

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson VIII.—FEBRUARY 20.

THE PREACHING OF JESUS.
Luke iv. 14-21.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 16-19.

Nearly a year intervened between the events of the last lesson and of this. Luke, however, mentions for this interval only the baptism of Jesus and his temptation. The acknowledgment of Jesus at the baptism of the Son of God suggests the genealogy which Luke carries back to Adam, showing Jesus to be also the Son of man. In the interval between this lesson and the last all the events of John i. 15; John iv. 42 must be located. The arrival in Galilee noted in the first verse of the lesson is the same with that noted in Matt. iv. 17; Mark i. 14, 15; John iv. 43-46.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor."—Luke iv. 18.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Preaching of Jesus, Luke iv. 14-21.
T. Christ's Work Foretold, Isa. xlii. 1-9.
W. Christ's Work Foretold, Isa. lxi. 1-11.
T. Christ at his Work, Matt. viii. 1-17.
F. Words of Grace, John vi. 22-40.
S. The Day of Salvation, Heb. iii. 1-19.
S. The Son of Man Preaching Grace, Luke iv. 14-21.

PARALLEL TEXTS.

- With vs. 14: Matt. iv. 12; John iv. 42.
With vs. 15: Isa. lii. 13.
With vs. 16: Matt. ii. 23; Acts xiii. 14.
With vs. 18: Psa. xxxiv. 18; Isa. xlii. 1; lxi. 1, 2; Dan. ix. 24; Psalm cxlvi. 8.
With vs. 19: Isa. lxiii. 4; 2 Cor. vi. 2.

THE SON OF MAN PREACHING GRACE.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. The Place, Vss. 14-16. II. The Text, Vss. 17-19. III. The Sermon, Vss. 20, 21.

QUESTIONS.—What is the title of the last lesson? What of this lesson? How much time elapsed between the events of these lessons? What two prominent events in Jesus' life does Luke locate in this interval?

I. Vss. 14-16.—To what province did Jesus return? From what place did he come? Give some account of Nazareth. What commendable custom of Jesus is stated in vs. 16?

II. Vss. 17-19.—What book was given to Jesus when he rose to read? In what form were books then made? By what other name is Esaias known? Who else spoke of the Messiah? (Acts x. 43). From what part of Scripture, then, may we learn of Jesus?

III. Vss. 20, 21.—When Jesus had read the text; what four things occurred? What was "the minister"? Why did Jesus sit down? Why did all look so intently upon him? What was the result of this sermon? (Vs. 28-30.)

Jesus began his ministry at about thirty years of age (Luke iii. 23). Before the events of this lesson, came his baptism, and temptation; also the occurrences related in the second, third, and fourth chapters of John. According to Lange, the order of events was as follows: The first friends (John i. 35-52); the first miracle in Cana (John ii. 1-12); the first passover (John ii. 13-22); Jesus and Nicodemus (John iii. 1-21); Jesus in Samaria (John iv. 1-13); the second miracle in Cana (John iv. 46-54); the preaching in Nazareth with Christ's rejection (Luke iv. 16-30). Some, however, put this visit to Nazareth after the second passover, in John v, when Jesus had been upon his ministry over a year.

NOTES.—I. The Preacher (vs. 14-16). In the power of the Spirit. This has reference, not to a special impulse, but to the possession of the Spirit received at his baptism. He was now "full of the Holy Ghost" (vs. 1). He returned to Galilee different, in this respect, from what he was when he left Galilee (Matt. iii. 13), to be baptized of John. It was a new phase of life, as striking as that into which the apostles entered on the Day of Pentecost. See Paul's use of the expression, in Rom. xv. 13. Fame. For its extent, see Matt. iv. 25; for its cause, see John ii. 23. This having preceded him, he came now himself. Synagogues. Houses of worship; they were built one in every small town,

and, in larger towns, more. At the time of Christ, Jerusalem is said to have had from 460 to 480 synagogues in it. The whole exercises were under the control of the ruler of the synagogue. Glorified. Honored. As yet, they saw in him only the herald of a temporal kingdom, and the possible Messiah, who might break their political yoke. But as, later, he unfolded the spiritual nature of his kingdom, honor was turned into hate. See vs. 28. Where he had been brought up. He had deferred his visit to Nazareth till his established reputation might counteract local prejudices. As his custom was. In his childhood and youth. He had been a constant attendant at the synagogue, even though much error had been taught there, and wicked men may have spoken. There he had heard the Old Testament read, and had become familiar with it. On the Sabbath-day. In this, Paul followed his Lord's example. (Acts xviii. 4). Stood up. Thus signifying a desire to read, and to make comments on some portion of Scripture. Reader and hearers all stood up during the reading, as a mark of respect to the Word of God.

