

A.D. 29] LESSON VII. [Feb 12
JESUS AND THE LITTLE ONES.
Matt. 18. 1-14. Memory verses, 2-4

GOLDEN TEXT.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 19. 14.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Children's Friend.
2. The Sinner's Saviour.

TIME. - 29 A.D.

PLACE. - Capernaum.

RULERS. - Same as before.

CONNECTING LINKS. - After they had come down from the mountain Jesus and the twelve lingered yet a little time in the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi. The wonderful miracle that healed the lunatic boy once more astonished the assembled multitudes. Jesus still sought solitude. He resumed his journeyings, and remained in quiet in Galilee and Capernaum. He gave no public teaching, but still taught his disciples the great principles on which his kingdom was to be founded. Our lesson brings one of them prominently forward.

EXPLANATIONS. - Kingdom of heaven - Here used by the disciples concerning the expected earthly kingdom. Ye be converted - Turned directly about; become in all things exactly opposite to what you are. As little children - That is, humble, simple, innocent, and harmless. Kingdom of heaven - This time used by Jesus with reference to his true spiritual kingdom. Shall receive - That is, into spiritual fellowship. Shall offend - Cause to make a spiritual decline or to fall into sin. Their angels - A belief in guardian angels was at this time very common, and Jesus recognizes it in these words.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. The Children's Friend. What spirit was displayed by the disciples in their question in verse 1? Of whom were they evidently jealous? What new occasion had there been to give Peter prominence just before this time? What others were ambitious to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven? What was the doctrine which Christ now for the first time preached? What does the New Testament mean by one's "being converted"? How can one become as a little child? By what figure did Jesus teach a similar truth to Nicodemus? Does Jesus mean here that we ought to receive one little child in years, or one little child in spirit?
2. The Sinner's Saviour. What connection can you see between a little child and one who is lost? Who are lost? Are there any who are not? How does the parable show our Lord's wonderful mercy? What is the will of God concerning every human soul? If any are lost, whose will will be at fault? How does the doctrine of "predestination to condemnation" appear in the light of this lesson? What is the great purpose of Christ's coming? What are the great sins against which this lesson warns, and from which Christ would save us?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

The little child is simple, humble, joyous, pure in heart, happy, without care, artless, frank, and loving. Except we are such we cannot enter the kingdom.

The shepherd sought one lost sheep. So Christ seeks one lost soul. Is yours that one? God wills that we be saved; what do we will? Even he cannot save us if we will not.

W' a friend! He would save that which was lost. That is I. That is every "I" of the world. Are you lost, or found?

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Find out of this lesson proof that Christ did not make Peter greatest of the disciples when he said "upon this rock."
2. Write out your own idea of what verses 8 and 9 mean.
3. Find proof here for the doctrine that they who cause others to sin will receive penalty.
4. Apply this doctrine to the liquor traffic in all its phases: to those who apologize for it in any way, or who favour the use of intoxicating drink as a beverage.
5. Find where it is taught that God's watchful care extends to the least of his creatures.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What does the disciples' question show that they expected? An earthly kingdom of heaven. 2. What does Christ's answer teach concerning human ambition? That it cannot enter heaven. 3. What must every citizen of this kingdom be like? Like a simple, artless child. 4. Who does Christ declare will be the greatest in his kingdom? He who is most childlike. 5. What reason did Jesus give for desiring the children of the people to follow and to hear him? "Jesus said, Suffer little children," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION - Humility.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

9. Have believers an internal evidence that Christ came from God? They have, according to their faith, the witness and the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. John xiv. 20; 1 John iv. 13; Gal. v. 22, 23.

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