he went forward to the great altar. Here, instead of the usual standing posture in devotion, he knelt down,—the first instance in Scripture of this attitude,—and, stretching out his hands towards heaven, uttered a prayer of almost unequalled sublimity.—*From Peloubet's Notes*.

NOTES.—Vs. 22-24.—Solomon stood, &c., took his stand. He stood upon a brazen scaffold or platform, seven and a half feet square, and four and a half feet high, in the court of the people, fronting the brazen altar of burnt offering, and surrounded by a great concourse of people. See 2 Chron. vi. 13. Spread forth his hands. The reference in 2 Chron. says, he "kneeled down upon his knees," and in this attitude offered prayer, with his hands spread forth toward heaven. This is the first recorded instance in Scripture of this attitude. He began, as is appropriate with all prayer, with praise. See Phil. iv. 6. No God like thee. Equivalent

to there is no God but thee. Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the only God. Kepest covenant. Fulfills his promises. And mercy. Solomon has specially in mind those gracious promises given to David and others. With thy servants that walk before thee. The promises are conditioned upon obedience. With all their heart. The only way to serve the Lord. See Jer. xxix. 13. Thou hast kept, etc. He has gratefully recorded the general truth that God keeps his word in those great promises, so full of mercy. He here particularizes the special promise to David, that his son should succeed him, and build the Temple. See 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. What his mouth had spoken his hand had fulfilled.

Vs. 25, 26.—Keep with thy servant David. God's servants die, but he lives to see that not a jot of his promises fail. There shall not fail thee a man, etc. See the original promise to David, 2 Sam. vii. 11-17. See also Psa. lxxxix. 3, 4; and Psa. cxxxii. 12, where this promise is upon condition of the continual obedience of David's descendants. So that. Better, as in the margin, only if. Let thy word . . . be verified. Especially the promise that the Lord would dwell in the Temple with Israel. See Psa. cxxxii. 14.

Vs. 27, 28.—Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Though inhabiting eternity, he "dwells with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit." See Isa. lvii. 15. Heaven of heavens. The heaven in its vastest extent. Though he condescends to dwell in an earthly temple, he is not shut up and confined there, like the idols of the heathen, but inhabits the whole universe. Have respect unto the prayer, etc. Language that shows a beautiful blending of humility and faith. His prayer, says Matthew Henry, was an humble prayer, an earnest prayer, a prayer made in faith, as shown by the words thy servant, cry, and before thee.

Vs. 29, 30. Thine eyes may be open toward this house. Not to watch over the building, but to see any one who prayed there, and to hear his petition. Toward this place. He asks God not only to hear prayer offered in the Temple, but of such as may be afar off, who turn their hearts and eyes toward it. See an instance of this in Dan. vi. 10. Wherever they were scattered abroad, the Jews worshipped toward the Temple. See Pa. v. 7; xxviii. 2; cxxxviii. 2; Jonah ii. 4. Heaven thy dwelling place. Though Jehovah came to dwell in the Temple, the Jews could claim no monopoly of him; for his real habitation was heaven.

Vs. 31, 32. Seven special petitions are presented in this prayer of dedication, of which our lesson includes but three. The first has reference to the solemnity of oaths made in or about the Temple. The prayer is that such oaths may be sacred—because false oaths dishonored the divine name and polluted the sanctuary dedicated to that name—and that the false swearer may be punished. See the sophistical distinctions, in vogue in our Lord's day, between the various forms of oaths. Matt. xxiii. 16-22. An oath is a solemn assertion or promise, calling upon God to witness.

Vs. 33, 34. These verses give the second petition, which is for the nation at large. Judging from the past, Solomon sees that Israel will, in the future, be subject to disasters in battle, and from the same cause—because they have sinned against thee. Notice the sure connection between sin and punishment. In this house. Margin, toward this house. Taken captive into a strange land, as afterwards to Babylon, they could still pray toward the holy city. Israel's defence was not alliance with other nations, or in their own military strength, but in obedience to God. So long as they served him faithfully, no enemy could prevail against them.

