

poor neighbor, Trust-in-God, is in no such bondage. Does he need food? He looks up to the birds singing amid the trees. They own no fields. They have no sickles. They pile no sheaves of grain in the barns. They have had their breakfast notwithstanding. Trust-in-God looks higher than the branches of the trees. He sees a great loving hand reaching down from the sky. It sprinkles the earth with seed, and the birds fly down. "I will do my duty, in God's strength, and look to my heavenly Father for food," says Trust-in-God. His clothes are thin. The wind pierces him through those rents in his armor. He looks abroad upon the fields. The white lilies are there. They have no loom in which to weave their drapery of snow. They

have only stood up and taken day by day the rain and the sunshine God has sent them. He has clothed the lilies with loveliness. Trust-in-God thinks of Solomon, of his purple robes, of his golden diadem. The beauty of the lily is greater than the glory of the king. He looks upon the grass of the field. "Only for a day!" he thinks. It will be flame to-morrow, leaping skyward, and gone forever, and yet God clothes it with what grace of form and paints it with what emerald beauty! "If I do my daily duty, in his strength, will he not care for my need?" Trust-in-God murmurs.

He says this to-day, looking across the strip of field before him, green with the grace of white-fringed with the lilies, and trusts God for the morrow.

A. D. 28.]

## LESSON XI. GOLDEN PRECEPTS.

[Sept. 11.]

Matt. 7. 1-12. [Commit to memory verses 7-11.]



1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither

cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

## General statement.

In the Sermon on the Mount, there are two underlying principles out of which grow all its precepts. One principle is that God is our Father, the other, that men are our brothers. Every-where these two great facts are assumed, and the commands of the discourse are based upon them. All men are our brothers, hence we should cherish a brotherly regard, and hold a gentle, lenient view of their characters. We should scrutinize our own faults with greater severity than those of others, and seek for that clearness of moral and spiritual vision which casts out our own sin, and thereby is able to extend a helping hand to our fellow-sinners. vs. 1-5. Yet in our judgments of others we must be

discriminating and not blind; we should not give divine truths to those who will despise them. v. 6. God is our Father, loving us with more than a Father's love, and as a Father always ready to hear and answer our prayers. As a loving father would not cheat his hungry son by giving him a stone for a loaf of bread, nor harm him by giving him for food a poisonous snake instead of a fish; so God will never refuse to answer our prayer, but will give unto us the best things which we are capable of receiving. vs. 7-11. Therefore, being the children of God, we should be like our heavenly Father, and give to men in the same spirit in which we would receive from men. v. 12.

## Explanatory and Practical Notes.

**Verse 1. Judge not.** The word in the original is expressive of a judgment that is irrevocably fixed, a settled conclusion. The precept does not forbid opinions, but refers to hasty and uncharitable judgments upon the character of others. That ye be not judged, neither by your fellow-man nor by God, to whom every man must give account for his unjust judgment upon others. (1) *God holds us responsible for every thought as well as for every act.*

**2. Ye shall be judged.** He who is kind in his estimates of others will be kindly judged by others; and he who is harsh will receive severity. It does not mean that if we judge others unjustly God will judge us in the same way, though he who is uncharitable and censorious will have to answer for it hereafter. **With what measure.** As Haman was hanged upon the gallows which he had made for Mordecai. See also the story of Adoni-bezek. Judg. 1. 7.

**3. Beholdest thou.** The verb means "to stare at," as in a close inspection. **The mote.** Literally, "a speck of chaff;" figuratively, a little fault. **The beam.** Figuratively, some great fault. In reality, the particle of dust which would scarcely be seen in the eye of another, becomes a "beam," blinding the vision in our own eye. But in ordinary life, people can readily see the minute defects in others, while they are unconscious of fatal errors in themselves. (2) *Those who judge others most severely are apt to judge themselves most leniently.*

**4. How wilt thou say.** As often the unkind judgment is concealed under the cloak of friendship. *Let me pull out the mote.* Whether it be the act of a friend or of an enemy to remind another of his faults depends entirely upon the spirit in which the information is given. **A beam is in thine own eye.** Not that only the perfect man should offer a criticism to his brother-man, but that we should watch ourselves as well as our neighbors. (3) *Offer the gift to see ourselves, not as others see us, but as we ourselves see others.*

**5. Thou hypocrite.** A term justly applied to the one who is more zealous to reform others than himself. **First cast out the beam.** The man who can help the brother man to reform must first reform himself. First, because to every man the purity of his own character is of the highest importance; and secondly, because only he who has conquered the evil of his own heart and life knows how to encourage another one to overcome it. Then shalt thou see clearly. In matters of character and of religion, clearness of vision can come only from purity of heart. **To cast out the mote.** To correct the faults of others is the most delicate of all duties, and the one which requires the clearest moral vision. (4) *Let us be on our guard against self-censorship, against self-parity, against censoriousness.* (5) *Let us be delicate in our dealing with the sins of others.*

**5. Give not.** After the exhortation to gentleness in judgments, and the warning against censoriousness.