

Sunday Reading.

Just to trust and yet to ask
Guidance still;
Take the training or the task
As He will;
Just to take the loss or gain
As He sends it;
Just to take the joy or pain
As He lends it.

He who formed thee for His praise,
Will not miss the gracious aim;
So to day and all thy days
Shall be moulded for the same.

Just to leave in His dear hand
Little things;
All we can understand,
All that stings;
Just to let him take the care
Sorely pressing,
Finding all we let Him bear
Changed to blessing.

This is all I and yet the way
Marked by him who loved thee best,
Secret of a happy day,
Secret of His promised rest.

Sunday in Jerusalem.

BY SELAH MERRIL, D. D., U. S. CONSUL.

The strict observance of the Sabbath is not very popular in Jerusalem any more than it is in Germany or in some parts of the United States. Its observance is not expected from the twenty thousand Jews or the ten thousand Mohammedans; and among the ten thousand nominal Christians who complete in round numbers the forty thousand inhabitants of the city, the large majority make it in some sense a day of recreation and pleasure. Very few shops, however, or places of business that are owned by Christians, are opened on the Sabbath.

Friday which is the Sunday of the Mohammedans, is the great market-day of Jerusalem. No Moslem closes his shop because of any respect which he has for the day. A few go early in the morning to the mosque to pray, and they have there also some kind of preaching service, but the number who have leisure to attend it is small; in reality very little notice is taken of it. On that day the Turkish flag floats from the castle—which is not the case on other days—and no business is transacted in the courts. This is likewise the case in the government offices in general. Mohammedans, provided they have the necessary leisure, wear better clothes, drink more coffee, smoke more tobacco, and make more visits on that day than on any other. If they have no leisure—which is the case with all common classes—they work just the same as on other days. The idea that the day is sacred because God has special claims upon the time and service of men never enters a Mohammedan's mind.

Saturday, the Sabbath of the Jews, is the most strictly observed of all the three days of rest. I refer to outward observance, for how the Jews observe the day at home or in secret I do not pretend to say. They close their shops and places of business, and are seldom seen on the streets until late in the afternoon, when multitudes of devout Jews, in their 'five clothes' and fur-trimmed hats, throng the principal avenue leading out of the city. After a day of worship—or a day of restraint as no doubt it is to some—they seem to enjoy a few hours of relaxation at sunset and in the early evening. As the Jews do not transact any business on their Sabbath, they make all their preparations for their day of rest on the day previous or Friday; and this is the chief reason why this is the principal market day of the city. The Jews, having no separate nationality, have no flag to float in honor of the day—which perhaps their religion might prevent them from doing even were they a distinct nation.

It is curious to observe that the poor bigoted Jew and the fanatical Mohammedan, not less than the Christian, however benighted the latter may be, have an idea that somehow good clothes, at least one's best clothes are connected with a suitable observance of the Sabbath, or the special day of rest in which one believes.

On Sunday flags float from the consulate of every Christian nation that is represented in the city—American, English, German, Italian, Austrian, Russian, Greek, Spanish and French.

As Christians are to a large extent the best patrons of the Jews, the latter do not find Sunday a very profitable day for business; and although they keep their shops open, they do in a sort of half and half way not wishing to close them entirely, and not expecting to trade much even if they keep them open.

One of the principal thoroughfares of Jerusalem is called Christian Street. It is also one of the main business streets of the city. For a wonder in an oriental town, it runs straight; but this is partly accounted for by the fact that it is a short street, it being less than three hundred yards in length. I have several times counted the shops along this street that were closed on Saturday, as compared with the number that was closed on Sunday, and found that many more were closed on Saturday, showing that this street might with more propriety be called 'Jew Street' than 'Christian Street.' This means, of course, that more of its places of business are occupied by Jews than Christians. The reason is partly explained when it is considered that the Christians number about one-fourth of the population of the city, while the Jews number fully one-half.

