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BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

(Condensed from Peloubet's Notes.)

Lesson IX. August 30. John 7: 41-45

CHRIST AT THE FEAST.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.—John 7: 37.

EXPLANATORY.

I. BY THE MIRACLES JESUS WROUGHT. —Ver. 31. "And many of the people." Better as in Rev. Ver., *But of the multitude many believed*, in contrast with the rulers who sought to kill Him. "Believed on Him." Believed that He was the Messiah, and trusted Him as their Saviour and teacher. The faith may have been weak and imperfect, but it was sincere and so accepted. "And said." *Kept saying*, in answer to objectors. "When (the) Christ cometh." So long expected and promised. "Will He do more miracles (signs) than these which this man hath done?" It was the common expectation that the Messiah would work many miracles. This opinion was founded on such passages as Isa. 35: 5, 6, etc.

II. SHOWN BY THE OPPOSITION OF WICKED MEN.—32. "He heard that the people murmured such things." Better, heard the multitude muttering these things. "Pharisees and the chief priests." Composing a large proportion of the Sanhedrin. "Sent officers to take Him." Probably in their official capacity.

33. "Then," *Therefore*, in consequence of their sending to arrest Him. "Said Jesus unto them." Jesus spoke to the officers and those who sent them. "Yet a little while am I with you." I must remain on earth a little while longer, and during this time ye cannot kill Me: then ye will succeed, and I shall go to My Father. "And then I go (withdraw, retire) unto Him that sent Me." When that hour came they would be able to kill Him, but not till then.

34. "Ye shall seek Me." Not as now for disputation and violence, but for help. "And shall not find Me." They seek too late. They have burned the bridge. "Where I am, thither ye cannot come." You do not belong there; you have a character the exact opposite of that which makes it what it is; you are utterly opposed to all that prevails there, to God the King, to His laws, His nature, His principles. See 8: 22, 23, where Jesus explains more fully His meaning.

35. "Then said the Jews among themselves." Mockingly, and with the attempt to excuse their own course. According to Lange, the mocking malice of their reply rises in a climax of three clauses. (1) "Whither will He go, that we shall not find Him?" To Paradise? to God, who has done so much for our nation? Who could believe that we are not as much heirs of heaven as He is? (2) "Will He go unto the dispersed (Jews) among the Gentiles?" Greeks, in the original, as representing the wide-spread Greek culture and influence. (3) "And teach the Gentiles?" Gr., Greeks. Will He become the Prophet and the Messiah of the Gentile world?

36. "What manner of saying is this." The saying haunts them, though they pretend to ridicule it.

III. SHOWN BY THE GIFT OF THE LIVING WATER. 37. "In the last day, that great day of the feast." This was either the eighth day, which, according to Lev. 23: 36, 39; Num. 29: 35; Neh. 8: 18, was reckoned along with the seven days of the feast proper. It was kept as a Sabbath and with splendid ceremonies. "Jesus stood." In the temple court, probably in Solomon's porch, where he witnessed the joyous procession described above, bringing the water from Siloam, when the people sang to the sound of cymbals and trumpets the words of Isa. 12: 3. "And cried." Heralded, spoke in a loud voice, "If any man thirst." It was burning autumn weather, when the sun had for months shone in a cloudless sky, and the early rains were longed for. "Let him come unto Me." To come to Jesus is to believe on Him, to accept His teachings, to yield to His commands. It is to come into sympathy with Him, likeness to Him. "And drink." Accept from Jesus the water of life, the blessings He has come to bestow.

