

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1881, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON X.

JUNE 5.] [About 28 A. D.]
THE CRUCIFIXION.

Luke 23: 33-46.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 44-46.

33. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

35. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar.

37. And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

38. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek and Latin, and Hebrew. THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41. And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

44. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

GOLDEN TEXT.—And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.—JOHN 12: 32.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Christ died that we might live.

HISTORICAL CONNECTION.—After speaking the parable of the last lesson Jesus made his entry into Jerusalem on Sunday. On Thursday evening of that week he ate the Passover with his disciples, Luke 22: 19. After the supper he went with them to the garden of Gethsemane. There he was betrayed by Judas, Luke 22: 48, apprehended, conducted back to Jerusalem, where he was tried, condemned and crucified, dying the next afternoon, Friday, at three o'clock. At his arrest he was first taken to Annas, John 18: 13-15, then to the high priest Caiaphas, Matt 26: 57, who founded the charge of blasphemy (a capital offence according to Jewish law) upon Christ's own avowal that he was the Son of God, verse 61. He was then taken to Pilate, the Roman governor, who alone had power to execute the sentence of death, and arraigned on the charge of sedition, Luke 23: 2. Pilate sends him to Herod, Luke 23: 7. In the meantime Judas committed suicide, Matt. 27: 3-11, and Peter denied his Master. Herod returns Christ to Pilate, who after in vain endeavoring to quiet the fury of the populace, delivers him up to be crucified.

NOTES.—CRUCIFIXION, a mode of punishment in vogue among the Egyptians, Assyrians, Romans and other nations of antiquity, but not practised by the Jews. A Roman citizen was exempt, it being considered too base. It was abolished by Constantine, the first Christian emperor, 300 years after the death of our Lord. Ancient writers agree in representing death by crucifixion as the most horrid, cruel and painful known. "The unnatural position of the body made every movement painful; the lacerated veins and crushed tendons throbbled with incessant anguish; the wounds, inflamed by exposure gradually gangrened. There was added the intolerable pang of a burning and raging thirst. All these physical complications caused an internal excitement and anxiety which made the prospect of death itself bear the aspect of a delicious and exquisite release."—FARRAR, Life of Christ, vol. II, p. 403. Not unfrequently the criminal lingered several days.—CROSS, its form varied between the three shapes: X T †. The first is known as the St. Andrew's Cross, because an apostle of that name, according to a tradition, met his death upon it. The third was probably the one used in the crucifixion of Jesus. It was also inflicted on a single stake without the cross piece, the body being supported by a pin placed so as to bear it. The spikes were driven through the hands which overlapped above the head, and the feet in the same way. The naked body was nailed to the cross before it was placed upright.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE IGNOMINY. (II.) THE POWER OF THE CROSS. (III.) DEATH ON THE CROSS.

I. IGNOMINY OF THE CROSS.—(33-38.) CALVARY, Latin word for skull. The Hebrew is Golgotha. It was outside the city, Heb. 13: 12, and called so either because the place was round and bald like a skull, or because it was the usual place of execution; MALEFACTORS, robbers who perhaps had been accomplices with Barabbas in sedition; FATHER FORGIVE, the first of the seven utterances upon the cross; PARTED HIS RAIMENT, the body had been stripped. Many like the soldiers get the benefits of Christianity without getting Christ; VINEGAR, sour wine; SUPERSRIPTION, those who were to be crucified carried a label with their crime or name on their breasts; GREEK, LATIN AND HEBREW, the languages of mental culture, imperial power and religion. "No tribute could have been more fitting, or more prophetic than an inscription which revealed unconsciously the relations of the cross to all the nationalities of the world."—GEIKIE, Life of Christ.

II. POWER OF THE CROSS.—(39-43.) THE OTHER, "surely Christ is set for the rising of one and the fall of another, the savor of life unto life for the one, and of death unto death for another."—Krummacher; WE INDEED JUSTLY, he had a true sense of guilt; NOTHING AMISS, the dying thief was the only one to take up Christ's cause.

III. DEATH UPON THE CROSS.—(44-46.) SIXTH HOUR, noon; DARKNESS, a star of light appeared at his birth, the sun is darkened at his death. "As creation itself had rejoiced at the coming of its Lord, so it bewailed his death."—Cyril; ALL THE EARTH, either Judea, or all the surrounding country; NINTH HOUR, three in the afternoon; GAVE UP THE GHOST, expired. Christ "died literally of a broken heart." The agony that uttered the cry may have caused a rupture of the heart.

