

For the Sabbath School.

International S.S. Lesson.

LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 10—1 Peter i. 1-12.

THE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Col. i. 12.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The child of God inherits from his Father, his care, his love, his nature, his possessions and his home.

DATE.—The First Epistle of Peter was written A.D. 64 and 67, during the great persecution of Nero.

PLACE.—It was written at Babylon, v. 13.

TO WHOM.—To Christians in the northern portion of Asia Minor.

LANGUAGE.—The Greek.

THE OCCASION.—Silvanus, that is, Silas, probably the companion of Paul in his second great missionary journey, had brought tidings to Peter of the fiery persecutions of the disciples in this region.

TREASURES.—i. 4, 5, 16, 18, 19, 24, 25, ii. 7, 11, 17, 24, iii. 10-12; iv. 12, 13, 18; v. 7, 8.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—"Peter an apostle of Jesus," Luke vi. 13. "Strangers," sojourners in a strange land. "Scattered,"—"of the dispersion," the name given to the Jews who dwelt in foreign lands. "Pontus," etc., countries of Asia Minor. 3. "Blessed," praised, honoured. "Lively," living; "by the resurrection," since without the resurrection it could not be proved that Jesus was the Son of God, or that there is immortal life. 4. "An inheritance," coming to us because God is our Father. We do not earn it or deserve it. "Reserved," preserved. Salvation ready to be revealed, to be shown, made known to us. "In the last time," at the close of the present dispensation. 10. "The prophets have.....searched," diligently. The prophets foretold Jesus Christ, and the whole scheme of the Jewish religion pointed to Him.

SUBJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND SPECIAL REPORTS.—The apostle Peter.—The First Epistle of Peter.—Elect.—Grace multiplied.—A lively hope.—The inheritance of the saints.—The trial of our faith.—"Whom having not seen, ye love."—Salvation.—"Which things the angels desire to look into."

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What can you tell about the apostle Peter? How many letters have we that he wrote? When and where was the first one written? To whom? What was the occasion of it? By whom was it sent? What are some of the choicest passages in it?

SUBJECT: THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS.

I. **THE GREETING** (vs. 1, 2).—When was Peter chosen an apostle (Luke vi. 13)? Where are the countries named in verse 1? Why were the Jews in these countries called strangers? Could St. Peter have included all Christians, according to Hebrews xi. 9, 10, 14, 16? Why are Christians called "elect"? To what are they chosen? What is referred to by "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus"? Heb. ix. 13, 14; xii. 24. What did St. Peter wish for these Christians? What was to be multiplied? How can they be so increased?

II. **THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS** (vs. 3, 4).—Whose children are all true Christians? How do they become such (John iii. 3, 5; Rom. viii. 14)? What is a "lively hope"? How does it come through the resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. xv. 13-19)? (See Lesson 6.) What follows if we are God's children (Rom. viii. 17)? What do the children inherit from their parents? What do God's children inherit from Him? What is said of this inheritance in verse 4? What further knowledge have we of it? 1 Cor. ii. 9; Rev. xxi. 22. How does it differ from earthly inheritance? When can it be ours? Can we have foretastes of it here?

III. **PREPARATIONS FOR THIS INHERITANCE** (vs. 5-12).—

For whom is this inheritance? How may we know whether we are children of God (1 John i. 3, 4; iii. 3, 10, 24)? Why can no others obtain it? How does 'the trial of faith' prepare us for it? What is the object of trying gold in the fire? In what respect is the trial of our faith like this? What are some of the fires that try our faith?

How can we love one whom we have not seen? Why does believing bring joy? How great may our joy be? How does this prepare us for our inheritance?

Toward what did the prophets of old look? How do the angels show the greatness of Christ's salvation?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. There is no limit to the grace and peace from God.
2. It is an unspeakable blessing to be children of God.
3. Only children of God can be heirs of God.
4. We inherit from God His nature, His care, His love, His home, His possessions.
5. The inheritance of the saints is glorious beyond compare.
6. The hope of this inheritance enables us to triumph over trials and temptations.
7. That hope should be a living hope, bright, growing—ever with us.
8. The more precious anything is, the more important that it should be tried and purified.
9. The trial of faith tests it, purifies it, increases its value.
10. The salvation that angels desire to look into, it is great folly for us to reject.

Prayer Meeting Topic.

GENTLENESS. A Fruit of the Spirit. Eph. iv. 30, 32, Col. iii. 12-15.

Observe that in the second text the graces spoken of are presented as a garment in which true Christians the elect of God, are clothed, "Put on."

Look at the repetition in v. 12, mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering.

How gentle will anyone be who is clothed with all these graces.

Then look at the mutual intercourse of those who are so clothed, forbearing and forgiving whenever a quarrel arises, even as Christ forgave them.

Then v. 14, above them all, and the root of them all is charity or love.

Withal is the peace of God ruling in the heart, v. 15, a peace which can only be experienced and enjoyed with thankfulness when this love, which is the bond of perfectness, is possessed.

The companion text from Ephesians enjoins the putting away of some sins which goes with the putting on of the graces—"put away" all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice and be kind and tender-hearted to each other.

How beautiful the character and the life of one who has not those sins and has these and graces. What gentleness!

And how charming would be society, even the society of the church, if all its members thus lived in mutual intercourse.

Let it be the aim of each and all of us so to do. To do otherwise is to grieve the Holy Spirit.

A SUPERFICIAL observer would decide at once that a thunderstorm was entitled to a much higher place among natural phenomena than a south wind or a dew. But he would be mistaken as to the comparative value of the two. We are apt to be deceived by the demonstrations of power which appeal most to the ears and eyes. On this principle most people would call quick and hot resentment of an indignity or wrong a greater exhibition of courage than silent and unresisting endurance of the same. But the same mistake would be made as in the former case. Resentment or impatience proves weakness, rather than strength, while the passion which does not condescend to notice that which irritates the ordinary mind, proves strength and elevation of character.—N. Y. Observer.