

with Christ here and now in the spirit of an overcoming faith which abides in His presence continually.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

By Rev. A. Wylie Mahon, B.D., Toronto

Remind the class that we have here another of the questions which the Pharisees put to Jesus. What object had they in questioning Jesus as they did? (Compare Matt. 22 : 15.) What did they mean by the kingdom of God in this question? (See Lesson Explained.)

For centuries the Jews had fondly dreamed of a good time coming when God would drive out the heathen invaders and set up His own kingdom on earth which would attract the wondering gaze of the whole world. What led them to cherish this hope? (See Isa. 2 : 2, 3.) They interpreted the references in the Old Testament prophets to the coming of the kingdom in a material rather than in a spiritual way. Note that in this question they want Jesus to tell them when this Golden Age will dawn upon their poor weary home-land.

How does Christ answer this question? His answer deals with the following two subjects :

1. *The Present Coming of the Kingdom*, vs. 20, 21. Show how Christ reminds the Pharisees that they had grossly misinterpreted the prophets, that they had got a wrong conception of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, with outward show. Question the class about the coming of earthly kingdoms, with the blare of trumpets and the roll of drums, with a good deal of pomp and pageantry, and show that the coming of the kingdom of God is altogether unlike this, that it comes unseen into the minds and hearts of men and women and exercises a blessed constraint and restraint over them, that the kingdom of heaven comes as silently as the light dawns, as gently as the dew falls.

Bring out our danger of making the same mistake that the Jews made, of locating heaven in our environment rather than in the heart. Discuss the power and limitations of our environment to contribute to our well-being, and make clear that nothing but Christ in the heart can make life contented

and of much value. As Professor Drummond used to say, "to enter heaven we must take heaven with us."

2. *The Future Coming of the Kingdom*, vs. 22-37. Question out the particulars of this wonderful revelation,—the desire of the disciples in times of distress for the coming of Christ (v. 22), the false reports at different periods in the history of the church that Christ had come or was about to come (v. 23), that there will be no mistaking the event when it takes place (v. 24), that Christ must suffer first (v. 25), that the future coming will be sudden and unexpected (vs. 23-30), the necessity of being prepared for that great day (vs. 31-33), the breaking up of human companionships, vs. 34-36. In what sense was the question which the Pharisees asked not answered? Jesus did not state when these things should come to pass. Teach the class that it is better for us not to know when certain events will happen, when sickness will come, or death. God kindly veils our eyes. The great matter is to be prepared now.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, D.D.

The teaching of the Lesson may be gathered under four heads :

I. THE PHARISEES' QUESTION, v. 20 (first part).

Get the scholars to tell you what this question was, and the reason why it was asked. This will lead to conversation about the Jewish idea of the kingdom of God, that it was a great earthly kingdom over which the Messiah should reign by force. Help the scholars to see that Jesus' kingdom is of a very different sort from this, that it is a kingdom in the hearts of men over whom He rules by love.

II. JESUS' ANSWER, vs. 20 (second part), 21.

Here the point to be brought out is, that the coming of the kingdom of God is not to be known by any outward sign, such as some wonderful appearance in the sky. Question about the meaning of "within you," that is, wherever people are obeying Jesus as king. Talk about how the kingdom of God is begun within us, namely, by our being born again, that is, by our hearts being changed.