

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

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

LESSON IV.

APRIL 25.]

CONFESSION AND CROSS-BEARING.

Matt. 16: 13-28.

[About A. D. 29.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 24-28.

13. When Je-sus came into the coasts of Cæsare-a Phi-lip-pi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

14. And they said, Some say that thou art John the Bap-tist; some, E-li-as; and others, Jer-e-mi-as, or one of the prophets.

15. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16. And Si-mon Pe-ter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17. And Je-sus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Si-mon Bar-jo-na: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Pe-ter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Je-sus the Christ.

21. From that time forth began Je-sus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Je-ru-sa-lem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised again the third day.

22. Then Pe-ter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24. Then said Je-sus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.

25. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

27. For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

28. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

GOLDEN TEXT.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.—Matt. 16: 24.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Confessors must bear the cross.

NOTES.—CÆS-ARE-A PHI-LIP-PI, a town at the source of the Jordan, about 120 miles from Jerusalem. It is situated at the base of Hermon, whose towering peaks rise 8,000 feet above the city. So far as known, this place was the northern limit of Christ's travels. The ancient name of the city was Paneas or Panium, after the pagan deity Pan. Herod the Great built a temple here to Augustus; after him, Philip the Tetrarch enlarged the city and called it Cæsarea, after Tiberius Cæsar, and added "Philippi" to distinguish it from Cæsarea on the Mediterranean.—JOHN BAP-TIST, beheaded by Herod.—E-LI-AS, Some doubtless believed that Elijah had arisen from the dead.—JER-E-MI-AS, Jeremiah was held by the Jews to be the greatest of prophets.—SI-MON, a contraction of Simeon.—PE-TER, "rock." Simon Peter was Andrew's brother.—BAR-JO-NA, "son of Jona."—JE-RU-SA-LEM (see Schaff's "Bible Dictionary" or article in cyclo-pædias.)

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) CONCERNING CHRIST. (II.) CHURCH'S FOUNDATION. (III.) CROSS FORETOLD. (IV.) CROSS-BEARING. (V.) COMING OF THE SON OF MAN.

I. CONCERNING CHRIST.—(13-17.) COASTS, vicinity; MEN SAY, What does the world say of me and my works? SON OF MAN, a designation seldom applied to Christ by any one but himself; SOME SAY, opinions had been formed; OTHERS, some malignant Pharisees had called Jesus "Beelzebub."

II. CHURCH'S FOUNDATION.—(18-20.) ROCK, "The words of Jesus only refer to Peter in so far as by this confession he identified himself with Christ, and was the first to uphold the Church by his testimony to faithfulness of confession" (Lange); GATES, powers; HELL, infernal regions; THERE, Peter, as representative of the apostles; KEYS, symbols of authority; BIND, loose, a miraculous power conferred upon, but doubtless limited to, the apostles; CHARGED, cautioned; TELL NO MAN, time had not yet come.

III. CROSS FORETOLD.—(21-23.) FROM THAT TIME, indicated in preceding verses; MUST GO, his mission must be accomplished; SUFFER MANY THINGS (see Isa. 53); ELDERS, PRIESTS, SCRIBES, office-bearers in the Jewish Church, the Sanhedrin; KILLED, by those he came to bless; RAISED AGAIN, meaning not then fully comprehended by disciples; TOOK, interrupted; REBUKED, affectionately; FAR FROM THEE, literally, "pity thyself"; SHALL NOT BE, zeal without knowledge; SATAN, the evil one speaks through the apostle; OFFENCE, a snare; SAVOREST NOT, thy views are carnal, not spiritual.

IV. CROSS-BEARING.—(24-26.) IF ANY, the

privilege of all; COME AFTER, follow; DENY HIMSELF, renounce or forget self; HIS CROSS, duty or service for Christ, regardless of consequences; WHOSOEVER, free to all, compulsory upon none; SAVE... LOSE, loss for Christ's sake is gain for self; PROFITED, an unanswerable question, WHOLE WORLD, valueless compared with the soul.

