

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

From the "Little Pilgrim Question Book," by Mrs. W. Burrows, Congregational Publishing Society, Boston.)

LESSON IV.—Oct. 27.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.—Luke xvi. 19-31.

19. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and lived sumptuously every day: 20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died and was buried:

23. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.

25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death."—Prov. xiv. 32.

1. Relate the first part of the story of the rich man and Lazarus:—Vers. 19-21.

2. What can you say of the purple and fine linen here mentioned?

Ans. They were the most costly materials for dress that any one could wear in those days.

3. Why were the poor in those days often laid near the doors of the rich?

Ans. That the rich might help them, for there were no hospitals or almshouses, where the poor and sick could go.

4. Does the story say that this rich man was dishonest or vicious in any way?

Ans. No; he was only selfish.

5. Is it wrong to be rich?

Ans. Not at all, if the riches are gained honestly; but it is dangerous.

6. Why is it dangerous?

Ans. Because rich people are so apt to love riches and forget their duties.

7. What is the duty of a person who is rich?

Ans. To use his money for the good of others.

8. What did this rich man do with his money?

Ans. Merely used it for himself.

9. What ought he to have done for Lazarus?

Ans. He should have sent Lazarus to his gate, and let him eat of the crumbs which fell from his table.

10. How did the dogs show more kindness and pity than he did?

Ans. They licked Lazarus's sores, while he neglected him.

11. Did he deserve any thanks for letting Lazarus have the crumbs?

Ans. No; he was only doing what was his duty.

12. What merit is there in giving away what you do not want?

Ans. None; it is only a waste of money.

13. What kind of a man was Lazarus, besides being poor?

Ans. He was a good man, who was patient and trusting in God.

14. Tell what the story says of the rich man and of the poor man after they die. Vers. 22-24.

15. How did Abraham reply to the rich man's request? Vers. 25, 26.

16. Because Lazarus was poor and sick, was that the reason he was taken to heaven and comforted?

LESSON V.—Nov. 3.

THE TEN LEPERS.—Luke xvii. 11-19.

11. And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men, that were lepers, which stood afar off.

13. And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Get ye yourselves unto the priests, and shew yourselves unto them: and whosoever shall have cleansed him, let him offer unto the Lord a he lamb, and two doves, and a yearling, and offer it upon the altar, and eat thereof with his brethren, and with the Levites, as the Lord hath commanded: and whosoever shall not have any of these things, let him go, and shew himself unto the priest.

15. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.

16. And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

18. There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"—Ver. 17.

1. What happened to Jesus near a certain village? Vers. 12, 13.

2. Ask your teacher to tell you about the dreadful disease of leprosy.

3. How did they know Jesus?

Ans. They must have heard of him and the wonderful works he had done, and perhaps been told how he looked.

4. Why did they stand "afar off," as they cried to him?

Ans. It was against the law for lepers to come near other people, lest they should give them the disease.

5. When they cried to him, "Have mercy on us," did they expect him to cure them of their leprosy?

Ans. They hoped he would help them, and they may have thought he could cure them; but it was a very wonderful thing for any one to be healed of that disease.

6. What did he tell them to do? Ver. 14.

7. Did they obey him?

8. What is the best way to show faith in Christ?

Ans. By obedience.

9. What is faith?

10. When they found they were cleansed or cured, how must they have felt?

11. What did it mean to them to be healed?

Ans. It meant health and happiness, instead of this terrible sickness and suffering, and that they could go and live with their friends and families again.

12. Did they all come back to thank the one who had healed them? Vers. 15, 16.

13. What did Jesus say about it? Ver. 17.

14. What did the nine show themselves to be?

Ans. Selfish and ungrateful.

15. Were they not glad to be healed?

Ans. Oh, yes! they gladly took the gift, but forgot the Giver.

16. Of what nation were they?

Ans. They were probably Jews.

17. Why was it strange that the Samaritan alone returned to thank Christ?

Ans. The Samaritans were not so religious as the Jews, and knew less about Christ.

18. What should this lesson teach us?

Ans. To be grateful to God for all his gifts.