Vs. 35, 36. The third petition is concerning the plague of famine from drought, also induced by Israel's sin; in which, according to Dnut. xxviii. 23, 24, "thy heaven that is over thy head shall be as brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron." Rain in the Eastern lands has always been accounted one of the best gifts of God (see Lev. xxvi. 4; Deut. xi. 11; Job v. 10), and its withdrawal one of the heaviest plagues. Solomon recognizes drought as a punishment sent to teach Israel the good way wherein they should walk, and prays that upon humble confession it may be removed.

Although the lesson ends here, it may be profitable to notice the remaining petitions, as also the visible symbol of the answer which God gave. See 1 Kings viii. 37-53. 2 Chron. vii. 1-22.

SUGGESTED LESSONS. There can be no public worship without forms; as witness the kneeling of Solomon and his stretching out his hands towards heaven. But forms dictated by worship will be simple, and

aids to devotion; whereas forms dictating worship will be complex, and hindrances to devotion.

The most magnificent edifice, though filled with congregations every Sabbath, is empty unless God dwells there with his people.

Every meeting house, however humble, should be the centre towards which hearts turn as their spiritual home, and an object of affection because of the refreshings there from the presence of the Lord.

As the Temple was dedicated to the service of God, so should we, as the temples of God, be wholly consecrated to his praise and work. 1 Cor. iii. 16.

The Lesson for the younger Ones.

The story of the Dedication may be divided into four parts.

Put the question, How many of the children come to church regularly? Encourage them to come. Why did all Israel come to the Temple? For these three reasons: To worship God; to praise God; to learn about God.

But are our churches the only thing to be dedicated to God—the only places where he dwells? What a pity it would be if that were so; for then we would never speak with God excepting at church, and we cannot be there always. Let the Golden Text be repeated.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Booth's Department.

Original and Selected Bible Enigma.

No. 299. Form a double acrostic—the initials and finals giving the names of two of the Apostles: 1. A sudden motion. 2. What is easy to give but difficult to take. 3. Ability to act. 4. To turn away from. 5. A sudden fall of water.

CURIOS QUESTIONS. No. 321. A Puzzle.

I am often an unknown quantity, but have lived in many countries for some thousands of years. I was greatly esteemed by the Greeks and afterward flourished among the Romans, am much at home with the learned particularly in mathematics, and yet I often serve those who have never learned to write their own names. Tell, who I am!

No. 322. A Portrait, Who is he?

Born in Scotland, and worked as a stone mason. Having a natural desire to study Geology his occupation furnished him with extensive opportunities of indulging it. He studied the stones which he quarried and shaped, he thus accumulated a vast store of geological facts. His writings were marked by unusual vigor and clearness, careful thought and high finish. He was held in the highest estimation by all who knew him. By intense labor his health became infirm and his brain disturbed. In a fit of terrible mental gloom he took his own life at the age of fifty-four.

No. 323. Form a half square of words: 1. A mountain of Palestine. 2. The number of Apostles at the time of Christ's death. 3. To surround. 4. To assert positively. 5. A bag made of string. 6. Placed upon. 7. The end of a pin.

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

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 298. 1. P hillistines, 10. M eab, 2. R uel, 11. E ikoab, 3. E kron, 12. E noob, 4. P erga, 13. T auaath-Shiloh, 5. A jalon, 6. R ithmah, 14. T elmelah, 7. E mmaus, 15. H areth, 8. T irzah, 16. Y arn, 9. O no, 17. G ihon, 18. O phni, 19. D almanutha.

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.

No. 318.

1	15	14	4
12	6	7	9
8	10	11	5
13	3	2	16

No. 319. Numerical Enigma.

"Where there's a will there's a way." No. 320. S A M A R I A N E B A T W E T L