

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

SECOND QUARTER.

- May 22. *Parables on Prayer.* Luke xviii. 1-14.
 May 29. *Parable of the Pounds.* Luke xix. 11-27.
 June 5. *The Crucifixion.* Luke xxiii. 33-46.
 June 12. *The Walk to Emmaus.* Luke xxiv. 13-32.
 June 19. *Review of the Quarter's Lessons.*
 June 26. *Selected Lesson: The Gospel for the World.* Luke xxiv. 44-53.

Lesson X.—JUNE 5.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

Luke xxiii. 33-46.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 44-46.

From Jericho, Jesus journeyed on toward Jerusalem, arriving at Bethany six days before the Passover (John xii. 1) in April, A. D. 30. Jesus then reached Bethany on the eve of the Sabbath, (Friday evening.) He spent the Sabbath at Bethany. On the first day of the week (Sunday), he made his triumphal entry (Luke xix. 28-38), returning at night to Bethany. The next day (Monday), he went again into the city and cleansed the temple, returning again to Bethany. On Tuesday, in the city again, he spoke several important parables, and had much sharp discussion. That night he returned to Bethany, where he spent the next day, returning to Jerusalem on the afternoon of Thursday. Then followed the Supper, the scene in Gethsemane, the arrest, the trial, and so the subject of the present lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”—John xii. 32.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. The Crucifixion, Luke xxiii. 33-46.
 T. Parallel from Matthew, Matt. xxvii. 35-50.
 W. Parallel from Mark, Mark xv. 24-37.
 T. Parallel from John, John xix. 18-30.
 F. Suffering Foretold, Psa. xxii. 1-8.
 S. Suffering Foretold, Isa. liii. 1-12.
 S. Salvation through a Suffering Saviour, Luke xxiii. 33-46.

SALVATION THROUGH A SUFFERING SAVIOUR.

- I. Suffering for Sin, Vss. 33-37, 44-46.
 II. Saving the Sinner, Vss. 38-43.

QUESTIONS.—I. Vss. 33-37, 44-46.—Give the story of Jesus' crucifixion as told in vs. 33. What was the method of crucifixion? Why was it peculiarly painful? For what did Jesus suffer this? (1 Pet. ii. 24). What additional sources of suffering are stated in vss. 34-37? What fact shows the spirit of Jesus in this suffering? Describe the end of his sufferings. (vs. 46 and parallel narratives.) What did Jesus say of such an end in John xv. 13?

II. Vss. 38-43.—What sinner was drawn unto Jesus as he suffered on the cross? What is meant by “malefactor”? What are these men called in Matt. xxvii. 44? What did the other malefactor say to Jesus? What rebuke did his companion utter? What confession? What prayer?

Special Topics.—Calvary; crosses and crucifixion; malefactors; the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross; the superscription—what was it in full, and why in three languages? Lots cast for his raiment; vinegar; Old Testament scriptures quoted to Jesus or by him as he hung on the cross; paradise; the miraculous darkness; the veil of the temple; the last words of the Lord; the physical cause of the Lord's death.

The central point of the world's history—the atoning death of Christ. It becomes us to touch upon it with tender and reverent spirit.

NOTES.—(Vss. 33-38.)—Verse 33.—*Calvary.* The Greek is *Cranian*. The word “Calvary” comes to us from the Latin translation (the Vulgate), and is not found in the original. In Matthew, we have the Hebrew word, *Golgotha*. All these words mean “skull.” It is supposed that this name was given because of the round, bare, skull-like appearance of the place where the Saviour was crucified. It was near the city; outside the walls (compare Heb. xii. 12); there was a garden in it (John xix. 41), and in the garden, a tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, (Matt. xxvii. 60). The locality is in doubt. It is worthy of note that the Scriptures do not speak of the “hill,” but of the

“place” called a skull. *They crucified him.* The punishment was not Jewish, but borrowed from the heathen; and, among the Romans, was inflicted only upon slaves and great criminals; hence the ignominy connected with it. The victim, stripped of his clothing, was fastened to the cross by nails driven through his hands, and, generally, through his feet; though sometimes, the feet were tied to the upright, instead. Crucifixion was the masterpiece of inhuman ingenuity, in devising continuance of torment with a combination of every kind of suffering. It was fitting that he, who “should taste death” in this form. *The malefactors.* In Matt. “robbers.” They were highway men, and, perhaps, had been engaged in sedition and murder, like Barabbas (vs. 19 and 25), and belonged to his band.

