The Sunday-School.

FOURTH QUARTER.
LESSON XI.—Dec. 13.

THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

1 KINGS 8: 1-11, 62, 63.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.*—Psa. 122: 1.

The Lesson.— The preparations for the temple (1 Chron. 28: 9-21; 29: 1-9; I Kings 5: 1-12; 2 Chron. 2: 1-16).

The building of the temple (1 Kings 6; 7: 13-51; 2 Chron. 3, 4).

The dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8: 1-66; 2 Chron. 5, 6, 7).

HISTORICAL SETTING. — *Time.*— The temple was dedicated in Tisri (September to October), B. C. 1004 or 1005 (Ussher), or 965 (revised by Assyrian inscriptions).

Place.—Jerusalem.

The temple was seven and one-half years in building.

Solomon.—The dedication was in the twelfth year of Solomon's reign.

Contemporary History.— Tyre flourished under King Hiram. The Sabæan Kingdom of Yemen, the queen of which came to see Solomon. Commerce extended to Europe, Africa and India.

PREPARATIONS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.—*Preparation of the Kingdom.*—The whole of David's reign was a preparation.

1. The kingdom firmly established on a basis of peace.

2. The organization of priests and choirs and orchestras for religious services.

3. The new religious awakening of the people.

Preparation of Material.—David had collected 108,000 talents of gold and 1,017,000 talents of silver. According to the lighter standard a talnet of gold weighed 379,000 grains, equals 54 lbs. avoirdupois (a pound avoirdupois equals 7,000 grains), equals $14,542 of gold, making a total of $1,570,536,000. A talent of silver weighed 336,750 grains, equals 48 pounds, equals $970, making a total of $986,490,000. The gold and silver together equalled $2,557,026,000.

Besides the gold and silver there was gathered brass and iron beyond computation (1 Chron. 22: 14). Huge beams of cedar were sent from Mt. Lebanon. Precious stones from every source were gathered together to adorn the interior. The immense stones of the foundation were obtained from different quarries.

The Workmen.—The skilled laborers were largely Phœnicians, supplied by King Hiram of Tyre. Overseers were appointed, apparently 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates, of whom 3,600 were Canaanites and 250 Israelites. There were 30,000 Israelites levied to do the work one month and remain home two months in turn. Besides these there were 150,000 laborers, probably from foreign subject nations.

BUILDING THE TEMPLE.—The site was on Mt. Moriah, overlooking the valley of the Kidron and the Mount of Olives. The top of Moriah was level; its sides were faced with a wall of stone.

Size and Shape.—The entire length of the temple given below includes the porch, 10 cubits; the Holy Place, 40; the Holy of Holies, 20; the chambers and rear wall, 10. The entire width includes the chambers on each side.

Entire length, 10 +40 + 20+10=80 cubits, or 120 feet.

Entire width, 10+20 + 10=40 cubits, or 60 feet.

Entire height, 30 cubits or 45 feet. Porch, 30 feet broad, 15 feet deep, 180 feet high.

Holy Place, 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, 30 feet high.

Holy of Holies, 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, 30 feet high.

The whole was situated according to the points of the compass, the front entrance being towards the east.

The Courts. There were two courts. The outer court was surrounded by a wall partly of stone, partly of cedar; on the eastern border was a cloister or colonnade. The court was adorned with trees, and free to all the people. Within this quadrangle was a smaller court, the court of the priests, on the highest ridge of the hill, enclosing the temple, and the great brazen altar, and brazen sea, and the lavers.

In the inner court were the great brazen altar of sacrifice, 15 feet high and 30 feet square, in sight of all the worshippers of the outer court, and the molten or brazen sea supported by 12 huge brazen oxen, each seven and one-half feet high.

THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES. — 1 Kings 8. *The Assembly.* Vs. 1, 2, 62, 63. *Solomon assembled the elders of Israel,* etc., the same as in Lesson IX and X, with the addition of *the men of Israel.* No Israelite who could be present was absent. The meetings lasted a week. They were religious meetings with *sacrifice of peace offerings;* that is, offerings of thanksgiving and consecration, and love to God. The *two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand* sheep were used for this purpose in part, and for the feasting of the great numbers gathered in Jerusalem for a whole week.

A platform was placed for Solomon in the court near the great altar, from which he spoke to the people and prayed.

The assembly met *at the feast* of tabernacles, the thanksgiving festival, *in the month Ethanim,* which covers portions of our September and October.

The Services of the Week.—The dedication was the grandest ceremony ever performed under the Mosaic dispensation.

The Procession.—Vs. 3-5; 2 Chron. 5: 4-6. The object of the procession was to *bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David,* built on Mt. Zion. Here David had placed the ark while waiting for the temple to be built. The procession began at Gibeon, whence the Levites "brought the old tabernacle, the brazen altar, the table of shewbread, the candlestick, and the brazen serpent." Coming into the city they would march through its streets, down the Tryopœon valley, and up on to Mt. Moriah into the temple courts. The great orchestra and chorus of four thousand musicians and singers, arrayed in white linen, accompanied the procession, chanting some of those splendid odes such as Psalms 47, 98, 99, 107, 118, 136. *And the tabernacle of the congregation.* This consecrated tent, which had up to this time stood in Gibeon, was now taken down and brought to the temple, to be preserved. *And all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle.* The brazen altar, the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, the candlestick, and also the brazen serpent. *Were with him before the ark.* In the temple court, where the great altar was. *Sacrificing sheep and oxen,* as a religious service signifying gratitude and praise, and consecration to the Lord's service.

