

LESSON NOTES

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

A.D. 62.] LESSON V. [May 3.
OBEDIENCE.Eph. 1:13. Commit to mem. vs. 1-3.
GOLDEN TEXT.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.—Eph. 6:1.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Obedience to parents the foundation of obedience to the State and to God.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Eph. 1:1-23. T. Eph. 2:1-22.
W. Eph. 3:1-21. Th. Eph. 4:1-16.
F. Eph. 4:17-32. Sa. Eph. 5:1-33.
Su. Eph. 6:1-24.

TIME.—The Epistle to the Ephesians was written in the Autumn of A.D. 62.

PLACE.—Written at Rome, from the house where Paul was a prisoner.

AUTHOR.—St. Paul, aged about 60

PLACE IN BIBLE HISTORY.—Acts 28:30, 31.

EPHESUS, the capital of Ionia, and chief city of Asia Minor.

EPHESIAN CHURCH was founded by Paul, during his three years' stay there, A.D. 54-57.

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.—Circular letter to several churches, sent by Tychicus.

INTRODUCTION.—Having completed the book of the Acts in our studies, we naturally turn to some of the letters written during the period described in its last verses.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—1. Obey... in the Lord—For his sake; because he commands it; in his strength. 2. The first commandment, etc.—The first with promise, of the first importance. 3. Obedience tends to these things. 5. With fear and trembling—Fear of God, anxiety to do just right. Singleness of heart—Sincerity, the opposite of hypocrisy. 6. Menpleasers—Pleasing only men, who see the outside and not the heart. 7. With goodwill—Cheerfully. 9. Do the same things—Act on the same principles. 12. Wrestle—The conflict is single-handed; each has his own warfare. Not against flesh and blood—The contest is not in sword or guns, but is spiritual. Rulers of the darkness—The unseen powers who make this world so dark with sin and sorrow. 13. To stand—To hold your own, to gain the victory.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The Epistle to the Ephesians.—Obedience to parents.—The promise.—Duties of parents.—Obedience to masters.—Ennobling service.—Duties of employers.—The great enemies of man.—The armour of defence.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Why do we now take up the Epistle to the Ephesians? When and where was it written? By whom? Who founded the church at Ephesus? (Acts 19.) How long before this?

SUBJECT: SOME MUTUAL CHRISTIAN DUTIES.

I. DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO PARENTS (vs. 1-3).—What is the first duty of the children? What is it to obey in the Lord? Why is this obedience right? Where is it commanded? What is it to honour our parents? What promise is given to those who obey? How does obedience tend to a long and happy life? How does disobedience tend to unhappiness? How does obedience to parents tend to make a prosperous nation?

II. DUTIES OF PARENTS TO CHILDREN (v. 4).—How should parents treat their children? In what should they bring them up? What is the "nurture" of the Lord? The "admonition"? What is the effect upon this training of the example of parents? How is this a motive for their becoming Christians?

III. DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYED TO THEIR EMPLOYERS (vs. 5-8).—What is their first duty to them? Meaning of "masters according to the flesh." Have all a higher master? (v. 9.) What is meant here by "fear and trembling"? By "singleness of heart"? "Eye-service"? "Menpleasers"? How can we serve men for Christ's sake? How does this ennoble our daily labours? How does God reward men? Does he make any distinc-

tion on account of our outward circumstances?

IV. DUTIES OF EMPLOYERS TO THE EMPLOYED (v. 9).—What are the wrongs employers are most likely to commit? What are the duties of employers? Meaning of "do the same things unto them" (Matt. 7:12.) Read v. 9 in the Revised Version. How would the fact that both had the same master in heaven help employers to do right? Meaning of "respect of persons."

V. DANGERS, AND HELPS TO DUTY (vs. 10-13).—Wherein does the strength lie for performing these duties? To what dangers and temptations are we exposed? What are "the wiles of the devil"? Against whom and what must we contend? How great are the powers of evil represented? Why? Why is this conflict called wrestling? What defence have we? What are the parts of this armour? Can we gain the victory in any other way?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. All duties to others are mutual.
2. We must do our duty to others whether they do theirs to us or not.
3. Obedience to parents leads to obedience to the State and to God.
4. Parents may be the cause of wrong doing in children.
5. The commonest service may be made noble and glorious by noble motives.
6. The enemies opposed to us are many and powerful.
7. But our helpers are stronger and wiser than they.
8. The greatest battles are fought on the battle-field of the heart.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in concert.)

1. When and where was the Epistle to the Ephesians written? ANS. It was written by Paul in prison at Rome in A.D. 62.
2. What is the first duty of children? ANS. To obey and honour their parents.
3. What promise is given to those who do this? (Repeat v. 3.)
4. How should we do all our work? (Repeat v. 7.)
5. What is said of our enemies? (Repeat v. 12.)
6. What is our defence against them? (Repeat v. 13.)