II. The Text (vs. 17-19.)

Delivered to him. By the "minister," or attendant of vs. 20. The book. A roll of parchment. Esaias. Greek for Isaiab. This prophecy formed a roll by itself. Opened. Unrolled. Found the place. As Isaiab saw the roll "delivered unto him," it is most likely that it contained the lesson of the day. The Spirit of the Lord, etc. Twenty-one verses made the ordinary lesson. Here, Jesus reads not quite two. Anointed. Priests, kings, and prophets, were set apart by anointing (Ex. xxviii. 41; 1 Sam. x. 1; 1 Kings xix. 16). Hence, Divinely appointed. Jesus was the anointed, as "Messiah" and "Christ" signify. Believers are now the Lord's anointed (1 John ii. 20). Gospel. Good news. To the poor. In purse and in spirit: See Matt. v. 3; xi. 5. To preach, etc. Proclaim, as a herald. Here is the true idea of all Christian preaching. We do not create the truth, nor do we apologize for it; we simply proclaim it. The acceptable year of the Lord. The primary reference of this passage, in Isa. li. 2, may have been to the Year of Jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9, 10), occurring every fifty years—the period of social restoration. Then the land that had been mortgaged returned to its owner, amnesty was granted to those in debt, and such Israelites as had sold themselves into slavery, were released. All this was typical of the Christian era, and of Him who was to restore spiritual liberty, and to give freedom from sin, and the heavenly inheritance. See 2 Cor. vi. 2.

III. The Sermon (vs. 20, 21.)

Closed. Rolled up. Minister. Attendant, or keeper of the sacred books. Sat down. The Jewish rabbis taught sitting; and this was the customary position of Christ in teaching (Matt. v. 1; Mark iv. 1; xiii. 3). The eyes, etc. Showing intense interest, and also giving a hint of the power of Christ's very presence. Fastened. An expressive word, peculiar to Luke and Paul in the New Testament, being used twelve times by Luke, in his Gospel and the Acts, and twice by Paul (2 Cor. iii. 7, 13). This day is this Scripture fulfilled. Jesus, as well as the Apostles, was an expository preacher. His very presence—upon his mission, and filled with the Spirit—was a fulfillment of the prophecy read. He had left them, a mechanic, whose mother and other relatives they knew; he returned, claiming to be the Christ of prophecy, and that the words which he quoted were written of him.

Jesus was the model preacher. He was anointed for the work by the Spirit. He preached the gospel to the poor and distressed in synagogues; on the mountain; in the boat; sitting on Jacob's well, to one person; everywhere, where he could reach and save the people. Himself, as our example, went out into the "highways and hedges." (Luke xiv. 23.)

Jesus sets an example, also, of public worship. "His custom was" to attend regularly.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

The people of Nazareth did not know that Jesus was God's Son; they thought that he was only Joseph's son. What work did Joseph do? Perhaps Jesus

worked with Joseph every day. No, not every day—you can tell one day in each week that he did not work. Where do you think Jesus went on the Sabbath?

The people in Nazareth did not know that Jesus had really come and was sitting in the synagogue with them!

Before he told the people at Nazareth, he went to John to be baptized. Then he went to many other places teaching and preaching. Matt. iv. 23. After Jesus had been away a year, he came back to Nazareth. Where would he go on the Sabbath? Read vs. 16.

Jesus was reading about himself; but the people did not know it.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Boutly's Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 111.

DOUBLE SCRIPTURAL ACROSTIC.

The primals and finals of these described words give the titles of two of our Saviour's parables. Name them.

1. A tetrarch of Abilene.
2. One of Ahab's governors, who preserved and fed the prophets.
3. A woman present at the crucifixion of Christ.
4. A slow animal unclean by the Levitical law.
5. Who was sent to preach in Samaria.
6. One of the borders of Ahasuerus' kingdom.
7. A king of Moab slain by a left-handed judge.
8. The guide and defence of the Israelites in the wilderness.
9. The place of Jeremiah's captivity.
10. A bird described by Job as without wisdom.
11. The part of Moses that shone when he came down from the Mount.
12. The second part of the first day.
13. A city on the plain of Sharon.
14. The mother of King Jehoiachin.
15. Whence Ezekiel saw the glory of God proceed into the Temple.
16. Types of bondage.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

165. TRANSLATIONS.
My whole suggests a disunion you see;
Twice behead, a similitude then I shall be.
Behead me again, round a nice country village,
You'll then see me lay, just ready for tillage;
Twice more behead, you'll then see at length,
That I clearly pretend to be of some strength;
Transpose me, then you quickly will find,
That I was the first of my sort in mankind.

