

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

NO. 10. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (III.).

THE CHRISTIAN'S LAW — continued.

To read—*St. Matthew v. 33—48.*

I. THE LAW OF OATHS. (33—37.) Refers to third Commandment.

Sanction of God's own example. God to Abraham. (Gen. xxii. 16.)

Commanded in Law of Moses. (Ex. xxii. 11.)

Instance of Abraham. (Gen. xiv. 22.)

Oaths must be kept. (Eccles. v. 4.) Instance of Hannah vowing Samuel. (1 Sam. i. 28.) St. Paul at Cenchrea. (Acts xviii. 18.) Not to be made rashly, as Jephthah. (Judg. xi. 30.) Jews in habit of frequent oaths on all occasions. Christ condemns this. Jews thought no harm in oaths if God's name not mentioned. But what is oath? Solemn appeal to God's knowing all things. Such an oath as Christ made Himself before High Priest. (St. Matt. xxv. 63, 64.) Should be kept for solemn occasions, such as Court of Justice. In daily life let words be few and simple.

II. THE LAW OF REVENGE. (38—42.) Eye for an eye, etc. (See Ex. xxi. 24.) Law allowed exact retaliation in kind—so did all primitive nations—allowed not for revenge of individual, but for good of community generally—simplest method of punishment. Christ teaches new law—overcome evil with good. Five examples:—

1. Resist not evil. So David to Saul. (1 Sam. xxiv. 4.) 2. Submit to personal injury. Christ Himself. (St. Matt. xxvi. 27.) 3. Give pressed service willingly. Simon the Cyrenian. (St. Matt. xxvii. 32.) 4. Be willing to give alms. Early Chris-

tians. (Acts ii. 45.) 5. Lend when asked. Mark of a righteous man. (Ps. xxxvii. 26.)

Coat or tunic—under-garment with sleeves. *Cloke*—the upper or outer garment.

Principle is to be willing and ready to help others.

III. THE LAW OF LOVE. (43—48.) Old law said "Love neighbour." (Lev. xix. 18.) Rabbis added "Hate enemy." Christ teaches true spirit. Show love by—

1. Kind words in return for curses—e.g. David. (1 Sam. xvii. 45.) 2. Kind deeds for injuries. Joseph. (Gen. xlv. 8.) 3. Prayers for persecutors. St. Stephen. (Acts vii. 60.)

Result of so doing—become true children of God—copy His example who does good to all—giving rain, sunshine, food, earthly blessings even to those who love Him not.

Three kinds of return possible—

1. Evil for good—is work of the devil. Example—Jews to Christ. (St. Luke iv. 22.) 2. Evil for evil, or good for good—is natural to man. Example—Spies' treatment of Rahab. (Josh. vi. 23.) 3. Good for evil—is to be like God. Example—Moses and Israelites. (Ex. xxxii. 32.) This Christian charity to be shown even in outward politeness.

Treat all and greet all with civility.

Example—Boaz and reapers. (Ruth ii. 4.) Thus in all things, however small, strive after perfection and spirit of God.

NO. 11. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (IV.).

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE.

To read—*St. Matthew vi. 1—18.*

I. ALMSGIVING, or Duty to Neighbour. (1—4.) (a) General caution.