

The Mandate of the Century.

BY ELIZABETH YATES RICHMOND.

UPON the rushing whirlwind Sweep the chariots of the Lord; The clouds roll back before him, And the seas obey his word. His hand unclasps the fetters, And through grated dungeon doors That man's iron hand had bolted, God's glorious sunshine pours.

Lo! on the distant hilltops His standard-bearers gather, And the solemn centuries listen To the mandate that they bring; "Bid the daughters of the nations March forth beneath their banners, And marshal in their cohorts Where the hosts are gathering.

"There is danger on the ramparts, There is rout upon the war-field; There is wrong and woe in all the land And stain upon our shield; Bid the silent ranks come forward, Come from their voiceless threshold, And battling for their hearthstones, Bear my standard to the field"

Shall his fiat fall unanswered Along the silent highway? Shall his mandate drop unechoed And his heralds lick the dust? No, not though thrones should topple, Though the battlements should falter, Though the sceptres should be shivered, And earth's crowns should sink to rust.

It is written in the heavens, It is carved upon the mountains; And the thunders of the ages Send their echoes on before; And the tides roll swift and certain As the rivers from their fountains, And the human right shall rule the earth, And wrong sit shrined no more.

LESSON NOTES. SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

A.D. 30] LESSON II. [April 14 THE REJECTED SON. Mark 12. 1-12. Memory verses, 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. John 1. 11.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Stone Rejected, v. 1-8. 2. The Head of the Corner, v. 9-12

TIME.—30 A.D.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

CONNECTING LINKS.—On the night of the triumphal entry Jesus returned to Bethany. For a day or two more he returned in the morning to Jerusalem, and taught throughout the day. Then finally leaving the temple for the last time, he went out of the city, to return no more until the evening of the passover. It was during these two days of teaching that the parable of this lesson was spoken.

EXPLANATIONS.—Parable—An illustration of truth, real or imaginary. The wine-fat—Wine-press; it was cut in a sloping rock, with openings through into another trough or basin below, called by the Romans "the lake." A tower—A lookout station where one could keep watch over the vineyard. Let it out—Rented it, perhaps for part of the fruit. See ver. 2 At the season—The time for gathering the fruit. The head of the corner—Or, simply the corner-stone, which is symbolic of a completed house.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. The Stone Rejected. For what purpose did Jesus speak this parable? Of what was it really a prophecy? Of what was it also a history? Did his hearers know for whom it was intended? Matt. 21. 45. Was this parable applicable to them only? In what way can it be applied to us? What constitutes a rejection of the corner-stone?

What Scriptures does Jesus here quote? See Psalm 118. 22, 23. Mention some historic cases which substantiate that part of the parable in vers. 3-5.

2. The Head of the Corner.

In what sense was Jesus Christ the head of the corner? Was it true that the spiritual building to be reared with him as Corner-stone had not yet been begun? Why should the hearers think the parable was against them? Was the part in vers. 7, 8, fulfilled? Did they understand that? What had the Sanhedrin agreed upon that would make it true? Give a reason for supposing that they knew that he was aware of all their purposes. What does Matthew add to this story that shows why they should have been angry? Matt. 21. 44.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Notice first: the wickedness of the husbandmen was voluntary. They were not compelled to be wicked. They chose to be. It is so to-day. Men cannot justly charge their sinfulness on God. He gives them every opportunity not only to care for themselves, but also to serve him. But they will not.

Notice second: the forbearance of this man was wonderful, and his trust in his servants was even more wonderful. But God's is indefinitely beyond it. But remember his word says, "He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever."

