

LESSON II.

PRECEPTS AND PROMISES

April 8, 1900

Matt. 7: 1-14. Commit to memory vs. 7, 8, 13, 14.

Read Matt. 6: 19 to 7: 29. Compare Luke 6: 37-43.

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.

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Revised Version.—1 Unto you; omit again; 2 Cast; 3 Lo, the beam; 4 Cast out first; 5 Haply; 6 Omit again; 7 Who; 8 Shall ask him for a loaf; 9 He omitted; 10 Shall ask for; 11 All things therefore; 12 Unto you, even so do ye also unto them; 13 By the narrow gate; 14 Be they that enter in thereby; 15 For narrow is the gate and straitened the way that leadeth; 16 Be they.

EXPLANATION

See Lesson I
Connection—After pronouncing the Beatitudes (see last Lesson), Jesus pointed out the duty of believers to the world (5: 13-16), and showed the true nature of His kingdom, which is a spiritual and not an earthly kingdom (5: 17 to 6: 23). Having warned against worldly anxiety (6: 24-34), He now gives, in this Lesson, some precepts and promises.

1, 2. Judge not; a prohibition of the common habit of harsh, unloving criticism of others. **That ye be not judged.** Jesus is not speaking of the judgment which God will pronounce, but, as seen from Luke 6: 38, of the judgment of our fellow men. **With what measure ye mete.** "Mete" is an old-fashioned word for "measure." The reference is to measuring grain or goods in buying and selling. It was evidently a common saying among the Jews. Christ took it up, made it His own, and thus sanctified it. It means that people are likely to treat us as we treat them.

3-5. The mote; another common proverb among the Jews. A "mote" is any small object, such as a particle of chaff or a splinter. It was an oriental symbol of a small fault. **The beam.** Any large object, as a log or piece of timber. It was an exaggerated way of speaking of a great fault. The fault-finder sees the smallest defect in the lives of others, but not the great faults of his own life. **How wilt thou say, etc.?** How can anyone, so blind to his own faults, correct the faults of others? **Thou hypocrite.** A hypocrite is a pretender. The advice is, first correct your own big faults before you undertake to correct your neighbor's little faults.

6. Give not that which is holy, etc.

Jesus means that, whilst we must not judge hastily or harshly, we must keep our eyes open, that we may know how to deal with people. Dogs and swine were regarded by the Jews as shameless and unclean animals. We must not make confidants of such people, giving them the holy things of our hearts and the pearls of our experiences. We must be discerning. **Rend you.** Much harm may be done by a lack of tact in seeking to help others.

7, 8. Ask—seek—knock. It is a picture of an Eastern traveller asking the way, seeking the gate of the city and knocking for admittance. **It shall be given, etc.** A three-fold promise of answer to fervent and persistent prayer. Verse 8 repeats the thought, to make it surer still.

9-11. Bread. Circular, flat, hard loaves. **Will he give him a stone or . . . a serpent.** There is no need to answer the question. No father would so do. **If ye, then, being evil;** selfish, sinful, more inclined to keep than to give. **How much more shall your Father;** who is perfect love. **Good things;** all kinds of good things, and, best of all, "the Holy Spirit" (Luke 11: 13).

12-14. All things, etc.; the "Golden Rule," the only fair way to treat others, and the way that will bring greatest blessing to all. **The law and the prophets.** This is the true teaching of the Old Testament.

13, 14. Enter. Act, as well as pray. **Wide is the gate;** leading into the broad way of self-indulgence. **Strait (narrow) is the gate;** where all forms of sin are excluded. **Few there be that find it.** All may find it who will seek (v. 8).