

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1878.

SUNDAY, July 28th, 1878.—Jesus at Nazareth.—Luke iv. 16-30.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 18-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power."—Luke iv. 32.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Luke iv. 14-30. Tuesday, Isaiah lxi. 1-11. Wednesday, Matthew xiii. 53-59. Thursday, 1 Kings xvii. 8-24. Friday, 2 Kings v. 1-27. Saturday, Acts xxi. 27-40. Sunday, Romans ix.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The preacher. Vs. 16. II. The text. Vss. 17-19. III. The lesson. Vss. 20-27. IV. The effect. Vss. 28-30.

QUESTIONS.—I. The Preacher.—Vs. 16.—What did Jesus do in Nazareth on the sabbath-day? What does his example sanction?

II. The Text.—Vss. 17-19.—What were the books read in Jewish synagogues? On what were they written? What was their form? What book did Jesus read? Where? What is meant by being "anointed"? Ex. xxix. 7; 1 Kings xix. 15, 16; 1 Sam. ix. 1. Who are meant by "the poor"? Matt. v. 3; Isa. lviii. 7. What did the fact that the Gospel is preached to the poor prove? Matt. xi. 3-5.

III. The Sermon.—Vss. 20-27.—At what did his hearers wonder? See Luke ii. 47; Ps. xlv. 2; Isa. i. 4; Matt. xiii. 54. What reproach did Jesus hear them utter? What curiosity did he see in them? What treatment did he expect? Vs. 24.

IV. The Effect.—Vss. 22-30.—How did his hearers express their rage? Did they accomplish their purpose?

Where do we see, in this lesson, the duty of men to attend Divine worship? Vs. 16; Heb. x. 25. Where that he knew the Old Testament thoroughly.

After his baptism, Jesus was tempted in the wilderness; then returned to Galilee; was at the wedding at Cana; attended the first Passover in his ministry at Jerusalem; cleansed the Temple; began to baptize; departed through Samaria into Galilee, and spent a few weeks there in retirement. Then he went to Jerusalem, to attend the second Passover in his ministry; healed the impotent man; and, having heard of the imprisonment of John the Baptist, returned, to begin his ministry in Galilee. He came to Nazareth, and taught in its synagogue. Luke iv. 16-32. But his words enraged the people; and, regarding his life as in danger, he left Nazareth and went to Capernaum, there to take up his abode. Matt. iv. 12-17.

EXPOSITION.—Verse 16.—As his custom was. See verse 15. His ministry was prominently that of teaching. The synagogue. Implying that Nazareth had but one. From the time of the Captivity, the Jews had provided themselves with synagogues wherever they dwelt. The Sabbath. "The times of meeting at the synagogues were the Sabbath and Feast-days, and afterward on the second and fifth days of the week." Stood up, etc. Dr. Hackett says: "I attended the Jewish worship at Jerusalem, and was struck with the accordance of the ceremonies with those mentioned in the New Testament. The sacred roll was brought from the chest or closet where it was kept; it was handed up by an attendant to the reader; a portion of it was rehearsed; the congregation rose and stood while it was read; whereas the speakers, as well as the others present, sat during the delivery of the address which formed a part of the service."

Verse 17.—Esaias.—Isaiah. This prophecy constituted a roll or "book" by itself. Opened the book. Unrolled the roll, until he reached the passage which he wished to read, which was Isaiah lxi. 1, 2; lviii. 6.

Verse 18.—The Spirit of the Lord, etc.—The inspiration of the prophet is always ascribed to the Holy Spirit; and we have seen Christ at his baptism, when entering upon his public ministry, receiving the Spirit, and the attestation of that reception. The gospel [good news] to the poor. To those not only destitute, but sensible of the destitution—hungry and thirsty for God's grace; weary, and consciously heavy laden under sin. To heal, etc. Those acts Christ did the body, but as a sign, a kind of parable, of his true work in and for the soul. The meaning is, indeed, almost

exclusively spiritual. Captives. In sin's grasp and power. Rom. vii. 23, 24, etc. Recovering of sight to the blind. This in Isa. lxi. 1, may be translated, "To open to those bound"—understood not of the prison-doors, but the eyes of the prisoners. To set at liberty them that are bruised. In Isa. lviii. 6, it is translated, "To let the oppressed go free." All these figures are very pertinent to explain the effect of sin.

