

## Solemn Warnings.

SEPT. 18. A. D. 28. MATT. 7: 13-29.

Golden Text, Matt. 7: 19.

SOME of Christ's hearers may have thought that his precepts and laws were too strict. They may have preferred a doctrine like that of the Pharisees, who asked no more than a pious exterior, Matt. 23: 23-28. Such men would praise what they called the "breadth" of the Jewish teachers and disparage the "strictness" of Jesus, who asked no less than the whole heart of men, Matt. 12: 35. But here the Lord himself applies this term "strait" to the way of life. If men will be saved they must know that they will have to deny themselves, and mortify the flesh and its lusts, Matt. 16: 24. V. 13. *Enter ye in—Strive to enter in*, Luke, 13: 24. The gate by which men enter on the path to heaven is called "strait" or narrow, because to go through it, they have to strip off their pride, put off the world and leave behind all evil habits. The way is narrow, being hedged in by Divine law. *Destruction*—everlasting perdition. *Many*—multitudes of all nations, sexes and ages. V. 14. *Few*—it is too narrow for the majority of men—those who follow it are called "the little flock," Luke, 12: 32. V. 15. *false prophets*—teachers of error, in sheep's clothing—assuming the appearance of holiness and innocence to cover their evil and unregenerated heart. *Ravens wolves*—who devour and scatter the sheep, John, 10: 12, often with interested motives, Matt. 23: 25. V. 16. *by their fruits*—by their actions and general disposition. V. 17. *A corrupt tree*—one that bears poisoning fruit. A good man will shew his goodness by his works, a wicked man will be known by his wicked actions. V. 21. *Not every one*—men may pray much and preach Christ to others, yet be lost in the end. Their worship has not been from the heart, their preaching mercenary. Balaam prophesied, yet he was a "worker of iniquity, Jude, 11. Judas cast out devils, Mark, 3: 15, yet was himself a devil, John 12: 70-71. V. 24. *His house*—his hopes of future happiness. *Upon a rock*—Christ is the only sure foundation for our hopes. 1 Cor. 3: 11. 2 Tim. 2: 19. V. 25. *the rain—the floods—the winds*—the calamities of life that wreck the hopes of earth, and death that puts an end to them. V. 26. *the sand*—insecure foundation of human hopes, riches, honours, earthly affections, that may be all swept away leaving the "foolish builder" desperate. Affliction and trial cannot wreck the Hope which rests upon Christ the Rock. V. 28. *doctrine*—religious teaching, *having authority*—Christ delivered his discourse, as a judge his charge, with a conscious right to speak. *Not as the Scribes*—who taught the people old traditions, by which they made the word of God of none effect, Mark, 7: 13.

## The Centurion's Faith.

OCTOBER 2. A. D. 28. MATT. 8: 5-13.

Golden Text, Matt. 8: 10.

THE evangelist having given his readers a specimen of Christ's preaching, now goes on to give instances of the miracles which he wrought. In this, he illustrates the words of Christ to the Jews when he said: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake," John 14: 11. The Gospels were written that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ, John 20: 31. When the Lord had ended his sermon on the mount, he came back to Capernaum, a town on the N. W. coast of the lake of Tiberias. On his way there, he healed a leper, Matt. 8: 2-4. V. 5. *A centurion*—a Roman officer, commanding a hundred men. He was probably a pagan, by birth. As Judaea was then a Roman province, there were garrisons in all the chief cities to keep the people in subjection. *Beseeching Him*—praying him, humbly yet earnestly. V. 6. *Sick of the palsy*—paralysis, an incurable disease, which destroys the power of motion, wholly or partly. V. 7. *I will come*—Jesus promises to do more than the centurion asked, he only asked him to heal his servant, Eph. 3: 20. V. 8. *I am not worthy*—the expression of a humble spirit. He remembered that as a Gentile, and as a sinner, he had no right to demand anything of Jesus. Thus should all feel who come to Christ for help. V. 9. *Under authority*—I have to obey my superior officers—*having soldiers under me*—I also command to others and expect to be obeyed, inferring that Jesus could by a word command the disease to leave his servant, and He would be at once obeyed. V. 10. *He marvelled*—he wondered at this man's faith, just as another time he marvelled at the Jew's unbelief, Mark 6: 6. Comp. Matt. 15: 28. *In Israel*—among my own people, the children of Abraham. V. 11. *From the east and west*—the blessings of salvation received through faith, would not belong to the Jews only, but to all nations as the prophets had declared, Is. 2: 2-3. The Gospel was to be preached to all nations, Matt. 28: 19-20. *Shall sit down*—Heaven is described under the similitude of a banquet, as in Matt. 26: 29 and Luke 14: 15. V. 12. *The children of the kingdom*—the Jews, who believed themselves to be special favourites of Heaven, excluding the Gentiles. Jesus meant by this, that many Gentiles would be saved, and many Jews lost. *Into outer darkness*—image of future punishment, contrasting with the brilliantly lighted banquet hall. The lost are utterly excluded from Heaven's light, its joy, peace and hope. V. 13. *Go thy way*—return home, thy servant is healed. What thou didst believe I could do, is done. Thus Christ will heal from their sins, all who come to Him with faith.