



LESSON X.—June 9

## Sins of the Tongue.

James iii., 1-13. Reap Chapter iii. Commit vs. 11-13.

### GOLDEN TEXT.

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.—Psa. xxxiv., 13.

### Home Readings.

M. Jas. iii., 1-18.—Sins of the Tongue.

T. Jas. iv., 1-17.—'Speak not Evil One of Another.'

W. Jas. v., 1-11.—'Be patient, therefore, Brethren.'

Th. Jas. v., 12-20.—Good uses of the Tongue.

F. Matt. xii., 22-37.—We Shall Give Account for our Words.

S. Prov. xv., 1-33.—'A Wholesome Tongue is a Tree of Life.'

S. Ps. xxxix., 1-13.—'That I sin not with my Tongue.'

### Lesson Story.

This lesson begins with a warning against seeking high places of authority over others. If a man leads others wrongly he will have to answer in some degree for their misdeeds. The greater the influence and authority the greater the responsibility. In many points we all fall short of our duty and so cannot judge others. The test of a man's spirituality is the use of his tongue, he who uses his tongue to stir up strife or to defraud his neighbor or to make false pretences of any kind in any sly or secret way cannot be called a holy man, no matter what his pretensions may be.

Words that are once said cannot be unsaid. It behooves us to watch our lips very closely, praying for grace to speak only kind and helpful words, but if we should be betrayed into sudden anger and unkind speech, the most Christlike thing we can do is to apologize and forgive and try by our kindness to bring that soul nearer to Christ. The tongue is a very small part of the body, but very powerful; a very small match, once lighted, may cause the destruction of a large town or great forest by fire, yet matches are very useful and necessary in their right place. There is danger in letting anything become master of us, all good things are ours to employ not to serve. It can be said of many necessary and useful things that, like fire, they make good servants, but very bad masters.

Every kind of beast has been or can be in some way tamed, but no man can tame the tongue, but, thank God, it can be tamed by changing the heart from which its utterances flow. If any man is wise, let him show it by his good conversation, not seeking to show off his knowledge in every way, but having that heavenly wisdom which is meek and peaceable, gentle and full of mercy and good fruits.

### Lesson Hymn.

A word, and the skies grow darker;  
A word, and the clouds roll high;  
A word, and the soul lies stricken,  
And hurt hearts grieve and sigh.

A word, and the skies would brighten;  
A word, and the clouds would fly;  
A word and the soul finds healing,  
And hurt hearts cease to sigh.

Oh, word, ere too late, be spoken!  
Let the threshold of silence be crossed,  
Ere the thread of thy fate be broken  
And the chance forever lost!

### Lesson Hints.

This is a fruitful theme, there is a great deal said in the book of Proverbs about the use of the tongue, verses which might profitably be studied in connection with this lesson. 'Masters'—Teachers, (R. V.). When we have learnt lessons at the feet of Jesus,

we are quite safe to pass on to others the truths we have learnt. 'Offend'—Trip, stumble, (R. V.). We are all human and the path is oftentimes rough. 'Perfect'—A bad man may guard his tongue ever so carefully but sooner or later words will slip out that show his true character, for 'a good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.' (Matt. xii.) 'Governor'—the steersman, who practically governs the course of the ship. 'Great things'—Either for good or evil.

'The tongue is a fire'—It can pour forth burning words of eloquence. It can burn into the hearts of men words good or bad, and can start fires which may burn through all eternity. 'The course of nature'—'The wheel of nature,' (R. V.), probably means the whole of life, all through which we are in danger from unruly tongues. 'Is set on fire of hell'—The devil is called 'the father of lies,' and it is at his altar those fires are lighted which bring such misery to mankind. 'Full of deadly poison'—'All the wild beasts and poisonous serpents in the world have not begun to do as much evil as the tongue. Socrates, when asked what beast was most dangerous to man, answered, "Of tame beasts, the flatterer; of wild beasts, the slanderer."—(Peloubet.)

'Therewith bless we God'—Those who love him do so, 'and therewith curse we men'—Those who know not God commit this terrible sin. 'So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh'—And the heart washed in the blood of Jesus and filled with the Spirit of Jesus will continually give forth good words.

### Search Questions.

Give six verses from the Old Testament about the tongue.

### Primary Lesson.

Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile. 'Speaking guile' means saying things to 'take people in,' that is just the same as telling lies. A very little lie, told by a very little mouth can do a great deal of harm, the bible tells us. There are other wrong things little tongues often do besides telling lies. When they speak cross words to playmates, or rude words to teachers or say something you would not like mother to hear, little tongues are sinning. How often we sin just with that foolish little tongue. How earnestly we need to pray:—

'Forgive, O Lord, for thy dear son,  
The ill which I this day have done.'

