

Lesson VI.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

May 10, 1914

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—The parable of the Unjust Steward was spoken to the disciples, perhaps immediately after the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Prodigal Son were spoken to the Pharisees and scribes.

GOLDEN TEXT—He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much : and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much.—Luke 16 : 10 (Rev. Ver.).

Memorize vs. 8, 9. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Luke 16 : 1-13.

1 And he said also unto ¹ his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward ; and the same was accused unto him that he ² had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, ³ How is it that I hear this of thee ? ⁴ Give an account of thy stewardship ; for thou ⁵ mayest be no longer steward.

3 ⁶ Then the steward said within himself, What shall I ⁷ do ? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship : I cannot dig ; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 ⁸ So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord ?

6 And he said, ⁹ An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy ¹⁰ bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou ? And he said, ¹¹ An hundred measures of wheat.

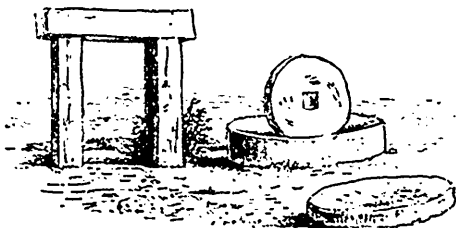
8 And he said unto him, Take thy ¹² bill, and write

Revised Version—¹ the disciples ; ² was wasting ; ³ What is this that I hear of thee ; ⁴ render the account ; ⁵ canst ; ⁶ And the ; ⁷ do, seeing that my lord taketh away the stewardship from me ? I have not strength to dig ; ⁸ And calling to him each one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first ; ⁹ A ; ¹⁰ bond ; ¹¹ He saith ; ¹² his lord ; ¹³ unrighteous ; ¹⁴ sons ; ¹⁵ for their own generation, wiser than the sons of the light ; ¹⁶ by means of ; ¹⁷ it shall fail ; ¹⁸ the eternal tabernacles ; ¹⁹ a very little is ; ²⁰ unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also ; ²¹ another's, who will give ; ²² Omit the.

Daily Readings—(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)—M.—The unjust steward, Luke 16 : 1-13. T.—Faithfulness required, 1 Cor. 4 : 1-5. W.—"As to the Lord," Col. 3 : 16-25. Th.—Forgiving an unfaithful steward, 2 Sam. 19 : 16-23. F.—A faithful steward, 1 Sam. 12 : 1-5. S.—A faithful steward honored, Gen. 41 : 38-46. S.—Gehazi, an unjust steward, 2 Kgs. 5 : 20-27.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. THE PARABLE.—1, 2. **Unto his disciples.** The parables of ch 15 (see Between the Lessons) had been spoken to the Pharisees and scribes. **Rich man.**



ANCIENT OIL MILL AND PRESS

His wealth would consist in land, with its products, flocks, herds and slaves. A steward ; the manager of the estate, whose owner likely lived in a town. It was the steward's business to admit and dismiss tenants ; to value their land and produce ; and to fix, collect and sell their rents, for in the East, in our Lord's day, as often in our own, rents were paid, not in money, but in produce. Accused ; by some enemy. Wasting (Rev. Ver.) ; by neglect and luxurious living, not actual dishonesty. Render the account (Rev. Ver.) ; the final account of all that had been under his care. No longer steward. It

four score.

8 And ¹² the lord commended the ¹³ unjust steward, because he had done wisely : for the ¹⁴ children of this world are ¹⁵ in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends ¹⁶ of the mammon of unrighteousness ; that, when ¹⁷ ye fail, they may receive you into ¹⁸ everlasting habitations.

10 He that is faithful in ¹⁹ that which is least is faithful also in much : and he that is ²⁰ unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches ?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is ²¹ another man's, who shall give you that which is your own ?

13 No servant can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other ; or else he will hold to ²² the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

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would be impossible for any owner to keep such a servant.

3, 4. **Not strength to dig** (Rev. Ver.). In Eastern farming the hoe or mattock is used instead of the plow where there is a rocky bottom with only a thin covering of soil and on the hillsides. The steward was not fitted for such manual labor. **To beg . . . ashamed.** Beggars were numerous in Palestine, owing to the lack of any system for the relief of the poor, the prevalence of blindness and the poverty caused by the oppressive taxes of the Romans. Begging, however, was regarded as disgraceful. **They ; the "debtors" of v. 5. Receive me ;** because of the liberal treatment to be given to them.

5-8. **Debtors ;** probably tenants in arrears with rent. **Measures** (the Hebrew "bath" containing from 8 to 9 gallons) of oil. Olive oil was one of the chief products of Palestine, and the rent of an olive yard producing 1,000 measures might be 100 measures. **Bond** (Rev. Ver.) ; literally, "writings," the documents containing the tenant's agreement, perhaps with a statement of the rent paid and that still due. **Measures** (the Hebrew "cor" equal to about 10 bushels) of wheat. A farm yielding 1,000 measures might pay 100 measures in rent. **His lord** (Rev. Ver.) ; that is, the "rich man" of v. 1. **Commended ;** not the steward's dishonesty, but his wisdom. **Sons of this world** (Rev. Ver.) ; worldly people. For