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LESSONS. BIBLE

Sabbath School.

Lesson 13.—December 25.

Isa. 9: 6-7. THE BABE AND THE KING. GOLDEN TEXT.

Of whom Moses in the law, and the prohets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth. - John

Topic.-A Divine Service.

DAILY READINGS .- Monday, Isa. 9: 6-7 Tuesday, Luke 2:11-16. Wednesday, Luke 40-52. Thursday, Luke 1: 26-35. Fri. day, Rev. 19: 5-16. Saturday, Isa. 11: 1-10. Sunday, Rev. 22: 1-14.

BY TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D.

These verses are the conclusion of the brilliant passage with which the thapter opens. The prophet announthe subdued tribes. The picture is finished by the verses before us, which brings to view the person by whom this great deliverance is effected.

Vs. 6 .- The first clause, indicate that the great deliverer is to come in a genuine human way, by means of conception and birth, yet the stress laid upon this suggests that there is something more. Especially as in Isa. 7: 14 the virgin-born is also called Immanuel. Unto us, Literally, for us, that is, for our benefit; and so in the next clause. A child is born. The deliverer shares the same nature as those whom he saves. A son is given. This may be a mere poetical earth! equivalent of the preceding clause, yet it is hard to resist the impression that something more was meant, made by the well-known passage in the New Testament (John 3: 16, Rom. 8; 32) in which God is said to give his Son in reference to his incarnation. The human child was born, the divine Son was given. The government shall be. The dominion is. (The tenses are the same all through the verse, namely, the prophetic pre-terite, which is often well expressed in English by the present.) Upon his shoulder. Either as a burden or as a robe of office (See Isa. 22: 22). In either case he is set forth as invested with supreme authority. His name shall be called. Literally, Has been, or is, called. This does not mean that he would actually bear any of the following names in real life, but merely that he would deserve them, and that they would be descriptive of his character. These titles therefore are an intentional and definite statement of the nature of this extraordinary personage Worderful. This is the exact mean ing of the Hebrew word-that which excites astonishment-nor is there any need of departing from it. Still less is there necessity of violating both the accents and the punctuation of joining it with the next word in the sense of a "wonderful counsellor. In Isa. 28: 29 Jehovah is called 'wonderful in counsel," but the Hebrew there is different. No argument is required to show how wonderful Messiah was in the constitution of his person, in the character of his works, in the depth of his sufferings, and in the extent of his grace. Counsellor. This word may be taken in its largest sense, as a deviser of allwise counsel, whether in relation to to their individual interests. It be ongs to a skillful ruler to be fertil in resources of this kind. A. none ever exceeded him. appealed to in vain.

bute of Jehovah. The child, there- of justice and righteousness." turn to the original, which literally rendered, is "father of eternity." This is explained by the Septuagint, which the Vulgate and the Douay follows, as—"father of the world to come"— a meaning that, if possible, is certainand appropriate view is gained by ed to limited periods of time. sesses me; in which case the phrase simply ascribes to Messiah anotherdivine attribute, namely, eternity. this magnificent prediction. He is self-existent and ever living. rain a father?) in which case the words set forth Messiah as the bethere is no inconsistency in combining ces to the northern extremity of the both of these interpretations, and reand (though the common version garding the "father of eternity" as does not show it) a degree of glory denoting that the great deliverer is of death. The nation is vastly in ament, will, like the French of Mar- care of his own honor and his detercreased, and filled with joy,—a joy tin (le pere d'eternite), render the like that of a finished harvest or of Hebrew literally. The explanation victors dividing their spoils. Its bur, of some eminent German critics. densome yoke and the rod of the task, "father of spoil," that is, a plundermaster are broken by a wondrous dis-play of divine power like that when Gideon routed Midian. So complete tion shows this to mean not so much Gideon routed Midian. So complete is the triumph, and so absolute the peace that follows, that even warlike implements are made fuel of the fire, astatement which reminds one of the fact that when India was disarmed, as has well been said: David, in that after the Sepoy rebellion it took more in that he reaps assured peace as the minimum after the Sepoy rebellion it took more in that he reaps assured peace as the minimum and so absolute the appeared prince as one the prophecy. Both for his own sake who saws this to mean not so much a peacetully disposed prince as one the prophecy. Both for his own sake and for his people's he will bring all these events to pass.

An Illustration.—Some years ago two æronauts, hanging in midal as has well been said: David, in that be that of Hezekiah or any of his successors, but only the reign of Christ, which answers all the requisite continuous and wondered to see the southern line of said to mean not so much a peacetully disposed prince as one the prophecy. Both for his own sake and for his people's he will bring all these events to pass.

