

—John was the only prophet whose coming had been predicted (Mal. 3: 1); he did more than foretell the coming of Christ, he actually pointed him out (John 1: 29); and his preaching prepared the people to listen to the words of Jesus (John 3: 26-36). **27. My messenger**—(Luke 1: 15-17, 76; Mal. 3: 1; Isa. 40: 3. See also Matt. 11: 14). The prophet alludes to the custom of oriental monarchs, who sent heralds before them, when they were about to take a journey, to proclaim their coming, and put the roads in proper order. **28. Least in the kingdom of God**—We know more about Christ than John did; we enjoy more of the Holy Spirit, for he applies to us the benefits purchased by Christ; John was a servant, Christ has made us children of God's family (Rom. 8: 14-17); we belong to a new and brighter era in the history of redemption.

II. CHRIST CONDEMNING THE PEOPLE.
29—This verse and the next are not a continuation of Christ's discourse, but a comment added by Luke. **Justified God**—Those of John's disciples, including many publicans, who heard Jesus, declared that God's plan for saving men was the right one, and they accepted Him to whom John had pointed them, and for whose coming he had prepared them. (Matt. 3: 5; Luke 3: 12.) Read Ps. 51: 4; Rom. 3: 4. **30. Rejected for themselves the counsel of God**—They would not receive Him whom God had sent to take away the sin of the world, because they had not learned the lesson of repentance that John taught. They were too proud and self-right-

eous to accept such a Saviour as Jesus. **32. Children**—Jesus must have loved to watch children at play. This is the only place in the Bible where any game of theirs is referred to. They seem to have been playing at "wedding" and "funeral." One group complains that, do what they will, the others "won't play right." At the wedding they won't dance, and at the funeral they won't wail. So, Christ says, the Pharisees disliked the searching rebukes of John, for they did not feel that they were sinners; and they hated still more his own gracious teaching for it set no value upon their heartless, formal ceremonies. They said that John was possessed with a devil, and that Jesus was a bad man. **33. Neither eating bread nor drinking wine**—living a hermit's life, and dining on locusts and wild honey. Every day was a fast-day with him (Luke 18: 12). **34. A friend of publicans and sinners**—It was not true that Jesus ate and drank to excess, or that he companied with bad people because he was bad himself. But it is true that Jesus made himself a friend and companion of all so that he might turn them from sin to himself. The words they spoke in scorn are his proudest title now. **35. Wisdom**—Divine wisdom. Prov. 8 and 9; 1 Cor. 1: 23, 24. **Is justified of**—i. e. "at the hands of" her children. God's children approve of God's plan, whether carried out by John or by Jesus, and gratefully accept of the salvation offered. Those who, like the Pharisees and lawyers, "resist the counsel of God," show thereby that they are not God's children.

- 1—Why did John send his disciples to Jesus? (4)
- 2—In what sense was John greater than all other prophets? (4)
- 3—In what sense are Christians greater than John? (5)
- 4—Why did the Pharisees and lawyers reject Christ? (4)
- 5—To what does Christ compare those who rejected both John and him? (4)
- 6—Who are meant by the "children of wisdom"? (4)

Name

Dear Teacher.—Please excuse my absence from Sabbath School to-day, I cannot come because I have read the "Daily Portions" and answered the questions as well as I could. I have committed to memory verses in addition to the Golden Text, and Questions in the Catechism and have recited them to I was at church
 I send with this my Weekly Offering of cents.