

Religious Notes

Sunday-School Lesson for November 12 Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem.

BY J. E. GILBERT, D. D., LL. D., Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

Important committee meeting was held in the parlors of the Penn Avenue Baptist church last Thursday evening of the chairman of the different missionary committees of the various churches of our city, when plans were perfected for the coming of the Yale Mission band, Messrs. JAG and Vickrey of the Yale Mission band, with two other members of the band, visited our city last year, will be in our midst Dec. 2 and 3. Their visit when with us then was one of great blessing and a spiritual event is in store for all who can hear them during this, their second visit on Saturday evening, Dec. 2, at 8 o'clock, there will be held in the parlors of the Elm Park church a meeting of all the missionary committees of the different churches, when Messrs. Gage and Vickrey will give addresses, Sunday afternoon, Dec. 2, at 4 o'clock, a meeting of all the Young People's societies will be held in the auditorium of the Penn Avenue Baptist church, where we shall have the privilege of hearing those gifted and consecrated men tell of the blessing and results of their past year's work in the large cities of our land.

The Methodist Ministers' association of Scranton and vicinity will meet in Elm Park church Monday morning, Nov. 15 at 10:30. Rev. Joseph Madison of this city, will be the speaker. His address at the late annual meeting at High Hill, Chapel, Myrtle Church Home, was intensely interesting and the members voted to have the paper preserved in the archives of the Historical society at Kingston.

Biographical history is the real history and much useful information in regard to the church has been lost because individuals have failed to tell the story of their own lives. The subject of Dr. Madison's paper next Monday promises to be even more interesting than the preceding one. The theme will be "Reminiscences of Forty-three Years Within the Bounds of the Wyoming Conference." At this meeting will occur the election of officers for the winter sessions.

J. M. Chance has arranged the following music for the Sabbath services in the Second Presbyterian church: Morning. Organ prelude, Andante in E flat, "Aurora," "Huldre Me," "Solos, duet, trio, quartet and chorus. Offertory, solo, "Hear Us." Miss Garagan Organ prelude, "Tears." Evening. Organ prelude, "Dudley Buck Anthem," "Raise Your Hands, O Ye Gates," Quartet and Chorus. Offertory, quartet, "God of My Life." Misses Blaine, Williams, Hughes, Beynon and Morgan. Organ prelude, "Woodman." At the Sabbath school Mr. Theodore Bauschman will play a flute solo and Mr. Faith Williams will sing a solo at the Y. P. S. C. E.

The semi-annual convention of the Baptist Young People's Union in connection with the Welsh Baptist Association, of Northeastern Pennsylvania, will be held in the Welsh Baptist church, of West Scranton, of which Rev. D. D. Hopkins, recently of Wales, is pastor, on Monday, November 20. Three sessions will be held. The sessions of the Welsh Baptist Association will commence on Tuesday and continue over Wednesday. Following is the programme: Business session, 10 a. m.—President, T. T. Edwards, South Wilkes-Barre. Afternoon session, 2 o'clock—Leader, Mr. Thomas W. Williams, Pittston; singing service, led by Hugh Williams, Scranton; devotional exercises; address of welcome, Rev. D. D. Hopkins, Scranton; responses, financial secretary, Isaac Doughton, Elm Park church; address, "Consecration of Ability," John M. Evans, Providence; address, "The 39th Convocation," Rev. J. E. Davis, Plymouth; social.

Evening session, 7 o'clock—Leader, President T. T. Edwards, South Wilkes-Barre; song service; devotional exercises; chorus; address, "The Christian's Stewardship," Miss Margaret Vaughn, Ashland; quartet, Misses Elizabeth and Barbara Lewis, John Evans, Mrs. William Hughes, Scranton; essay, "Failure and Success," Miss Cora Roberts, Scranton; prayer; prayer, banquet presentation to Scranton by President T. T. Edwards, South Wilkes-Barre; acceptance.

