

## After His Resurrection.

DECEMBER 17.

MARK XVI; 9-20.

*Golden Text, v. 15.*

**C**OMPARE Matt. 28; 9-20; Luke 24; 9-53; John 20; 3-31. This passage is not found in some of the oldest and best manuscripts, but it has been received as canonical from a very early date, and all that it contains is found in the other gospels. The eleven recorded appearances of our Lord after His resurrection are as follows:—(1) To Mary Magdalene alone, v. 9, and Jn. 20: 11-18. (2) To the women returning from the sepulchre, Matt. 28: 9-10. (3) To Peter alone, Luke 24: 34. (4) To the two disciples going to Emmaus, Luke 24: 13-35. (5) To the Apostles at Jerusalem, except Thomas, Jn. 20: 19. (6) To the same, Thomas being present, Jn. 20: 26-29. (7) At the sea of Tiberias, Jn. 21: 1. (8) To the eleven in Galilee, Matt. 28: 16. (9) To above 500 at once, 1 Cor. 15: 6. (10) To James only, 1 Cor. 15: 7. (11) At his ascension, Luke 24: 51, V. 9. This first appearance is more fully described by John. V. 10. *Then that had been with him*—The Apostles. *As they mourned and wept*—thinking that all their hopes concerning the Messiah were now gone forever. V. 11. *They*—the Apostles. *Believed not*—See Luke 24: 10, 11. V. 12. *In another form*—His form was the same, Luke 24: 39, but the expression of his countenance was probably changed so that they did not recognize him. *Two of them*—Cleopas and another. *Went into the country*—to Emmaus, six miles N. East from Jerusalem, Luke 24: 13-18. V. 13. *They went*—back to Jerusalem where the ten were assembled, Luke 24: 33. *Told it*—narrated the whole interview. V. 14. *Afterwards*—including the 5th and 6th appearances. *Their unbelief*—in respect to our Lord's own repeated declarations that he should rise from the dead, and also the testimony of those who had seen him alive. V. 15. *Go ye into all the world*—This great commission to evangelize the world, puts Home and Foreign Missions upon an equal footing. Every creature needs the gospel, and it is suited to the varied circumstances of all people. The missionary spirit is the life and soul of religion. The church or congregation that has not this spirit must soon decay. The churches that do most for the heathen are the most successful at home. V. 16. *He that believeth*—who trusts solely to Christ for the forgiveness of his sins, shall be saved, Rom. 3: 16-18; Acts 2: 38; 16: 31; Rom. 10: 9. *Is baptized*—Baptism will not save any one, but is the natural consequence and evidence of faith. *He that believeth not*—who positively refuses to accept Christ as his Saviour, see Jn. 3: 18, 19. V. 17. *These signs shall follow*—not that every follower of Christ should have miraculous power, but that miracles should attend the introduction of the Gospel. The apostles exercised such power, Acts 3: 1-8; 28: 5, but the promise was limited to the apostolic age. V. 19, 20. The ascension was the crowning act of our Lord's earthly life. It confirmed his words, convinced his disciples, and is the pledge of a most blessed hope to all who believe in Him, 1 Thess. 4: 14. They who are risen with Christ will seek those things which are above, Col. 3: 1.

## The Kingdom of Peace.

DECEMBER 24.

ISAIAH XL; 1-9.

*Golden Text, Isaiah 11: 9*

**I**SAIAH began his prophetic career under Uzziah, Ch. 6: 1, and continued it during a period of about forty years, until the year of Hezekiah's death. Of all the prophets he is the most clear in his references to the Messiah, and he is more frequently quoted than any other. In the previous chapter, vs. 21, 22, he had foretold the return of a remnant of the captive Jews to Jerusalem under the leadership of Hezekiah, but here his prophetic vision has a wider sweep—the final deliverance of the chosen race under the Messiah's reign. V. 1. *A rod*—a slender shoot or twig. *Out of the root of Jesse*—who lived and died in obscurity, 1 Sam. 18: 18: the house of David was also reduced and brought very low at the time of Christ's birth. The Messiah was to come in low estate that it might appear that his kingdom was not of this world. V. 2. *The Spirit of the Lord*—should not only descend upon him as at his baptism but should rest upon and dwell in him, Col. 1: 19: 2: 9. *Wisdom and understanding*—sound judgment, with ability to plan and execute. V. 3. *Quick understanding*—as manifested by the ready and admirable answers which he gave to many captious questions as well as skillful reasoning with the rabbis. V. 4. *Righteousness*—He shall see that impartial justice is done to the poor. *Smite the earth*—the wicked on the earth. *The root of his mouth*—by his fearless reproofs. *Slay the wicked*—The Apostle applies this to the destruction of "the man of sin," whom he calls that *wicked one*, 2 Thes. 2: 8. V. 6. The virtues of righteousness and faithfulness shall adhere to him as closely as a garment bound to the body by a girdle. Vs. 6, 7. His kingdom shall transform the sinful nature of man, effecting a radical change as marked as if the lower animals were to lose their ferocity and instinctive hostility to each other; for by nature the wolf preys upon the lamb, and the leopard on the kid, while the lion, stronger and more daring than either, carries away the oxen to his lair. A little *c. li shall lead them*—The heart of man, renewed by the Holy Spirit, will no longer be rebellious, but will be susceptible of good impressions and easily influenced. The records of Christian missions among the most depraved of the human race afford many remarkable illustrations of the transforming power of the Gospel of Peace. *Artificer* for example. St. Paul himself is a notable example. 1 Tim. 1: 12-14. V. 8. *The Asp and the Cuckatrice* are both venomous reptiles; to touch them is to incur the risk of instant death; hence the force of the figure here used to represent the security and peace of the Messiah's reign. V. 9. *For the earth shall be full*—Wherever the Gospel has spread, its effect has been to benefit and bless mankind. We have therefore encouragement to promote missions by every means in our power, and to pray for the gospel, and consummation, embodied in the golden text. It is the privilege of every church, of every man, woman and child in the world, to contribute in some measure towards the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom.