

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Vs. 20, 21 and 31-35 come in, in the Gospel story, immediately after the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 4 : 25 to 8 : 1. Vs. 22-30 belong to a time some months after the last Lessons, the intervening events being a preaching tour of Jesus amongst the towns of Galilee (Luke 8 : 1-3), and the healing of a man possessed by an evil spirit, who was both blind and dumb.

GOLDEN TEXT—This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.—John 3 : 19.

*Memorize vs. 28, 29. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Mark 3 : 20-35. Read Matthew 12 : 22-50

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his friends heard ¹ of it, they went out to lay hold on him : for they said, He is beside himself.

22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out ² devils.

23 And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Sa'tan cast out Sa'tan ?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house ³ cannot stand.

26 And if Sa'tan ⁴ rise up against himself, and ⁵ be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 ⁶ No man can enter into ⁷ a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he ⁸ will first bind the strong man ; and then he will spoil his house.

Revised Version—¹ Omit of ; ² the ; ³ will not be able to ; ⁴ hath risen up ; ⁵ is ; ⁶ But no one can ; ⁷ the house of the strong man ; ⁸ Omit will ; ⁹ their ; ¹⁰ but whosoever shall ; ¹¹ Spirit ; ¹² guilty of an eternal sin ; ¹³ And there came his mother and his brethren ; ¹⁴ they sent ; ¹⁵ a ; ¹⁶ was sitting ; ¹⁷ say ; ¹⁸ answereth them, and saith ; ¹⁹ and ; ²⁰ looking round on them ; ²¹ round about ; ²² he saith, Behold ; ²³ Omit my.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—Malignant unbelief, Mark 3 : 20-35. T.—The unpardonable sin, Matt. 12 : 22-33. W.—Unbelief rebuked, Matt. 12 : 35-42. Th.—"They believed not", Ps. 106 : 7-25. F.—The saying of Etais, John 12 : 37-43. S.—"Take heed", Heb. 3 : 12-19. S.—Life through believing, John 3 : 11-21.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. JESUS AND HIS RELATIVES.—20, 21.

The Rev. Ver. puts the last clause of v. 19 into v. 20, and translates : "And He cometh into a house", probably that in which Jesus made His home in Capernaum (compare Matt. 4 : 13).

The multitude . . . again ; as in ch. 2 : 1, 2. Mark gives us a picture of the rush of Jesus' ministry—surging crowds, blocked streets, crowded doorways, no

leisure for Jesus and His disciples to eat bread, not to speak of rest and sleep. **His friends** ; His family. **Lay hold on him** ; to protect Him against Himself. **He is beside himself** ; insane. His enthusiasm in doing good, they thought, had become dangerous to His health both of mind and body.

II. JESUS AND HIS ENEMIES.—22, 23. Scribes ; official teachers of the law and religious leaders of the people. **Down from Jerusalem** ; "down" as from the capital. **Said**. They joined with the Capernaum Pharisees (v. 6) in their murderous plans against Jesus. **He hath Beelzebub** ; literally "Fly-god", a name which the Jews gave to the prince of the devils, sometimes changing it, to show their contempt, into

Beelzebub or "Fifth-god." In parables ; proving His point by illustrations from the experiences of every day life. **Satan** ("The Adversary", a name for the devil) cast out Satan ? If Satan were to cast out the evil spirits who were doing his work, he would be fighting against himself.

24-27. **A kingdom** ; such as those existing amongst men. **Divided against itself** ; having within it different factions fighting one another, instead of uniting against outside foes. **Cannot stand** ; but will be destroyed by its own divisions. **A house** ; that is, a family. **Divided** ; one working against the other. If a divided kingdom or family on earth cannot stand, no more can the kingdom or family formed by Satan and his subjects stand, if there is division and dissension in it. **Satan rise up against himself**. That is what would happen, if Satan were to use Jesus for casting out devils, as our Lord's enemies charge. **Hath an end** ; as a king. Thus Jesus shows how absurd it was to say that He who came to destroy Satan's power, was in league with him. **Strong man's house**. The strong man represents Satan. His house is the world of sin, into which Jesus entered. **Spoil his goods** ; "plunder his tools", the evil spirits used by Satan in his work. **Bind the strong man** ; having conquered him in the fight. Jesus conquered Satan, Matt. 4 : 1-11.

28-30. **Verily** ; a word introducing an important and solemn statement. **All sins shall be forgiven** ; so wide and free is the mercy of God. **Unto the sons of men** ; all mankind, of every class and country. **Blasphemies** ; speech insulting to the divine Majesty—



JEWISH SCRIBE