

work now. Myself, Giam Chheng, Hoa, Lien, Ho, Chhoa, Seng and Tan He were engaged teaching and drilling the students. Last night at seven o'clock we met for the closing exercises. One of the teachers compared Oxford with our old College. The latter, he said, had the heavens for the roof; sand, and mud for the floor; mountains and seas for the walls; rocks for the tables, benches and beds. All this was true, literally so. Last year when building the girls' school, there was some material left, so I built a neat brick house near Oxford College. Three students with their wives occupied it this session. In a few days Giam, Chheng, Hoa and myself will start for the east coast, taking back the thirty girls from the school. They came and began study in the beginning of March. At that time they did not know one letter. Now they go home able to read and write in the Romanized colloquial. Mrs. McKay and myself and those who taught in Oxford College keep day after day drilling them.

"Mr. and Mrs. Jamieson are faithful and diligent in the study of the language, and they are doing well. In due time they will be real and efficient helpers. Let God be praised, we'll shout the triumphs of the Gospel o'er mountain and dale. We'll never cease, never surrender, until China's, yes, beloved Formosa's millions crown Him Lord of all."

Mr. Jamieson writes: 'Oxford College and the girls' school are closed for a few months during the warm season. The session has been a very successful one. The teaching in both schools has been earnestly and faithfully carried on. Most of the students have now left for their homes. Dr. McKay is accompanying the girls on their homeward journey. On the morning after the closing of the College, some fifteen of the students set out on a three days' journey to their homes on the east coast. We could not but admire those lads as they called in passing to bid us good-bye, with their bright honest faces, and carrying their little all-of-worldly goods on a pole slung across their shoulders, going forth to bear home their testimony for Christ. As to Mrs. Jamieson and myself, who are but new comers, we can report no active service as yet beyond a patient study of the language. But we are delighted to be here, and to witness the progress of the Lord's work among the people of Formosa. And if we can in any way by our presence and counsel encourage and hold up the hands of those who are bearing the burden and heat of the day, we esteem that an honour. Pray for us that God may still continue to bless this mission as he has blessed it in the past."

I ask for these extracts a place in your columns in order that a wider circle of readers than can be reached through the ordinary channels of church intelligence may be made aware of the state and prospects of our mission in Formosa. Thousands beyond the limits of the Presbyterian Church heard Dr. McKay when two or three years ago he was traversing Canada, his native country, and urging the claims of the the heathen. Thousands will hear with deep concern of the peril to which he and his fellow-labourers, and the converts there, are now exposed. There have for some time been around them rumours of war. They are now actually in the midst of its horrors. Many hearts throughout our land will beat in true and loving sympathy with them. I ask a place for them in the prayers of God's people of every name, in their closets, at their family altars, and in the congregations of worshippers.

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## SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Nov. 2, 1884. | THE TEMPLE DEDICATED. | Kings 8: 22-36.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee."—Vs. 27

TIME.—B. C. 1005.

PLACE.—The Temple at Jerusalem.

PARALLEL.—2 Chron. chaps. 5-7.

Introduction.—The Temple was built and ready for the sacred purposes to which it was to be dedicated. For months before, the day had been eagerly expected and discussed, as in anticipation it was to be the greatest day the Israelitish nation had ever seen. Grandly broke the bright October morning, while the thousands and hundreds of thousands who had come up from every part of the land, from the southern boundary at the River of Egypt, to Hamath, far north on the Orontes (for at that time the boundaries of the nation were more widely extended than in its later history) were all gathered on the streets of the city and on the mountains round about Jerusalem, to see and take part in the magnificent and joyful ceremonies of the day. Very early two processions were seen approaching the Temple from different points, one from Gibeon bearing the Tabernacle of the Wilderness, venerable with its more than four hundred years of service, faded and worn with long exposure, perhaps often repaired, but sacred from all its associations with the early history of the people. Then from Mount Zion, from the temporary resting place prepared for it by David, came the Ark of God, still more sacred and awful, for above it had rested the symbol of the presence of Jehovah, and in recent years its sanctity had been attested by God himself: in his visitation of the sin of Uzzah. Into the Temple enclosure came Solomon in all his glory, the most magnificent prince

of his race. Sacrifices, so vast that they could not be numbered, of sheep and oxen were offered by Solomon and all the congregation. A full gathering of the Levite singers, under the leadership of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests bearing trumpets, then the trumpets and the singers "as one," broke forth into a mighty chorus "praising and thanking the Lord," and the refrain caught up by the vast mass in the Temple area spread as by a flash through the streets of the city, and was echoed back by a myriad voices from the hill-tops around. Praise the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever," and as they sang the symbol of a gracious acceptance was manifested, "the house was filled with a cloud—so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud." The solemn silence which had fallen upon the worshippers, caused by the thick cloud, was broken by Solomon in the words of ver. 12; then he blessed the congregation, and in a few words told them of the desire of his father David to build the Temple, of God's choice of himself to do the work, and of his performing it by the good hand of God; then followed that wonderful prayer, the earlier portion of which, a type of it all, forms the subject of our lesson.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 22. "Solomon stood," at first, then knelt, see ver. 54, "spread forth his hands," lifted them up "toward heaven," he was on the platform or "brazen scaffold" specially prepared for the occasion. All this, we must remember, took place outside the building, in the court of the Temple.

