

LESSON I—April 5th, 1896.

Warning Against Sin. LUKE 13: 22-30.

(Commit to memory verses 24, 25).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Luke 13: 24.

PROVE THAT—We all have sinned. Rom. 3: 23.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 53. Which is the third commandment? A. The third commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 27, 51, 84, 164.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Warnings against sin. Luke 13: 22-30. *Tuesday.* Known by fruit. Matt. 7: 13-27. *Wednesday.* Hearers but not doers. Ezek. 33: 30-33. *Thursday.* Fate of the fruitless. Luke 13: 1-9. *Friday.* Fear of failure. Heb. 4: 1-11. *Saturday.* Winning the prize. 1 Cor. 9: 19-27. *Sabbath.* A sure entrance. 2 Pet. 1: 1-11. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. The words of our lesson were spoken somewhere in Peraea (Mark 10: 1) during our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem. There is no parallel passage in the other evangelists.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Strait Gate. vs. 22-24. II. The Closed Door. vs. 25-27. III. The Last First. vs. 28-30.

I. Jesus was now on his way to Jerusalem to be "offered up."¹ He journeyed by the east side of the Jordan,² as did most of the pilgrims from Galilee, and turned aside, as he went, to the towns and villages near the way that he might do some last deeds of mercy and speak a last solemn message to them. The Jews loved to think of themselves as the special favorites of God and the only people who were to get to heaven at last. But some things that Jesus said appeared to teach that others besides children of Abraham would enter his kingdom. So one asked him whether many or few would be saved. In reply Jesus said, The most important question is not, "How many are going to be saved?" but "Am I saved?" The entrance into my kingdom is a narrow one and only those who are seeking with all their hearts can pass through it.³

II. Again he said, when all the family have arrived home the master of the house closes the door for the night, and will not open it again to any but well-known friends. So the door of my kingdom will one day be closed⁴ and you will stand at the door and knock in vain because you have not in your hearts believed upon me and obeyed my commands.⁵ You will not acknowledge me now and I will not recognize you then. The Jews prided themselves upon being heirs of the

promise made to Abraham, but Jesus told them that they might be descendants of the patriarchs and yet not share their blessedness.⁶ So we may have pious parents, who gave us to God in baptism, and we may have been taught at home and in the Sabbath school how to love and serve God, yet, if we do not give our hearts to Christ, he will not acknowledge us at the day of judgment. If we are not loving and serving Christ we are serving Satan. We shall receive at last either Christ's welcome or sin's wages.⁷

III. Jesus assured his hearers that a great many would be saved⁸ and that they would belong to every nation throughout the whole world.⁹ Those who rejected him, although they were children of Abraham, would be thrust out, and the true Israelites, those who believed in Christ, would sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets at the heavenly banquet.¹⁰ God does not judge by our professions but by what we really are.¹¹ Many who have had great privileges in this life will be refused admittance to heaven, because they have made so little use of their advantages; while others who have tried to serve Christ amid many hinderances will hear his welcome "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."¹²

¹ ch. 9: 51; 12: 50. ² Mark 10: 1. ³ Matt. 7: 13, 14; 1 Tim. 6: 12; ch. 9: 23. ⁴ Isa. 55: 6; Matt. 25: 10. ⁵ John 10: 7; 14: 6. ⁶ Rom. 9: 6; Gal. 3: 7, 29. ⁷ Rom. 6: 16, 23; Matt. 25: 41. ⁸ Rev. 5: 11. ⁹ Eph. 3: 6; Isa. 45: 6; 49: 12. ¹⁰ Isa. 25: 6; Rev. 19: 7, 9. ¹¹ 1 Sam. 16: 7. ¹² Matt. 21: 31; Rom. 9: 30.

LESSONS. 1. Avoid questions prompted by mere idle curiosity. 2. Our first duty is to enter into the kingdom of God. 3. We are apt to suppose ourselves to be true disciples when we are not. 4. The true Israel will embrace all nations.