

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

REVISED VERSION.

LESSON VIII.

Aug. 20, 1882.]

[Mark 12: 1-12.]

THE WICKED HUSBANDMAN.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 9-11.

And he began to speak unto them in parables. A man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country. And at the season he sent to the husbandman a servant, that he might receive from the husbandman of the fruits of the vineyard. And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and him they wounded in the head and handled shamefully. And he sent another; and him they killed; and many others; beating some, and killing some. He had yet one, a beloved son: he sent him last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. Have ye not read this scripture: The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner: This was from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes? And they sought to lay hold on him: and they feared the multitude; for they perceived that he spake the parable against them: and they left him, and went away.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner."—Ps. 118:22.

TOPIC.—God's Grace Despised.

LESSON PLAN.—1. THE SERVANTS REJECTED. 2. THE SON SLAIN. 3. THE REJECTERS PUNISHED.

Time.—Wednesday, April 5, A.D. 30, the last day of Christ's public ministry. Place.—In the temple at Jerusalem.

HELPS TO STUDY.

I. THE SERVANTS REJECTED.—(1-5). Parallel passages, Matt 21: 33-46; Luke 20: 9-19. V. 1. A CERTAIN MAN—God. VINEYARD—the Jewish Church. WINEPRESS—where the grapes were trodden, and a lower one which received the juice flowing into it. The latter was often under ground. A TOWER—where a watchman was posted, when the grapes were about ripe, to watch against thieves and other spoilers. This vineyard was furnished with everything needed. These things represented the word and worship of God, the means of instruction which the Jewish Church enjoyed. (See Isa 5: 1-4.) LET IT OUT—on shares. HUSBANDMEN—the Jewish people, especially the priests and scribes. V. 2. AT THE SEASON—the time of the ripe fruit. SENT A SERVANT—the servants sent represented the prophets and teachers who called upon them to repent and render God his due. The different sendings show the long-suffering of Jehovah and the increasing wickedness of the people.

11. THE SON SLAIN.—(6-8). V. 6. ONE SON—the Lord Jesus Christ. There was no use in sending any more prophets. God now sends his Son, his well-beloved, whom the world ought to reverence as the Father himself. John 5: 23. V. 7. SAID AMONG THEMSELVES—they formed a deliberate plot. LET US KILL HIM—at this very time the Jewish rulers were consulting together to put Jesus to death. V. 8. TOOK HIM—so the priests and rulers took Jesus, condemned him, led him forth and crucified him.

111. THE REJECTERS PUNISHED.—(9-12). V. 9. Jesus appealed to their own consciences to say what ought to be done. Their measure of guilt was full, and the deserved punishment was about to be inflicted upon them. UNTO OTHERS—the blessings which they abused he would give to others. V. 10. THIS SCRIPTURE—Ps. 118: 22, 23; a prophecy of the truth represented in the parable, which was about to be fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ; the casting off of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles into the Church of God. THE STONE—Jesus Christ. THE BUILDERS—the Jews, especially their leaders, the Pharisees and scribes. HEAD OF THE CORNER—the binding, chief foundation stone of the Church. Eph. 2: 20. V. 11. THE LORD'S DOINGS—God has glorified his own Son. V. 12. SOUGHT TO LAY HOLD—to arrest him according to the decree already issued. They were afraid to do this openly, and therefore put it off until they could safely carry out their purpose.

TEACHINGS: 1. God has bestowed upon us many privileges. 2. He has shown great goodness in sending to us his messengers. 3. Especially has he shown his love in the gift of his Son. 4. If we do not improve our privileges, they may be taken from us. 5. All who reject the Saviour and despise his grace must perish.

REMEMBER that, great as were the privileges which God bestowed upon the Jews, he has given to us still greater privileges. We have clearer light and more abundant means of knowledge than they; and if their "disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. 2: 3.

LESSON IX.

Aug. 27, 1882.]

[Mark 12: 13-27.]

PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES SILENCED.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 14-17.

And they send unto him certain of the

Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in talk. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one; for thou regardest not the person of men, but of a truth teachest the way of God: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image, and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus said unto them, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they marvelled greatly at him. And there came unto him Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave a wife behind him, and leave no child, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed; and the second took her, and died, leaving no seed behind him; and the third likewise; and the seven left no seed. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. Jesus said unto them, Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven. But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; ye do greatly err.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4: 8.