Placing the Ark in the Holy of Holies. Vs. 6-9; 2 Chron. 5: 7-10. *And the high priest brought in the ark of the covenant . . . . unto his, i. e., its place. Into the oracle of the house.* The place where God at times made known his will. *To the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.* The symbolic figures representing the attributes and majesty of God. *The cherubims covered the ark,* as the most holy repository of God's law covered by the mercy-seat. *And . . . . the ends of the staves* overlaid with gold, by which the ark was carried. *Were seen out in the holy place.* The meaning apparently is that the staves in the rings of the ark were drawn forward, that the ends projected through the curtains. This would show to the priests that the ark was in its place. *Unto this day.* When this part of the book of Kings was written, and quoted. *Nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone,* on which the Ten Commandments were written. *Made a covenant.* That he would be their God if they would be his people. The chorus, accompanied by the orchestra, sang. *The cloud filled the house of the Lord.* The cloud which betokened the divine presence. The cloud was the veil that hid *the glory of the Lord,* for that glory was too bright to be seen by mortal eyes. This was the same as the pillar of cloud and of fire that guided the people through the wilderness. It was the acknowledged symbol of God's presence. Then follows the rest of the order of service.

The king facing the sanctuary Vs. 12, 13; 2 Chron. 6: 1, 2).

He turns and blesses the congregation (Vs. 14; 2 Chron. 6: 3), all standing.

Address by Solomon (Vs. 15-21; 2 Chron. 6: 4-11), standing.

Dedicatory prayer (Vs. 23-53; 2 Chron 6: 14-40), kneeling (Vs. 54; 2 Chron. 6: 13).

Psalm 132 (2 Chron. 6: 41, 42): Arise O God. Fire descended, the glory filled the house, and the people prostrated themselves (2 Chron. 7: 1-3).

"For his mercy endureth forever," by the congregation (2 Chron. 7:3).

Closing address (1 Kings 8: 54-61), standing.

LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.—*The Temple is the Type of God's Kingdom.* (1) in its foundations; (2) in the preparations made for it; (3) in its beauty and grandeur as a whole; (4) in its many harmonious parts; (5) in its altars of worship; (6) in the chambers around it, showing its secular and business side; (7) in the manifestation of God's abiding presence in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit; (8) in its object,—the worship of God, in the redemption of souls, and in spreading the good news over the world.

The Temple is a Type of the Individual Christian (1 Cor. 3: 10-16). (1) Rich and costly preparations have been made by others. We are heirs of all the ages. (2) The foundation is Jesus Christ, the rock that never can be

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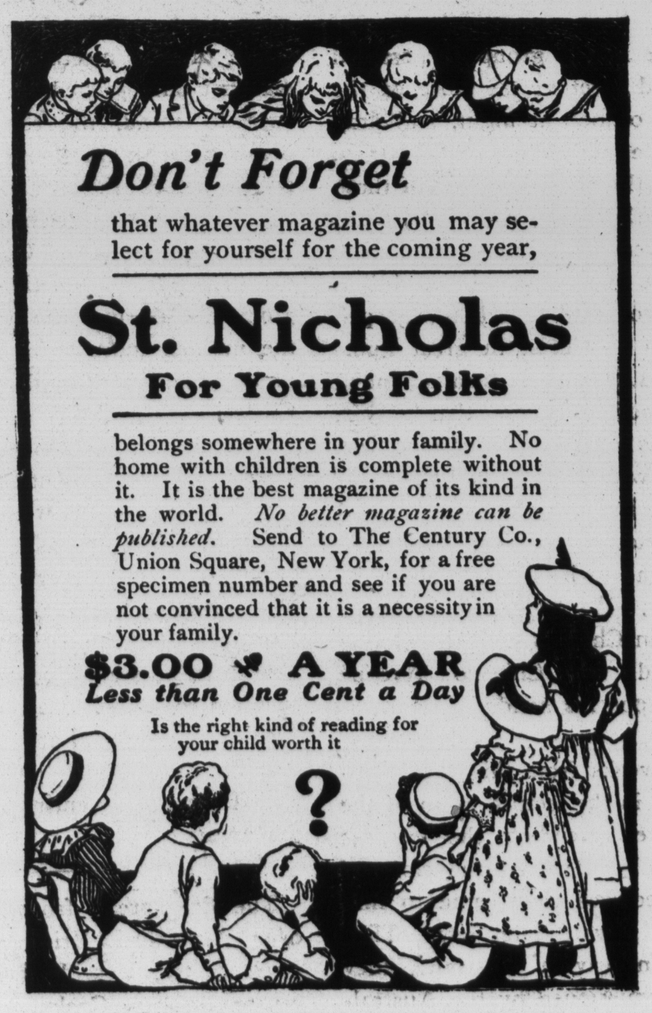
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