



INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN LUKE'S GOSPEL. A. D. 29. LESSON XII. THE SAVIOUR'S LAST WORDS; or, The Promise of the Father. Luke 24, 44-53. Dec. 22.

EXPLANATORY.

Verse 44. These are the words. An expression meaning "These events are the fulfillment of the words." During his earthly career Christ had uttered many sayings, mysterious at the time, which were made clear by his resurrection. 1. "The words of Christ and their accomplishment unite to form a strong evidence of the Gospel's truth." While I was yet with you. That is, while he was present in the flesh, and constantly. After the resurrection his appearances were not continual, but occasional. Love of Moses. The books of the Pentateuch, containing not only prophecies of Christ, but types, ceremonies, and historical events concerning him. Prophets. The Jews included among the prophetic books most of those which are now called historical, as Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. These were called the former prophets. The latter prophets included the last portion of our Old Testament, except Ezekiel and Daniel. The Psalms. Referring to the portion of the Old Testament which the Jews called the Hagiographa, or "holy writings." These they divided into three classes: 1. Psalms, Proverbs, and Job. 2. Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. 3. Daniel, Ezekiel, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. These were, in general, spoken of as the Psalms. Concerning me. 2. "Though Christ came four hundred years before the Old Testament canon was closed, yet he is the central figure of its every page."

45, 46. Opened he their understanding. Though they had been taught from the lips of the Great Teacher, yet they required further enlightenment, and this they were to receive in the Holy Scriptures. 3. "The Saviour puts great honor upon the Bible by leaving it as his substitute with the disciples." That they might understand. Though the duties of Scripture are plain, yet its doctrines are some times mysterious. A plain man can know how to live from its pages, while the most learned may find its depths of knowledge beyond them. Scriptures. 4. "The Spirit in the word and the Spirit in the heart say the same thing."—M. Henry. Thus it is written. The events of Christ's life on earth, as foreshadowed in the Old Testament. Behooved. It was necessary, for the fulfillment of the word, and the accomplishment of God's purposes. Yet the necessity of Christ's death did not lessen the crime of those who crucified him. God overruled their guilty deed for the salvation of many for whom he would otherwise have provided in some other way.

47, 48. Repentance and remission of sins. The great doctrine which is the summary of all Gospel preaching is salvation through Christ alone, to be obtained of repentance of sins. 5. "The sinner's part is repentance—God's part is remission of sins, or forgiveness." In his name. 6. "There is but one name mighty to save—the name Christ Jesus." See here (7) "the absolute dependence of every soul for salvation upon his merits and power." Among all nations. Up to this hour the teachings of Christ and his apostles have been limited to the Jewish people. Now, the Gospel gates are flung wide open for all mankind. 8. "The Gospel is to be preached to all nations, because it is adapted to all, and needed by all." Beginning at Jerusalem. Because 1. It would be a proof of the Gospel's truth. At Jerusalem the events occurred, and the facts could not be disputed. Had they begun their work far away from Judea, as in India or Italy, men might question their truthfulness. 2. Because it would give proof of the disciples' fidelity. At Jerusalem they would meet the bitterest opposition; if they could brave the worst there at home, the hardest of all places, they could face the world. 3. Because it would prove the Gospel's power. If the sinners of Jerusalem, who drove their Saviour to Calvary, could be saved, then none were too great sinners to find mercy. 4. Because it would prove the Saviour's love. There could be no love greater than to offer salvation to those who had rejected and slain their Redeemer. Ye are witnesses. Not only of the resurrection, but of the whole series of events connected with the life of Christ on earth. They were to testify what they knew and had seen. 9. "Every Christian can bear testimony to his own experience of Christ's power."

49. I send. The event ten days distant is spoken of as already present. Promise of my Father. The Holy Spirit, poured out on the day of Pentecost, promised not only by Christ, but by the Father, in the Old Testament prophecies. Tarry ye. Though the world was waiting for their message, they were not to deliver it until endowed with the power. Power from on high. They were to receive power. 1. To know the truth; an understanding of the Gospel plan. 2. To speak the truth; gifts of utterances with tongues of fire. 3. To work miracles. 4. To endure the opposition and persecution of enemies. 10. "Those who go forth by Christ's appointment and to do his work receive every needed equipment for success."

50, 51. He led them out. From the meeting-place of the disciples in Jerusalem, perhaps the scene of the last supper and of the pentecostal baptism. To Bethany. On the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, not quite two miles from Jerusalem. Blessed them. The last act of Christ on earth was to bestow a blessing, a token of the mercy which he has ever since been showering upon the sons of men. Parted from them. He arose in the air, while still in the attitude of benediction, and their wondering eye followed him "until a cloud received him out of their sight." Carried up into heaven. We may not know all the reasons that impelled him to ascend from earth to heaven, but we can see benefits that accrue to the church from this event. 1. It sets the seal of truth upon the record concerning him, by rounding out his career to completeness. 2. It fully attests his divinity. He came from heaven and he returned to heaven. 3. It gives us a proof of the reality of the heavenly world, and a new interest in it. 4. It gives us the assurance of our own eternal reward. "I go to prepare a place for you." 5. It permits all his disciples to have personal communion with him, which would be only to a few if he were abiding on earth. 6. It adds to self-reliance and strength of Christian character. The apostle could never have become such strong saints if Jesus had remained with them to bear their burdens. 7. It puts honor on Christian faith in him and work for him, by leaving his followers to carry forward the great conquest which he began on Calvary.

52, 53. They worshiped him. Though they could no longer see him, they yet worshipped him; an evidence that they believed him still living, and possessed of divine attributes. 11. "Their worship of an ascended Christ is a warrant and an example for ours." Returned to Jerusalem. There to await the power which had been promised. With great joy. Though they beheld him no more, they do not sorrow, but rejoice, so deep is faith in him fixed in their hearts. Continually in the temple. They now see a new meaning in its services, and take a new delight in its songs. 12. "Those who are lovers of Christ will love the house of his Father." Praising. Full of rejoicing over the consummation of the world's redemption, and eager to go forth and proclaim the glad tidings. GOLDEN TEXT: Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matt. 28, 20.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION: Christ's spiritual presence.

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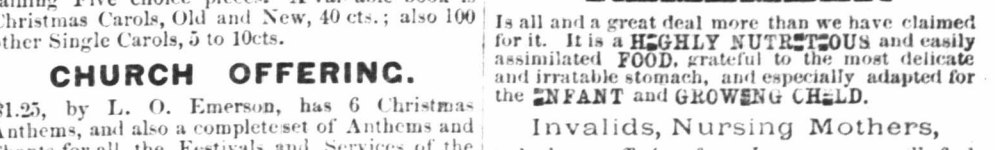
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SMARTNESS.

it is said, a farm- et a trap with a h which was ad expensive visits vent to see his trap r "touched off," and instead of a re was only a quiet e the jaws of the ned for fourteen could see no tracks e of the fox. It couraging work to have them stolen; ed. He did not give it, it's no use." No; and on the fifteenth old fox with his rong jaws of the th was a stick of en he had tried his ing the trap and He was caught at

shows that some e dangerous. The at his cute tricks e beings, as well as mething by sharp e enjoy for awhile dishonest doings e escape catching, et safely " nabbed," pilfering, disobey- ightly doings, may e for awhile, but e snaps in an unex- evil doer is caught out and put to ad best way is to