

Sabbath School Lessons.

July 19th 1863.

LIFE AND DEATH PROPOSED.

Deut. xxxii, 1, 43.

1. MERCY PROMISED TO THE PENITENT.

Call them to mind. The blessing and the curse. Consideration is one of the first steps in repentance. Thus the prodigal in the parable, came to himself, he considered his present position; the many comforts enjoyed by the meanest servants in his father's house, in which, from his knowledge of his father's goodness, he still hoped on returning to share. *Obeys his voice.* True repentance is always followed by obedience. *With all thine heart.* This obedience must be internal. God must be obeyed in thought as well as in word and deed. It must be universal:—God will not share the heart and soul with sin. *Gather these from all the nations.* One of the Chaldee paraphrasts applies this to the Messiah. God's covenant with Christ was that he should restore the preserved of Israel. Isa. xlix 6; this was the design of his death, to gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad," Jno. xi. 51, 52: to him shall the gathering of the people be. This prophecy was fulfilled in the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity; it will have a still more striking and more glorious fulfillment when the Jews return to their God in obeying the gospel.

2. THE COMMANDMENT EASY.

This commandment is not hidden from thee. Their duty to God and each other was clearly revealed in the precepts of the moral law. *It is not in heaven.* They needed not hence a further revelation of the will of God: the light they had was amply sufficient for their guidance. *The word is in thy mouth and in thy heart.* This is especially applicable to the moral law, which however obscured, obliterated by sin, is written in the heart of every man. The apostle applies this passage to the gospel of Christ, and makes it the language of the righteousness which is by faith Rom. x. 6. 8. The law was plain and easy, but the Gospel is much more so.

3. LIFE AND DEATH.

Life and good, death and evil. These are inseparably connected.

Moses first shows them the benefits which they would receive by loving and obeying God, and in case they should fail to attract, he, as a faithful preacher discloses to them the fearful consequences of disobedience.—

This also is the purport of the New Testament; "he that believes shall be saved; he that believes not shall be damned."

Learn 1. *The mercy of God.* None so great a sinner that he need despair of grace; Isa. i. 18. No sin so great that the blood of Jesus cannot wash it away; 1 Jno. i. 7. Repentance is not the cause but the effect of God's mercy. His mercy draws the sinner to Christ, his mercy keeps the sinner in Christ; and his mercy reclaims the backsliding, working in them that godly sorrow for sin, that "repentance which is not to be repented of."

2. *That the easiness of the command should induce us to obey.* What is it that God requires of us for our salvation and his own glory, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Acts xvi. 31; faith in his love—faith in his power—faith in his willingness to save.

3. *How foolish are those who prefer death to life.* Yet the Bible informs us that the many do so, Matt. vii. 13, and the divine testimony is confirmed by all Christian experience. Man's judgment is perverted in sin—his understanding darkened, and all would make the foolish choice, were it not for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

July 26th. 1863.

THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAC

MATT. XVII. 14. 21.

The event described in the lesson took place immediately after the transfiguration. The Lord Jesus did not tarry long on the mount of Olives. His communion with Moses and Elias was very short. He soon returned to His accustomed work of doing good to a sin-stricken world.

The period of Christ's descent was early morning. As they descended from the mountain they found a crowd, gathered round the other disciples, and the Scribes engaged questioning them. Either surprised at his sudden, or unusual appearance the multitude ran to meet him.

THE FATHER TOLD HIS SON'S STORY.

He told how he had been brought to his disciples, but they could not cure him. The father fell on his knees, and implored Christ's aid. When Christ told him that faith could cure. He exclaimed "Lord I believe, help my unbelief."

These disciples were *faithless*. They seemed to have doubted if their commission could reach so bad a case. They were *perverse*.—For while the boy was suffering from an unseen spirit, they trusted not the power of an unseen Saviour

In Matthew ch. xvii. 20, we are told that his disciples had failed because of their un-