V. COMING OF THE SON OF MAN.—(27-28.) SHALL COME, a sure prophecy (see Acts 1: 11); IN GLORY, sufferings for ever past; SHALL REWARD, cross-bearers will then be crown-wearers; ACCORDING, "whether they be good or evil."

WEALTH
HONORS
OFFERINGS
LOVE
ESTEEM } of the WORLD! SOUL!
WHICH WILL YOU HAVE?

LESSON V.

MAY 2.]

THE TRANSFIGURATION. Matt. 17: 1-13.

[About A. D. 29.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 5-8.

1. And after six days Je-sus taketh Pe-ter, James, and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart.

2. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3. And, behold, there appeared unto them Mo-ses and E-li-as talking with him.

4. Then answered Pe-ter, and said unto Je-sus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Mo-ses, and one for E-li-as.

5. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

6. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7. And Jesus came and touched them, and said Arise, and be not afraid.

8. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Je-sus only.

9. And as they came down from the mountain, Je-sus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead.

10. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that E-li-as must first come?

11. And Jesus answered and said unto them, E-li-as truly shall first come, and restore all things.

12. But I say unto you, That E-li-as is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them.

13. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Bap-tist.

GOLDEN TEXT.

We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.—John 1: 14.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The divinity of Christ is infallibly attested.

NOTES.—JE-SUS, called also "Lord" in verse 4; "Beloved Son" in verse 5; "Son of man" in verses 9 and 13.—PE-TER, "rock"; known also as Simon Bar-Jona and Cephas. (See "Hand-Book," part 12, page 60.)—JAMES AND JOHN, called "Boanerges"—"sons of thunder"; fishermen of Galilee, and sons of Zebedee; called to be apostles, among whom they ranked foremost of the twelve.—MO-SES, son of Amram and Jochebed; preserved in the ark of bulrushes; rescued by Pharaoh's daughter; deliverer and leader of Israel; died on summit of Pisgah fifteen centuries before Christ.—E-LI-AS, or E-LI-JAH, the Tishbite. We know nothing of his birth or parentage. He was a prophet in Israel during the reign of Ahab, about 900 years before Christ.—MO-SES and E-LI-AS, representative of the law and the prophets; both had been removed from this world in a mysterious manner; both, like Jesus, had endured a supernatural fast of forty days and nights; both had been on the holy mountain in the visions of God.—ALP-HA HIGH MOUNTAIN, not yet identified; tradition names Mount Tabor, but many scholars of late (Stanley, Elliott, Lange, Hanna, and others) think it must have been Hermon.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) ON THE MOUNTAIN. (II.) DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN.

I. ON THE MOUNTAIN.—(1-3.) AFTER SIX DAYS, perhaps at night; BRINGETH THEM, a glorious surprise awaited the favored three; APART, away from interruption; TRANSFIGURED, changed, transformed in appearance; what the change was must be learned from the remarkable details (see Mark and Luke); FACE... SHINE AS... SUN (see Matt. 23: 3; also Rev. 1: 13-16); RAIMENT... WHITE AS... LIGHT, an effort to describe an indescribable phenomenon; a vision of heaven's glory; APPEARED UNTO THEM, Peter, James, and John saw and heard the spiritual visitors; MOSES AND ELIAS, see Notes; TALKING, "of his decease" (Luke 9: 31); GOOD FOR US, not afraid when he thus spoke; TABERNA-CLES, booths, camps; ONE... ONE... ONE, thought not of himself or brethren; BEHOLD, suddenly; BRIGHT CLOUD, "a cloud of light"; OVERSHADOWED, "Heaven's shadows resplendent with light; a celestial paradox"; VOICE, of the Father Almighty; MY BELOVED SON, he alone of the glorified is mentioned; WELL PLEASED, delighted, satisfied; HEAR YE HIM, not them, but him, Christ is the end of the law and the fulfillment of prophecy; FELL, overwhelmed with awe; SORE AFRAID, God's voice fills them with tremor; TOUCHED THEM, perhaps awoke them, comforted; BE NOT AFRAID, fear not: it is I; SAW NO MAN, the curtain again lowered; JESUS ONLY, yet God was all around them just as near. "So in our own lives moments of spiritual ecstasy that are few and far between; and it is