38. "He that believeth on Me." He that acknowledges Me as the Christ (ver. 31), and with a penitent and obedient heart trusts in Me for salvation from sin. "As the Scripture hath said." The reference is not to any one insolated passage, but to the general tenor (1) of such passages as Prov. 18: 4; Isa. 58: 11; and Isa. 44: 3. And (2) to such passages as fortell the gift of the Holy Ghost, as Ezek. 47: 1-12; Joel 3: 18; Zech. 13: 1; 14: 8. "Out of his belly." The innermost part of man, the soul, the heart. "Shall flow rivers of living water." Just as the rock in the desert not only contained water, but the water flowed forth for the thirsty multitudes (Num. 20: 1-11: Ex. 17: 6), and the stream followed them to supply their needs (1 Cor. 10: 4). "Shall flow." The water which he drinks becomes in his body a spring from which streams of living water flow. "Rivers." Denoting abundance, freeness, continued supply, in contrast with the small, golden pitcher used in the ceremony of the pouring of water. "Of living water." Pure, running water, ever-flowing streams; the opposite of stagnant, malarious, poisonous water; also life-giving water.

39. "But this spake He." This is John's interpretation of Christ's words in the temple. "Of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive." The Holy Spirit and His influences were the living waters, abundant, free, purifying, bringing life, health, salvation. "For the Holy Ghost." Spirit, omitting Holy, as in Rev. Ver. "Was not yet given." The dispensation of the Spirit, when His influences should come in their full abundance, had not yet come. "Because that Jesus was not yet glorified." The great work of the Spirit could not fittingly be accomplished till Jesus had completed His work, made His atonement, and shown what He really was; for the Spirit was to use this work, and lead men to Jesus as King, and Saviour, and Lord.

IV. SHOWN BY THE TESTIMONY OF ENEMIES, as to the Scriptural statements about the Messiah. 40. "Many." Omitted in the best MSS. and in the Rev. Ver. "Of a truth this is the Prophet." The prophet of Deut. 18: 15, whom some identified with the Messiah, others supposed would be the forerunner of the Messiah.

41. "Others said. This is the Christ." The great Messiah King whom they expected, whom the prophets foretold, and to whom their whole religious ceremonial pointed. "Shall (the) Christ come out of Galilee." Christ seemed to them to come from Galilee, because His childhood home and much of His ministry was there.

42. "Hath not the Scripture said." This is their argument for believing that Jesus, being a Galilean, in their opinion could not be the Messiah. "That Christ cometh of the seed (or *offspring*) of David," (see Ps. 89: 19-29; 132: 11; Isa. 9: 6, 7; 11: 1-5; Jer. 23: 5, 6). "And out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? Where he was born and lived for about sixteen years, till He was called into the service of King Saul (see Mic. 5: 2; Luke 2: 4; 1 Sam. 16: 1, 5, 18; 17: 12-15, 58). All the trouble with their argument was that they did not take care to ascertain the facts. Their quotations of Scripture were an argument in favor of Jesus being the Messiah, for He fulfilled the Scriptures.

43. "So there was a division." It means a serious and possibly violent division.

44. "Some of them." Of the multitude, not the officers mentioned in the next verse. "Would have taken Him." Arrested Him, and carried Him before the Sanhedrin as a pretender. "But no man laid hands on Him." Not even those who had been commanded to do it (see vers. 32, 45).

The Apostle James' System of Mnemonics.

There is no end to the systems of mnemonics in the world. To many of them applies the remark of Dr. Johnson: they are like a machine which a man invented to enable a person to walk without labor. Without the machine, a man walks and carries himself; with it, he carries himself and the machine beside. After we have remembered the thing that we were trying to fasten in memory we then use the thing itself to recall the aid to the memory. Not long ago, the unwise and unhappy writer hereof paid $5 to a no doubt excellent professor, whose name he can scarcely recall (an instance of the triumph of this system), for the purpose of being inducted into a new and gorgeous system which was to enable us to remember every number, every date, every name. Each pupil was to be a sort of walking memorandum. The only thing which we now recall distinctly is the sum which we paid, and the palpable impression that the alleged author of the system was—yes—he was, indeed.

How often we wish, on hearing a sermon or discourse, that we could remember it all; how often we sigh after reading the Bible, after attending prayer meeting or a conference like that at Northfield, "Oh, that I could remember, as long as I live, everything that I have heard, that I could make permanent every lofty, heavening experience which has made this hour a foretaste of the better world; that all these thoughts and feelings would not glide from my mind as quicksilver from the hand that tries to grasp it."