Verse 34.—*Father, forgive them, etc.* The first of the seven cries from the cross, uttered, perhaps, as they were nailing him to the cross. Here is the fulfillment of his own precept in Matt. v. 44, and of the prophecy in Isa. liii. 12, concerning making intercession for transgressors. But who are meant by them? They are those who *know not what they do.* With this, Peter's words in Acts iii. 17, and Paul's in 1 Cor. ii. 8, would seem to agree. *They parted his raiment, etc.* The garments of the crucified were the perquisites of the soldiers. (Psa. xxii. 18.)

Verses 35-37.—*Beholding.* Gazing upon a spectacle. The word implies wonder and astonishment, but not malevolence. But, some of these “people” were the mocking ones of Matt. xxvii. 39. *The rulers.* Members of the Sanhedrim. *Derided him.* Christ on the cross was within easy reach of smiting hands and cruel tongues. In his dying agonies, the dignitaries of the land went out to mock him. *He saved others.* No irony can make this other than grandly true. *Let him save himself, etc.* This he could do, (Matt. xxvii. 53). This he could not do, (2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 24). His claim to be the Christ, or Messiah, “the chosen of God,” excited their malice. *The soldiers also mocked him.* Making sport of his claims to Kingship, they offered him vinegar, or sour wine, which they were drinking, as one offers a festive cup, pretending to treat him as a king.

Verse 38.—In the superscription, Pilate seemed to have sought a petty revenge for being, in a sense, compelled to deliver one whom he pronounced innocent to be crucified. He would vex the Jews by putting over Christ's head, *This is the King of the Jews.* It was in Latin for the Romans, the Hebrew for the Jews, and the Greek for men of all countries.

(Vss. 39-43.)—Verses 39-41.—It may be that, “at first, both malefactors mocked; afterwards, only one.” *Railed.* Literally, “blasphemed.” *If thou be the Christ, etc.* Rulers and thief alike demanded special tests of his Messiahship. In this dark hour, when even the disciples of Jesus were fled, the dying malefactor becomes the apostle of the New Kingdom.

Verses 42, 43.—*Remember me.* That is, in mercy. *Into thy kingdom.* He addressed Christ as *already King*, and as one who should return, by-and-by, with the splendor of the Messianic reign. *To-day.* The effort to connect the “to-day” with what precedes, thus: “I say unto thee to-day,” is unwarranted, and only shows how men do not hesitate to pervert Scripture language to fit their theological opinions. Both purgatory and soul-sleeping are impossible, in the light of this saying of Jesus. *Paradise.* “Royal garden.” The promise to the dying thief, was of an immediate entrance with Jesus into the place of infinite joy.

(Vss. 44-46.)—Verses 44, 45.—From the sixth hour (noon), till the ninth hour (three o'clock), darkness was over all the earth. The word translated “earth” is rendered “land,” in this connection. *The sun was darkened.* Not by a natural eclipse, as the Passover occurred at full moon. *Veil of the temple was rent.* At the moment of Christ's death. The veil was of purple and gold, sixty feet by thirty in dimensions. It divided the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The way to the Throne of Grace was now open to all, through the rent veil of Christ's body, (Heb. x. 19, 20).

Verse 46.—*Loud voice.* Jesus did not die from exhaustion; he died volun-

tarily. *Father, into thy hands, etc.* The last of the seven cries from the cross. Jesus died with Scripture (Psa. xxxi. 5) upon his lips. *Gave up the ghost.* Or, “he breathed out his spirit.” Dr. Stroud, however, in his *Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, attributes the speedy death of Christ on the cross to a rupture of the heart, which would explain the suddenness of the death. The violence of his emotions were sufficient to burst open the heart. The purpose of this death was, to redeem us, by making a real atonement for our sins. See 2 Pet. ii. 24; Rom. iii. 25.