Sunday is, of all the seven, the great day of the week for recreation, in which Mohammedans and Jews join as well as Christians. The coffee-shops, which are the only pleasure resorts within the city, are then full to overflowing; small companies of friends stroll in the fields, or recline under some tree; but the great mass of pleasure-seekers throng the Jaffa road for miles beyond the city. This road is broad, and, being without trees or shade on either side, is in the summer time very hot and dusty. In any city of Europe or America such a road as this would never be thought of as a promenade; but it is the only place for the purpose that the poor Jerusalemites have. Here may be seen, towards sunset on Sunday afternoon, every variety of costume and nationality represented in the city, where not less than thirty-four different languages are spoken. This sight is in some respects grotesque, but in other respects it is one of the most interesting in the world. All this to the Mohammedans is sacred ground. Hither also 'the tribes' of Israel 'come up,' as of old, from the ends of the earth, as though the temple and the holy of holies were still in their glory; while Christians of every name and country under heaven look away to Jerusalem, even in her ruin and desolation, as the fatherland of their religion.

Taking all the different Christian sects together, there are among them a large number of churches, and the wild, strange clanging of the bells on Sunday morning leads one to suppose that the day is designed for anything rather than worship and rest. The bells here are not chimed, nor are they rung as in America, and neither the effect of their confused sounds, nor the manner in which these are produced, can be described. Even the ringing of church bells assumes a very oriental phase.

Among the Protestant community in Jerusalem there are three churches, and connected with each is a Sunday-school. One of these is a Lutheran church, which has a regular pastor. The service and the preaching are in German. The present incumbent is an able and scholarly man, and the congregation under his care, which is composed chiefly of German residents, is quite large and intelligent.

Another of the three is formed of the native Arab Protestants. They have a fine church edifice, and a large congregation, which is under the care of two pastors, one European and one native. The service and preaching are entirely in Arabic, and the service itself is simply a translation or an adaptation of the Church of England service, since the enterprise belongs to the Church of England Missionary Society.

The third and largest of the three churches belongs to the London Society for the Jews. This is the general place of worship for all the English-speaking people of the city, whether permanent residents or merely travelers. There is an English service (Church of England service) held there every morning and evening, and a German service in the afternoon. There is also a service

in Hebrew, and another in Spanish. One of the pastors is an Englishman, and preaches only in English, while the other, who is a converted Jew, preaches equally well in Spanish, French, German, English, Hebrew, and Arabic.

There are no Methodist, Baptist, Congregational or Presbyterian services held in the city; and this statement will answer an inquiry which is frequently made to me by travelers, and also by persons residing in America, whether such services are not held in Jerusalem.

While for the most part the foreigners residing here are correct in their lives, reverent toward religion, and generally attentive to religious services there seems to be a great lack of sincere and earnest piety among them. The religious services, which are maintained with great regularity throughout the year, are well enough in their way, but they never touch or move a single heart. There are many young people here whose hearts are never stirred by the power of the gospel. To them religion is something to be 'performed.' It consists in the observance, on certain occasions, of certain religious forms and leaves out of the account almost entirely the devoting of the heart and life to Christ.

When it is said that Jerusalem is the great religious center of the world, it must be understood of ceremonial religion. That is certainly true; but it is not a center of piety. What can be done to exalt Christ in the hearts of the people—to make them love and obey him as his humble disciples? Sacred and holy names are constantly upon their lips, and in and about the city are the scenes of some of the most solemn events in the world's history, namely, the crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension of our Lord; but these things do not change the heart, and in the midst of them all, and in spite of them all, the mass of men, nominal Christians as well as Mohammedans and Jews, live and die without Christ.

Alone on the Mount of Olives, with the sky overhead into which the Master ascended, and the fields about on which the Master trod, with the inexpressibly beautiful and touching records of the Master's life in one's hands, the Christian can enjoy the Sabbath far better than in the filthy and noisy city of Jerusalem.—*Sunday School World.*

The Old Pastor.

'Yes, things in the church is dull—all at a stand-still so to speak. Parson Miles ought to spur up a little.'

