

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1880, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON II.

APRIL 11.]

THE INVITATION OF CHRIST. Matt. 11: 20-30.

[About A. D. 28.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 27-30.

20. Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21. Woe unto thee, Cho-ra-zin! woe unto thee, Beth-sa-i-da! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Si-don, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Si-don at the day of judgment, than for you.

23. And thou, Ca-per-na-um, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sod-om, it would have remained until this day.

24. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sod-om in the day of judgment than for you.

25. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.—Matt. 11: 28.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Christ is the refuge for the helpless.

NOTES.—CHO-RA-ZIN, "district of Zin," one of the towns on the Sea of Galilee, the site of which is uncertain, although the weight of authority seems to favor modern Kerazeh as the place. BETH-SA-I-DA, "house of fishing," a city on the north-western shore of Galilee, where Philip, Andrew, and Peter once resided. This city was blessed by the visits of Jesus, and was the scene of some of his miracles. TYRE AND SI-DON—the former means a "rock," the latter a "fishery"—two Phœnician towns on the Mediterranean (See Ezek. chs. 26, 27, 28.) CA-PER-NA-UM, "city of comfort," a city on the north-west side of the Sea of Galilee, and one of the most interesting localities of the Bible. Once a thriving town, the prophecy of the Saviour has been so literally fulfilled that even its exact site is now disputed. SO-DOM, "burning." All that is known concerning this lost city is found in the Bible. (See Gen., chs. 18, 19.)

COME UNTO ME.

WEARY, SINFUL, EEPING, CORROWFUL, OUNDED, OFFERING, RETCHED, AD,

I WILL GIVE YOU REST.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) A DIVINE UPBRAIDING. (II.) A DIVINE THANKSGIVING. (III.) A DIVINE INVITATION.

I. A DIVINE UPBRAIDING. (20-23.) THEN, doubtless at the close of Jesus' last visit to these cities; UPBRAID, severely rebuke; THE CITIES, the inhabitants of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum; MIGHTY WORKS, miracles; REPENTED NOT, rejected his teachings; WOE, a scathing prophecy; SACKCLOTH AND ASHES, tokens of deep sorrow and grief; MORE TOLERABLE, because the cities had greater opportunities; DAY OF JUDGMENT (see Matt. 25: 31, 46); EXALTED UNTO HEAVEN, by the presence and works of Jesus; TO HELL, to the lowest depths, literally, "Hades;" REMAINED, would have remained through its repentance.

II. A DIVINE THANKSGIVING. (25-27.) AT THAT TIME, probably at the return of the seventy (see Luke 10: 17-22); I THANK THEE, Jesus himself is grateful for the wonderful plan of redemption; LORD, "not his Lord, but Lord of heaven and earth"—(Lange); HID, not spiritually discerned; THESE THINGS, the divine nature of Christ and his spiritual kingdom; WISE AND PRUDENT, worldly wise; BABES, the followers of Christ, despised by Pharisees; SEEMED GOOD, it seemed right to the infinite Mind; ALL THINGS, the Son equal in wisdom and power to the Father; DELIVERED, not "revealed;" NO MAN, God's plans and purposes not comprehended by finite minds; WHOMSOEVER, "if any of you lack," etc. (see James 1: 5); THE SON, will reveal to all who ask in faith.

III. A DIVINE INVITATION. (28-30.) COME, a loving word of invitation, as clear and sweet as it was when it fell from divine lips; ME, who but Jesus could thus invite? ALL, every condition, class, color, age; LABOR... HEAVY LADEN, the load of sin heavy and hard to carry; GIVE, free; YOU, every individual invited; REST, from guilt, sin, fear, distress—rest from every burden; TAKE, the gift must be accepted; MY YOKE, indicates service; LEARN OF ME, follow

my example; MEEK AND LOWLY, how light when compared with pride and vanity! FIND REST, that for which all are seeking; EASY, his service is delightful; BURDEN IS LIGHT, duty becomes pleasure.

