

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

REVISED VERSION.

LESSON X.

Sep. 3, 1882.] [Mark 12: 23-44.]

LOVE TO GOD AND MEN. COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 29-31.

And one of the scribes came, and heard 28 them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God the Lord is one; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is, this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribes said unto him, Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that he is one; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any questions.

And Jesus answered and said, as he taught 35 in the temple, How say the scribes that the Christ is the son of David? David himself 36 said in the Holy Spirit,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

David himself calleth Lord; and whence is he 37 his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

And in his teaching he said, Beware of the 38 scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and to have salutations in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts; they which devour widows' 40 houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation.

And he sat down over against the treasury, 41 and beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a poor widow, 42 and she cast in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, 43 and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than all they which are casting into the treasury; for they 44 all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."—Deut. 6: 5.

TOPIC.—The Religion of the Heart.

LESSON PLAN.—1. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT. 2. THE SON OF DAVID. 3. THE HYPOCRITICAL SCRIBES. 4. THE WIDOW'S MITES.

Time.—Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30. Place.—Jerusalem, in the temple.

HELPS TO STUDY.

I. THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.—(23-31.) Parallel passage, Matt. 22: 34-40. Luke (10: 25-37) refers to another though similar occurrence. V. 28. THE FIRST COMMANDMENT—the most important. V. 29. JESUS ANSWERED HIM—he quoted Deut. 6: 4, 5. WITH ALL THY HEART, ETC.—God requires that we love him above all other beings or things, and with all our faculties. THE FIRST—the most important, as underlying all others. V. 31. THE SECOND—Lev. 19: 18. We are to love our neighbor, not in the same degree, but after the same manner, as ourselves. Love to God and love to man "is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13: 10. V. 33. MORE—more acceptable to God and more useful to the worshipper.

II. THE SON OF DAVID.—(35-37.) Parallel passages, Matt. 22: 41-46; Luke 20: 40-44. V. 35. THE SON OF DAVID—this was the common opinion, and it was true (Luke 1: 32; Rom. 1: 2), but not the whole truth. Jesus here proves that the Messiah was to be the Son of God. V. 36. DAVID HIMSELF SAID—Ps. 110: 1. THE LORD—Jehovah. UNTO MY LORD—the Messiah. As David is here the speaker, MY LORD means David's Lord. ON MY RIGHT HAND—the place of honor. This was a dignity to which no human being could attain. The Messiah was David's son by human birth, but David's Lord by his divine nature as the Son of God.

III. THE HYPOCRITICAL SCRIBES.—(38-40.) Parallel passages, Matt. 23: 1-39; Luke 20: 45-47. V. 38. BEWARE—do not catch their spirit. LONG CLOTHING—robes of office. Matt. 23: 5. SALUTATIONS—the low bowing in token of respect. MARKET PLACES—public places, where they would attract attention; V. 40. CHIEF SEATS—places of honor. UPPERMOST ROOMS—rather the upper or middle couch at meals, which was deemed the most honorable. V. 40. DEVOUR WIDOWS' HOUSES—robbing the poor and defenceless, and yet pretending to be very religious. LONG PRAYERS—they made great show of piety so as the better to carry on their villany.

IV. THE WIDOW'S MITES.—(41-44.) Parallel passage, Luke 21: 1-4. V. 41. OVER AGAINST THE TREASURY—there were thirteen brazen chests in the outer court of the temple to receive the money for the temple expenses. V. 42. TWO MITES—the smallest copper coins, worth about one-fifth of a cent of our money. V. 43. MORE... THAN ALL THEY—Jesus counts our offerings but notes especially the spirit in which they are made. A penny given in self-denial, love and worship is of more value in his sight than all the gold that is put in to be seen of men.

TEACHINGS:

- 1. Honest, earnest enquiry after truth is the first step toward the kingdom.
2. It is our duty to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves.
3. There is no true obedience without love.
4. Religion does not consist in long prayers and loud professions.
5. Giving our money should be a part of our worship.
6. A small gift may show a large heart.

REMEMBER that you may be very near the kingdom of heaven, and not in it. It is one thing to know the truth, and another thing to have it in the heart. Christ regards not our profession, but our practice: Show your faith in him as Lord of all by the obedience of love.

LESSON XI.

Sep. 10, 1882.] [Mark 13: 1-20.]

CALAMITIES FORETOLD. COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 9-11.

And as he went forth out of the temple, one 1 of his disciples saith unto him, Master, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings! And Jesus said unto him, 2 Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down.

And as he sat on the Mount of Olives over 3 against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are all to be accomplished? And Jesus began to say unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray. Many shall come in my name, 6 saying, I am he; and shall lead many astray. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled; these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. 8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines; these things are the beginning of travail.

But take ye heed to yourselves; for they 9 shall deliver you up to councils; and in synagogues shall ye be beaten; and before governors and kings shall ye stand for my sake, for a testimony unto them. And the gospel 10 must first be preached unto all the nations. And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. And 12 brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men 13 for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

But when ye see the abomination of desola- 14 tion standing where he ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains; and let 15 him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house; and let him that is in the field not return 16 back to take his cloak. But woe unto them 17 that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that it be not 18 in the winter. For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like 19 from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be. And 20 except the Lord hath shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened the days.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself."—Prov. 22: 3.

TOPIC.—The Disciples Forewarned.

LESSON PLAN.—1. JERUSALEM TO BE DESTROYED. 2. THE DISCIPLES TO SUFFER. 3. FLIGHT COMMANDED.

Time.—Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30, at the close of his public ministry. Places.—Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

HELPS TO STUDY.