APPLICATIONS SUGGESTED BY THE LESSON:

(1.) Whose sins did Christ suffer for on the cross? 1 John 2: 2. (2.) Did any words of unkindness proceed from his lips? 1 Pet. 2: 23. (3.) Did nature seem to be in sympathy with the mission of Jesus? (4.) Were the sufferings of Jesus entirely voluntary? John 10: 17, 18.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST BRINGS PARDON AND PARADISE.

LESSON XI.

JUNE 12.] [About 28 A. D.]
THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

Luke 24: 13-32.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 25-27.

13. And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

14. And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18. And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19. And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre:

23. And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27. And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

GOLDEN TEXT.—And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?—LUKE 24: 32.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The risen Jesus solves the mysteries of providence.

HISTORICAL CONNECTION.—After our Lord's death, Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin and a Christian, received permission from Pilate to take the body down from the cross. He laid it away in a new tomb, Luke 23: 53. The Pharisees and chief priests recollecting Christ's predictions of his resurrection, took the precaution of guarding against a surreptitious removal of the body, and with Pilate's consent sealed the sepulchre and set a watch over it, Matt. 27: 62-66. On the first day of the week Jesus rose from the dead. The women went early with spices to anoint the body, but it was not there. Simon Peter and John had also gone to the sepulchre and found it empty. The two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus had heard these reports, vs. 23, 24, but did not understand that he was risen.

NOTES.—APPEARANCES OF THE RISEN CHRIST. "Jesus shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days," Acts 1: 3. The fact of the resurrection is attested by most of the books of the New Testament, and appearances of Christ are detailed by the four Gospels, the Acts, and St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians. Eleven of these in all are recorded. They were made to (1.) Mary Magdalene, John 20: 11-18; (2.) The other women, Matt. 28: 9, 10; (3.) Peter,

Luke 24: 34; (4.) The two disciples on their way to Emmaus, Luke 24: 13-33; (5.) The ten disciples, Luke 24: 36-48; (6.) Thomas and the other disciples, John 20: 26-29; (7.) James, I Cor. 15: 7; (8.) On the shore of Lake Galilee, John 21; (9.) On a mountain in Galilee, Matt. 28: 16-20. (10.) The five hundred, I Cor. 15: 3-8; (11.) Before the Ascension, Luke 24: 50-53. The disciples were discouraged by the crucifixion and did not fully believe predictions that Christ would rise again. It took much evidence to convince them that the appearance of Christ was not the appearance of a spirit, Luke 24: 37; John 10: 27.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) DISCOURAGED. (II.) INCREDULOUS. (III.) TAUGHT. (IV.) RECOGNIZING THE RISEN CHRIST.

DISCOURAGED.—(13-21.) SAME DAY, the first day of the week; EMMAUS, about eight miles from Jerusalem. Its exact site is unknown; ALL THESE THINGS, the trial, crucifixion, burial and alleged resurrection of Jesus; ART THOU ONLY A STRANGER, "Art thou the only stranger who," etc. The crucifixion was a matter of all-absorbing interest; PROPHET, a teacher as Nicodemus regarded him, John 3: 2; REDEEMED ISRAEL, their minds were set on a visible dominion and emancipation of the Jewish people from the domination of the Roman empire; THIRD DAY, they had some faint recollection of Christ's oft repeated prediction that he would rise again the third day.

II. INCREDULOUS.—(22-24.) YEA, AND, However also. They had had some little glimmering of hope; CERTAIN WOMEN, Mary Magdalene and the others with her, v. 10; OUR COMPANY, the followers of Jesus; CERTAIN OF THEM, Peter and John, John 20: 2; HIM THEY SAW NOT, this extinguished the hope which an open tomb aroused.

III. TAUGHT.—(25-27.) HIS GLORY, the glory of his triumph and kingdom; MOSES, the name of the writer stands for his five books; ALL THE PROPHETS, includes the Psalmists, historians and prophets who predicted Christ; EXPUNDED, explained.

IV. RECOGNIZING THE RISEN CHRIST.—(28-32.) ABIDE WITH US, perhaps Emmaus was their home; TOOK BREAD, as when he fed the multitude, or partook of the passover; OPENED, perhaps they recognized the method, or perhaps saw the pierced hands; VANISHED, the body of Christ after his resurrection was susceptible of changes, such as do not belong to the natural body.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS UPON THE LESSON:

(1.) Does the Old Testament predict a suffering Saviour? Is. 53. (2.) Why were the disciples so slow in believing it? Luke 24: 21. (3.) How did Jesus predict his resurrection? Luke 18: 33. (4.) What proofs did he give of his resurrection? Acts 1: 3. (5.) Who hath brought life and immortality to light? 2 Tim. 1: 10. (6.) Is Christ's life the pledge of our immortality? John 14: 19.

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