An Illustration.—Some years ago two æronauts, hanging in midal ago two æronauts, hanging in midal ago two æronauts, be that of Hezekiah or any of his successors, but only the reign of Christ, how small great things had grown in that he reaps assured peace as the which answers all the requisite continuous contracted into lit. the motley array of all sorts of weathruit of those victories. The higher pons which had been surrendered by sense of the phrase as interpreted by other Scriptures is that of a great Peacemaker between God and man, who in that capacity reconciles Jew and Gentile, is an umpire between nations, abolishes war to the ends of

> Vs. 7.—The reign of this monarch is to be progressive and perpetual because it is founded in justice and secured by the distinguishing favor of the Most High. His government. Or dominion, the same word that is used in the preceding verse. There shall be no end. A very strong method of affirming its continual advance. And peace. Not merely will the reign predicted continue but also its prosperity. The Hebrew word (shalom) denotes not only peace as opposed to war, tumult and violence, but well-being and success as opposed to privation and sorrow. For a full delineation of this state see Psa. 72 and Isa. 11: 1-10; 60: 1-22. This prosperity is to have no limit either The labor of making, copying and temporal or local, but to be both uni-multiplying books by hand was very versal and eternal. There is nothing great. Many persons spent their to hinder our giving the very widest whole lives in this tollsome work. As application to the terms here employ- the copying of the sacred writing reed. On the contrary, such an expan- quired great care, in order to avoid sion benefits the whole scope of the errors and to make the book readable, passage. Upon the throne of David. persons had to be trained to the task. The new monarch is not to be of an Indeed, the copying of the Scriptures alien stock, but a descendant of Da- came to be a sacredart. In this way vid, and in continuation of his royal arose the profession, and as may be line. And upon his kingdom. A said, the learned caste of the scribes. further assertion of the identity of As they had the care of the rolls or the coming deliverer with the exist- volumes, of the law, they were someing dynasty. The promise of such a times called lawyers. Not only did descendant whose throne should be forever was expressly given to David (2 Sam. 7: 12-16), and was often gratefully referred to by him (2 Sam. the people. From our Lord's reproof 23: 1-5; Psa. 2, 45, 72, 89, 132). Hence the Messiah is called the that they did not always use their inbranch or Son of David (Isa. 11: 2; flaence for good. Jer. 23: 5, 33: 15; of Zech. 3 The chief scribes among the Jews 8, 6: 12], sometimes even David himself (Jer. 30: 9; Exek. 34: 23, 24, the temple were many chambers, in 37 : 24; Hosea 3: 5). The two reigns are identified in this way, not merely and overlooked their pupils, who sat because of a typical relation, but be on lower platforms, and thus at their because of a typical relation, but because of a real and vital connection. David himself and his remote but exalted descendants were kings and reads of the same body; the former emporal and temporary head, the ler a spiritual and eternal one.

of the advocate with the Father (John church. To order and to establish. 14: 16; 1 John 2: 1). Mighty God. Rather, to establish and confirm it. Some have attempted to explain this Both verbs refer to the agency of the as meaning a mighty hero, or a god-Messiah in perpetuating his domin-like warrier, but the same combination. It is so settled and grounded many years have passed, and the childtion (el gibbor) occurs in the next that it cannot be overthrown. With ren who watched his first work for chapter (verse 21), where, as all ad-judgment and with justice. Not mit, it can be rendered only as the merely with justice as an accompanycommon version has it, there and ing circumstances, but by it as a nehere. The adjective occurs in Deut. cessary means. The clause is given 10: 17, and Jer. 32: 18, as an attrimore exactly thus, "In the exercise fore, the woman-born, will be able to new monarch's throne will be eternal wield the authority ascribed to him, because it is one of unimpeachable because he is at the same time God, equity in every respect and to every yea, mighty God. The everlasting party. From henceforth even forevre Father. This combination strikes Literally, From now even unto eterone as strange both in itself and in nity. The period referred to in the its application to the Messiah, who is first words may be the date of the nowhere else in Scripture thus des- prediction, the time when Isaiah utterignated. It is better, therefore, to ed it; but more probably the prophet having spoken of the child as already "born" and "given," now looks for-ward from its birth into the future, and in this sense uses the phrase "from henceforth." The word rendered "forever" (olem) properly denotes ly not probable. A self-consistent indefinite duration, and is often applitaking the first word as equivalent to it is always to be taken in its largest embody the thought conveyed in Mrs. possessor, a very common usage in the meaning unless limited by something Fyfe request. cognate Arabic, and shown in some in the context or the nature of the Hebrew proper names as in the phrase case; much more in the present case (Job 17: 14) "corruption, than art where the context shows that no limmy father:" that is, corruption pos- itation is conceivable. The remain ance your soul in your face; let the ing clause of the verse states the ground for expecting the fulfillment of zeal of the Lord of hosts. "Jehovah Or, "father" may be considered as - (God) of hosts" means Jehovah who author (see Job 38: 28; hath the has supreme control over "the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them" (Gen. 2: 1), that is, all their stower of a blessed immortality. But inhabitants, and whose power therefore is absolutely without bounds This power will be exerted because of his "zeal" or jealousy,-a term used in the Old Testament to denote and bliss equal to its former degrada- both eternal in his own existence and not only God's intense love for his tion and sorrow. The way of the sea the giver of eternal life to others people, but his disposition to protect (that is, of Galilee) sees a great light (John 10, 28; Heb. 5: 9). It is to and favor them at the expense of which beams even upon the shadow be hoped that the Revised Old Test- others. It expresses also his jealous mination to avenge it when insulted.