LESSON III.

APRIL 12.]

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

Matt. 13: 20-30; 37-43.

[About A. D. 28.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 40-43.

24. Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28. He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29. But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also wheat with them.

30. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

37. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38. The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

39. The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The harvest is the end of the world.—Matt. 13: 39.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God will distinguish between the righteous and the wicked.

INTRODUCTORY.—This lesson is from the "parable chapter" in Matthew—a chapter in which are grouped together seven parables of our Lord, which bear a close and progressive relation to each other. But while they may have all been given the same day, they were not all spoken at the same time, nor is it likely that they were given in the order that Matthew has recorded them. What a beautiful picture is presented in the scene of the giving of these parables! Imagine a quiet, sunny day, Jesus with a few of his disciples seated in a ship on the still waters of Galilee, a short distance from the shore, on which were gathered the multitudes, while on the distant mountain-slope may have been seen husbandmen scattering seed.

NOTES.—PARABLE: "The parable is a brief narration of natural or earthly things, so constructed as to represent spiritual or heavenly truths to the mind. No compositions in human language so forcibly trace the analogies of nature and grace as the parables of our Lord. The sacred parable was a wonderful vehicle of truth to serve three distinct purposes—namely, to reveal, to conceal, and to perpetuate. It revealed the sacred truth by the striking power of analogy and illustration. It concealed the truth from him who had not by proper sympathy, or previous instruction, the true key to its hidden meaning. To such a one it was a riddle or a tale. But the truth thus embodied in narrative was, as it were, materialized, and made fit for perpetuation. It had a form and body to it, by which it could be preserved in tangible shape for future eyes."—Whedon.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE PARABLE. (II.) THE EXPLANATION.

I. THE PARABLE. (24-30.) THEM, the multitudes on the shore; KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, the spiritual kingdom, Christ's reign in the earth; A MAN, the sower the Messiah; GOOD SEED, incorruptible (1 Pet. 1: 23), the word of God; HIS FIELD, Christ's; WHILE MEN SLEPT, at night; ENEMY, the devil; TARES, a wild weed, so closely resembling wheat in its early stages as not to be easily detected; WICKED MEN; WHEAT, good men; THEN TARES ALSO, not distinguished till the fruit appears; HOUSEHOLDER, sower, owner; SIR... FROM WHENCE, astonishment; AN ENEMY, out of malice and revenge; WILT... WE... GATHER, shall we destroy the wicked? NAY, not God's plan; LEST, the good will be endangered; WHEAT WITH THEM, roots of tares and wheat closely entwined; HARVEST, at death, end of the world to each individual; REAPERS, angels; GATHER... FIRST TARES... WHEAT, the separation will then be made. God alone is Judge.

II. THE EXPLANATION. (37-43.) THEM, the disciples, after the multitude had been sent away; SON OF MAN, Jesus, both human and divine, both the seed and the sower; WORLD, not the Church; CHILDREN, the followers of Christ, Christians; OF THE WICKED, slaves to Satan, sinners; DEVIL (see 1 Pet. 5: 8), Satan; THE END, with each individual at death; TARES... BURNED, useless; SO, an impressive word in this connection; ALL THINGS THAT OFFEND, the causes of evil; THEM THAT DO INIQUITY, evil persons; FURNACE OF FIRE, place of punishment for the wicked; WAILING... GNASHING, intense anguish and woe; THEN, after the banish-

ment of the wicked; SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN (Dan. 12: 3); KINGDOM... FATHER, in glory; WHO... HEAR, a warning that we all should heed.

TWO SOWERS.

Deceitful, Envious, Vile, Iniquitous, Liar,

Just, Excellent, Spotless, Undeified, Saviour,

TWO CLASSES.

Troublesome, Abominable, Rebellious, Evil, Sinful,

Worthy, Holy, Exalted, Active, Triumphant,

SIXTEEN THOUSAND INCREASE.