Right here, comes in the great system of mnemonics invented by the Apostle James, although he has taken no patent upon it, and does not charge every pupil $5, and impose upon him the obligation of never revealing it to anybody else. The system is found in the first chapter of his General Epistle, verses 22, 23, 24, 25: "But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

It is a curious thing that, often as we have looked in the glass, we do not call up before us our image, as we call up the image of a friend. Probably we should not know ourselves if we should meet ourselves, as it were, walking down Chestnut Street. The case of the mirror aptly illustrates what James is telling us, that hearing without doing is only the first step toward forgetting. We hear and learn that we may lose; so it is with a vast deal of our hearing. It is a great mistake to suppose that there is any special virtue in hearing, in knowing.

But James further gives us his system for remembering. We are to *do*, we are to *continue therein*, we are to *put in practice*. A child who should learn the rules in arithmetic, but never put them in practice, would soon find that they had slipped out of his mind. The way to remember moral truths is to practice them. Suppose that a person is impressed by some passage of Scripture, by some truth, and desires to grave it on his memory; let him at once put it in practice. He has received some lesson in regard to the love of man; let him practice it and he will not forget it. Whatever he has learned of God, let him reduce to practice in prayer, in action; this will grave the truth in the mind. As you return from a meeting or a conference, your soul filled with the richest truths, begin at once, carry them out in your own family and everywhere; and, in doing so, you will make them a part of yourself that cannot be lost.

This is the great principle of James' system of mnemonics; hear that you may do, and do that you may remember. —*National Baptist.*

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Bible Burning in America.

"Bring that here to me, Gussie!" was what a nun—a "Sister of Charity" said to Miss Gussie Gilforth, a young Presbyterian lady who was sent to Loretto Academy, corner of Campbell and Pine streets, Springfield, Mo. The young lady burst into tears and pleaded that the Bible she had just taken from her trunk was a present, a gift from her grandmother; but her tears and prayer did no good. "Bring that here to me, Gussie," had to be obeyed, and the poor girl was compelled to hand over her Bible and see it put into the stove and contemptuously punched with the poker till the precious gift was consumed to ashes.

The facts, as we gathered them from the intimate friends of the young lady, are about these: About four years ago a young girl, a Presbyterian, was sent here to the Catholic school. When will people ever learn any sense? Before leaving home her grandmother gave her a Bible, as a keepsake, with instructions for her to read it every day. But Miss Gussie had not been in the convent long until she confessed to a friend that the Sisters had proved to her that the Protestant Bible was all a lie; and that she had ceased to read at all, and was going to become a Catholic.

Some days later she came to the house of an estimable lady in this city, and with sobs and tears related how the "Sister" had come into her room, found the Bible on the table, where she had laid it when removing some writing materials from her trunk, when the following scene took place. We give Miss Gussie's own story, as given to us, as nearly as possible:

"Gussie, what is that lying on the table?"

"The Bible, sister."

"The Bible! And what are you doing with that again?"

"I'm not reading it; I never will read it any more."

"Bring it to me, Gussie."

"It is not my Bible, sister, it's grandma's."

"Bring it to me, Gussie."

"Let me send it back to grandma, sister. She gave it to me, and I want to send it back to her."

"Bring it to me, Gussie."

And the poor girl, crushed in spirit, took her grandmother's Bible over to the sister, who contemptuously pitched it into the stove and punched it with the poker until the last vestige of the precious Word of God, a grandmother's gift, was consumed. And yet many of the protestants of Springfield are sending their children to this same school, and are foolish enough to believe that they will be educated, and not have their religion meddled with.—*Protestant American (Springfield, Mass.)*

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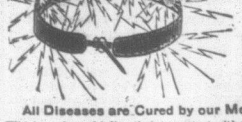

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