What are our tongues for? To praise God, to speak kindly and to tell people many true and sweet things—we can even tell the story of Jesus and so help to save people with our tongues. But suppose we sing hymns and then speak very crossly to some one the next minute. Would that be nice? Or suppose we talk about Jesus to a little friend and then tell him something untrue or horrid. What sort of tongue would do that? Little tongues that belong to Jesus must be very careful what they say.

But often the words come before we have time to think, so we must not only be careful ourselves but ask God to take care of our tongues. We can say, 'Let the words of my mouth be acceptable in thy sight.' We can say, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.' We can ask Jesus who always spoke such very good things to make us like himself so that our tongues may say the things that please him and not wrong things or unkind things. We can say:

'Take my lips and let them be  
Filled with messages from thee.'

### SUGGESTED HYMNS.

'What shall the harvest be?' 'Oh, could I speak,' 'Sing them over,' 'Draw me nearer,' 'What a friend we have in Jesus,' 'Have courage, my boy.'

### Christian Endeavor Topic.

May 30.—'That ye bear much fruit.'—John xv., 1-14.

### Junior Prayer-Meeting Topic.

May 30.—How can we 'bear much fruit?' John xv., 1-8.

## Ancient Annals.

The bible is no longer a book of lonely records. Fifty years ago it seemed as if the only voice that came to us out of the ancient East was that of the Old Testament. Babylon and Nineveh had perished irretrievably; nothing could be gathered of their history except what biblical authors told, or what Greek writers, to whom the rest of the world were barbarians, had happened to gather of the story of these nations that had gone before them. The key had been found to the Egyptian hieroglyphics, but not much of value had been discovered; some names of kings and multiplied copies of one burial book. It then seemed hopeless to expect that any of the many questions which scholars were asking about the possibility of the truth of the Scripture records which bear upon the histories of the countries about them could ever be answered.

How different is the case now. The annals of Kings of Babylon, Assyria, and Persia, written by their own orders and in their own times, have been discovered and the forgotten languages have been reconstructed and read. It is something amazing when one king of Assyria makes mention of five kings of Israel and Judah, mentioned in the bible, and recounts his dealings with them. The King of Egypt, who was probably the Pharaoh of the oppression, has been found buried in his tomb, and any tourist that goes to Cairo can see his mummified features. Nebuchadnezzar tells us in his own language of the great Babylon, which he had builded; Cyrus records for our instruction his story of how he captured Babylon, and Belshazzar tells us such little things as how much he paid to the boatman to carry an offering to the temple of the sun god.

Nor have the hidden libraries of the East been less fruitful. A whole mine of historical material has been discovered which opens to us the constitution of the primitive Christian church and brings just the needed evidence of the early composition of all four of the Gospels. Meanwhile the labor of scholars in studying the literary problems connected with the composition of the biblical books has gone on with increased zeal, and archaeology adds its bit to critical investigation.—New York 'Independent.'

## Reverence in the Sunday-School.

(By Mrs. W. B. Porter.)

The heart of every truly devout teacher in the Sunday-school to-day is shocked and pained at the great lack of reverence shown on the part of many children and youths for things sacred and holy. What is the reason for this lack? The Sunday-school teacher often teaches more by example than by precept, and we often find the character of the teacher reproduced in the lives of her pupils. When precept and example go hand-in-hand, what an influence they exert! But do teachers always remember that they are living epistles, known and read of their scholars, and are they sure that the example in reverence is always worthy of imitation. Will it be safe for the teacher to say to her pupils, as Paul did to his in Philippians iv., 9: 'Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and see in me, do?' Perhaps she will not care to be thus closely scrutinized by her class, but let her know assuredly that very little will escape the keen observation of her scholars.

One who would teach reverence must be reverent. The teacher who enters God's house for public worship with reverent manner, and bows her head in a silent prayer for God's blessing upon pastor and congregation, exerts a positive influence for good that will be felt by all who see her. The careless teacher—for there are such—who laughs and carries on a conversation during the singing of the hymns, will feel herself reproved, and the older scholars, and even the little ones, will deport themselves better because of this exemplary conduct.—S.S. 'Times.'

## Gordon's Favorite Lines.

We read Thee best in Him who came  
To bear for us the cross of shame;  
Sent by the Father from on high,  
Our life to live, our death to die.  
—Dr. Horatius Bonar.