Every day the number of subscribers to the NORTHERN MESSENGER grows larger. Now it has the immense circulation of FIFTY-SEVEN THOUSAND copies, an increase of above fifteen thousand over last year. If this proportion of increase is kept up during the remainder of the year the number of subscribers to the MESSENGER will be at least SEVENTY thousand. At present, counting five readers to each paper, which is below the average number, the MESSENGER is read by two hundred and eighty-five thousand persons all over North America. How far this number may be increased during the summer is difficult to say; but the spring and summer is the very best time for the young folks, and they have undertaken to work for the MESSENGER, and whatever they undertake succeeds. We therefore will not make any guesses this time at the probable result, but hope that it will be beyond all expectations.

A FEW WORDS FROM WORKERS.

Perhaps every worker who sent in a few names during the year is astonished at the results of the work of the whole. There are few who can realize the amount of work required to get fifteen thousand subscribers to any paper, but that number was added to the MESSENGER last year. There are three reasons for this:—the workers have worked better than ever, the times are better than they have been for some years, and the MESSENGER is more attractive than ever. This year's prizes were also remarkably successful in giving satisfaction as is shown by the following letters:

DEAR SIR,—I received my present (the Testament). I think it is the best little book that ever was. It is a great deal better than I expected it would be, but the NORTHERN MESSENGER is the best paper in the world. I am well pleased since it is changed; it makes it better to look at. I could not get any more names this season, but I will try my best to get some before long. Would it do to send any new subscribers now? I was away when your letter came, so I could not write till I came home. I am, yours truly, GEO. G. JENNINGS.

Certainly, it would do to send subscriptions now. We expect to do great things this summer.

DEAR SIR,—My object in sending for some copies of the MESSENGER is in order to put it in the hands of the superintendent in connection with our Sabbath-school, in the hope that some of the children and parents who take an interest in its welfare may subscribe toward it for their own edification. I am quite familiar with it. I read it for a number of years in my last field of labor, and I would only consider it a favor to be able to recommend it to my people. However, our Sabbath-school is not open in the winter on account of the inclemency of the weather and state of the roads, which should make it a very welcome visitor to our homes.

Yours respectfully, GEORGE MCKAY. Kennear's Mills, P. O. Leeds; Quebec. March 8th, 1880.

DEAR SIR,—* * * This lot with the six names I sent you before New Year makes ten new subscribers, and you sent me, oh, such a beautiful Bible! I cannot get any new subscribers for the WITNESS here because everybody who knows anything takes it already, and father says I have done very well for wee mite of a girl only seven years old. Your little friend and reader,

HENRIETTA AIRTH.

SIR,—I received the portraits of the Princess and Marquis, and I am very much pleased with them; they are much nicer than I expected they would be.

J. H. PORTER.

GENTLEMEN,—Thanks for the Testament, which I received in due time. It is very nice and I am well pleased with it. I like working for your paper very much, and I should have got another subscriber but almost every person in our neighborhood takes the MESSENGER and it is hard to get new subscribers.

ANNIE M. RONSOM.

SIR,—I send you the names of four new subscribers for NORTHERN MESSENGER—part of the pupils of my class in the Sunday-school. I send for the papers at my own expense as I wish to do all the good I can in such a good work and try to circulate the paper in our neighborhood. I think good literature one of the best things we can present to our friends.

MISS ANNIE STAPLETON.

DEAR SIR,—I received the cut glass ink-bottle safe, and am very much pleased with it, and thank you very much for sending it. I like my pretty wee ink-bottle far better than the album and penholder.

ANNIE HOWITT.

SIR,—I was very highly pleased with the fine picture I received of the Princess Louise as a premium for getting up a club. Thanks to you for it. I will try and get a larger one next time.

Yours, with respect, GERTIE S. BOYD, aged 11.

SIR,—I have received the picture of the Marquis of Lorne, for which I am very much pleased, and for which I return you many thanks.

Yours truly, JOHN McQUEEN.

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