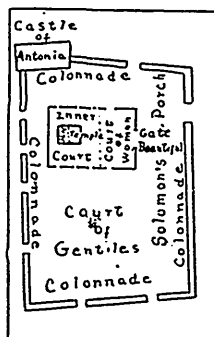


special and heinous kind of sin,—even this will be forgiven. **Blaspheme against the Holy Ghost**; who descended on Jesus at His baptism (Luke 3 : 22), and drove Him into the wilderness to be tempted (Mark 1 : 12), under whose power He began His ministry in Galilee (Luke 4 : 14), and through whom He cast out evil spirits, Matt. 12 : 28. If any one shall say, in spite of reason and conscience, that the work of the Holy Spirit is the work of Satan, he hath never forgiveness; not because God is unwilling to forgive, but because such an one is so set in sin that he cannot receive forgiveness. **Guilty of an eternal sin** (Rev. Ver.) ; a sin that can never be pardoned. Because they said, etc. ; said (see v. 22), knowing their words to be untrue—practically calling the Holy Spirit an unclean spirit.

III. JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES.—31-35. The story returns to the visit of Jesus' relatives (see vs. 20, 21). **Who is my mother, or my brethren?** Jesus does not belittle family ties, but places before them the bonds of duty and obedience which unite the children of the heavenly Father of whom He Himself is first and greatest.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



The temple Court of the Gentiles was free to any person. It covered a space exceeding fourteen acres, surrounding the other courts and the temple itself. Solomon's Porch (John 10 : 23) was here. Higher up was the Court of the Women. It was entered by the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3 : 2, 10) and contained "the treasury" (Luke 21 : 2). Beyond this court women were not allowed to go. Still higher was the Court of Israel, separated from

the Women's Court by a high wall. Here the worshiping Israelites stood when sacrifices were being offered in the Inner or Priest's Court, where the Great Laver and the Altar of Burnt Offering were kept (Luke 1 : 8-10). Still higher was the Holy Place.

LESSON QUESTIONS

20, 21 Whither had Jesus come? How great were the crowds that thronged Him? For what purpose did His relatives come to Him? What did they think had made Him "beside Himself?" Where was Paul told that he was "mad?" (Acts 26 : 24.)

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. For what purpose did Jesus' relatives come to Him?
2. What explanation did His enemies give of His casting out devils?
3. What sin did Jesus say can never be forgiven?

22, 23 Who came down from Jerusalem to Capernaum? With whom did they join? What were these plotting against Jesus? How did they explain His casting out evil spirits? (In what way did Jesus show that this explanation was absurd?)

24-27 By what two illustrations did Jesus show what would happen if Satan were to cast out evil spirits? Whom does the "strong man" of v. 27 represent? Explain "spoil his goods." By whom has Satan been conquered? Where is it said that God shall bruise Satan under the feet of Christians? (Rom. 16 : 20.)

28-30 What is it to blaspheme against the Holy Ghost? Why can that sin never be forgiven?

31-35 Who did Jesus say were His true relatives?

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Enthusiasm in our religion—is it reasonable?
2. When family ties and duty to God conflict, on what principles are we to decide what to do?

A LESSON FOR LIFE

Take a rope and tie your arm to your side. Leave the rope there long enough, refusing to employ the arm for its appointed purpose, and the time will come when you will be unable to lift it. Put a bandage on your eye and leave it there long enough, and the eye will lose its capacity to see. In like manner, the heart, through long refusal to repent and believe, may lose its power of repentance and faith. And when the power is gone, the heart cannot receive the forgiveness which God is so willing, yes, so eager, to bestow.

Prove from Scripture—That Satan is our enemy.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 21. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.

The Question on Missions—(Third Quarter, At School in Honan.)—1. What School Work is our Honan Mission doing? At Changte, Weihwei and Hwaiking, there are Boys' Primary Boarding Schools; at Changte and Weihwei, Girls' Primary Boarding Schools; at Weihwei, a Boys' High and Normal School; besides these, there are a few country day schools.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 7 (Supplemental Lesson); 100; 105; 17 (Ps. Sel.); 545 (from Primary Quarterly); 110. (These hymns may be practised at home during the week.)