

A Messenger of Consolation.

Love's peace is in her pure young heart,
Love's light is on her face,
She carries sunshine in her eyes
To many a shady place.

For ought she has of good and sweet
She only seeks to share;
She lends her loving strength to all
The crosses others bear.

Her posies cheer the sufferer's bed,
The city workshop's gloom,
She has a wreath to lay upon
The stranger's lonely tomb.

Through every gentle deed she does
Love's soft aroma steals,
The weary heart grows fresh again,
The wounded spirit heals.

And when she wanders through the woods
In morning's dewy hour,
Standing amid the flowers we see
Herself the fairest flower!

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A.D. 29] LESSON VIII. [FEB. 19

A LESSON ON FORGIVENESS.

Matt. 18. 21-35. Memory verses, 21, 22

GOLDEN TEXT.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matt. 6. 12.

OUTLINE.

- 1. Forgiving.
2. Unforgiving.

TIME.—29 A.D.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

RULERS.—Same as before.

CONNECTING LINKS.—This lesson follows in very close connection with the last, and is among the last of the teachings given by Jesus to his disciples before his departure for Jerusalem and Judea.

EXPLANATIONS.—Till seven times—Peter thought there must be some limit to forgiveness, and yet would be magnanimous. The number seven, as a symbolic number, might mean once for every day in the week. Seventy times seven—A limitless number of times; not four hundred and ninety times simply, but, as that is a very large number compared with seven, it means a vast number of times; that is, always. Take account of his servants—Not number his servants, but make a reckoning with them. Ten thousand talents—An expression intended to indicate the infinite debt incurred, which could never be discharged. Commanded him to be sold—That is as a slave, according to the law of Moses. Loosed him—Set him free. A hundred pence—About fifteen dollars; a very small comparative sum. The tormentors—The torturers, or those who would subject him to rack and punishment till he should pay; an awful picture of punishment, since he could not pay.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Forgiving. What previous teaching of Jesus caused Peter's question? v. 15. Did Peter ask for himself, or for all the disciples? What view of forgiveness as a virtue does his question disclose? What was the great law laid down by Jesus? How did he illustrate the principle? What is forgiveness?
2. Unforgiving. To what realm does Jesus teach that forgiveness belongs? In the illustration, whom does the earthly king represent? Who are the servants? What is the day of reckoning? Was the judgment just? Why did the king forgive the debt? Did the servant's promise to pay have any thing to do with the forgiveness? What should the effect of forgiveness be in the life?

How did Jesus illustrate this in the house of Simon the Pharisee? See Luke 7. 30, and after.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Here is the hardest lesson that human life has to learn. One says, "I can forgive but I must remember."

God says, "Forgive and forget." Forgiving is forth giving. You give away what you have against one; then there is nothing left to remember.

Forgiveness must come from the heart; that is, it must be willing, generous, compassionate, merciful, helpful, and loving. Is there one person whom you have not forgiven?

Remember, the largest word in our Lord's Prayer is the smallest one, "as." "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Find instances in the Scriptures where God forgave men's iniquities freely.
2. What did Christ pray on the cross? What did Stephen pray when the Jews were casting stones?
3. Find how many times in Matthew the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used.
4. Find (an illustration in this lesson) how men regard the ungrateful recipient of kindness.
5. What Mosaic law is alluded to here? See if you can find it.
6. Write down and give to your teacher what you think the doctrine of this lesson is.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What was Peter's question to Jesus? How often shall I forgive? 2. How many times did Jesus tell him he must forgive? Until seventy times seven. 3. What does v. 35 show that this means? That there is no limit to forgiveness. 4. What does this verse say we must do? From our hearts forgive all trespasses. 5. How had Jesus already taught men to pray? "Forgive us our debts," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Forgiveness.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

10. What does our Lord say of those who reject him?

He declares that they ought to believe in him; and that they would believe in him if they humbly and patiently listened to his words.

John viii. 46, 47. If I say truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth the words of God: for this cause ye hear them not, because ye are not of God.