Verse 20.—See above, on verse 17. Fastened on him. Curiosity was largely the source of this intent and intense interest. They had long known him, had heard of, and some of them seen, his miracles in Jerusalem and in Galilee, and they knew something of his claims and the wide-spread expectation. Now he stands a teacher, where with them for a quarter of a century he has been a silent worshipper. What will he say to his old companions and fellow-townsmen?

Verse 21.—This day, etc.—an immediate grappling with the grand and awful question of salvation, and a proclamation of the way of salvation, with Divine authority and solemn and profound earnestness.

Verse 22.—Bear him witness.—A speaker usually has from his hearers immediate testimony as to the effect of his words. Gracious words. Literally, "words of grace." Grace has probably here its wider meaning of beauty—that is, of moral and spiritual beauty. Is not this Joseph's son? Not necessarily asked aloud in words, as Jesus knew the secret, silent question of the heart.

Verse 23.—He said unto them.—In reply to their questionings. Physician, heal thyself. Among your own people. In Capernaum. John iv. 46-54. At a subsequent visit to Nazareth, Jesus was treated in a similar manner, but with a less violent and general opposition; and consequently he then wrought a few miracles. Mark vi. 5.

Verse 24.—Verily, etc.—How often did Jesus oppose to human unbelief the Divine authority of his "verily, verily!" No prophet, etc. Seemingly a proverb, which he sets over against the previous proverb. Of course, he uses it only as expressing a very common, but not an invariable, fact.

Verses 25, 26.—I tell you of a truth.—Still again crushing their false fancies under the weight of Heaven's eternal truth. Many widows, etc. See 1 Kings xvii. xviii. Sarepta. Zarephath. 1 Kings xvii. 9-16. It is on the Mediterranean coast, ten miles south of Sidon, ten north of Tyre, and about fifty north of Nazareth. Three years and six months. James v. 17. In 1 Kings xviii. 1, therefore, the reckoning is from Elijah's flight to Zarephath.

Verse 27.—See the history in 2 Kings v. 1-19. Elisha is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Elisha. These two cases are very pertinently cited by Jesus in confirmation of his statement as to the prophet's want of honor at home.

Verses 28, 29.—All they in the synagogue.—Not necessarily every individual, without exception, but the congregation as a whole. Filled with wrath. Madly, but not convicted. Not rarely even now, clear and faithful preaching has the same effect. Thrust him out of the city, etc. This was madness and mob-law. Dr. Hackett says: "The present Nazareth lies along the hill-side, but much nearer the base than the summit. A precipice—almost perpendicular, forty or fifty feet high—is found still just above the modern village, over which it is hardly possible that a person should fall without being killed instantly."

Verse 30.—But he passing, etc.—His "hour was not yet come," and so they were not suffered to kill him.

We have here the Worship, the Word, the Warning, and the Wrath.

I. The Worship.—Verse 16.—(1) Jesus approved of public worship by joining in it. (2) This was his constant custom.

II. The Word.—Verses 17-20.—(1) Jesus recognizes the written Word as of Divine authority. (2) The Word so recognized is our own Old Testament. (3) The Old Testament witnessed of Jesus and was fulfilled in him.

III. The Warning.—Verses 21-27.—(1) Occasioned by worldliness, with its blind unbelief and disobedience. (2) Yet even this rejection went with a sense of wonder, and, so far, an admission of the truth. (3) The sin was better known to Jesus than to the men themselves—to the Searcher of Hearts,

and to the hearts searched. (4) It was exposed and condemned.

IV. The Wrath.—Verses 28-30.—(1) Great, and general—"all" filled with wrath." (2) Wicked, because truth and holiness kindled and provoked it. (3) Cruel, and lawless, and ungovernable—rushing to a wicked end, along a road of blood.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, August 4th, 1878.—The Draught of Fishes.—Luke v. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him."—Luke v. 11.

The Story of the Bible Lesson.

FOR THE PRIMARY CLASS.

Jesus began his public work of teaching and doing good after his baptism. One Sabbath he was in the town of Nazareth, where he had been brought up; he went into the synagogue, as he always did. A book was handed to him, and he stood up to read it; it was the book of the prophet Isaiah, written on a long roll of parchment. He opened it and read from it a verse in which the prophet told some of the things which he promised Saviour would do. Then he rolled up the book and gave it to the man again, and sat down. The eyes of all were fixed on him to see what he would say. He began, "This day the Scripture I have read is come to pass;" he meant that God had given him the spirit to preach the gospel to the poor; that he was the one sent to open blind eyes and give liberty to sin's captives. They all thought he spoke very sweetly, but some whispered, "Is not this Joseph the carpenter's son?" They did not believe that any one they had known from childhood could do such things as they had heard, and wanted him to work some wonders for them as he had done in other places. But Jesus had told them that God had sometimes sent prophets to do miracles for people who were not Jews. This made them so angry that they rushed on Jesus and hurried him out of the synagogue intending to throw him over a hill. But Jesus passed through the crowd and went into another city.