Me and John was sitting on the front porch Sabbath afternoon. He was smoking his pipe and looking over the Sunday paper, sometimes reading a bit to me which most always put me half asleep, as is natural enough when there's nothing to do to keep one awake. But I always get wide awake when he begins to talk, so when he says that I says to him:

'Well, I must say I'm getting tired of the same thing. Now, when I was over to Spencerville, where they've just got a new minister, there was so much going on and everything so lively. There was all the ladies fixing up the parsonage and everybody calling there, and presents, and then the house-warming, dear me!—it all seemed to make so much good feeling—'

'That's it,' said John. 'There's no feeling—at all here. Parson Miles is a good enough man, but he's slow—yes, rather slow. It sometimes comes over me, Maria,' (and then John spoke lower, though whether it was in fear of being heard by the leaves that whispered in the apple-tree that shades the porch, or by the birds building their nests there, or by old Carlo that lay on the mat, is more than I can say, but there wa'n't nothing else to hear) 'that 'taps we need a change, though I wouldn't be the one to start the idea.'

'No indeed,' says I: 'but still, he's been here a long time.'

'Yes and getting a little old. A younger man, now, would 'liven things up. We could pay him a better salary, and give him a good setting out. The church is well able to do it.'

'There's no fault to be found with Brother Miles, though!' says I, for I couldn't find it in my heart to hear him run down.

'Not a bit. It's only that—well—only that 'taps—his usefulness here is at an end. What do you say, Maria, to us driving over to hear Parson Tuttle this evening just for a variety? He's more my style—beats and whacks away and wakes folks up.'

'What!' says I. 'Clear over to Radnor! It was ten miles and more. 'Yes,' says he, 'I'll hitch up Prancer, and we can make it in an hour.'

I see he was a little restless, and rather liked the idea of a ride after the colt, so I made no objection. As we got near Radnor there were lots of folks on the way to church.

'Great many out for evening worship,' says I. 'Our folks don't turn out this well.'

'Parson Tuttle's a man that draws,' says John. 'Keeps up the interest you see!'

There was quite a crowd in the entry, and, as we was waiting for some one to show us to a seat, we overheard a man say:

'You'll hear something worth hearing to-night, Mr. (I couldn't get hold of the name though I tried) is going to preach.'

I was afraid John had set his heart on hearing Mr. Tuttle, but, as far as I was concerned, I didn't mind hearing a stranger, 'specially if he was like they said, for they was keeping right on:

'—He's a strong speaker, yes, strong—that's just the word. We're always glad when we get him on an exchange. Wonder is, a man like him's let stay so long in a country living. None of your hop-and-jump sort—don't waste no force hammering out sparks, but goes at it and drives in the truth square and solid, and then he clinches it—yes, sir, he just clinches it!—that's the very word.'

I could see the folks was expecting a little more than common by the way they looked as they settled into their seats. I was looking about a little, trying to see if anybody I knew was there, for I know a few of the Radnor folks (though, what with running to Eliza Jane's or to Susan's, now they're married, and something or other always ailing with one or the other of the children, and the work at home, it's a wonder I ever keep track of anything else), and didn't look towards the pulpit at all till I heard the minister's voice, and then I almost jumped from my seat as I stared at him. Then I turned and stared at John and he stared at me.

It was Parson Miles as sure as you live!

If it hadn't 'a' been in church I should 'a' laughed right out to see John's blank look. But I sobered down, and then I couldn't help seeing how those people listened. It was very plain they considered Parson Miles no such small doings. And it set me to noticing him myself a good deal sharper than I'd been doing of late. I tried to look at him and to listen to him as if I'd been somebody else beside myself. I couldn't feel to say he was a very handsome man, but I made up my mind you don't often see a more earnest, scholarly face than his.

Then I noticed the sprinkling of gray in his hair and beard, and somehow the tears would come into my eyes as I began thinking over the long years he'd been among us. I couldn't think of a time of trouble or of joy when his face hadn't been good to see. I couldn't remember a time of sickness when he hadn't brought strength and comfort, and I could almost hear again how often his voice had seemed to bring down a beam of hope and faith as we stood by an open grave.

When he came to his text John gave me a little poke, for, if you'll believe me, it was the same we'd heard in the morning. But I had to confess to myself I hadn't listened much, for I'd got into a way of thinking Brother Miles' sermons didn't edify me any longer. I thought to myself, though, that if I hadn't listened then I would now. And when I saw the man we heard in the entry give a little nod to the other man, once in a while, as much as to say, 'Didn't I tell you so? That's one of his clinchers!' I actually began to feel a little bit scared, wondering whether some of those Radnor folks mightn't take a notion to give our pastor a call.