Vers. 23, 24. Solomon begins his prayer as ours should begin, with a remembrance of past mercies "No God like Thee:" not to be understood as comparing Jehovah with the gods of the heathen, but he is described as the only true God. "Keepest covenant:" one of the attributes of the God of Israel was that he was a covenant-keeping God, see Lesson three of last quarter, and Lesson two of this quarter, those who are faithful will always find that his covenant of mercy is sure, "with thy servant David,"—the promise to whom was that he should have a Son who, in peaceful possession of the Kingdom, should build the house which David desired, but was not permitted to build; "fulfilled"—as it is this day.

Vers. 25, 26. He now prays that beyond himself the promise of God may be verified, that "there shall not fail a man—to sit on the throne of Israel," and as he coupled with it the condition God had given, a righteous walk before God, it is practically a prayer for his successors that they should "take heed to their way," and even if they sinned, that God would not withdraw his mercy quite from them.

Ver. 27. "Will God dwell on the earth?" Other thoughts come now to the mind of Solomon, he remembers the greatness of God, "heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee;" with a firm belief of God's special presence in the Temple he yet would guard himself and the people against the narrow views or notions of the deity into which they were only too apt to fall: Jer. 7: 1; Mic. 3: 11. When we consider the ideas of a local god or gods as held by the heathen nations of the land, this conception of the infinity of God is very marked and striking.

Ver. 28. "Yea," notwithstanding that thou art so far removed, "have respect to the prayer," that I am now offering which has reference to blessings to be given from and through this house. "Prayer—supplication—cry," these words seem to indicate a general increase of intensity in the prayers of the people to God, beginning with ordinary requests for daily mercies, and continuing in the agonized "cry" for help and deliverance in times of peril.

Ver. 29. "Eyes may be open towards this house: that thou mayst hearken," see Psa. 34: 15—the eyes of the Lord upon, and the ears of the Lord open to the righteous; "the place of which thou hast said," to which a general reference had been made, but the exact locality of which has not been stated, see Deut. 12: 5, 11, 18, 14: 29; 15: 20, 16: 2, and elsewhere. And God was graciously pleased to tell Solomon that his prayer was heard. "Mine eyes and Mine heart shall be there perpetually." Ch. 9: 4.

Ver. 30. It had been a personal prayer hitherto; it is now enlarged and includes the whole nation: "hearken to Thy people Israel when they shall pray. And we find that therefore the Jews always worshipped toward the Temple. Dan 6: 10; Jonah 2: 4. "When thou hearest forgive:" hear the prayer and forgive the sin.

Ver. 31, 32. Solomon now proceeds in his prayer to make mention of special cases, in the which he besought God to hear and answer. The first has reference to the oaths sworn in the Temple, the sanctity of which he asks God to protect. Every oath is an appeal to the knowledge and justice of the Most High, and the prayer is that God will vindicate the truth by punishing the false swearer. "Tree-pass, as in the cases mentioned in Ex. 22: 7-12, an oath had to be taken by the accused person as to his innocence. "Judge thy servants," because human judgments are fallible, he therefore prays that God would interpose, condemn the wicked and justify the righteous.

Ver. 33, 34. The next is a petition for the nation, when its sin—as sin the King knew too well it would—was punished by defeat in battle and being carried away captive, then when the people prayed toward that house, his petition is that God would hear and forgive and bring them back to the land of their fathers. Doubtless Solomon had in mind the threats of Lev. 26: 14-17, and of Dent. 28: 15-25, "confess thy name," acknowledging their sins, that they were justly punished, and making supplication, "in," rather "toward," as in the margin, they could not make supplication "in" the house when in a strange land. This, to a Jew, was one of the greatest calamities that could fall upon him and so it has a prominent place in the prayer.

