DR. BEARDSLEY'S SERMON TO MASONS

Pastor of the First Congregational Church Addressed Members of Order at Special Service.

ON TEMPLE OF SOLOMON

Pastor Speaks Interestingly of This Edifice and Some Lessons Which May be Drawn From It.

Special services, to which the members of the Masonic orders of this city were especially invited, were conducted in the First Congregational church last night, by Dr. Frank G. Beardsley, S. T. D., pastor of the church. Dr. Beardsley took for his topic, The Building of Solomon's Temple. This was a subject of particular significance to the members of the Masonic orders, and Dr. Beardsley treated it in a most interesting manner.

Special music was prepared for the occasion. Miss Grace Edwards of Warsaw sang a solo at this service, and the choir sang several special numbers. The church was well filled for the service, which was under the auspices of the brotherhood of the church.

Speaker's Two Texts

Dr. Beardsley took for his text the first verse of the twenty-ninth chapter, First Chronicles, "For the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God," and First Corinthians, sixteenth verse of Chapter three: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you."

His sermon in full follows:

Next to David, Solomon was the greatest of Israel's kings, while his reign was the most splendid. When he succeeded his father to the throne, he was young and inexperienced. One of the first acts in his reign was to sacrifice at Gibeon, where the Lord appeared to him in a vision or dream, saying, "Ask what I shall give thee?" Solomon replied, "O Lord, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge so great a people." So pleased was Jehovah because he had asked wisdom rather than riches, honor or long life that he not only gave him wisdom but assured him of riches, honor and long life. We need not dwell upon the excesses which corrupted Solomon's later life, but under the blessing of Almighty God he became the wisest of kings as well as one of the richest and most honored. The chief event in his reign was the building of the temple at Jerusalem. Since ancient craft masonry traditionally traces its origin to the building of the temple we have selected as our theme for this occasion, the building of King Solomon's temple.

Stood on Brow of Hill.

The temple stood on the brow of Mount Zion which overlooked the city of Jerusalem. It was constructed of massive blocks of white limestone quarried in the hills a few miles distant. This limestone was susceptible of taking a high polish like marble, in fact it was a species of marble. In recent years some of the foundation stones of this ancient temple have been unearthed. One of these finely bevelled stones is 38½ feet long, 7 feet high and weighs more than 100 tons, which will give us some idea of the character of the workmanship that went into the erection of Solomon's temple.

This building was a massive structure of the Phoenician or Assyrian type of architecture. Its walls were six cubits in thickness. These walls were surrounded by a series of thirty chambers five cubits square for the Levites. Around these chambers there was an outside wall five cubits in thickness. The interior of the temple or sanctuary was sixty cubits long and twenty cubits wide. It was entered through a porch or tower of the same width, but only ten cubits long. The building faced the east. At the entrance of the porch or vestibule stood two great fluted Tyrian pillars of brass or bronze, surmounted by chapiters of lily and pomegranate work. Symbolical names were given to these pillars signifying strength and beauty. Between the pillars was a flight of steps which led to the porch or vestibule which contained the gilded shields taken in battle by King David from Hadadezer's soldiers. Beyond the porch was the sanctuary which was entered through folding doors of cypress wood with posts of olive wood. The walls of the sanctuary were covered with cedar overlaid with gold and the floors were covered with cypress overlaid with gold.

Something of the Interior.

The sanctuary consisted of two apartments, the first of which was the holy place, twenty by sixty subits. Windows are mentioned, but these were not windows in the ordinary sense, but rather aperatures for admitting air. In the holy place stood the seven-branched golden candlestick by which it was lighted, the table of show-bread, and the altar of incense. The priests only were admitted to the holy place. Beyond the holy place and separated from it by doors and a heavy veil was the holy of holies in the form of a perfect cube, twenty cubits long, twenty wide and twenty in height. It contained only the famous ark of the covenant overshadowed by the cherubim; this ark had been carried through the wilderness by the children of Israel and contained the pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone upon which the commandments had been inscribed by the finger of God. The holy of holies was lighted by the Shekinah or glory of God. No one might enter this sacred apartment save the high priest, and he only once a year on the great day of atonement when he offered up atonement for his own sins and those of the people.