Notice third: there is only one corner-stone—that is, Christ. Men cannot lay a corner-stone of their own—morality will not do. It is by Christ and through him alone that men can rise into a spiritual temple.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Explain fully this parable; write it in full. The certain man means..... The vineyard means..... and so apply point by point. 2. Write the names of the prophets who were beaten, driven away, killed, stoned, etc. 3. Read Matt. 23. 27-39, to see what Jesus charged upon these Pharisees. 4. Why they feared the people is not told. Think of the reasons. What trouble would a popular tumult at this time have caused? etc. 5. Find in Paul's writings what he has to say about a corner-stone or foundation and building thereon.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. To whom does Christ here liken God? To the owner of a vineyard. 2. To whom does he let out his vineyard? To the chosen people. 3. Who were the servants sent to his people? The prophets of Israel and Judah. 4. Who was the son whom they slew? Jesus Christ the Saviour. 5. How does our GOLDEN TEXT tell the truth of this parable? "He came unto," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The patience of God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

18. How does the New Testament teach his religion? It contains the history of his life and death, the record of his teaching while he was among men, and the doctrine which he taught the Apostles by his Spirit after he ascended into heaven.

A.D. 30] LESSON III. [April 21. THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS. Mark 12. 28-34. Memory verses 30, 31.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13. 10.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Law, v. 28-31. 2. The Scribe, v. 32-34.

TIME.—30 A.D.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

CONNECTING LINKS.—The last lesson closed with the anger of the Scribes and Pharisees at Jesus for his attack upon them. Twice more they deliberately attempt with worldly wisdom to entrap him, and each time are foiled. Then comes in the story of our lesson, like some gleam of sunshine through the gloom of a darkening day. Let us study it.

EXPLANATIONS.—One of the Scribes—Originally transcribers of the law, who afterward became expositors of the law and its traditions. Their teachings were not original evolutions of the truth, but simply repetitions of past traditions. The first commandment. This means the most important of the commandments. Soul, mind, strength—That is, with all the powers with which God has endowed man. Thy neighbour—Any one with whom life brings a person into relations. The kingdom of God—Here means, thou art not far from a correct understanding of the great principles of righteousness and from participation in their benefits. Durst—Dared.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. The Law. Who was the questioner who now came to Jesus? What is this questioner called by Matthew? Matt. 22. 35. What was the reason that caused him to ask the question? What had been the chief subject of the teaching of Jesus? Why did he ask the question? Had he not his own opinion about these things? In the answer of Jesus did he deny his own divinity? Is there an argument here against the Trinity? How are the answers of Jesus correct reproductions of the Ten Commandments? 2. The Scribe. What was the office of the scribe in Christ's day? By whom is it supposed the order of scribes was founded? What was the character of this particular one? Is there any evidence that he was put forward by the hatred of the Sanhedrin to entangle Jesus in his words? What was the Saviour's attitude toward this scribe? What was his attitude toward the scribes as a class? Mark 12. 38-40. What did the scribe lack of being in the kingdom of God? Why did no man after that dare to ask him questions?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

How many there are who are ready to ask questions about the scheme of salvation! It is worse to be near the kingdom and to miss it than never to have heard of it. Being near the kingdom saves no one. He must be in it who would be saved. For this, one must be born again. Knowledge saves no one. The scribe was discreet and wise. Agreement with Christ as to the principles of the law saves no one. Such a one, though not far from the kingdom, is nevertheless not in it.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Write the one word which makes the central thought of this lesson. 2. Think of five things which it will make the soul do, and write them out. 3. Put all of the commandments from Exod. 20 which belong under Christ's first answer into a column. Do the same with the second. How many are in the first column? In the second? 4. Compare this story with the story of the young man whom Jesus loved. 5. Write one evidence that this man was not in the kingdom of God.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who next came to Jesus? A scribe questioning him. 2. About what did he question Jesus? About the greatest commandment. 3. What did Jesus tell him was the first commandment? To love God supremely. 4. In what relation to this did Jesus place love to man? As like unto it. 5. How was this same truth afterward taught by Paul? "Love is the fulfilling of the law," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Love.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

19. How does the Lord teach us by his Spirit. All the Scriptures were written under the Holy Spirit's inspiration; and he who inspired them will show their meaning to such as humbly ask him.

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