Salvation is by faith in the Crucified One, not by works; else the case of the penitent thief had been hopeless. Regeneration is not gradual, but immediate; and the Word gives as positive assurance of a present salvation to each believer as Christ gave to the penitent by his side.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Jesus was taken to the place which was called Calvary and crucified. On each side of him was a cross, on which a thief hung. The soldiers stripped off his clothes, casting lots as to what each should have. Jesus prayed for these enemies: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” The people who stood about, the rulers, and the priests all mocked him, saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself.” Then they nailed a writing over his head, which read in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, “This is the King of the Jews.” Even one of the thieves joined in the mockery and said, “If you are the Christ, save yourself and us.” But the other thief reproved him and said, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” Jesus at once forgave him, and said, “This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” From twelve o'clock till three, the earth was dark, the sun was hid. Jesus cried loudly, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit,” and bowed his head and died. Then the earth shook; the curtain which was before the inner temple was torn from top to bottom.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Bouths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 129.

1. The centurion who “courteously entreated Paul.”
2. The discreet youth who waited till “days should speak and multitude of years teach wisdom,” before he ventured to speak himself.
3. Paul's chosen companion, who shared also his imprisonment, and made his dungeon resound with the voice of prayer and praise.
4. A Roman lady whom Paul saluted as “our helper in Christ.”
5. Either the slayer or the slain in the battle of Gezer between Israel and the Philistines.

Put the initials from first to last, or the initials from last to first will form a name of great value.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

206. Form the following into a five word-square:

1. Ruth's mother-in-law.
 2. Moses' brother.
 3. One of the stellar constellations.
 4. An Irish author.
 5. The part within.
207. My first is a kind of animal food, Which when well cooked is very good;
 My second is quite feeble and frail;
 My third is a weight you will see without fail.
 My whole is formed of these bits of knowledge,
 It is the name of an American college.

208. 1. Behead a spiral column, and leave a unit; curtail, and leave upon.
2. Behead a weapon, and leave a fruit; curtail, and leave a vetch.
3. Behead to frighten, and leave thoughtful attention; curtail, and leave a large carriage.
4. Behead an earnest look, and leave a weed; curtail, and leave a resinous liquid.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 128.

BIBLE AGROSTIC.

1. Wellspring of life.
2. Obadiah.
3. Ruth.
4. Shushan.
5. Hannah.
6. Ithamar.
7. Persis.
8. Gilboa.
9. Orion.
10. Daniel.

“WORSHIP GOD.”

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

WORD SQUARES.

R E A L
 E C H O
 A H A B
 L O B E

204.

W O L F
 O P A L
 L A C E
 F L E A

205.

ENGLISH WORKS.

1. T hompson.
2. H eywood.
3. O tway.
4. M ilton.
5. A rmstrong.
6. S pencer.
7. G ay.
8. R andolph.
9. A kenside.
10. Y oung.

A Brave Little Rebel.

If our heroine, Cynthia Smith, walked the earth to-day, she would be a great-grandmother. But at the time of this story, 1780, she was only a small girl, who lived on a plantation near the Santee River in South Carolina. She was twelve years old, four feet two inches high, and, for so young and so small a person she was as staunch a rebel as you could have found in all America; for the War of Independence had been raging in the United States ever since Cynthia could remember.

When she was only five years old, her little heart had been beaten hard at the story of the famous “Boston Tea Party,” at which a whole ship-load of tea had been emptied into the harbor because stupid George III. insisted on “a threepenny tax.”

“And New-York and Philadelphia would 'a done the same, but for the ships turning tail, and going where they came from. They've burned the stuff in Annapolis, and its spoiling in the Charleston cellars, bless the Lord!” said Mr. Smith, striking his heavy hand on his knee.

“Hurrah!” shouted John and Jack and William and Ebenezer, Cynthia's brothers. “Hurrah!” echoed Cynthia, as if she understood all about it.

The following year, when England shut up Boston harbor with her “Stamp Act,” never a bit of rice did Cynthia get to eat, for her father sent his whole harvest North, as did many another Southerner.

After that John went to Massachusetts to visit Uncle Hezekiah, and the next June they heard that he had been shot dead at the battle of Bunker Hill.

Cynthia wept hot tears on her coarse homespun apron; but she dried them in a sort of strange delight when Jack, all on fire to take John's place, insisted on joining the Virginia Riflemen, and following a certain George Washington to the war.

“It's ‘Liberty or Death’ we have marked on our shirts, and it's ‘Liberty or Death’ we have burned in our hearts,” Jack wrote home; at which his mother wrung her hands, and his father smiled grimly.

“Just wait, you two other boys,” said the latter; “we'll have it hot and heavy at our own doors before we're through.” That was because Will and Ebenezer wished to follow in Jack's footsteps. Cynthia longed to be a boy, that she might indulge in a private skirmish with the “Britishers” on her own account.

