

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER—STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. D. 59. LESSON III. CHRISTIAN LOVE; or, A Full Salvation. 1 Cor. 13, 1-13. July 20.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL.

Verse 1. Thought. "Supposing that." He imagines a case which might occur, not one which had occurred. The aim is not to depreciate any gifts, or to place them in antagonism with each other, but to show that all gifts and graces were dependent upon love for their value. Tongues of men. There was in the apostolic age a power which some Christians possessed of speaking in foreign languages, or in some strange, unearthly manner which appeared to be the tongues of angels. See Acts 2, 4; 1b, 6; and 1 Cor. 14. See Whedon 1 Cor. 14 for a full discussion of the subject. As the gift has ceased in the church, being no longer needed for the promulgation of the Gospel, it is difficult to decide what were its manifestations. Have not charity. An unfortunate mistranslation, for the word "charity" has now come to mean either liberality of feeling, or benevolence in giving, while the word here means love, in its widest sense, toward God and man. Sounding brass. A metal, without life, but ringing only when struck by outside power. The Corinthian brass was composed of gold and silver, and was famous for its resonant quality. Tinkling cymbal. A clanging, noisy, rather unmusical instrument, made of two metallic plates, which were struck against each other. 1. So the voice of one who speaks on Gospel themes without the experience of love has no power to touch the heart. 2. Loving hearts rather than eloquent lips are needed in the Church of Christ.

2. Prophecy. The power to utter the divine will, whether in the way of prediction or instruction. Mysteries. "The secrets of the divine counsel."—Alford. All knowledge. The intellectual apprehension of truth. 3. There may be the clearest penetration in the knowledge of God, with the utter lack of love for God. 4. It is not sufficient to have the truth in our minds, it must also be in our hearts, as the motive power in action. All faith. True saving faith works by love, and cannot exist without it: but there may be a peculiar confidence in self, like that of a Napoleon or a Bismarck, which seems to work wonders in the world. Some think the reference is to "the faith of miracles," that which merely recognizes Christ in his wonder-working power. See Acts 19, 13. Remove mountains. An expression here quoted as a proverb in common use, to represent the most wonderful effects of faith. "That miraculous powers are not confined to the holy is shown by the cases of Balaam, Samson, and the witch of Endor."—Whedon. I am nothing. 5. Not what men can do, but what they are, makes them acceptable before God. "Satan may have more intelligence and power than any man ever possessed, yet he is Satan still."—Hodge.

3. Though I bestow. The apostle next refers to acts which represent the highest generosity and self-sacrifice, yet avail nothing without the motive of love. 6. There may be charities without true charity; but they are of no benefit to those who bestow them. The literal rendering is, "Though I dole out all my property in mouthfuls," which many have done to perpetuate fame or to expiate sins, but without the inspiration of love for God and men. Give my body to be burned. In the sacrifice of life for country, friends or principle. In the history of the church it has often been found that during periods of persecution many who have lived unworthily have been ready to suffer martyrdom, for their religion. 7. We need more courage to live for Christ than to die for his cause. Profiteth me nothing. That sacrifice which comes from mere vain glory, or presumption, or a spirit of obstinacy, is of no avail to save. 8. Heaven and the favour of God are not to be bought by gifts nor won by illustrious deeds.

4, 5. Charity suffereth long. The apostle now presents the portrait of love in its varied relations. He begins with its patient endurance of wrong, and its willingness to do good, even to those who have done evil. There may be in this summary of Christian traits some reflection upon the self-seeking, unloving spirit manifested among the Corinthian Christians, but its application is universal, as well as particular. Envieth not. 9. He who loves his Master is not jealous of the gifts or graces enjoyed by other disciples. Vaunteth not. The word may be translated, "is no braggart." 10. Even attainments in grace are in danger of becoming occasions of pride. Behave unseemly. True love endeavours to show at all times as courteous, kindly, winsome manner, and is radiant with the beauty of holiness. Seeketh not her own. Is not ever solicitous about the interests of self. Not easily

provoked. 11. Grace does not reign over any character until it embles its possessor to hold his passions and tempers in check. Thinketh no evil. Is not ready to attribute evil motives to actions, but takes a charitable view and sees the good in others.

6, 7. Rejoiceth not. Is never pleased to hear evil reports concerning others. In the truth. Rather "with the truth;" sympathizing with the Gospel in its trials and happy in its triumphs. Thus Paul (Phil. 1, 18-19) rejoiced even when the truth was preached by his enemies. Bear-eth all things. Some would translate "covereth all things," hides the errors of others as far as possible. Believeth. More ready to believe good than evil of others, showing a trustful nature.