We all covet strength and admire it. We look at the marvelous muscular development of a Sandow with envy and straighten up resolve to have a physique and strength like his. It begins there because there the strength elements are manufactured, and from there they are distributed to blood, bone, brain, muscles and nerve. If you want to begin to be strong, start with the stomach. Put the digestive and nutritive organs and blood making glands in perfect working order. That is the foundation of strength. Exercise puts on the superstructure of development.

To establish the stomach and the digestive and nutritive functions in perfect health, there is no more reliable and satisfactory aid than Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It strengthens the stomach, enriches the blood, nourishes the nerves, and regulates the functions of every vital organ of the body.

CONTEXT—After his earnest prayer for guidance and help (see last lesson), Nehemiah, at a favorable opportunity, solicited and secured the king's permission to go to the relief of Jerusalem. He carried with him letters instructing the keepers of the forest to furnish such timber as might be needed in the proposed building. Shortly after his arrival he made an inspection of the city by night, a time when he would be best able to judge its defenses, then gaining a personal knowledge of the actual conditions. The rulers of the city were then called together and urged to build the walls. The response was encouraging. The high priest set the example, erecting the sheep gate and consecrating it, and other parties selected other sections, carrying forward the work by easy stages on the co-operative plan. Princes and the common people united their labors with great unanimity and with much of the old-time devotion.

ENEMIES (Verses 7 and 8)—During the earlier stages of the work the builders were mocked by their leather-shoed enemies (Vs. 1-6). As several previous attempts since the time of Zerubbabel had failed they regarded this as a foolish undertaking. But, as the walls continued to rise, the revelling and feasting of the Jews, and the hostility, Sanballat, the chief of the Samaritans, who had been refused the privilege of co-operation in the previous century (Ezra iv, 3), and Tobiah, king of the Ammonites, who had been for centuries enemies of the Jews (2 Kings xxv, 2), did not offend them. The league was formed, the work was begun, and the city was completely surrounded by the walls.

DEFENSE (Verse 9)—This conspiracy might have been expected (Psalm lxxxiii, 5). It has ever been the policy of the wicked to oppose the purposes of the good (John xv, 19). Besides, if the Jews prospered, the surrounding peoples would be exposed, and their plans would be frustrated (Psalm li, 1-3). It is probable, therefore, that Nehemiah and his associates were neither surprised nor disheartened on account of this league, but they addressed themselves to the work of defense. Opposition always brings out the true qualities of a man, and it was so on this occasion. Two methods were employed to meet the emergency. "We made our prayer unto God," says the historian. This was the most appropriate beginning. God comes to help only by prayer. Whatever other result there may be of his petitions he is strengthened by laying hold of the infinite. But prayer was supplemented by providential measures. Watchers were stationed by day and by night upon the wall.

WEAKNESS (Verse 10)—It must not be thought that all the Jews were courageous and confident. The misfortunes of a century could not be forgotten. Many, looking about them, found discouragement on every hand. The ruins of the old walls and of the buildings which their fathers had occupied were scattered around like rubbish, which it appeared no one could remove. Besides, the men of strength, who had borne the burdens, were becoming weak, unable longer to raise the great stones even with such machinery as the oxen and men used in their appropriate places. And Judah—the foremost of the tribes, in whom centered all hopes (Gen. xliii, 10), from whom ought to have been expected most service—Judah grew faint-hearted, confessed weakness, and was ready to abandon the work. It is possible that this condition was caused by greater anxiety than the presence of external foes (Matt. x, 36).

INTRIGUE (Verses 11 and 12)—While these discouraging words were being uttered by the enemies without devised their plans of mischief. They determined not to attack the place, knowing that the result would be uncertain, but to steal in quietly, distributing themselves about the city, and at an appointed time or signal to enter the city and slay the people. That was a favorite mode of warfare in ancient times. To come unawares upon an adversary and deal a sudden and fatal blow was a proof of cunning rather than of bravery. Fortunately this intrigue was freely discussed by the enemy and betrayed to the Jews, who were freely outside the city, and they came in and reported to their brethren what they had heard. It seems also that they who gave the warning, while they did it in a friendly spirit, felt that they did it in a great peril.

