

Scripture Lessons.

International Lesson Department, 1874

THIRD QUARTER—LESSONS ABOUT JESUS.

SUNDAY, JULY 5, 1874.

LESSON I.—THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL.

Mark i. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT : John i. 34.

Berean Notes on the Lessons.

I. PRELIMINARY.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER : Let us begin at the very beginning. If the Gospel, the "beginning" of which is to occupy our attention this week, is to be a power with your scholars, IT MUST BE A POWER WITH YOU! You must feel your need of it. You must repent of sin and accept it. You must accept it and repent of sin. You must have an inward realization of its preciousness and fulness and efficiency. You must prepare and teach under its inspiration.

Good JOHN FLETCHER has said some things to the minister, in his "Portrait of St. Paul," which are equally appropriate to the Sunday-school teacher. READ : "If Quintillian the heathen has laid it down as a general principle that it is impossible to become a good orator without being a good man, surely no one will deny that piety should be considered the first qualification essential to a Christian (teacher) speaker. . . . If those who are called to serve tables were to be 'men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom,' it is evident that the same dispositions and graces should be possessed, in a more eminent degree, by those who are called to minister in holy things. 'When thou art converted,' said Christ to Peter, 'strengthen thy brethren.'"

May the HOLY SPIRIT himself descend upon and prepare you to teach from largeness and fullness and richness of Gospel experience the all sufficiency of Gospel provisions and resources!

II. THE BOOK OF MARK.

Tell your class about it. Let them study the following short catechism about MARK : 1. Author's name? *John, Mark, or Marcus.* (1 Pet. v. 13.) 2. Mother's name? *Mary.* (Acts xii. 12.) 3. Home? *Jerusalem.* 4. His uncle's name? *Barnabas.* (Col. iv. 10.) 5. His "spiritual father," (that is, through whom he was probably converted to Christ?) *Peter.* (1 Pet. v. 13.) 6. With what good men did he travel? *Paul and Barnabas.* (Acts xii. 25.) 7. How far did he go? *From Antioch to Parga.* (Acts xiii. 13.) 8. What serious separation was

afterward caused by his leaving them at Parga? *Separation between Paul and Barnabas.* (Acts xv. 30-41.) 9. Which way did Barnabas and Mark go? *To Cyprus.* (Acts xv. 39.) 10. Did he and Paul ever work together again? *Yes, in Rome.* (Col. iv. 10, 11.) 11. Under whose direction and dictation does tradition say that Mark wrote his Gospel? *Under the direction of St. Peter.* 12. In what language was it written? *Greek.* 13. Where written? *Uncertain. Rome, Alexandria, or Antioch.* 14. When? *Uncertain. Probably between A. D. 63 and A. D. 70.* 15. Give a few facts about the Gospel according to St. Mark. (1) *It is the shortest of the four;* (2) *Full of vivid word-pictures;* (3) *It begins with Jesus as a public teacher and worker.*

III. GENERAL STATEMENT.

Omitting the facts preceding, attending, and following his birth; omitting all accounts of his childhood—the Gospel of Mark begins with Jesus the man, "Son of God," announced by John the Baptist, baptized in the Jordan, and approved by the "Voice" from heaven. Compare Matt. iii. 1-17. Mark i. 1-11. Luke iii. 1-23.

IV. OUTLINES.

See "Lesson Leaf," page 163. Or one of these : 1. *The Voice of Prophecy,* vers. 1-3 ; 2. *The Voice of John,* vers. 4-8 ; 3. *The Voice of God,* vers. 9-11....1. *The Old Testament Prophecy,* vers. 1-3 ; 2. *The New Testament Prophecy,* vers. 4-8 ; 3. *The Beginning and the End of all Prophecy,* vers. 9-11.

V. NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. ACCORDING TO PROPHECY, verses 2, 3. (1) *Whose Prophecy?* Compare Isa. xl. 3 ; Mal. iii. 1. (2) *What Prophecy?* In verse 2 of our lesson we have a condensation of Isaiah's and Malachi's prophecies concerning John, whose preaching of repentance was in one sense the BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. (1) There is a beginning to all things finite. Creation. Gen. i. 1. (2) He who was in the beginning, (John i. 1), but was himself without beginning, (Psa. xc. 2), begins the Gospel. (3) This was not the beginning of his existence, nor of his gracious purpose, nor of his power and authority.

. . . It was the blossoming out in a new flower of an old life, and an old love from an old root. Beautiful flower of Gospel grace!

(4) A beginning without an ending. It began in LOVE, and LOVE NEVER FAILETH. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

. . . "1. A wonderful thing here begun. 2. A wonderful beginning of this wonderful thing. 3. The wonderful beginning of the wonderful new, was the beginning of the end of the wonderful old."—Gray.