

The Sabbath School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

JESUS AND THE YOUNG.

MAY 7th. MATTHEW XIX : 13-26.

THE LESSON opens with an episode in the life of our Lord, in words unspeakably precious to parents and teachers, containing as they do the Saviour's explicit recognition of the church-membership of children. Compare Mark 10 : 13-27 and Luke 18 : 15-27. Vs. 13-15. *Then were brought*—by their parents, presumably. *Little children*—infants, Luke 18 : 15, that he might bless them in patriarchal fashion, Gen. 48 : 14-15. *The disciples rebuked them*—as being officious and troublesome. This they did in other cases, on several occasions, but always against His mind, as in ch. 15 : 23, and Luke 18 : 39. But Jesus turns their rebuke upon themselves. He was "much displeased"—Mark 10 : 14. *Suffer them to come*—the same words as in Mark and Luke. *For of such*—not only of child-like persons, Matt. 18 : 3-4, but children in the literal sense : infants even. *Is the Kingdom*—it belongs to such, until by actual transgression they disinherit themselves. *Laid his hands on them*—an encouragement to parents to dedicate their children to Him in infancy. V. 16. The person now introduced is a young man : in a high social position, (Luke 18 : 18) ; very rich, (v. 22) ; of irreproachable moral character, (Mark 10 : 21) ; an anxious enquirer, (Mark 10 : 17), believed in eternal life, and was anxious to obtain it. He recognizes Christ as a good Teacher. V. 17. Jesus does not decline the appellation "good." He means rather, "Do you recognize me as the good—divine Teacher?" That question he did not answer. *If thou wilt enter*—Eternal life is life in Christ, upon which believers enter now, John 3 : 36. *Keep*—it is not enough to know the commandments. *Which?*—as much as to say, shew me one I have not kept? Vs. 20, 21. *All these have I kept*—The secret leaks out ; he is trusting to his self-righteousness. *What lack I yet?*—He has some qualms of conscience. *If thou wilt be perfect*—In Mark and Luke it is, *one thing thou lackest*—Ah ! that one thing is a fatal lack. *Go and sell all*—Riches were his idol. He must part with them, 1 John 5 : 21. This Christ says substantially to all his disciples, ch. 6 : 24. *Follow me*—If property interferes with following Christ it must be given up, ch. 16 : 24. *He went away*—sorry to part with Christ, but preferring the comforts of earth to the treasures of heaven. He never came back ! The remainder of this chapter and the parable that follows in the next, form an instructive commentary on this remarkable interview.

LEARN, first, The duty of bringing children to Christ. They may become true Christians at a very early age. Second, Morality, however respectable will not secure heaven. Great wealth cannot secure peace of mind, and is only valuable when used for the glory of God. Christ demands from all his followers absolute subjection of the heart. Everlasting life will more than compensate for all the sacrifices we can make now.

The Marriage Feast.

MAY 16.

MATTHEW XXII : 1-14.

THIS PARABLE is different from that of the great supper, in Luke 14 : 15, and is recorded by Matthew alone. In it Christ reveals himself in his exalted character as "the King's Son"—the Son of God. Gospel privileges are represented as a feast ; so in Isa. 25 : 6. They include church-membership, many precious promises, the comforts of the Spirit, pardon of sin, and assurance of eternal life. V. 3. *Sent forth his servants*—beginning with John the Baptist, then the twelve, afterwards the seventy. *Them that were bidden*—more particularly the Jews, so often invited by the prophets, and now by the Apostles, and Christ Himself. *They would not come*—said regretfully, as in other places, ch. 23 : 34-37, John 5 : 40. Vs. 4-6. *Other servants*—a testimony to the long-suffering and patience of God in repeating the Gospel invitation. *All things are ready*—The crucifixion was nigh at hand, and this points to the great sacrifice by which every provision for salvation was completed, 1 Cor. 5 : 7, 8. John 6 : 51, 53. *Come unto the marriage*—The gracious invitation is pressed upon all to enter into the mystical union existing betwixt Christ and his believing people. *They made light of it*—some, from sheer indifference, pursued their worldly avocations ; others began a course of open persecution. V. 7. *When the king heard thereof*—Kings are supposed to be well-informed about their subjects, Acts, 26 : 26. But God is omniscient, Ps. 139. *He was wroth*—at the affront put both upon His Son and Himself, Ps. 7 : 11. *Sent forth his armies*—a reference to the Roman invasion, 40 years later. *Destroyed those murderers*—over 1,100,000 were slain during the siege of Jerusalem, "the city of the Great King." V. 9. *As many as ye shall find, bid*—Jews and Gentiles, without any distinction. *Both bad and good*—none are so good that they do not need to come to Christ. V. 11. *When the King came*—as Christ will come in the final judgment. *He saw*—detected at a glance. *A man*—The judgment of individuals is here referred to : national judgment in the former part. *Had not on a wedding garment*—see Zeph. 1 : 7, 8. He might have had one, for it would be offered ; therefore he was inexcusable ; we cannot enter into heaven in the "filthy rags" of our own righteousness, Isa. 64 : 6. "Worthiness" consists in "putting on the Lord Jesus," Rom. 13 : 14. Vs. 12, 13. *How camest thou?*—Ingratitude and presumption are implied in coming without the wedding garment. *Speechless*—the terrible silence of self-conviction. *Bind him, &c*—a picture of the doom that awaits unbelievers !—utter helplessness : the blackness of darkness for ever, Jude 13 : *Weeping*—"Tears then extorted will be vain, the hour of mercy past."

MANY ARE CALLED : FEW CHOSEN—is the practical moral of the parable. Many hear the Gospel call. How few, comparatively, accept the great salvation ! It is not owing to God that sinners perish, but to their own unbelief. We may and ought to come to God "just as we are : " but we may not remain as we are, Rom. 4 : 21-32.