TOPIC.—Christ Questioned by his Enemies.

LESSON PLAN.—1. THE QUESTION OF TRIBUTE. 2. THE QUESTION OF RESURRECTION.

Time.—Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30. Place.—Jerusalem, in the temple.

HELPS TO STUDY.

I. THE QUESTION OF TRIBUTE.—(13-17). Parallel passages, Matt. 22: 15-22; Luke 20: 20-26. V. 13. HERODIANS—a Jewish political party; so named because they stood by the family of Herod. V. 14. MASTER, WE KNOW—they tried to entrap him by flattering words. IS IT LAWFUL—if he said no, they meant to accuse him to the Roman government as its enemy; if he said yes, they meant to accuse him to the people as opposed to the law of God. V. 15. KNOWING THEIR HYPOCRISY—he saw their motives as plainly as he did their faces. A PENNY—a Roman coin, worth about fifteen cents, in which the tribute was paid. V. 16. IMAGE AND SUPERSCRPTION—likeness and name stamped upon it. CAESAR'S—he thus compelled them to answer their own questions. By accepting the Roman coin they acknowledge themselves under Roman rule. They must therefore "give back" support to it. They were to fulfil all duties—those to Caesar as well as those to God.

11. THE QUESTION OF RESURRECTION.—(18-27). Parallel passages, Matt. 22: 23-33; Luke 20: 27-40. V. 18. SADDUCEES—a religious party among the Jews denying the resurrection of the dead and the existence of angels and spirits. V. 19. MOSES WROTE (see Deut. 25: 5, 6)—the case proposed was doubtless a fictitious one, but it might have occurred under the operation of the Mosaic law referred to. V. 23. WHOSE WIFE—a scoffing question in ridicule of the doctrine of the resurrection and of Christ. V. 24. YE KNOW NOT THE SCRIPTURES—that is, the Old Testament, which plainly implies the resurrection. NEITHER THE POWER OF GOD—the Scriptures rest the doctrine of the resurrection on the Divine power. Acts 26: 8; Rom. 4: 17; 8: 11; 1 Cor. 6: 14. V. 25. THEY NEITHER MARRY—marriage was intended only for this present life, to make good the ravages of death and keep up the race. In the future state, as there will be no death, so there will be no marriage. AS THE ANGELS—immortal, not subject to death, and free from bodily appetites. V. 26. IN THE BOOK OF MOSES—Ex. 3: 6, 15. V. 27. THE GOD OF THE LIVING—these patriarchs still live, though their bodies are dead, in the state of the blessed, awaiting the resurrection. God regards all the dead as still living; how easy, then, for him to raise them hereafter!

TEACHINGS: 1. Pretended friends are sometimes more dangerous than open enemies. 2. Hypocrisy and deceit are pretty sure to miss their aim. Honesty is apt to be the best policy as well as right. 3. We must obey the laws of the land unless they are contrary to the law of God. 4. We must give ourselves with all we have and are, to God. 5. Men often find fault with the Bible because they are ignorant of what it says. 6. The immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body are taught in the Old Testament, but more clearly revealed in the New Testament.

REMEMBER that you have a soul that will live after the death of your body, and that your body is not always to rest in the grave. So live that it may finally be raised to a glorious immortality. Blessed are those who shall have part in the resurrection of the just.

HASTY WORDS.

Half the actual trouble of life would be saved if people would but remember that silence is golden—when they are irritated, vexed, or annoyed. To feel provoked or exasperated at a trifle when the nerves are exhausted is perhaps natural to us, in our imperfectly sanctified state. But why put the annoyance into the shape of speech, which once uttered is remembered, which may burn like a blistering wound, or rankle like a poisoned arrow? If a child be trying, or a

friend capricious, or a servant unreasonable, be careful what you say. Do not speak while you feel the impulse of anger, for you will be almost certain to say too much, to say more than your cooler judgment will approve, and to speak in a way that you will regret. Be silent till the sweet "by-and-by"—when you shall be calm, rested, and self-controlled.