The Biblical Alphabet.

- A was a traitor hung by the hair—2 Samuel xviii. 9.
B was a folly built high in the air—Genesis xi. 9.
C was a fountain o'er-looking the sea—1 Kings xviii. 43-45.
D was a muse buried under a tree—Genesis xxv. 8.
E was a first born bad from his youth—Hebrew xi. 16.
F was a rule who trembled at truth—Acts xxiv. 25.
G was a messenger sent with good words—Daniel ix. 21.
H was a mother who loaned to the Lord—1 Samuel i. 27, 28.
I was a name received of the Lord—Genesis xxxii. 21-28.
J was a shepherd in Arabian land—Exodus iii. 1.
K was a place near the desert of sand—Deuteronomy i. 10.
L was a pauper begging his bread—Luke xvi. 20, 21.
M was an idol, an object of dread—Leviticus xx. 2, 3.
N was an architect ages ago—Genesis vi. 13-25.
O was a rampart to keep out the foe—2 Chronicles xvii. 2, 3.
P was an isle, whence a saint looked above—Revelations i. 4-9.
Q was a Christian sainted in love—Romans xvi. 24.
R was obscure, yet a mother of Kings—Matthew i. 5.
S was a Danite, who did wonderful things—Judges xiv. 5, 6.
T was a city that had a stronghold—2 Samuel xxiv. 7.
U was a country productive of gold—Jeremiah x. 8.
V was a queen whom a King set aside—Esther i. 10-22.
Z was a place where a man wished to hide—Genesis xix. 1.
Read 2 Timothy iii. 15.
Buffalo Sunday News.

The movement for the abolition of celibacy in the priesthood of the Old Catholic Church is said to be making headway in Germany. The question might be settled this year, but many persons desire a postponement, for fear that Dr. Dollinger, who opposes abolition, will withdraw from the Church.

"Will you please insert this obituary notice?" asked an old gentleman of a country editor; "the deceased had a great many friends about here who'd be glad to hear of his death."

Booths' Department.

New York Wharf Rats.

Wharf rats are long, lean, hungry-looking vermin. Did you ever see one? Their haunts are between old bales and barrels, and in holes that long ago rotted out of the spiles, posts and logs of wharfs. They are sharp-eyed creatures, and of course avoid the sight of mankind. Your rat of that sort is a knowing animal.

But there is another kind of wharf rat—a more interesting object of study—that I have in mind. It is the human "wharf rat." He is as keen, almost as quick, and a good deal more dirty, than his namesake, the quadruped.

One pleasant morning early this spring, I went down with two friends upon one of the wharves in Gotham, to get a view of the harbor. As we were standing quietly watching the shipping, our escort, Harry, exclaimed: "Why, what is this?" and he poked with a stick at something between two old bales.

"Halloo! that's me, that is!" cried a shrill voice; and there slowly rose to view a curious specimen of humanity, bearing a general resemblance to a child some six years old, but probably more than twelve. His face was unique, small, droll, old and strangely pathetic in its drollness.

"Look here, mister, what right 'as you to come into my boarding-house?" he asked. "When a feller pays for board and lodgin', he doesn't generally like to be 'sturbed;" and he pulled at an imaginary visor, the real one having probably been torn off in yesterday's fights.

"How many of you are boarding round here?" asked Harry, much taken with the whimsical idea.

"That's telling," said the youngster, with a provoking smile, his grimy hand fumbling in his pocket.

"Will that help you?" asked my friend, showing a bit of bright silver.

"Well, Governor, it will, I reckon;" was the quick response; and never in an old miser's face came a greedier look. The small, cunning eye fairly devoured the coin.

"There's sometimes a dozen, and sometimes more," said the small boy. "There's two or three stowed away in there," pointing to several bales and barrels. "It's snug in there, and they keep each other warm."

"And you have no other home?"

"I hasn't, sir. I've lived round the wharf ever since I was a little feller. I never had no home as I knows of; I was raised in a hoepitile, 'n' I never saw nobody b'longing to me."

"Do you come down here only to sleep?"