A D. 63.] LESSON VI. [May 10.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

Phil. 2:5-16. Commit to mem. vs. 8-11.
GOLDEN TEXT.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 2:5.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The true aim of men, to be like Christ.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Phil. 1:1-14. T. Phil. 1:15-30.
W. Phil. 2:1-13. Th. Phil. 2:14-30.
F. Matt. 20:17-28. Sa. Rom. 15:1-13.
Su. Heb. 1:1-14.

TIME.—The Epistle to the Philippians was written late in the Autumn of A.D. 62, or early in A.D. 63.

PLACE.—Written to Philippi, from Rome, the latter part of Paul's imprisonment.

PLACE IN BIBLE HISTORY.—Acts 28:30, 31.

THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI was planted by Paul and Silas in the second missionary journey, A.D. 51. (See Acts 16.)

CIRCUMSTANCES.—The Philippians, who had a peculiar love for Paul, sent a contribution for his support while in prison. It was brought to Rome by Epaphroditus. When he returned Paul sent this letter by him.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—5. Let this mind—The spirit of humility, and seeking the good of others. 6. In the form of God—Christ was not only God, but had the glory and honour which belongs to God. The reality he could not change. The form, or appearance, he could lay aside. 7. Made himself of no reputation—Rather emptied himself, i.e., put aside all the form and outward glory of God. A servant of God, as good men are. 9. A name—The name, i.e., of Jehovah,—he made him first in the universe. As God he was this before. Now the man Christ Jesus is thus exalted. 10. Every knee should bow—In worship and love, or in unwilling submission to his power. Things under the earth—The dead, and perhaps demons. 12. Fear and trembling—Not cowardice, but carefulness lest we fail in so important a matter.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The church at Philippi.—The Epistle to the Philippians.—Ideals and examples.—Christ's nature.—Christ's humility.—Christ's exaltation.—Working out our salvation.—Murmurings and disputings.—The Christian in the world.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Give some account of the founding of the church at Philippi. (Acts 16.) Where was the Epistle to the Philippians written? When? What was the occasion of it?

SUBJECT: IMITATION OF CHRIST.

I. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST (v. 5).—What was one danger in the Philippian church? (Phil. 2:1-4.) By whose example would Paul teach them better things? What is it to imitate Christ? Must we imitate the things he did, or "the mind" of Christ? What is the benefit of having a high ideal.

II. HIS EXAMPLE.—IN SEEKING THE GOOD OF OTHERS (vs. 6-8).—What was Christ before he came to this earth? What is said of him in John 1:1-3? and Hebrews 1:2, 3? Meaning of "being in the form of God." What of "thought it not robbery to be equal with God?" In what way did he humble himself? How far did he carry this humiliation? What was his object in it? What "mind" or spirit did this show? In what ways may we imitate his example? What things will this lead us to avoid? (Phil. 1:15; 2:3, 4, 14.)

III. THE REWARD (vs. 9-11).—How did God reward Christ? Meaning of v. 10. Does v. 11 mean that all the people in the world shall be Christians? How does confessing that Christ is the Lord Jehovah honour God the Father? Did Christ humble himself for the sake of the reward? What did Christ say to us? (Luke 18:14.) How did he illustrate this truth? (Luke 14:7-11; 18:9-14.)

IV. THE POWER (vs. 12, 13).—What is meant by "salvation" here? What two elements of power were necessary to it? What part must they do? What is it to work out this salvation? Why with fear and trembling? Who would help them? What does God do in their salvation? Could we do anything without him?

V. THE MOTIVES (vs. 14-16).—What two things should they specially guard against? The evil of murmurings? Of disputings? What kind of a world did they live in? Would it be better to leave such a world altogether? (John 17:15.) What should they do for the world? What is the word of life? In what ways may we hold it forth?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. We need a perfect human being for our ideal and pattern.
2. The true Christian ever seeks to be like Christ.
3. By being humble and unselfish like Christ, we shall avoid the envy, jealousy, love of honour and power, which would injure the church of God.
4. God exalts those who humble themselves.
5. Salvation is to be free from sin and to be like Christ and fit to live with him forever.
6. We can work out our salvation, because God works in us; as we can raise fruits and flowers because God works in nature.
7. God has left us in a sinful world that we may make it better.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in concert.)

7. When and where was the Epistle to the Philippians written? ANS. By Paul, in prison at Rome, A.D. 62.
8. Who is our perfect pattern? ANS. Jesus Christ.
9. How did he humble himself? ANS. Being in the form of God, he was made in the likeness of men, and became obedient unto death.
10. How did God exalt him? ANS. He gave him the name above every name.
11. How may we imitate him? (Repeat v. 12, beginning with "Work out," etc., and v. 13.)
12. What two things should we do in the world? ANS. Be blameless, and hold forth the word of life.

"Bro pardon, sir—hic—but could you tell me which is the opposite side of the street?" "Why, that side, sir" (pointing across). "Mosh oblish. I was sover there just now, and asked 'nother gen'l'n which was opps' side, an' he said this was."

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