

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. D. 30.]

LESSON X. CHRIST'S LAST

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.

[March 4.]

Matt. 20. 17-29. [Commit to memory verses 17-19.]



17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the third day he shall rise again.

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.



General Statement.

The ministry in Perea has been completed, and now Jesus turns his face toward his last field of labor and of coronation—Jerusalem. Wonder and fear mingle in the hearts of the twelve as they see their Master's footsteps tending toward the city where dwell his bitterest foes, and where his death has been already decreed. John 11. 47-53. Yet their fear does not hold them back, and they follow him, even to the prospect of death. Mark 10. 32; John 11. 16. As they walk across the plain of the Jordan toward Jericho, Jesus forewarns his disciples once again, and more explicitly than ever before, of the sufferings and death which await him. But so slight is the impression wrought by his words that two of the twelve, and they from among the chosen three, come to him with a request for the highest offices in his kingdom. They proffer it through the lips of their mother, but it is the voice of their own ambitious hearts. The vision of the agony,

the cross, the sepulcher, rises before the eyes of Jesus; and he asks them whether they are able to taste the cup and bear the baptism which he must ere he shall sit upon his throne. Ignorant of themselves and of their own future, they answer boldly, "We are able." The Saviour, seeing the gold of their devotion mingling with the baser metal of their ambition, declares that they shall pass through his own fiery trials; but that the honors of his kingdom are awarded not by favor, but according to divine laws of justice. The other disciples are offended at the ambitious schemes of the two brothers, but Jesus reminds them that his kingdom is not like the realms of earth, where man rules over men, and a crown means despotic control. The highest honors of the Gospel are for those who serve, and the Son of God came not to receive the service of men, but to render service to men, even to the surrender of his life in their behalf.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verses 17. And Jesus going up. He was at this time in the Jordan valley, near Jericho, not more than thirty miles from Jerusalem, but nearly three thousand feet below it, so that the journey would be a continual ascent. To Jerusalem. Every visit to the capital had been attended with persecution, and the last with danger to his life (John 10. 31; 11. 47-53); yet he turns once more toward the city, fully conscious that he was journeying toward his cross. The twelve disciples apart. He had noticed their amazement and fear as he turned toward Jerusalem, and he wished to forewarn them of events that were soon to take place. Said unto them. This was his third warning of his own death, and more distinct than either of his earlier predictions.

18. We go up. He was going to his death, and willingly, because of the blessings which that death should bring to the world. (1) *O for more of the Master's self-forgetfulness among his followers now!* The Son of man. The term by which Jesus frequently spoke of himself in his capacity as the representative man, the head of the new humanity. Shall be betrayed. Rev. Ver., "delivered." The word hints at betrayal, and may have been spoken to touch the heart of Judas, who was already in danger. John 6. 70. Unto the chief priests. Who were the leaders of the opposition to Jesus. The scribes. The lay members of the Jewish Sanhedrin, or ruling council. They shall condemn him. He saw every step of the sorrowful way, yet not once did his courage falter.

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