I. JERUSALEM TO BE DESTROYED.—(1-3.) Parallel passages, Matt. 24: 1-3; Luke 21: 5-11. For events between this lesson and the last read John 12: 20-50. V. 1. WHAT MANNER OF STONES—the temple was one of the most magnificent buildings of ancient times. It was forty-six years in building (John 2: 20), and ten thousand skilled workmen were employed upon it. V. 2. When this prophecy was spoken, no event seemed more improbable. Yet within forty years it was literally fulfilled. Of the temple proper not a vestige remains. V. 4. ALL THESE THINGS—which he had predicted. V. 6. IN MY NAME—claiming to be the Messiah. V. 7. BE YE NOT TROUBLED—there will be nothing even in the last days to terrify God's people. V. 8. All these predictions were fulfilled in the time preceding the destruction of Jerusalem.

II. THE DISCIPLES TO SUFFER.—(9-13.) Parallel passages, Matt. 24: 9-14; Luke 21: 12-19. V. 9. TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES—be cautious that no man deceive you; or do not run into unnecessary danger. COUNCILS—Jewish courts. RULERS AND KINGS—Roman officers. FOR MY SAKE—because of your attachment to me. FOR A TESTIMONY AGAINST THEM—rather, as the Revised Version has it, "unto them," to be witnesses before them of the truth. V. 10. AMONG ALL NATIONS—this was literally fulfilled, so far as the world was then known, during the life-time of the apostles. V. 11. TAKE NO THOUGHT—have no anxiety. NEITHER DO YE PREMEDITATE—do not prepare your defence beforehand. THE HOLY GHOST—through you shall speak the right things in the right way. V. 12. All these sufferings were endured by the early Christians.

III. FLIGHT COMMANDED.—(14-20.) Parallel passages, Matt. 24: 15-22; Luke 21: 20-24. V. 14. THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION—generally understood to mean the eagles of the Roman standard. SPOKEN OF BY DANIEL—Dan. 9: 27; 12: 11. WHERE IT OUGHT NOT—encamped around Jerusalem. FLEE TO THE MOUNTAINS—the Christians in Judea remembered this direction and fled to Pella, over the mountains, in Perea, and were safe during all these days of horror. V. 15. HOUSETOP—flat, so that people often sat, walked and spent their nights upon them. TO TAKE ANYTHING—but flee by the shortest way and in the quickest manner. V. 18. WINTER—which would make it trying. The siege of Jerusalem began in the spring and ended before the winter. V. 20. SHORTENED—as compared with other sieges of ancient times, that of Jerusalem was very brief—only about five months. FOR THE ELECT'S SAKE—in mercy to God's believing people.

TEACHINGS:

- 1. Nations that dishonor God will be punished by him.
2. Men show their hatred of Christ by their hatred of his people.

3. Christians must enter the kingdom through much tribulation.
4. God directs all events for the good of his people.

REMEMBER that if you neglect your privileges they may be taken from you. Ask God to help you to improve them aright, and, while you thus pray, try to help yourself by the use of every means that he has given you. Your prayers of faith and your works of obedience must always go together.

"SET A WATCH."

BY HENRY A. PARKER.

A young girl was doing some copying for George. She had but recently begun to walk in the "new way," and was finding it a "way of pleasantness," and its paths "paths of peace." Conversation one day turned upon the harm often unconsciously done by good people who had not learned to bridle their tongues; and picking up a little card issued by the Young Men's Christian Association which lay upon the desk, she wrote around its margin those words of David which all Christians should ever keep in mind: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Five years passed, and often George looked at the words his young friend had written, and prayed earnestly that God would help him to so guard his speech that he might not dishonor his Master's cause by passing hasty and uncharitable judgment upon his neighbor, or be led into angry disputation; but he often found it to be no easy matter to be always watchful in this respect, for at times he was unconsciously led on to say things that afterward brought regrets, and re-resolves to do better.

George, at the time of the present writing, was employed in an office with a younger Christian brother, who belonged to the same church as himself. He had one day shown him an error in a piece of work upon which he was engaged, but which he immediately disputed. To every showing of George to the contrary, William insisted that his work was right as it stood, and he would not make the alteration. A warm controversy ensued, William still insisting that he was right, and that he would not make the proposed change.

Five minutes elapsed, when George, calm again, thought the matter over. It was well known by nearly all in the office that they were both professing Christians, and members of the same church. A dispute such as had happened sometimes ruptured a friendship for life. They could not afford to sever their friendship on so slight a provocation, nor show to their associates that there was no distinction between the feelings and actions of Christians and worldly people. As for himself he had tried to "show his colors" amid his daily duties, and his influence had more than once been felt. He could not let this matter rest as it was. William was wrong, and he was right; but for Christ's sake he would take the first step toward a reconciliation. And so, rising from his chair, and going to the farther end of the office, George placed his hand on William's shoulder, and said,

"Suppose we let this matter drop right where it is. We cannot afford to sever our friendship by such a trifle. Let it be between us as though nothing had happened. We should neither of us want to let an unchristian spirit be shown to those around us in the office."

It was not too hard for George to take this step, for he had been schooling himself for years in the valley of humiliation, and had learned to know what it was to "turn the other cheek also."

Oh, what bitter, unsatisfying animosities, often of years' standing, might be quickly healed by a trifling, if humiliating, concession on the part of many Christians!

William was impulsive and quick-tempered, and was often in a quarrel of words with those around him; yet he had generous impulses, and more than once had come to George and spoken of his grief at his folly. Turning to him at the present moment, he said,

"I was wrong about that. I saw it afterward, and followed your suggestion and made the alteration. I am sorry I spoke as I did."

A half-hour afterward the two were chatting together—undoubtedly to the surprise of some—as though they had never had a shade of difference. A silent battle had been fought, and a victory won. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

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