A.D. 30] LESSON IX. [FEB. 26

THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

Matt. 19. 16-26. Memory verses, 23-26

GOLDEN TEXT.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matt. 6. 24.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Service of God.
2. The Service of Mammon.

TIME.—30 A.D. Early in the year.

PLACE.—Perea, beyond Jordan.

RULERS.—Same as before.

CONNECTING LINKS.—Several months in time have passed, and many most interesting events have occurred since the events of the last lesson. Jesus has finally left Galilee, not to return till after the resurrection. He journeyed through Samaria, healed ten lepers, one of whom was a Samaritan, and at last reached Bethany, which he made his home. At Jerusalem, at the Feast of the Tabernacles, he taught and wrought miracles, and continued until the Feast of Dedication, when the violence of his enemies became so great that he was compelled to withdraw into Perea. Here he sent forth the seventy messengers, and here received tidings of the deadly illness of Lazarus. He returned to Bethany; called Lazarus back to life; once more sought for quiet in the mountains of Ephraim; again passed across the Jordan into Perea, and there began his last great ministry to the thronging multitudes. Here occurred the visit from the rich young ruler, and his story is the lesson for to-day.

EXPLANATIONS.—What good thing—That is, what work of righteousness. Enter into life—That is, have the eternal life about which he asked. If thou wilt be perfect—That is, if besides keeping the letter of the law

you are earnest to keep its spirit. Camel The familiar Oriental beast of burden. Eye of a needle—Miss Von Finkelstein interprets and illustrates as an actual thing that there is a gate called "the needle's eye," through which a camel, stripped of all burden, can pass. Most commentators think it means "a matter of very great difficulty." With men . . . impossible—That is, according to the way men judge and understand, it is impossible.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. The Service of God. With whom had Jesus been in discussion previous to this scene? Of what class was this "one" who came with a question to Jesus? Luke 18. 18. Why did he use the word "good" when he spoke to Jesus—"good" "master"? Why did Jesus answer as he did? What commandments did Jesus cite? What is the number of the last commandment he mentioned? What did Jesus mean by being perfect? Can any one render a perfect obedience to the law? Was the young man's answer, "all these," etc., true? Give a reason for your answer.

- 2. The Service of Mammon.

What is meant by mammon, the word found in the GOLDEN TEXT? What was the young ruler's claim? What did Christ lead him to see? Did Jesus demand an unreasonable thing of him?

Can you mention any instance in the Old Testament where God demanded all that a man had?

Why is it that a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven?

What makes it easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for him to enter heaven?

What is meant by the eye of the needle? What did Jesus teach us to the difference between divine and human standards of judgment?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

This rich young man has many followers to-day.

They do not kill, steal, lie, lead impure lives, or dishonour their parents, but abstaining from these things is often no self-denial.

Jesus says, "Sell all;" they go away.

Jesus says, "Give self;" they go away.

Jesus says, "Abandon self seeking;" they go away.

Jesus says, "Give to the poor;" they go away.

Whom are you following, the young man or Jesus?

The young man came to Jesus. Lot's wife went out of Sodom. Both were lost. Why?

This young man deceived himself. Do you?

Christ weighed him in the balances. On one side a desire for eternal life, on the other self. So he will weigh all of us.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. Learn where Jesus was when the lesson opens. See where he was in the last lesson.
2. Trace his steps between the two lessons.
3. Write all the miracles that he is said to have worked during this time.
4. Read Luke's account and Mark's account of this visit.
5. Write two reasons why it is hard for a rich man to be saved.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who came asking for eternal life? A rich young ruler. 2. What did Jesus tell him he must do? "Keep the commandments." 3. How did the young man show that he considered himself fit for eternal life? He said, "All these have I kept." 4. What did Jesus say that showed him he had not kept the one that had been last mentioned? "Go . . . sell . . . give . . . come . . . follow me." 5. What great truth from the Sermon on the Mount was thus exemplified? "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Self-righteousness.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

11. What is his warning to them? That his word shall condemn them at the last day.

John xii. 48. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.

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ANNUALS, 1887.

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