good for us that it should be so, and that we should be left to carry the fragrance and power of their memory into our common life."—Dr. Plumptre.

II. DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN.—(9-13.) CAME DOWN, "on the next day" (Luke 9: 37); CHARGED, cautioned; VISION, the scene on the mountain; TELL... NO MAN, hour not yet come; UNTIL, after the resurrection; the people were not prepared to receive such a communication; WHY THEN, the Jews still look for a visible manifestation of Elias; FIRST COME, the prophecy was already fulfilled; RESTORE, that was his mission; ELIAS IS COME, not as the fulfillment of prophecy, yet Elias had truly come; BONE UNTO HIM (see Matt. 14: 6-12); SUFFER, mocked, scourged, buffeted, spit upon, crucified; OF THEM, the Jews; JOHN THE BAPTIST, son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, the forerunner of Jesus; his coming foretold by Malachi (3: 1, and 4: 5, 6); preached in the wilderness of Judea; ministered at the baptism of Jesus; was imprisoned by Herod, by whom he was also beheaded at the request of the daughter of Herodias.

JESUS

ONE ONLY WAY.
NO OTHER NAME.
LOVED OF GOD.
YOUR ONLY SAVIOUR.

A PARABLE.

I held in my hand a little dry tree, an infant hemlock. It grew on a sort of a bog, and a muskrat digging his hole under it, bit off its roots, and it was dead. It was full of limbs and knots and gnarls, and I felt curious to know how it happened that it was so.

"Where do all these ugly limbs come from?" said I.

"Just where all ugly things come from," said he. "I am pretty much like you men. Find out where my limbs come from, and you will find out where all human sins come from."

So I took out my knife and peeled off all the bark. But the limbs and the knots were left.

"You must go deeper than that, sir." So I began to split and take off layer of wood after layer. But all the knots were there.

"Deeper still," said the dry stick. Then I split it all off, and separating it, the heart was laid bare; it looked like a small rod about six feet long, and perhaps an inch through at the large end. Ah! and I was now surprised to see that every limb and knot and gnarl started in the heart. The germ of the starting-point of each one was the centre of the heart.—Selected.

A MOTHER'S TRAINING.—There were six children in the household—three sons and three daughters. The mother was a cheery, quiet, religious woman, thoroughly bound up in her household. The husband was a resolute, defiant, outspoken unbeliever. He was a journalist, and lost no opportunity to have his fling at Christianity. Unbelievers, bitter as himself, were frequent guests at his table, and made themselves merry with the Bible and religious faith before the children. The mother seldom bore any part in the conversation. Not one of the children entertained the opinions of the father. As they grew up one after another came into the church. The sons, especially, were noted for their intelligent piety. I felt a great curiosity to know how Mrs. Long accomplished her difficult task—by what means she had neutralized the influence of her husband, and how she had led her entire flock into the fold of the Redeemer. I asked Mrs. Long to give me some clue to her method. "Well," she said, "it is a very simple matter. I never opposed my husband, never argued with him, nor disputed on the subject of religion. I never belittled him in the eyes of the children. But I never allowed them to go to bed without reading a few short verses of something the Saviour had said. I put his words over against the words of men. If the devil cast in the tares and went his way, might not the truth be as potent? And that's the whole of it."—Matthew Hale Smith, in *Christian at Work*.

THE WAY to get out of self-love is to love Christ.—Augustine.

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L. REEVE.

March, 19th, 1880.

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