

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. SECOND QUARTER.

LESSON X. (June 4.)

CHRIST CRUCIFIED. John 19. 17-30.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2. 20.

Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.



[The usual review, making clear the facts in the history of the crucifixion—Christ before the high priest, and before Pilate, repeating such explanations concerning persons, places, and reasons for the course of action as may be needful for clear understanding and no more, lest little memories be overloaded.]

Introductory. Long, long ago a very strange, sad story was told, which you have heard, perhaps, but may care to hear again. Listen, and see if you can tell if you ever heard it before. It is the story of a man who had a vineyard and rented it. Everything was done for this fair garden of vines that could be done, and those who had the care of it had nothing to complain of at all. Surely it was right that the owner should have the rent of what belonged to him. But the tenants were not willing to give it to him. When the rent time came, and it was due and should be paid, the owner sent his servants to collect it. It did no good. They beat the servants and cast them out. Then the master said: "I will send my dear son. They will care for him." But these tenants said, "If we can put him out of the way, we can keep everything ourselves;" and they took this beloved son, who came last of all, and put him to death. The very ones who owed him most refused everything and took his life.

Do you know the meaning of the story which Jesus himself told? Remember the Golden Text, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." It was Jesus who was the Son that God sent to those who owed everything to him. Those to whom he came did not love and receive him. Now we come to the time when they put him to death.

Connecting links. Three times Pilate tried to set Jesus free. He was afraid to do it unless the Jews were willing. They were not willing. They chose Barabbas. Pilate washed his hands before them to show that he put off from him the sin of giving up their King to death. But he could

not wash his heart clean with the water that touched his hands. He then gave him up to be crucified, and they took Jesus and led him away.

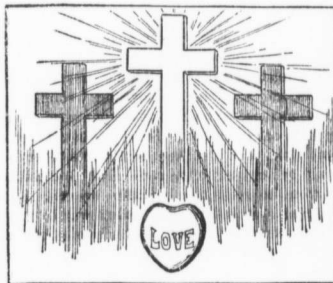
Jesus on the cross. Jesus carried his own cross when that sad procession started out of Jerusalem. Afterward they laid it on a man named Simon. If you had been there, would you have been glad to lift a little at that heavy cross? Then are you willing now to do things for Jesus that may be a little hard and heavy? If you love him, you will be willing.

Above the cross Pilate put the title, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." The people did not feel pleased with that, but Pilate would not take it down. It was true. He was their King. He is ours too. Shall we stand by him? Shall we own him?

Jesus prayed for those who put him on the cross, saying, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." He saw the soldiers dividing the clothes he wore, but he did not punish them, as he might have done. He said nothing to the thieves on either hand when they abused him, but when one of them grew sorry and prayed to him Jesus forgave him and promised to take him to paradise. In the midst of his pain Jesus remembered his mother, who stood there, and gave her into John's tender care. At this sad time the sky grew dark, and for three hours, from twelve till three, there was darkness over the land. At last Jesus said, "I thirst." They gave him vinegar to drink, and then he said, "It is finished," and gave back his spirit to God.

Why did he die? It was only wicked men that used to be put to death on the cross. Jesus was perfectly pure and holy; why did he die this sad death? It was not for his sin, for he was good; it was for our sins, yours and mine.

We owed to God a great debt of goodness, which



we never could pay. God's holy law had been broken. When one breaks the law he must suffer. That is why men put others in prison—