8. Charity never faileth. The next proof of the value of the grace of love is its permanence, as compared with the transitory nature of other gifts of the church. Prophecies shall fail. The apostle looks forward to a time when the gift of prophecy in the church shall cease; when teachers shall instruct from the written word instead of by a supernatural illumination. Now that the canon of Scripture is complete, prophets are no longer needed to interpret the divine will. Tongues. The gift of tongues ceased when the Gospel was made known among the varied languages of the Roman world. Knowledge shall vanish away. "Be done away." The imperfect knowledge of the earthly church shall be lost in the complete light of the heavenly.

9, 10. In part. The highest gifts were but partial and incomplete; prophecy was limited, knowledge was far below omniscience. That which is perfect. When the church militant becomes the church triumphant, and earth gives place to heaven. Even then, when knowledge is lost in glory, love abides eternally.

11, 12, 13. When I was a child. 12. The highest attainment of saints on earth, compared with their condition in heaven, is as childhood to manhood. Put away. 13. Much that we value here, will be cast aside as worthless hereafter. Through a glass. Rather, "in a mirror." Glass was scarcely known in ancient days, and the mirrors were of brownish metal, which gave a dim and only uncertain picture; an apt illustration of the knowledge of earth in contrast with the clearer light of heaven. Know in part. We know only in part. (1.) Ourselves; (2.) Each other; (3.) Nature; (4.) Scripture; (5.) Eternal things. In heaven all mysteries will be revealed. Faith, hope, charity. These three graces endure superior to all transient gifts. Greatest... is charity. "Because it contains in itself the root of the other two."—De Wette.

GOLDEN TEXT: And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. 1 Cor. 13, 13. DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION: Love to God and man. The next lesson is 1 Cor. 15, 50-58.

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culture. It is clear, however, that they will presently be forced to turn their attention to it, by reason of the growing scarcity of game and fish. The Deputy Superintendent General thinks that the Government should adopt early and energetic measures to prepare the Indians for the change in their mode of life, and that instruction in farming or herding and raising of cattle should be furnished to the red man, so that, they may learn, in as short a space of time as possible, to become self-supporting. The most interesting portion of the report, however, is that which deals with the numbers of the various Indian tribes. All the Indians of Nova Scotia are Micmacs, as well as all the Indians in Prince Edward Island. In addition to these there are 913 Micmacs in New Brunswick and 600 in Quebec, so that the Micmac race numbers in all 3,714 souls. The Malacites of New Brunswick, number 546, but they are the same people as the Amalacites and Abenakis of Province of Quebec, who number 522, so that the Malacites of the Dominion foot up to 1,068 souls. The Iroquois of the Province of Quebec number 3,057, and they are well advanced in civilization. The Montequacs of the same Province number 1,255, and the Naskapees, of the lower St. Lawrence, 2,860. The Hurons of Lorette, a feeble tribe, the remnants of the once great Huron nation, are reduced now to 290 persons, and seem doomed to extinction. The only other considerable race in Quebec is the Algonquins, numbering 5,163. They are allied both to the Micmacs and the Malacites of the Maritime Provinces. In the Province of Ontario the Iroquois number 4,608. They are represented by the Oneidies of the Thames, Mohawks of Bay Quinte, and Six Nations on the Grand River. The Chippewas are the most numerous tribe in Ontario numbering 9,570 souls, although this enumeration includes a few Ottawas and Pottawattamies. The Algonquins of Ontario number 614, and the Messesaquus 728. None of the other tribes are sufficiently numerous to be worthy of mention. In Manitoba and the North West territories the Chippewas are the most numerous tribe. The Crees and Salteaux are also numerous, the Blackfeet number 4,928 and the Sioux, all of whom are emigrants from the United States, 1,200, and very unwelcome immigrants some of them have been. The mere mention of the names of these tribes, many of whom are very warlike and have been famed for their cruelty in bygone years, suggests the heavy responsibility which is cast upon the Government of Canada in keeping them at peace with each other and the white settlers. It is to be hoped that Canada may be spared the infliction of such Indian wars as our neighbors of the United States have so frequently experienced.

The outlook for Protestantism in France was never fairer than it is today. No other country in Europe offers so hopeful a field for spiritual religion. The great burden of civil disability which has interfered with all the efforts of the Protestant Churches is fully removed. The language of President Grevy, "The Reformation is the source of modern liberties and of democracy in Europe," must strike the ear of thousands in France as a new and strange utterance. But Protestantism will fail to do its proper work in this grand field if it busies itself in seeking civil favors and wastes its strength in mere antagonism, however successful, of the Roman Catholic Church. Its chief work is to preach everywhere the Gospel of Christ. The redemption of France is not a new and better church organization, not a change from one creed to another, but faith in Christ, a true spiritual life that shall give a new significance to Christianity throughout Europe. If only one with the spirit, the uttering zeal and genius for organization that Wesley possessed, were to appear, the greatest harvest of modern times could be gathered.—Central Advocate.

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