

Sabbath School Department.

[From the Christian Helper.]

International Bible Lessons.

Lesson XI. March 16.

DELIGHT IN GOD'S HOUSE.

Psalm 84. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT—Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee. V. 4.

Exposition.

V. 1. How amiable. "How lovely, how worthy of being loved! But the Hebrew is more personal: how dear to my heart!"—Covles Thy tabernacles. The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. His ear is ever open to the cry of His children...

V. 2. Longest faintest. "Expressions of intense, languishing desires."—Covles. My heart and my flesh. His whole being was, as it were, consuming in the flames of holy desire...

V. 3. The Sparrow. The English tree sparrow is very common in Palestine, and seen in numbers on Mount Olivet and around the Mosque of Omar.

V. 4. That dwell in thy house. "This is true, blessedly true, of all who trust in Jesus now. But though God's children are all priests by birth, as were the sons of Aaron, they are not all, alas! priests by consecration."

V. 5. Beginning of second stanza. In whose hearts are the ways of them. That is, who love the paths leading to the tabernacle.

V. 6. Valley of Baca. The valley of mulberry trees, dry and sandy, or the valley of weeping. (Bochim Judges 2: 1-5.) Make it a well, etc.

V. 7. From strength to strength. The pilgrims, setting out for the holy feasts at Jerusalem from a great distance, would be few in number.

V. 8. In this prayer, we have God represented first, as the great Lord of all, and secondly as our God, the God of men, the God of Jacob, the God of Bethel.

V. 9. Beginning of third stanza. Our Shield. This explains the delight in God as the Lord of Hosts. The Omnipotent God is our shield.

V. 10. A day in thy courts, &c. One day of such pleasure as God gives is better than a thousand of the best we can have away from Him. A doorkeeper. Rather, one who sits on the threshold, a beggar. Better to take the meanest and most despised position, if it will only secure us a share in the blessings of the sanctuary, than to be an inmate in the house where God is forgotten.

V. 11. A Sun. A wonderful comparison, and yet inadequate to represent what God is to us. What the earth would be without the sun, dark, cold, dead—unimaginable chaos; such is the soul, upon which the light of the Sun of Righteousness hath not shined.

V. 12. The psalmist, after dwelling upon his deep delight in God and in His house, fittingly closes his psalm with the exclamation, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Even while still only seeing through a glass darkly, knowing only in part, he can say from his own experience, "Blessed is the man."

Remarks.

1. In this psalm, the delight in God's house is not referred to the social religious pleasure of the assembly, but to God's own peculiar presence there. Do we look forward eagerly to meeting with God, when we go to church, or prayer meeting?

2. A fitful religious life is generally a life of much doubt and murmuring. If we would live a joyful, grateful life, let us dwell with God, make Him our hearts' home.

3. It is a marvellous privilege to be allowed to lead a soul out of darkness into the light; out of the gloom of sin, into the blessedness of those who trust in the Lord. It is not only our privilege, it is our solemn duty to point out clearly to those young minds whose teaching has been confided to us, the way to attain that blessedness.

There's the Lord's Answer.

A devoted minister in Scotland recently related the following incident as an illustration of the way our Father answers prayer: "Many years ago, when in my country charge, I returned one afternoon from a funeral, fatigued with the day's work. After a long ride, I had accompanied the mourners to the churchyard. As I neared my stable door, I felt a strange prompting to visit a poor widow, who, with her invalid daughter, lived in a lonely cottage in an outlying part of the parish."

The Little Orphan.

When I was in Europe Mr. Spurgeon told me a story of a boy who was in an orphan asylum. This little boy came up to Mr. Spurgeon and said: "Mr. Spurgeon, would you allow to speak to you?" He said, "Certainly, get upon my knee. The little fellow got up and said: "Mr. Spurgeon, supposing that your mother was dead, and that your father was dead; and that you were put into this institution, and that there were other little boys that had no father or mother, but they had cousins and uncles and aunts, and they brought them fruit and candy and a lot of things, don't you think that you would feel bad?" "Cause that's me." Why, Mr. Spurgeon put his hand in his pocket and gave the little fellow some money right off. The little fellow had pleaded his cause well. When men come to God and plead their story—I don't care how vile you are, I don't care how far down you have got, I don't care how far off you have wandered—if you will tell it all in His ear, the relief will come.—Moody's Child Stories.

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