Outside of the temple and fifty cubits to the east of it stood the altar of burnt offering, on either side of which were five lavers or cauldrons in which the sacrifices were cleansed before they were placed upon the altar. Between the altar and temple to the south stood the brazen sea, consisting of a great brass basin in the shape of a lotus flower, five cubits high, ten cubits in diameter, and a hand-breadth in thickness. This great basin, which contained water for the ablutions of the priests, rested upon twelve great brazen oxen, three of which faced the east, three the west, three the north and three the south. The outer court of the temple is supposed to have been surorunded by a wall, with gates or entrances on the east, north and south.

Idea was His Father's.

While the chief instrument in the building of the temple was Solomon, King of Israel, the idea originated with David, his father. Up to this time the Israelites worshipped in the tabernacle, a portable sanctuary which their fathers had carried through the wilderness. After David had become well settled in his kingdom and had erected for himself a splendid palace it did not seem appropriate to him that his people should continue to worship in the torn and tattered tabernacle. So he proposed to erect a temple that was suitable for the worship of the most high God. This purpose was approved at first by the prophet Nathan, but he was afterwards instructed of God that since David was a warrior it was not fitting that he should build the temple which should be erected by his son. However, David gathered together a great quantity of materials, gold, silver, brass, iron, onyx, and precious stones to facilitate the work of building when his son came to the throne.

In the erection of the temple King Solomon had the co-operation and assistance of Hiram, king of Tyre, with whom his father David had formed an alliance, and Hiram, a Tyrian half-caste, whose mother was a Hebrewess of the tribe of Naphtali. He is sometimes spoken of as Hiram, the widow's son, his father being dead. Hiram, king of Tyre, supplied the timber for the temple. The trees were felled in the forests of Lebanon, skidded down the mountain side, formed into rafts and conveyed a hundred miles along the coast to Joppa, whence they were laboriously dragged up the steep and rugged roads, a distance of thirty-five miles, to Jerusalem. Hiram, the widow's son, was really the master overseer, who had entire supervision of the construction of the temple. Under him were 36,000 free-born Israelites, who performed the lighter work, 70,000 hewers of wood and haulers of water, and 80,000 craftsmen who wrought in the quarries. The materials of the temple were all shaped at a distance so that as the scriptures record "there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." Each beam and stone was carefully prepared to be fitted into its place before conveyed to the temple hill. Seven years were occupied in the erection of the temple and its cost has been variously estimated at from five hundred million to five billion dollars.

Some Lessons to Be Drawn.

From the building of King Solomon's temple some valuable and profitable lessons may be drawn. The purpose of a building determines its character. In building a barn, utility is the chief consideration, but in building a home we take account of beauty and proportion as well as utility. Of course a man in building a barn aims to have it correspond with his house. But even if he should build a barn of brick or stone he would not plaster and frescoe the walls or put in polished wood work and hard-wood floors. That would be a needless expense and would simply mean money thrown away. On the other hand, if it were a house or home he would look at these matters in an entirely different light. As a place for worship, the temple of King Solomon was built to endure for ages and but for the devastating wars in which the Israelites became involved, it might be standing today. In the building of character we should consider the purpose of the building. St. Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." As the temples of God we should keep ourselves from defilement.

We should seek to keep ourselves free from the defilement of evil thoughts. Back of every evil deed there is an evil thought, for "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." No man ever did a wrong thing without first thinking wrong thoughts. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." We should therefore heed the admonition of the scriptures, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Shun Evil Habits.

We should seek to keep ourselves free from the defilement of evil habits. Habits are easily formed, but when once formed they are not easily broken. The story is told of a blacksmith to whom a stranger came one day with the request to make a chain of a certain size and length. But when it was completed the man said, "It is not quite long enough, I wish you would make it longer." When this was done he was not satisfied but demanded that it should be made still longer. At last the blacksmith had used up his materials and exhausted his strength, but the stranger said "It is not quite long enough for the purpose. I think you have the means of adding a few more links." So he gathered together some scraps and with his remaining strength he forged the additional links. "Now," said the stranger to his servants, "the chain is completed, entwine its links about the workman, for he shall be no longer free." That is only a story and yet it points a moral—the man who forms evil habits forges his own fetters by which he is enslaved at last.