The boy gave a droll, evil sort of glance as he answered:

"We git jobs, you know. The sailors are good to us sometimes, and then—sometimes—we find things."

"What do you mean by finding things?"

"Well, you finds 'em in boats, and you finds 'em some foggy nights on the ships. There's little punts along these yere wharves, kept out of sight mostly, and there's old men been at the business a good while, and they're the ones as find 'em things, and we gits somethin' for 'em. Sometimes there's a smasher, or the watchman sees 'em, or the police is aboard. Then we puts 'em in 'bout boats—we jest swim for it."

"Don't you know that that is wrong?" asked my friend with an innocent expression.

"Well, we don't know nothin' down here," was the answer. "We jest gits a livin', that's all."

"And a pretty hard one," muttered Harry, as two or three shocks of uncombed hair were seen emerging from the nooks and corners—sleepy, bleary-eyed boys, with faces the cunning meanness and cruelty of which no painter, however skillful, could pourtray.

Probably they were all thieves of the meanest sort; though Bill Hiltz, who was pointed out to us—the bouquet-seller in summer—had a better expression, clearer eyes, and really sweet smile. Some of these boys had parents of the baser sort. One of them said his father was in the hospital with a broken leg.

"Yes," cried another, "he got caught a-burgling, and fell out of the second-

story winder; that's wot's the matter of him."

They were all ragged. One or two had armless overcoats, and others fur caps, from which the fur was worn in ridges. I never saw a queerer assortment of old clothes. And the pinched faces, haggard and gray, as if generations of sin and shame had sifted all the evil of their wicked lives into them!

I wondered whether these "rats" ever played liked other boys at the merry old games that seem to have come down from the time of the deluge; but when I turned to ask, the speaker, who was unquestionably the brightest among them, had gone off for a wash.

The last I saw of him he had crept down close to the water, and was dipping his shaggy head under, while only his heels and a few fluttering rags were visible.

Edison's Phonograph.

In these days, one invention very often leads to another, and the telephone already has an offspring not less wonderful than itself. It is called the speaking phonograph. It was invented by Mr. Edison.

Evidently, Mr. Edison said to himself: "The telephone hears and speaks; why not make it write in its own way; then its record could be kept, and any time after the instrument might read aloud its own writing." Like a great genius as he is, Mr. Edison went to work in the simplest way to make the sound-recorder he wanted. You know how the diaphragm of the telephone vibrates when spoken to. Mr. Edison took away from the telephone all except the mouth-piece and the diaphragm, fastened a point of metal, which we will call a "style," to the center of the diaphragm, and then contrived a simple arrangement for making a sheet of tin-foil pass in front of the style. When the diaphragm is still, the style simply scratches a straight line along the foil. When a sound is made, however, and the diaphragm set to vibrating, the mark of the style is not a simple scratch, but an impression varying in depth according to the diaphragm's vibration. And that is how the phonograph writes. To the naked eye, the record of the sound appears to be simply a line of pin points or dots, more or less close to each other; but, under a magnifier, the line is seen to be delicate but exceedingly complicated series of marks.

Now for the reading. The impression on the foil exactly records the vibrations exactly measures the sound-waves which caused the vibrations. The reading simply reverses all this. The strip of foil is passed again beneath the diaphragm, the point of the style follows the groove it made at first, and the diaphragm follows the style in all its motions. The original vibrations are thus exactly reproduced, setting sound-waves in the air precisely like those which first set the machine in motion. Consequently, the listener hears a minutely exact echo of what the instrument heard; it might have heard it a minute, or an hour, or a year, or a thousand years before, had the phonograph been in use so long.

What a wonderful result is that! As yet, the phonograph has not been put to any practical use; indeed, it is scarcely in operation yet, and a great deal must be done to increase the delicacy of its hearing and the strength of its voice. It mimics any and every sort of sound with marvelous fidelity, but weakly. Its speech is like that of a person a long way off, or in another room. But its possibilities are almost infinite.—St. Nicholas for June.

The man who is curious to see how the world could get along without him can find out by sticking a cambric needle into a mill pond, and then withdrawing it and looking at the hole.

We are glad to learn, even at this late day, that Thomas Jefferson would turn aside rather than step on a bumblebee. He was bare-footed when he felt that way, of course.

"Don't show my letters," wrote a young man to a young lady whom he adored. "Don't be afraid," was the reply: "I'm just as much ashamed of them as you are."

Do not put a mortgage on the farm unless you are sure the soil is strong enough to raise it.