I think John, as well as me, was a little proud to have folks know he was our minister when the hand-shaking came when meeting was out. And when some one congratulated him at hearing such preaching all the time he took it just exactly as if he'd always considered Mr. Miles the greatest preacher going.

We didn't speak a word for morn'n half the way home, and then says John:

'I say, Maria, there's such a thing as going further and farther worse.'—*American Interior.*

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1884.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson VI.—NOVEMBER 9, 1884.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

1 Kings x. 1-13.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 8, 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—'Behold, a greater than Solomon is here.'—Matt. xii. 42.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

M. Connecting Link.—1 Kings ix. 17-28.

T. The Lesson.

W. Parallel Account.—2 Chron. ix. 1-12.

T. Solomon's Riches and Magnificence.

2 Chron. ix. 13-28.

F. The Visit of the Magi to Christ.

Matt. ii. 1-12.

S. Solomon as a Type of Christ.—Psa. lxxii.

S. The Greater than Solomon.—Golden Text.

ANALYSIS.—I. The Queen Astonished, Vs. 1-5. II. The Half not Told, Vs. 6-9. The Interchange of Presents, Vs. 10-13.

QUESTIONS.—How did Solomon engage himself after the completion of the Temple? What instance is given of the wide extension of his fame?

Vs. 1-5.—In what country is Sheba? What had the Queen of Sheba heard about Solomon? How far had she come to visit him? For what purpose? What did she do when she arrived at Jerusalem? What success had Solomon in answering her questions?

Vs. 6-9.—What did she say to Solomon of the report she had heard in her own land? What was her verdict as to his wisdom and prosperity?

Vs. 10-13.—What is the value of the gold that she gave to Solomon? What other valuable presents did she give? From what other quarter did Solomon obtain gold and precious stones?

LESSON PROVERBS.—Where, in this lesson, do we find—1. An illustration of one earnestly seeking after truth. 2. An illustration of humility of spirit in seeking knowledge? 3. An illustration of the fullness there is in Christ. 4. An illustration of the blessedness of those who serve Christ and bear his word? 5. An evidence of God's love to his people?

'The divine promise of wisdom was amply fulfilled for Solomon. From the very beginning of his reign he displayed remarkable powers of mind and heart. His decision in the case of the two women who claimed the same child (1 Kings iii. 16-28), shows the keenness of his penetration. The Temple, the royal palace, and other structures, show his skill. The general good order and prosperity of his kingdom evince his political sagacity. The Proverbs, and such of the Psalms as are attributed to him, manifest the profundity of his thought. The Book of Ecclesiastes gives evidence of a mind full of inquiry and speculation. The Song shows him to have been a poet of the highest rank.'—*Senior Quarterly.* After completing the Temple, Solomon engaged in building cities and palaces, made a navy, sent out his ships to distant regions on commercial voyages, and by various wise, far-seeing plans, enriched his kingdom. The fame of his splendid reign extended far and wide, and reached the ears of an Arabian queen, who made a long journey from her country to see, with her own eyes, the magnificence of which she had heard. Her visit is the subject of this lesson.

The queen's verdict is: 1. The report of his fame, which she had not believed, was true. 2. His wisdom and prosperity exceeded the fame of them. 3. The half had not been told. 4. His officers and servants were blessed in being continually in a position to hear his wisdom. 5. It was an evidence of the Lord's love to Israel that he gave them such a king.

