



## LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 12.

## The Dedication of the Temple

I. Kings viii., 1-11, 62, 63.

## Golden Text.

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Psalm cxxii., 1.

## Home Readings.

Monday, Dec. 7.—I. Kings viii., 1-11.

Tuesday, Dec. 8.—I. Kings viii., 12-21.

Wednesday, Dec. 9.—I. Kings viii., 22-30.

Thursday, Dec. 10.—I. Kings viii., 56-66.

Friday, Dec. 11.—II. Chron. v., 1-10.

Saturday, Dec. 12.—II. Chron. vi., 1-11.

Sunday, Dec. 13.—II. Chron. vii., 12-22.

1. Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.

2. And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

3. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

4. And they brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

5. And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

6. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.

7. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

8. And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day.

9. There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

10. And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord,

11. So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.

62. And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord.

63. And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the Lord, two and twenty thousand oxen and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord.

(By R. M. Kurtz.)

## INTRODUCTION.

In I. Kings v.-vii. we have the account of the building of Solomon's Temple, one of the most glorious and famous structures in human history. The description of this building can best be understood by the aid of some good Bible dictionary or spe-

cial work upon the subject. A number of such have been produced, such as Ederheim's 'The Temple and its Services,' probably obtainable through any large religious publishing house. Though the description, in some of its details may not be readily understood, still, by no means omit it. You will at least get an idea of the magnitude of the work, of the vast number employed, of the great treasure put into the construction, and of the time required, and with these things you will also gain some idea of the glory of Solomon's reign. For an account of the personal greatness of the king, see chap. iv.

In this lesson we have the dedication of the temple, an occasion of great national importance and interest.

## THE LESSON STUDY.

Verses 1, 2 give an outline account of the assembly that Solomon called for the dedication. In the last two lessons we have had accounts of great national gatherings of Israel, and now we have a third. Can you tell how this one differed from the other two? The assemblies upon the occasion of David's charge to the young king, and again when Solomon called the people together at Gibeon were composed of the chief men of the nation, but in this case, as you will notice by verse 2, not only were the elders and the heads of tribes brought to Jerusalem, but 'all the men of Israel' were present on this great occasion.

'At the feast in the month of Ethanim.' This was the 'feast of tabernacles,' one of the three feasts of the year at which all the males of Israel were commanded to be present. Leviticus xxiii., 34, Deuteronomy xvi., 16. This month corresponded to parts of September and October, and this was the great thanksgiving feast of the Jews, a fit occasion to dedicate the new temple.

3. 'And the priests took up the ark.' The ark had reposed in a tent which David had made for it, in the city of Jerusalem, though the tabernacle was at Gibeon, as we saw last week. There was a solemn procession as well there might be when the ark of God was to be placed in a permanent abode.

4. '... And the tabernacle of the congregation.' The tabernacle was also brought into the temple with due ceremony. It is supposed that the curtains and poles of the now dismantled tabernacle were stored in suitable places in the temple for preservation. Objects so full of memories and so rich in historic association were not to be destroyed or allowed to fall into profane hands.

5. 'Sacrificing sheep and oxen.' During the days of the feast of tabernacles solemn offerings were made. We find in verse 4 that the brazen altar could not accommodate the great number of sacrifices, and that Solomon 'hallowed' the middle of the court that was before the 'house of the Lord,' for this purpose. It was a great occasion for thanksgiving, as well as a regular feast.

6, 8. 'And the priests brought in the ark,' etc. We now come to the placing of the ark in the position assigned to it. This was the 'most holy place' or 'oracle,' the preparation of which is described in chapter vi. In Hebrew this is called the 'holy of holies.' The ark was placed beneath the wings of the cherubim, or angelic figures. Read Exodus xxv., 10-22 for a description of the ark and mercy seat, with its cherubim. In the 22nd verse we learn that it was from between these cherubim that God communicated.

'And they drew out the staves,' etc. The Revised puts it, 'And the staves were so long,' etc. The meaning seems to be that the poles or staves by which the ark was carried were so long that they projected through the curtains dividing the most holy place from the holy place, so that they could be seen in the latter room.

9. 'There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone,' etc. In Hebrews ix., 4, the ark is referred to as containing 'the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant,' but the writer of Hebrews

was not speaking of the temple but of the tabernacle; it would seem that the reference in Hebrews deals with a time when the ark held all the articles referred to.

10. '... The cloud filled the house of the Lord.' Notice that it does not say 'a' cloud, but 'the' cloud. It was the cloudy pillar that had led their forefathers in the wilderness, the outward evidence of God's presence. It had rested upon the old tabernacle when it had been dedicated and it now rests upon the great temple. (Exodus xl., 34).

11. 'So that the priests could not stand to minister.' The officiating priests were overwhelmed by the very nearness and glory of God, so that their ceremonial labors were interrupted. How the presence of God's Spirit in the soul crowds out all form and ceremony!

After this portion of the chapter, just studied, comes the account of the remarks of Solomon concerning the temple, his blessing of the people, his address, his dedicatory prayer, his further blessing and admonition to the people, and then the accounts in verses 62, 63 of the sacrifice of peace offering, twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. Read the account of the dedication in II. Chron. vi., 6, 7.

'The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon.' I. Kings x., 1-10.

## C. E. Topic

Sunday, Dec. 13.—Topic—An anti-worry meeting. John xiv., 1-31.

## Junior C. E. Topic.

## KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

Monday, Dec. 7.—In our power. Gen. i., 26.

Tuesday, Dec. 8.—Under God's care. Matt. vi., 26.

Wednesday, Dec. 9.—He uses them. I. Kings xvii., 6.

Thursday, Dec. 10.—They serve us. Luke xvi., 20, 21.

Friday, Dec. 11.—They teach us. Prov. vi., 6-8.

Saturday, Dec. 12.—How to treat them. Deut. xxxii., 6.

Sunday, Dec. 13.—Topic—A Bible maid who was kind to animals. Gen. xxiv., 19-28.

## The Test

I would have this question as the grand and requisite test of a teacher's fitness: Do you feel that you are called by the Spirit to this work, and are you ready to lay aside joyfully everything in your daily life which will disqualify you to be a preacher of divine truth to your class? Do you say 'This principle, if carried out, would reduce the number of teachers in many of our schools one-half?' I think not; but if this were true, then let the number be reduced, and you will lose nothing, but gain immensely in spiritual power and in success, to God's glory. Does any teacher say, 'Well, then, I ought to give up my class?' But why? 'Because I am not fit to instruct my scholars.' But this would be cowardly. You surely are not teaching from the mere sense of duty, nor do you wish to be laboring in a barren field, barren because of your own negligence. No; your only noble course is to seek a more intimate acquaintance with Christ, a deeper enrichment of his grace, so that your scholars will know that you have been with Jesus; they will feel your spiritual power, and every word you speak will be as good seed in their hearts, seed whose harvest grain by and by will see, and will lay the sheaves at the pierced feet. —Dr. A. E. Kitteredge.

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