But she had little time for even patriotic dreamings and yearnings. There was a deal of work to be done in those days.

Cynthia helped to weave cloth for the family gowns and trousers, and to spin and knit yarn for the paternal and fraternal stockings. This kept her very busy until 1776, when two great events took place.

One was the signing of the Declaration of Independence; the other was the birth of a red and white calf in Mr. Smith's barn. Which was of the most importance to Cynthia it is hard to say.

To be sure, she tingled from head to foot at her father's ringing tones, as he read from a sheet of paper some one had given him, “All men are born free and equal;” but she also went wild with joy when her father said, “You may keep that bossy for your own, if you agree to raise her, Cynthia.”

Cynthia took the calf into her inmost heart, and she named her “Free-n'-equal.” That was the way the words sounded to her.

If ever an animal deserved such a

name, that was the beastie. She scorned all authority, kicked up her hind-legs, and went careering around the plantation at her own sweet will, only coming up to the barn when Cynthia's call was heard.

Free-n'-equal was Cynthia's only playmate, for no children lived within six miles. As the calf grew into a cow, the more intimate and loving were the two. To Free-n'-equal did Cynthia confide all her secrets, and chiefly did she inform her of her sentiments in regard to the war. She even consulted her as to the number of stitches to be put on a pair of wristlets for Jack, who in this winter of 1777-78 had gone with General Washington to Pennsylvania. Alas! Jack never wore these wristlets. He was one of the many who lay down to die of cold and hunger in that awful Valley Forge. Cynthia believed that Free-n'-equal understood all the sorrow of her heart when she told her the pitiful news.

Quite as much did she share her joy when Cynthia came flying to the barn with the joyful tidings that British Burgoyne had surrendered at Saratoga.

Again the joy vanished, and Cynthia sobbed her woes into Free-n'-equal's sympathizing ear when Sir Henry Clinton captured Charleston, only twenty miles away.

But she sobbed even more a few months later.

“For General Gates has come down to South Carolina, Free-n'-equal, and father and Will and Ebenezer have gone to fight in his army.”

Free-n'-equal shook her head solemnly at that, and her long low “Moo-o” said, plainly enough, “What's to become of the rest of us, my poor little mistress?”

Cynthia brushed away her tears in a twinkling.

“We'll take care of ourselves, that's what we'll do. Mother and I'll hoe the rice. And Free-n'-equal, you've got to toe the mark, and give more milk than ever to keep us strong and well.”

“Trust me for that!” said Free-n'-equal's eyes.

And she kept her promise. Rich yellow milk did she give, painful after painful. Cynthia and her mother worked like men, and fed on the cream.

Those were dangerous days all along the Santee River, for Lord Cornwallis's troops were roaming over the land, and laying waste the country. But Cynthia was not afraid—no, not even when Lord Cornwallis came within three miles of the plantation. She said her prayers every day, and believed firmly in the guardian angels, and a certain rusty gun behind the kitchen door.

“Just let those soldiers touch anything of ours, and see what they'll get!” said she, with ponderous dignity.

Free-n'-equal was perfectly sure Cynthia could manage the whole British army, if need were, and munched her cud in blissful serenity.

Oh no, Cynthia had no fear, even when a red coat did sometimes rise above the horizon like a morning cloud. She regarded him no more than she would a scarlet breasted bird which sung above her head when she went into the forest hard by to gather sticks.

So no wonder that she was taken mightily aback when, one afternoon, she came home with her bundle of sticks, her mother met her with wide open eyes and a pale face.

“Cynthia, they've been here and carried off Free-n'-equal.”

“They!” gasped Cynthia. “Who?” “The British soldiers. They tied a rope round her horns. She kicked well, but they jerked her along. Cynthia, Cynthia, what shall we do?”

Cynthia uttered a sound between a groan and a war-whoop, and darted out of the door. Along the dusty road she ran, on and on. Her yellow sun-bonnet fell back on her shoulders, and her brown curls covered with dust. One mile, two miles, three miles—on and on. At last she reached a small house, which was Lord Cornwallis's headquarters. Never a moment did Cynthia pause. The sentinels challenged her in vain. She marched majestically past them. Into the house—into the parlor—walked she.

There sat Lord Cornwallis and some six of his officers, eating and drinking at a big table.

Cynthia stopped at the threshold and dropped a courtesy.

Lord Cornwallis glanced up and saw her.