Nor is this unworthy of him, but ex-

actly right in view of his own suprem-

acy and perfection. His zeal is not

a turbulent passion, but a principle

of powerful and certain operation,

and it ensures the accomplishment of

ten on the leaves of the papyrus, on skins, on cloth, on tablets of stone, on wood of lead and of brass. Among the Hebrews, the sacred books were usually written on skins prepared like parchment of modern times. To form even one principal section of the Bible many skins had to be sewed together. When written upon, the con- it. The lines are as follows: neeted skin or volume was rolled upon two pieces of wood, or if long upon two pieces from the two ends. The reader, therefore, unrolled the book to the place he wanted, and rolled it up again when he ceased to read. (See Luke iv., 17-20.) The volume thus rolled upon the pieces of wood could be easily tied and sealed. (See

Isaiah xxxix. 11; Daniel xii. 4.)

were teachers. In the outer court of which they sat on elevated platforms

When we remember the wars, the aptivities and the persecutions of the Jews, we may well consider the afe-keeping and handing down of the sacred records to modern times as eally continued in the Christian dence. — Golden days.

A fresh word from Dr. Judson seems a strange treasure, now that so God have become the mothers watching over ours. But these lines have, I think, never before been published. They were written during his visit to this country, for Mrs. Rebecca Kendall Fyfe, whose mother was a warm friend of the first Mrs. Judson, in response to her request that he would write in her album the three words, "America, Burmah, Heaven."

*Oh, grant that Christ and Heaven be minel What can I want beside?

In Freedom's Land I'll make my grave, Or sink beneath the ocean wave, Or live to tell His power to save Who has for Burmah died."

In the light that after events shed upon them, there seems a strange prophecy in the words,

"Or sink beneath the ocean wave," added, as they were, when not needed either for measure or rhyme, or to

CHEERFULNESS .- Carry the radi world have the benefit of it. Let your cheerfulness be left for good, wherever you are, and let you smiles be scattered like sunbeams-"on the just, as well as on the unjust." Such a disposition will yield you a rich reward, for its happy effects will come home to you, and brighten your moments of thought. Smiles are the higher and better responses of nature to the emotion of the soul. Let the children have the benefit of them, these little ones who need the sunshine of the heart to educate them, and would find a level for their buoyant nature in the cheerful, loving faces of those who lead them. Let them not be kept from the middleaged, who need the encouragement they bring. Give your smiles also to the aged. They come to them like the quiet rain of summer, making fresh and verdant the long, weary path of life. Be gentle and indulgent to all; love the true, the beautiful,

which answers all the requisite conditions and which was set forth by Gabriel (Luke 1: 32.34) in terms of much the same import. The Lord Jesus was David's son, his dominion has never been interrupted, but is constantly growing in extent and power; it is eminently peaceful in its dimensions of a village, the long, and Gentile, is an umpire between nations, abolishes war to the ends of the earth, and bestows upon all who receive him the inward peace which passes all understanding. It is true that, in the world at large, this result has not yet actually occurred, but that a very great advance toward it has been made is undeniable. Wars have been fewer, less barbarous, and less bloody, ever since He came whose advent was announced by the angels in a song which proclaimed peace on earth!

ANCIENT, BOOK MAKING.

Books in the early ages were written on the leaves of the papyrus, on power; it is eminently peaceful in its dimensions of a village, the long, faith." - Thomas Guthrie, D.D.

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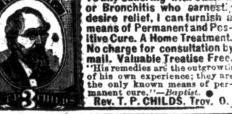


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