166. Make a word square:
1. To get thoughts from books.
2. An itinerant court.
3. An open place.
4. Costing much.
167. Supply words sounding alike.
1. She looked too — to be carrying that heavy —
2. He held a tight — over his subjects during his whole —
3. The — brought the potatoes from the — for their inspection.

Answers next week.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 110.

1. V ashti..... Esther 1.
2. I shmael..... Gen. xvii. 18.
3. N aboth 1 Kings xxi. 1-16.
4. E sther..... Esther ii. 7.

"I AM THE VINE." John xv. 5.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

163. 1. Greece.
2. Because it is thoroughly wicked from head to foot.
3. Because it lives upon the fat of the land.
4. Because if you say "Please to go out," it answers "I'm blown if I do."
5. Because when it burns half way, it went burn any longer.
6. Because it always dies of consumption.
7. Because it cannot get along very well without a stick.
8. Because it smokes when it goes out.
9. Because it often runs.
10. Because it is burnt to death in a good cause.
11. It shines wherever it is placed, and as long as it lives.

164. Lord Byron's Puzzle: The letter H.

The words of Jehovah are holy in His precepts, just in His laws, gracious in His promises, significant in His institutions, true in His narrations, and infallible in His predictions!

Select Serial.

A Thorny Path.

BY HESBA STRETTON.

CHAPTER VI.

MRS. CLACK'S DIFFICULTY.

Mrs. Clack felt herself very much put about and embarrassed by the presence of a man in her house. Old Lister had slept on Don's flock mattress in the coach-house below her dwelling-room and Dot in her own bed beside her; but now Don had left the blind man in her charge while he was away at his daily work, and she did not know what to do with him. True, he was an old man and blind; but he was almost as strange and dreaded a creature to her as if Don had brought one of the savage wild beasts from the Zoological Gardens to find a shelter in her quiet little home. She knew almost nothing of man and his ways. Though she called herself Mrs. Clack on her business cards, she had no actual claim to the title, for she was a single woman. She had been reared and trained in a small orphanage in the country, where sixteen orphan-girls were brought up in strict seclusion never seeing any man nearer than the aged clergyman, who preached to them with the rest of his small congregation from the pulpit of the village church. She had never known her father, and she had neither brother nor husband. Her first business had been that of a seamstress and dressmaker, mostly for servants; but as her sight began to fail her somewhat, she had taken to buying old wardrobes, ladies' wardrobes chiefly, which, after mending and renewing, she could sell again to her large circle of customers, among the servant-women and mechanics' wives in her neighborhood. Thus her whole experience of life had been strictly confined to the woman's side of it.

Mrs. Clack was a quiet, small, timid person, who seldom spoke above an undertone, as if all she had to say partook of the nature of a secret. Even in her own house she seemed to make herself as small as possible, and to take up as little room as she could. To have a man there, who spoke in a loud and deep voice, and who stretched his legs across her narrow hearth, blocking up the way to the fire, was the heaviest trial that could have befallen her. She said to herself she would rather have been laid low in sickness.

"It is a cross, a heavy cross!" she murmured between her teeth, as she stood in the farthest corner of the small room, watching old Lister, fumbling about the table, at the breakfast she had put ready for him. Dot had taken her breakfast sitting comfortably on Mrs. Clack's lap close by the fire, and now she was amusing herself by playing at hide and seek among the clothed bed-posts of the bed where she had slept as soundly as children sleep, while the little woman beside her had lain awake all night fearful of disturbing her if she so much as stirred. But the heavy cross was old Lister, not the little child.

"Ma'am!" he cried suddenly, so suddenly that her heart began to beat rapidly, and her hands to tremble, "Ma'am, I must visit the Gardens at once. My daughter Hagar will no doubt be seeking me there."

"Yes, sir, yes," she answered in a nervous tremor.

"I must trouble you to guide me then, he continued.

"Me!" she cried, in alarm, "me!" She could not recollect ever having had to walk beside a man; and to guide one, holding him by the hand, or having his arm in hers, seemed an impossibility. Old Lister had risen as he spoke, and was now groping hopelessly about the room in his blindness, looking more than ever in her eyes like some caged wild beast. But there was no one else to give him a guiding hand, and she stepped nervously to his aid.

