

INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSONS.**March 22. Luke xii: 37-48.**

This passage was addressed not to the multitude, but (verse 22) to the disciples, to them that were able to receive it. In verse 39 the reference to the digging through of the house is only intelligible in the light of eastern customs, where men dwelt in tents, into which the burglariously disposed entered by digging under the tent-wall. "The master of the house" is the lord of the body, the incarnating ego, and he may keep his "tabernacle" in perfect safety and purity. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord (the Christos) when He cometh shall find so doing." The ability of every man to absolutely control the various departments of his nature, physical, psychic, or mental, should be clearly understood. Upon that fact rests the reasonableness of the teaching here given. If any man neglects to use the powers in his possession then "in an hour that he knows not" he will be "cut in two," the higher divine nature will be separated from the lower animal nature, the personality of that particular incarnation will be lost. The Karma of such as are instructed will be heavy in succeeding lives, they will be beaten with many stripes. Those who know not, and act in ignorance, Karma will deal with according to their opportunities. "Unto whomsoever much is given of him shall be much required." Peter's endeavour to learn who were disciples and who were not (verse 41) is met by the warning so often given that only they are servants who do the will of the Master. "Not every one that calleth Lord, Lord," merely, "shall enter in the kingdom," but he that doeth the will of the Father, the Atma-Self.

March 29. Review.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God. Luke xii: 8.

If the Son of Man be taken as the incarnating ego or the Son of Manas, which is evidently the sense in which the term is generally used, the Son of God implying the Higher Self, the passage in which this text occurs becomes

quite clear. He who rails against the Holy Breath or Spirit shall not be forgiven (discharged or set free is the original meaning of the word, and has to do with causes, not effects, which must take their course); he who declares himself against the ego may find release from that Karma. The law adjusts all these things equitably, even the hairs of the head being numbered. They who associate themselves with the law as manifested in the Karmic ego will be found in agreement in the presence of the messengers of the Divine.

April 5. Luke xiii: 22-30.

The frequent question of the curious is again parried in this passage by the Master, "Lord, are there few being saved?" It is not a question of salvation in the ordinary sense. Every man is saved to the extent that he progresses out of evil ways, and no further. Salvation is a constant becoming, just as health means continuous life and action. "Strive with earnestness," or literally, "agonize to enter in through the narrow way. Many will strive to enter and will not be able." This whole passage is worthy the deepest consideration. It is not those who have the brightest opportunities, who may have been able to eat and drink with the Master and hear his teaching, that are assured of that entrance. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth among the disciples even, when the exoteric church goes and orthodox preachers (verse 28) are found in the kingdom and the better instructed are cast out. It is not by mere learning, but by growth of character, "self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control," that the journeying in the Path can be achieved. "And lo, there are last who shall be first." Let us avoid foolish judgments concerning the progress of others, and each make his own vocation and choice assured.

April 12. Luke xiv: 15-24.

The parable of the banquet is repeated in various forms, and has been a favourite theme in elaborate versions with several classical writers. In the present narrative, the allegory of the feast of the Bread of the Kingdom of the Holy One, the "Bread of Wisdom"