Above all, never write a letter when you are in a mood of irritation. There is an anger which is justifiable; there are resentments which are righteous; it is sometimes a duty to express indignation. But, if you consider the matter, the occasions for putting such feelings on record are comparatively few. They come once in a lifetime perhaps and to many fortunate beings they never come at all. Upon the whole,—people—our friends and neighbors, and the community of which we form a part, are trying to do the best they can; and in hours of good temper and health, life wears a bright and sunny aspect. Much of the friction which makes the machinery of living move roughly and discordantly, is caused by things too petty to be noticed if we were in our normal condition. The hasty word spoken in petulance may be explained, forgiven and forgotten. But the letter written in an ebullition of wounded feeling, is a fact tangible, not to be condoned. There it lies with a certain permanence about it. You have sent it to a friend, who, reading it a half-dozen times, will each time find it more cruel and incisive than before. Letters once written and sent away cannot be recalled. You cannot be sure that your friend (or enemy) will burn them. Hidden in bureau drawers or in compartments of desks, folded up in portfolios, locked in boxes, they will, it may be, flash up again in sudden feud and fire, months after you have ceased to think of the folly which incited them, or the other folly which penned them.

Never write an angry letter, or write a letter when you are angry.

All heated feeling seeks the superlative as an outlet, and superlatives are apt to be dangerous. So long as we cling to the positive in speech, we are pretty safe.

We all need to be cautioned against undue haste in speech, but mothers most of all. It is so easy to misunderstand a child; so easy to grieve a little person who is forbidden to answer back; so easy to leave a picture of yourself in the plastic memory, which will be photographed there for the remainder of life and of which you would in coming days be ashamed. Let who will be hasty and uncontrolled, the mother cannot afford to be either; and, if she ask the help of her Lord daily, hourly, and every moment, she will be kept from this sin and peril.—Christian Intelligencer.

ODD NAMES IN ENGLAND.

Who would presume to decide why a Master Rook, registered at Wye in Kent two or three years back, was named Sun? or whence Luna Millicent Nation derived her first appellation? A quarryman at Portland, surnamed White, recently called his infant daughter Mary Avalanche. He would scarcely be personally familiar with Alpine disasters; is it to be inferred that the second name implies the child's unwelcome descent upon an unready household? Again, what volcanic impulse can have produced such a forename as that of Mrs. Etna Brooking? It is quite impossible to answer such questions. The registers introduce to us a Doctor Allred, a Tea Bolton, a Longitude Blake, a Crescent Boot, an Ephraim Very Ott, a Hempseed Barrass, a Purify Buckland, a Married Brown, a Quilly Booty, a Sir Dusty Entwistle, &c.

Among the miscellaneous fancies must be placed that for registering, as formal appellations, those abbreviations and pet names which are commonly applied only in familiar intercourse. Of these the ordinary monosyllabic appellatives such as Alf, Bob, Bill, Bess, Dan, Dick, Meg, Nat, Ned, Poll, Sall, &c., are unfortunately not at all unfrequent in the registers. It is impossible to associate gentleness or refinement with a preference for such curt nomenclature as this, although in the domestic circle or among intimates the semi-jocose enjoyment of these monosyllables is sometimes excused. On the other hand, the pet names ending in e or y are always tender and often pleasing; Pretty, however, as many such denominations may seem in the earlier hours of life, they are apt to become embarrassing possessions at a

later period; and to register them—especially without any additional names—is a manifest mistake. What a pitiable contradiction would be a pallid Rosie of seventy-five, a Pussy on crutches, a blind Daisy, or a Birdie voiceless from chronic bronchitis? Some name-choosers indulge a fancy for extreme brevity in personal nomenclature. This indulgence reaches its most foolish extreme when single letters are inserted in the registers. Initials (or what may be supposed to be such) have, from time to time appeared as names in these records; but they have not often been used without the addition of other appellations in completer form. Ex, Is, No, and Si are recorded names. The opposite taste for every voluminous denomination now and then displays itself. Thomas Hill Joseph Napoleon Bonaparte Horatio Swindlehurst Nelson is an incongruous combination in which length seems to have been aimed at more than anything else; and Arphad Ambrose Alexander Habakkuk William Shelah Woodcock may be classed with it. Then, again, in the higher ranks, we sometimes find ancestral names piled very heavily upon single heads, as in the case of Lyulph Ydwallo Odin Nestor Egbert Lyonel Toedmag Hugh Erchenwyne Saxen Esa Cromwell Nevill Dysart Plantagenet Tolle-mache-Tollemache.—N. Y. Observer.

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