19. What is leprosy like?

Ans. Like sin, which makes us wholly vile.

20. To whom should we cry to be cleansed from sin?

21. Need we stand "afar off"?

Ans. No; the Lord Jesus loves to have us come near him.

22. If he should "have mercy on us," and forgive our sin, how ought we to show our gratitude?

Ans. By loving hearts and obedient lives.

My prayer for this week,

"WASH ME, AND I SHALL BE WHITER THAN SNOW."

ARE THERE NO HONEST MEN?

One of the daily papers, discussing the subject of defalcations, lays down these two propositions:

"There is no man who will ultimately resist the temptation to use funds which are absolutely in his control for a long time; and in using them he does so with the most honorable intentions, trusting to secrecy until he shall have paid back every cent."

Both of these statements are objectionable, because they are not founded in truth. It would be in the highest degree discreditable to the human race, if the first proposition were true, and exceedingly dangerous to administer the justice of the second. Let us look at them separately:

1. "There is no man who will ultimately resist the temptation to use funds which are absolutely in his control for a long time." Is that so? Then there are no honest men living; then we may not put confidence in anybody; then character is no basis for trust, and a defalcation or robbery is but a question of time. Give any man time and opportunity and he will prove himself to be a villain. Now we do not take so sad a view of society as this. We bear in mind that in proportion to the vast number of trusted men, the breaches of trust

are very few. In such a community as New York, Boston, or Philadelphia, the number of men having absolute control of large trusts, as executors, agents, guardians, trustees of estates and minors, is to be counted by tens and hundreds of thousands. Scarcely a man of position and character but is in some way made the trustee of money which he is to handle and guard for others. Some of these men are treasurers of great institutions, with large sums lying in their hands, subject to their individual direction, and at any moment they could hypothecate securities, raise money, and on it depart out of the city, or speculate in stocks. This is the temptation which overcomes weak and wicked men. But to say that "no man will resist this temptation" is to ignore the fact that the immense majority of men do resist: that the defaulters are only as one in a thousand, miserable exceptions to the general rule, which is honesty, not robbery.

The facts are bad enough, without making them worse by exaggeration. We would not increase general distrust by impeaching the many who are entitled the more confidence because others forfeit character and drown themselves in the perdition of dishonest men. Good men would shrink from holding trusts, if it were held as a fact that all men will betray their trusts with plenty of time and opportunity.

2. But the second statement is even more dangerous than the first. The one excites distrust, the second stimulates to crime. The writer says: "In using them (trust funds) he does so with the most honorable intentions, trusting to secrecy until he shall have paid back every cent." The point we make is that the word honorable in such a connection is unfortunate and injurious to good morals. The intention is in the highest degree dishonorable which encourages a trustee to peril the money of another for his own advantage. The intention to restore is the salve to his conscience, or rather the mask that he wears while he robs his innocent, unsuspecting and helpless victims. Honorable intentions, indeed! A man being entrusted with the money of another says to himself: "I will take this money and go upon the street with it and operate till I have doubled it; then I will put it back where it now is, and the trust will be as good as before. I will be so much richer, and nobody will know how it was done." Is that honest? The trust was safe as it stood. Or it was where the law and his judgment directed him to place it. But he resolved to put it in peril for the sake of making himself rich. His intention to put the money back was part of the scheme which he formed for his own advantage at the hazard of the trust. The resolution was dishonest. The intention was no palliation, but was a cloak for the crime, and therefore, was in no sense honorable. The moment that he decided to violate his obligation as a trustee the man was lost. Having no better right to take that money for his own use than he would have had if it were in the keeping of another, he was a thief at heart as soon as he determined on its appropriation.

We are the more explicit on this point because it is just here that men deceive themselves, and are deceived, by such reasoning as we have cited. They vainly imagine that restoration atones for the appropriation of what was not their own: as if it were a sufficient excuse for highway robbery, that the robber intended to restore, and actually did restore, at some future time, the purse he took. The trustee who misappropriates the funds in his hands is as much worse than a thief, as a thief is meaner than a robber, the meanness being greater as the risk of detection is diminished.

N. Y. Observer

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