

Lesson X.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

June 6, 1909

James 3: 1-12. Commit to memory vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT—Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.—Proverbs 21: 23.

1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive ² the greater condemnation.2 For in many things we ³ offend all. If any ⁴ man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, ⁵ and able ⁶ also to bridle the whole body.3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; ⁴ and we turn about their whole body⁵.4 Behold ⁵ also the ships, which though they ¹⁰ be so great, and ^{are} driven ¹¹ of fierce winds, yet are they turned about ¹² with a very small ¹³ helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, ¹⁵ how great a matter a little fire kindleth!6 And the tongue is a fire, ¹⁶ a world of iniquity: ¹⁷ so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth

Revised Version—¹ Be not many teachers, my brethren; ² heavier judgment; ³ all stumble; ⁴ stumbleth not; ⁵ *Omit* and; ⁶ to bridle the whole body; ⁷ Now if we put the horses' bridles into their mouths; ⁸ also; ⁹ the ships also; ¹⁰ are; ¹¹ by rough winds, are yet turned; ¹² by; ¹³ rudder, whither the impulse of the steersman willeth; ¹⁴ So the tongue also; ¹⁵ how much wood is kindled by how small a fire; ¹⁶ the; ¹⁷ among our members is the tongue, which defileth; ¹⁸ wheel; ¹⁹ *Omit* it; ²⁰ and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea; ²¹ a restless; ²² it is; ²³ the Lord and Father; ²⁴ likeness; ²⁵ cometh forth; ²⁶ from; ²⁷ opening; ²⁸ a; ²⁹ yield olives, or a vine figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Good Tongue, 1, 2.
- II. The Little Tongue, 3-5a.
- III. The Evil Tongue, 5b-8.
- IV. The Fickle Tongue, 9-12.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The power of the tongue, James 3: 1-12.
 T.—Speaking deceitfully, Jer. 9: 1-8. W.—“Speak the truth!” Zech. 8: 9-17. Th.—Devising mischief, Ps. 52. F.—Speaking vanity, Ps. 12. S.—Tongue of the wise, Prov. 10: 11-22. S.—Keeping the tongue, Ps. 34: 11-18.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 19. *What is the misery of that estate wherinto man fell?* A. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.

the whole body, and setteth on fire the ¹⁸ course of nature; and ¹⁹ it is set on fire ¹² of hell.7 For every kind of beasts, ²⁰ and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed ¹² of mankind:8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* ²¹ an unruly evil, ²² full of deadly poison.9 Therewith bless we ²³ God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the ²⁴ similitude of God.10 Out of the same mouth ²⁵ proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.11 Doth ¹⁶ a fountain send forth ²⁶ at the same ²⁷ place sweet *water* and bitter?12 Can ²⁸ the fig tree, my brethren, ²⁹ bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? *so can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

The Question on Missions—10. What is our church doing for the foreigners? Our Presbyterian church is helping the Galician and Hungarian settlers in the West. A kindergarten school, five hospitals, and ministers and students are supported by our church people.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 65 (Supplemental Lesson); 223; 225; 95 (Ps. Sel.); 529 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 238.

Special Scripture Reading—Ps. 34: 9-22. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.) It is expected that each scholar will have his or her Bible, and so be prepared to take part in this reading, which may form part of the opening exercises of the School.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, M. P. 28, Horses with Bit and Bridle; M. P. 29, Ocean Race, Showing Helm. For Mission Question, H. M. 16, Knox College Students on Horseback Setting out for Mission Fields; H. M. 17, Ruthenian Students.

EXPOSITION

By Rev. Professor James W. Falconer, B.D. Halifax, N.S.

Introduction—The connection between the chapters in this Epistle is not very close; but the third chapter continues the discussion of the fruits of faith as manifested in speech. James is the specialist on the tongue.

I. The Good Tongue, 1, 2.

V. 1. *Be not many teachers* (Rev. Ver.). From 1 Cor. 14: 26 we gather that, at the meetings for worship of the early church, any member was at liberty to speak. So eager were many to become instructors of others, that these meetings often became a perfect babel, 1 Cor. 14: 23. It is to these would-be teachers, themselves in sore need of being taught, that James addresses his warning. His words echo those of Jesus, Matt. 23: 8-10. (Compare Acts 15: 24;

Gal. 2: 12; 1 Tim. 1: 7.) *My brethren* (this is the order of the Rev. Ver.). The apostle is not afraid to utter stern rebuke, but he does it with courtesy and tenderness. *We*. James is careful to include himself among those to whom he gives his warning. *Receive heavier judgment* (Rev. Ver.); heavier than other Christians who did not aspire to be teachers. Those who assume to be teachers will be condemned more severely than others, if they teach false doctrine, or if they do not themselves live up to their teaching. There are frequent references in the New Testament to the danger from false or blind teachers (see Matt. 7: 15; Mark 12: 38-40).

V. 2. *In many things we all stumble* (Rev. Ver.). Every one—teachers and all—sins,

*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Leaflets are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. Their recitation leads to the obtaining of a beautiful Certificate or Diploma.