Ver. 35, 36. Another petition based upon the moral certainty of the people sinning and of other threatened judgments coming upon them, "heaven is shut up—no rain:" this was also a threatened punishment for sin, see Lev. 26: 19; Dent, 11: 17; 28: 23-24; "hear—forgive

—teach," not only does Solomon ask that God will hear the prayers of the people in their repentance and forgive their sins, but that he will "teach them the good way," that is, by their afflictions, by "the judgments Thou dost send upon them." Here we have the great New Testament principle, that the chastisements of the Lord are designed to bring His people back to Himself, are, in fact, for their eternal good. Note the order of Solomon's prayer: first, that they should pray, confessing their sins; then that God would forgive; that he would teach the right way, and last of all that the affliction should be removed. Is there not here a lesson for us, do we not sometimes want God to remove the affliction before we recognize his purpose in sending it and make confession of our sins before Him? Let us learn that this is God's way.

The teacher should read and note the rest of the petitions down to ver. 53.

#### HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Preliminary. Although the title of our lesson is, "The Temple Dedicated," the select verses only contain a portion of Solomon's dedicatory prayer, the intention of the Lesson Committee being, doubtless, that those should serve as a centre around which teaching on the whole service should be grouped. We have dwelt somewhat at length on the more impressive portion of the ceremonies preceding this prayer, so shall confine our remarks now to the thoughts suggested by the selected verses. Will the teachers suffer us to caution them against spending too much time on the ceremonies alone, or any at all on the mystical lessons which some writers would associate with these dedicatory services; there are spiritual and practical lessons of great value in this portion; strive to teach those.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Praise and thanksgiving, 22-24. (2) Prayer for continued mercies, 25-28. (3) Prayer for special circumstances, 29-36.

On the first topic show how Solomon, following the constant example of his father, David, thankfully recognizes the "faithfulness and constant mercy of God." Ever before these men was the fact that their God was a covenant-keeping God, and they sought to set forth this truth in the public utterances especially; before Solomon prayed he blessed God, so should our prayers ever be mixed with thanksgiving, let us not be reaching forth the hand for blessings and forget those which have been so bountifully given to us in the past. Then the truth is repeated here that we have so often noticed in this quarter's lessons—the conditions of God's blessings. On this there can be no mistake, it was repeated again and again to, and by David, and now Solomon reiterates it God's mercies are to those who walk before Him "with all their hearts." No half service is acceptable. He must have the supreme affection of the undivided heart. This truth set forth so unmistakably in the Old Testament was affirmed by our Saviour to be the foundation stone of the New Covenant, it was the "first and great Commandment:" Matt. 22: 37-38.

On the second topic we may teach that past mercies should encourage continued prayer. God is not angry at our continued or persistent prayers, even when sometimes we appear to be bold in our requests and would remind Him of His promises. Not that he needs reminding, but the pleading of the promises shows that they have a place in the hearts of His children even as he would have them. So as we stand in the present, looking backward over our mercy-strewn path, let us be encouraged to ask larger and greater things and believe that he is able to do for us "exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think." Eph 3: 20.

On the third topic, there are one or two lessons not so common as preceding ones. We are taught to make our petitions special and pointed. There is a story of a good old man whose child was dying, and he with his wife knelt down to implore the mercy of God and healing of their loved one; the good man had a stereotyped prayer embracing the whole world, which he had often offered in the prayer-meeting, and so he went on in his regular rut until he came to pray for the Jews, when his wife could stand it no longer but burst out "Man, it's our child that's dying!" and forthwith prayed herself, earnestly, vehemently that God would have mercy upon their child. Just so, we may bring our special wants and needs before God, but we learn further, that we must get beyond ourselves and be unselfish in our petitions, we may, ought, to pray for our selves and ours, but we must rest on that—let our prayers be for any whom we know need God's mercy, blessing and guidance; there are the sick and weary; there are the tempted and tried, there are the anxious and worried, the prodigals far away from their father's home, the forgetters of God, and there are those who are seeking Him—we should bear all these in our prayers before God and we should pray for our country. God has given us a fair and beautiful home, but how much we need the care and keeping of God—let us pray for our country with all its interests. The school with which the writer is connected sometimes sings

"Now pray we for our country,  
That Canada may be,  
The holy and the happy,  
And the gloriously free;  
That through her wide Dominion,  
Across from sea to sea,  
Her children may be blessed,  
The righteous and the free."

In this is the hope of a great future for our country

#### INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS

God will dwell in the midst of his true worshippers. Where there is sincere dedication to God, He will accept and give the true consecration.

The visible symbols of the Divine presence may be lacking but the Lord will really be in the midst of His people. The teachings of the last lesson are suggested again—Our bodies living Temples of the living God and should be thoroughly dedicated to Him; see texts quoted there.

Main Lesson.—The dedication of ourselves—who then is willing? 1 Chron. 29: 2.