NOTES.—Vs. 1, 2.—*Queen of Sheba.* Opinions have varied as to the locality of the Sheba, here mentioned, there being two countries of that name; one in African Ethiopia, in what is now known as Abyssinia, and the other in Arabia Felix. It is now generally supposed that the queen came from the latter country. First, because it was the more considerable and wealthy kingdom; and second, because it was noted for its spices, which article formed an important part of her present to Solomon. The fame of Solomon would be the means of extending the knowledge of his wisdom. Concerning the name of the Lord. His fame was connected with the magnificent Temple, and with the special gift of wisdom from God. Came to Jerusalem. Like seeks like; wisdom appreciates wisdom. The journey was several hundred miles, perhaps a thousand, and would consume nearly two months. It was one which exposed her to great fatigues, hardships, and possibly perils of robbers by the way. Very great train. As befitted

her dignity, and for protection and supplies; and also to bear her presents to King Solomon. The object of her journey was to test Solomon with *hard questions*. Such questions, whether enigmas, riddles, or the more serious matters of a future life, and how to be justified before God, as she had been unable to solve. The saying that *she communed with him of all that was in her heart*, would imply that there were far more serious things upon her mind than ingenious puzzles, and she may have sought such knowledge as the Ethiopian Eunuch did in after times. See Acts viii. 27.

Vs. 3-5.—*Solomon told her all her questions.* The Arabian legends (see Sale's Koran, p. 311) give a list of puerile questions which they say the queen asked; but the writings which represent that age, such as Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, show that the great problems of the day were such as affect man's relationship to God and the future. And in Solomon's writings we have, doubtless, the substance of his answers to her questions. *Seen Solomon's wisdom.* The evidence of his wisdom in his solution of the hard questions, in the management of his affairs, in his buildings, and in his government. *The house that he built.* His own palace, not the Temple, which, it would seem, she was not permitted to enter, but only saw the ascent to it by which the king went up. *The meat of his table.* The great variety and quantity of food. See his provision for one day (1 Kings iv. 22, 23); also, the costly table furniture (1 Kings x. 21). All his plate and drinking vessels were gold. 'None were silver; it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.' *Servants.* State officers. All of them had splendid apartments. *Ministers.* Personal attendants, inferior in rank to the state officers. All were dressed in gorgeous costumes, graded according to their rank. *Ascent . . . unto the house of the Lord.* A magnificent arched viaduct from his palace across the valley to Mount Moriah, forming the royal entrance into the Temple. From the effect which it had upon the queen, it must have been remarkable for its costliness and beauty. *No more spirit, etc.* She was overwhelmed with astonishment.

Vs. 7-9.—*The half was not told me.* Words not of vapid compliment, but coming from a wise and thoughtful queen, whose mind was stirred with unusual wonder and admiration. While she was sensible of the external magnificence and evidences of prosperity around her, it was the wisdom of Solomon, which enabled him to do judgment and justice, that most profoundly impressed her. Her own love of wisdom is seen in the declaration of verse 8. *Blessed be the Lord (Jehovah) thy God.* Some Jewish writers say that the queen was converted to the worship of the true God through Solomon's influence; but of this nothing is definitely known. *Because the Lord (Jehovah) loved Israel, etc.* No homage could be at the same time more delicately and more strongly expressed.

Vs. 10.—*A hundred and twenty talents of gold.* A very large sum—amounting to over three millions of dollars. *Spices . . . and precious stones.* Which she brought for a present to Solomon. See verse 2. The great abundance of spices in Arabia is noted by many writers. The whole gift of the queen was truly royal in its largeness.

Vs. 11, 12.—These verses seem to have no connection with the story of the Queen of Sheba, but are suggested by the mention of gold and spices given to Solomon. The writer here takes occasion to mention other stores of gold and precious stones received by the king. His ships, manned by sailors furnished by Hiram, King of Tyre, brought gold from Ophir. Whether Ophir was in India, Arabia, or Eastern Africa, is not known. The latest authorities favor the theory that it was a seaport of Arabia. *Almug trees.* Thought to be the fragrant sandal wood. *Pillars.* Revised Version, *railing* for the stairs, a balustrade. *Psalteries.* Stringed instruments played with the hand, after the manner of a guitar.

Vs. 13.—*All her desire . . . whatsoever she asked.* The interchange of presents is common in the East, and it is also usual for persons to indicate their preferences in the matter. It was not out of the way for the queen to express her desire for certain things, and it was natural for Solomon to give what she preferred. *Of his royal dounity.* Margin, *according to the hand of King Solomon.* That is, he gave largely, generously, like a king; and especially like the rich and magnificent King Solomon.

SUGGESTED LESSONS.

The Queen of Sheba is an example of an earnest seeker after light. It was not mere curiosity which prompted her