We should keep ourselves free from evil companions. It is our duty to be courteous, kind and considerate to all even the most depraved and degraded, but it is one thing to be courteous, kind and considerate, to evil-minded men and quite another to make boon companions of them. If a man is known by the company he keeps it is simply impossible to escape contamination if he consorts with the vicious and evil-minded.

Foundations for Character.

In the building of character we should look well to the foundation. The temple at Jerusalem was built on Mount Zion, a veritable symbol of strength and security. As the Psalmist says, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever." A building cannot be stronger than the foundation upon which it rests. If the foundation is unstable, the building no matter how beautiful or substantial will be insecure. In the sermon on the mount we are told of two men, one of whom built upon the rock, so that when the storm came, the winds blew and the rains descended, the house, because it was founded upon the rock, withstood the floods and the tempest. But the other built his house upon the sand: it may have been just as beautiful and just as costly, but when the rains descended and the floods came, because it was founded upon the sands it fell and great was the fall of it. My friends, can we build our characters upon a better or firmer foundation than this old, old book, which we call the Holy Bible, the book which we as Masons have accepted as the rule and guide to faith. If our characters are founded upon this grand old book we shall rear a structure which shall stand not only for time but for all eternity.

In the building of character we should be careful of the materials with which we build. With what infinite pains and toil the timbers for King Solomon's temple were hewn and prepared in the forests of Lebanon and the rocks shaped and polished in the quarries some miles distant! Does not that impress us that we ought to exercise familiar industry, patience, and skill in preparing and shaping the materials that enter into our lives? The materials of which we build should be good deeds, kind thoughts, and helpful acts. These should be so planned and executed that they may pass inspection by the great master builder at last.

Must Choose Materials.

In the building of character we should not only be careful of the materials with which we build, but we should exercise equal care in our workmanship. Good workmanship is fully as important as good materials. In the cathedral which was erected by the Benedictine monks at Peterborough, England, during the middle ages, poor mortar was used. The stones were good but they seemed to think that anything was good enough to shovel in between the courses. It was an expensive mistake and in recent years it has been necessary to expend thousands of dollars to rectify their mistakes and restore the structure. The lesson is obvious. We must not only use good materials but we must build wisely and well.

In the building of character it is well to remember that we are building not only for time but for eternity. As St. Paul says: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The same materials and the very same workmanship that are employed upon our earthly characters enter into the construction of that "building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The story is told of a rich woman who dreamed that she went to heaven and there saw a beautiful mansion being built. "Who is that for?" she asked the guide. "For your gardener." "But he lives in the tinest cottage on earth, with barely room enough for his family." Further on she saw a tiny cottage being built. "Whose is that?" she asked. "That is for you." "But I have lived in a mansion on earth. I would not know how to live in a cottage." The words which she heard in reply were full of meaning: "The Master Builder is doing His best with the material which is being sent up." My friends, what sort of material are we sending up for the building of our heavenly mansions?

Dedicated to Service.

After the temple was completed at Jerusalem it was solemnly dedicated to the worship of God. I wish there were time at my disposal to enter into a consideration of the details of that dedication, but I am afraid that I have already overstepped the bounds of your patience. Our character building is not yet completed, but incomplete as it is, it ought nevertheless to be dedicated to the service of the Most High, for Solomon, the builder of the temple at Jerusalem said, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." It is only as we build wisely and well, with good materials and upon the right foundation that when at last we pass before the Master Builder for inspection we shall hear the welcome words, "Well done, good and faithful servant thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many; enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

London Tramway Strike.

[United Press Leased Wire Service.]

LONDON, May 17.—London tramway strikers, at several spirited early morning meetings today unanimously voted in favor of a protracted strike unless their demands for a war bonus are met.

Traffic was paralyzed today. Only one tramway line, the one running to the government arsenal at Woolwich was in operation. Thousands of persons were unable to reach their places of employment.

TRANSYLVANIA REACHES PORT

Arrived Safely at Glasgow Today With No Interference from Submarines.

[United Press Leased Wire Service.]

GLASGOW, May 17.—The Anchor liner Transylvania arrived here today from New York, having taken the northern route because of warnings of the presence of German submarines off the south coast of Ireland, near the spot where the Lusitania was torpedoed.

She brought 839 passengers, most of them destined for Liverpool. Until she arrived at Greenock at 8 a. m. today, the Transylvania had not been heard from since she left New York May 7.

—Read The Daily Gate City.