

✻ The Sunday School ✻

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

Third Quarter, 1903.

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER.

Lesson XI. December 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.

EXPLANATORY.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR BUILDING THE TEMPLE.—First. Preparation of the Kingdom. It was as necessary that the people and the kingdom should be prepared as that building materials should be collected. The whole of David's reign was a preparation.

II. BUILDING THE TEMPLE.—The site was on Mt. Moriah, overlooking the valley of the Kidron and the mount of Olives. "The rugged top of Moriah was leveled with immense labor; its sides, which to the east and south were precipitous, were faced, with a wall of stone, built up perpendicular from the bottom of the valley, so as to appear to those who looked down of most terrific height,—a work of prodigious skill and labor, as the immense stones were strongly mortised together and wedged into the rock."

Religious Meaning of the Temple. The Temple and all connected with it had a religious teaching for the people, most of whom could not read, but could understand symbols, and visible expressions of great truths. St. Mark's at Venice was built and decorated on the same principle. The stories of the Old and New Testaments are expressed in carvings and paintings; and the order of these teaches the religious progress of the soul. The temple taught the presence of God, and made it real. The arrangement of courts and rooms, expressed the progress of the religious life, from the outer world into the court of general worship, then into the more sacred court, the Holy Place, the Holy of Holies, the altars, the ark, the candlestick, the shewbread, the sacrifices, the incense were full of religious teachings and truths.

III. THE DEDICATION CEREMONIES.—1 Kings 8. The Assembly. Vs. 1, 2, 62, 63. I. SOLOMON ASSEMBLED THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL, etc., the same as in Lesson IX and X., with the addition of (v. 2) THE MEN OF ISRAEL. "No Israelite who could be present was absent." The meetings lasted a week (v. 66). They were religious meetings with (v. 63) 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.

The assembly met (v. 2) AT THE FEAST OF tabernacles, the thanksgiving festival, one of the three great annual festivals of the Jews, IN THE MONTH ETHANIM, also called Tisri,

BOTH FEEL

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The Services of the Week. The dedication was the grandest ceremony ever performed under the Mosaic dispensation, and one of the brightest days in Jewish history:—

"A day in golden letters to be set Among the high tides of the calendar."

1. The Procession.—Vs. 3-5; 2 Chron. 5: 4-6. The object of the procession was to (v. 1) BRING UP THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD OUT OF THE CITY OF DAVID, built on Mt. Zion, the western of the two principal hills on which Jerusalem was situated. Here David had placed the ark while waiting for the temple to be built.

4. AND THE TABERNACLE OF THE CONGREGATION. Better, as in other places, "the tent of meeting." "This consecrated tent, which had up to this time stood in Gibeon, was now taken down, and the curtains and poles of which it consisted seem to have been brought to the temple to be preserved. There was probably room enough for their bestowal in the 'side chambers' which enclosed the temple on three sides." AND ALL THE HOLY VESSELS THAT WERE IN THE TABERNACLE. "Perhaps the brazen altar. Certainly the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, the candlestick, and also the brazen serpent."

5. WERE WITH HIM BEFORE THE ARK. Probably in the temple court, where the great altar was. SACRIFICING SHEEP AND OXEN, as a religious service signifying gratitude and praise, the forgiveness of past sin, and consecration to the Lord's service as his people.

2. Placing the Ark in the Holy of Holies.—Vs. 6-9; 2 Chron. 5: 7-10. 6. AND THE PRIESTS BROUGHT IN THE ARK OF THE COVENANT... UNTIL HIS (i. e., "his") BUT this word is never found in the A. V. It has come into use since the date of our translation) PLACE (comp. 1 Kings 6: 19) INTO THE ORACLE OF THE HOUSE. The place where God at times made known his will. TO THE MOST HOLY PLACE (Hebrew, holy of holies), EVEN UNDER THE WINGS OF THE CHERUBIM (1 Kings 6: 27). The symbolic figures "representing the attributes and majesty of God."

7. THE CHERUBIM (better, "cherubim") COVERED THE ARK, as the most holy repository of God's law covered by the mercy-seat. The law of God and the mercy of God, ever under the shelter of his wings and guarded by his presence.

8. AND... THE ENDS OF THE STAVES overlaid with gold, by which the ark was carried. WERE SEEN OUT IN THE HOLY PLACE. Note the R. V. rendering. The meaning apparently is that the staves in the rings of the ark were drawn forward (as would be necessary because the ark was close by the rear wall), and were so long that the ends projected through the curtains which divided the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. This would show to the priests that the ark was in its place, although they never saw it, since only the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, and he only once a year. UNTIL THIS DAY. When this part of the book of Kings was written, and quoted by the later author.

9. NOTHING IN THE ARK SAVE THE TWO TABLES OF STONE on which the Ten Commandments were written. "We read in Heb. 9: 4 that in the ark of the covenant 'was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded' as well as the tables of the covenant." But the author of Hebrews is speaking of the tabernacle, not of the temple. So there is no contradiction. MADE A COVENANT. That he would be their God if they would be his people.

10. THE CLOUD FILLED THE HOUSE OF THE LORD. The article before cloud denotes that it was the well-known cloud which betokened the divine presence. "The cloud was the veil that hid (v. 11) 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, which had rested on the tabernacle on the day it was dedicated (Ex. 40: 34), and had apparently been specially displayed at certain junctures in the history of Israel (Num. 12: 5, 10; 16: 42; Deut. 31: 15).

IV. LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.—I. The Temple as a Lesson in Church Building. "A true church is an echo of God," says Joseph Cook. And the building should be the fittest instrument for expressing and repeating that echo, that men may know and feel the character and the love of God.

2. The Temple is the Type of God's Kingdom. (1) In its foundations; (2) in the preparations made for it,—all the world is made tributary to its work; distant kings, often unintentionally, are led to prepare the way for it. (3) The kingdom of God is like the temple in its beauty and grandeur as a whole, "the glory of the whole earth"; (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, without which all else is but Horeb's rock before it was touched with Moses' rod, Pygmalion's statue before the breath of life was

breathed into it, or Mt. Hermon before Christ was transfigured on it; (8) in its object,—the worship of God, in the redemption of souls, and in spreading the good news over the world.

3. 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, like the rock under the temple, the same in all ages, never can be moved. (3) He has prophets with messages from God to aid and encourage in the building,—the Bible, the Holy Spirit, with teachers, pastors, and friends to bring the message.

LET YOUR STOMACH HAVE ITS OWN WAY.

Do Not Try to Drive and Force it to Work When it is Not Able or You Will Suffer All the More.

You cannot treat your stomach as some men treat a balky horse; force, drive or even starve it into doing work at which it rebels. The stomach is a patient and faithful servant and will stand much abuse and ill treatment before it "balks," but when it does you had better go slow with it and not attempt to make it work. Some people have the mistaken idea that they can make their stomachs work by starving themselves. They might cure the stomach that way, but it would take so long that they would have no use for a stomach when they got through. The sensible way out of the difficulty is to let the stomach rest if it wants to and employ a substitute to do its work.

Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets will do the work of your stomach for you and digest your food just as your stomach used to when it was well. You can prove this by putting your food in a glass jar with one of the tablets and sufficient water and you will see the food digested in just the same time as the digestive fluids of the stomach would do it. That will satisfy your mind. Now, to satisfy both your mind and body take one of Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets after eating—eat all and what you want—and you will feel in your mind that your food is being digested because you will feel no disturbance or weight in your stomach, in fact, you will forget all about having a stomach just as you did when you were a healthy boy or girl.

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