COURAGE (Verses 13-14)—A stout heart beat in the breast of Nehemiah, and he proved himself equal to the occasion. As a precaution against surprise from any foe lurking within the city, he re-arranged the entire population of the inside of the walls, grouping them by families. In this way they could at any time determine whether any strangers were present. He also put swords, spears and bows in the hands of the men, and directed them to fight, if attacked, for their wives, their daughters and their sons. The wisdom of this policy is obvious. He is able to bring their counsels to naught. 2. If our enemies cannot frighten us from our duty, or deceive us into sin, or find us unwatchful, they cannot hurt us. When ministers of religion add the example of diligence, courage, and self-denial to their exhortations, others will be stirred up to united effort. 3. Every true Christian is both a laborer and a soldier, working with one hand, fighting with the other, called by the sound of the gospel alternately to his work and to the conflict. Widely dispersed in our several employments, we form one army, and must be ready to unite against the common enemy in whatever place the assault is made. We must learn to labor and to fight.

REFLECTIONS—These are the most salient points in the lesson: 1. No opposition will prove any real hindrance to us, in our endeavors to do good, if we be led by it to a more simple confidence in God, and to the more diligent use of proper means of obtaining success. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" However craftily the enemy may scheme against us, He is able to bring their counsels to naught. 2. If our enemies cannot frighten us from our duty, or deceive us into sin, or find us unwatchful, they cannot hurt us. When ministers of religion add the example of diligence, courage, and self-denial to their exhortations, others will be stirred up to united effort. 3. Every true Christian is both a laborer and a soldier, working with one hand, fighting with the other, called by the sound of the gospel alternately to his work and to the conflict. Widely dispersed in our several employments, we form one army, and must be ready to unite against the common enemy in whatever place the assault is made. We must learn to labor and to fight.

UNITY (Verses 15-16)—Whenever a community is menaced by a common enemy and plans are laid for its overthrow, but for the general defense, the people forget their little differences and unite with one heart. (Lam. iii:41)

Methodist Episcopal. Elm Park church—Prayer and praise service at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Dr. M. Leod will preach. Sunday school at 12:15 p. m.; Cedar avenue mission at 2:30 p. m.; mid-week service Wednesday evening at 7:45 o'clock. Strangers welcome.

Presbyterian. First Presbyterian church—Services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Dr. M. Leod will preach. Sunday school at 12:15 p. m.; Cedar avenue mission at 2:30 p. m.; mid-week service Wednesday evening at 7:45 o'clock. Strangers welcome.

United Evangelical church—Capone avenue, Rev. C. D. Moore, pastor. Sabbath school, 9:45 a. m.; preaching, 10:45 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Keystone League Christian Endeavor, 6:30 p. m.; Junior Christian Endeavor, Monday, 7 p. m.; prayer meeting, Wednesday, 7:30 p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to the public to attend these services.

Baptist. Penn Avenue Baptist church, Penn avenue between Spruce and Linden streets—Preaching in the morning by the pastor, Rev. Robert F. Y. Pierce. Morning prayers in the lower temple at 9:45 o'clock; morning sermon at 10:30 o'clock. Subject, "Our Heavenly Possessions." Sunday school after morning service. Mrs. S. Benjamin superintendent. Y. P. C. E. meeting, 6:30 p. m. in basement of Pine Flats Temple. All are invited to attend. Rev. J. H. Bell, in charge of the church.

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First Church of Christ, Scientist—519 Adams avenue, Sunday services, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; subject, "The Plan of Salvation." Wednesday evening meeting at 8 o'clock. All are invited.

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First Baptist church—Rev. S. P. Matthews, pastor. The usual services morning and evening, 11:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. in the basement of the Welsh Baptist church, Main avenue. Sunday school, 2:30 p. m. Plymouth church, Dr. Reddo, superintendent. 12:15 p. m. weekly prayer meeting at Ivy street hall; weekly prayer meeting, 7:30 p. m. Wednesday evening; Industrial school, 2 p. m. Saturday, 10:30 a. m. All are cordially invited.

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