"Dear! dear!" she murmured, "this is a cross."

There was a degree of excitement, however, in the doing of this new and strange service to a man, which was not altogether disagreeable, though she was trembling with agitation. Don was gone out for the whole day, so she was bound to wait upon him herself. But by the time she had brought him his old hat,

and the shabby, threadbare overcoat, and found his walking-stick for him, it seemed less impossible for her to guide him down the narrow stair-case, and through the court into the street, when she trusted to meeting with some boy who, for a few halfpence, would lead him to the Gardens, and bring him back if his daughter should not happen to be there.

There was a lame boy, who went about upon crutches, and who was glad enough to take care of the old man for a small payment, to be paid when he came back. Mrs. Clack kissed little Dot, and shook hands with old Lister bidding them good-by, on the chance of never seeing them again; though they were to come in, in time for dinner, if Hagar did not meet with them. It was just such a day as the day before, sunless and foggy; the air was damp and chill, and as the three wayfarers crept along with slow and difficult steps, the cold seemed to wrap them round in an icy mantle. Old Lister was very silent, save that from time to time he asked his guide anxiously if he could not see a tall young woman, with a baby in her arms, looking as if she was searching for somebody. Each time that the lame boy answered "No," he sighed heavily, and for a minute or two pushed on as quickly as the lad's crutches could carry him. Little Dot trotted with short footsteps beside them, patient and quiet, as only young children are who are used to cold and want, and do not know that life has anything better to give them; but even Dot now and then cried softly, and asked if nobody could carry her just a little bit. But how could a blind old man and a boy on crutches bear the burden of a little child?

"My daughter Hagar is bound to be searching for us," said old Lister again and again, half to himself and half to his guide. He could not give up all hope, though he was fast sinking into despair; his daughter, who had been faithful and dutiful to him all her life long, how could she have forsaken him now in his helpless old age? Yet there was a deep and very bitter dread in his inmost heart that she had left him to drift away on the sea of troubles, which had been tossing them to and fro so long.

"Let us tell the police," said the lame guide.

That was still something that could be done, and old Lister snatched at the straw of hope. They stopped every policeman they met, and he told his sad story to each, asking if he had not seen such a person as he described his daughter to be. But his description was misleading, as his blind eyes had never looked into her face and watched the changes time worked upon it. At length, sadly and despondently, he allowed himself, late in the afternoon, to be fed back to Mrs. Clack's.

Even Don was astonished to see how Mrs. Clack reconciled herself to the old man's presence in her house. Dot she delighted in, and she tolerated her grandfather, but it was an extraordinary relief and encouragement to her, as soon as she fairly realized it, to think he could not see her, or what she was doing. Her nervousness presently passed away, and even this man's voice did not startle her so much after she had heard it for a few days. His blindness put him apart from her almost as if he were occupying another room, except that the sight of his downcast head, drooping on his hands for an hour at a time, and the sound of his heavy sighs, deepening into sobs at times, melted her heart in pity for him. This was not like having a man in the house—a coarse, masterful, domineering man. A poor, blind, forsaken, broken-hearted creature he was, without a friend in the world, and with no hole to creep into for a shelter to his last days. He would nurse Dot on his knee sometimes, but he soon grew tired with her light weight, and daily through fruitless and painful pilgrimages to the Gardens, seemed to wear out all the strength he had.

Mrs. Clack had no fiddle among her stores, as Don had vainly hoped, but by-and-by it came into her mind to buy one which she saw in a pawnbroker's shop, kept by a woman with whom she had long had business dealings, and she brought it home with her in quiet triumph, waiting till all were assembled together in the evening, before bringing it out.

"There, pleased voice by the fire. It's not a man and I'm not to a man. drinks, nor innocent man you could maybe I could sing it school." Old Lister us be joyful her best cracked ke many of the once been of the the another man was, in came into as his cheek old instrum his feet, small space clear of looked on, face at the "He wi Don, rap hands till would. B Jack, mus If you on wind enou along with heaps of knows? Hagar and "It wou going to to Mrs. Clack and down perhaps a and come bless you voice in robbers s never sum "See the 'Hark! sound! never say They wou say, but cheerfully Next Lister, D Mrs. Clac crutches, money to watching middle of the vic windows luently But fid out the expected aged to and above Jack for he came to the be small lo Clack's uttered though a failure a earn som all, and could so his unf worst ca into her she had the worl day can carry h the area In on America primitiv the con taking made th minister with the not a pe over th that its looking claimed God th congre "No, would I but to would for prov