

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1879, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

JULY 13. LESSON XXVIII. THE SECURITY OF BELIEVERS.—Rom. 8 : 28-39. COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 35, 37-39.

- 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them also he called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36. As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. 39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT.

If God be for us, who can be against us.—Rom. 8: 31.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Saints are kept by the power of God.

INTRODUCTORY.—After showing the greatness of the glory which shall be revealed, and assuring believers of the aid of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle goes on to declare that all things, even the greatest afflictions, shall work out good for God's children. When Paul wrote this Epistle he had already experienced persecution, and was in expectation of bonds and afflictions. See Acts 20: 23.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) GOD IS FOR BELIEVERS. (II.) CHRIST IS FOR THEM. (III.) LOVE SHALL ENDURE.

I. GOD IS FOR BELIEVERS. (28.) AND WE KNOW, or "But we know," compare the "we know" of v. 22, and the "we know not" of v. 26; ALL THINGS, every event of life and especially those which seem adverse; WORK TOGETHER, because God enuses them so to do: FOR GOOD, for the final and eternal well-being. (Note that the following verses, 31-39, are an expansion of, and commentary on, v. 28.) (29.) CONFORMED TO, made like unto; IMAGE, Christ in the believer's pattern, sanctified and glorified; FIRSTBORN, in pre-eminence of rank, as well as in time; BRETHREN, Christ is made the brother of all believers. (31.) IF GOD BE FOR US, as the writer has shown in vs. 28-30; WHO CAN BE AGAINST US? since one who is against us must be against God, and will be surely overthrown.

II. CHRIST IS FOR THEM. (32.) SPARED NOT, compare Abraham and Isaac, Gen. 22: 12, 16; HIS OWN SON, the only-begotten, John 3: 16; DELIVERED HIM UP, to suffering and death; FOR US ALL, in behalf of us all; ALL THINGS, which we need for our well-being and salvation. (33.) GOD THAT JUSTIFIETH, some regard this and the second clause of v. 34 as questions, and read, "Shall God who justifies them?" (34.) WHO... CONDEMNETH?—"Who will condemn?" "Is it Christ...?" No one can bring an accusation which will stand, when the Judge himself has pronounced absolution; RIGHT HAND OF GOD, the right hand was the seat of honor and of power, compare Ps. 110: 1; Rev. 3: 21; MAKETH INTERCESSION, entreats for, advocates the cause of.

III. LOVE SHALL ENDURE. (35.) WHO, or what LOVE OF CHRIST, to us; TRIBULATIONS, etc., are not proof of want of love; PERSECUTION, Paul and the early Christians had experienced it, comp. 1 Cor. 4: 11; 2 Cor. 11: 26; SWORD, as John the Baptist, Matt. 14: 10; James, Acts 12: 2, and later, according to tradition, Paul himself. (36.) AS IT IS WRITTEN, in Ps. 44: 22; during all ages God's people had been so treated by the world. (38.) DEATH, even by martyrdom; LIFE, with all its tribulations; ANGELS NOR PRINCIPALITIES, superhuman powers, good or bad; THINGS TO COME, in time or eternity. (39.) CREATURE—"created thing;" LOVE OF GOD, to us.

What truths in this lesson teach us that—

- 1. Blessings may result from the heaviest trials? 2. Faith in God should not be shaken by adversity? 3. With God as our friend we need have no fear? 4. The love of Christ will ensure the final victory for his people?

ILLUSTRATION.—Believers are all soldiers; all soldiers by their profession are engaged to fight if called upon; but who shall be called to sustain the hottest service, and be most frequently exposed upon the battlefield, depends upon the will of the general or commander. Thus the Captain of our salvation allots to his soldiers such stations as he thinks proper. He has a right to employ whom he will, and when he will: they are supported, and in the end made more than conquerors through him who hath loved them.—J. Newton.

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JULY 20. LESSON XXIX. CHRISTIAN LOVE.—1 Cor. 13: 1-13. COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 4-8.

- 1. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. 2. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. 6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth: 7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11. When I was a child, I spake as a child, understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.—1 Cor. 13: 13.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The grace of love is an everlasting possession.

INTRODUCTORY.—Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians towards the end of his long residence at Ephesus (Acts 19: 21), probably in the spring of 57 A.D. In the twelfth chapter he writes of spiritual gifts. In the thirteenth chapter he shows the superiority of the graces, faith, hope, charity; and ranks charity, or love, above all the rest. This chapter has been called the New Testament "Psalm of Love."

NOTE.—Cym-bal, an instrument for producing music by beating plates of metal together. Two kinds of cymbals are mentioned in Ps. 150: 5.—(1.) "The loud cymbals," consisting of four small plates of brass, or some other hard metal, two of which were attached to each hand of the performer, and struck together: (2.) "The high sounding cymbals," consisting of two larger plates, one of which was held in each hand, and struck together as an accompaniment to other instruments, producing a loud noise.

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) THE NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN LOVE. (II.) ITS CHARACTERISTICS. (III.) ITS ENDURING NATURE.

I. THE NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN LOVE. (1.) TONGUES, languages and gifts of speech; CHARITY—"love" to God and man, in its broad Christian sense; TINKLING, clattering; CYMBAL, see Note. (2.) MYSTERIES, secrets of the divine counsel and will; REMOVE MOUNTAINS, by miraculous power, comp. Matt. 21: 21. (3.) BESTOW... GOODS, the original signifies to feed out in morsels as to children; TO BE BURNED, in sacrifice, or as a martyr.

II. ITS CHARACTERISTICS. (4.) SUFFERETH LONG, without getting angry. Eight negative characteristics of charity are now given; ENVYETH NOT, "knows neither jealousy nor envy" (Aford); VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF—"displays not" itself; PUFFED UP, with inward pride

(5.) UNSEEMLY, so as to violate decorum, or propriety; THINKETH NO EVIL, not brooding over the wrongs it suffers, nor seeking to revenge them, but rather forgives and forgets. (6.) REJOICETH... INIQUITY, its commission by others, at which the wicked rejoice (love of scandal, etc.); IN THE TRUTH, or better, "with the truth," its extension and victories, the spread of Gospel truth, etc. (7.) BEARETH, or, "covereth all things," that is, covers the faults of others; ALL THINGS, these word, four times repeated, are, of course, to be limited to things right to be borne, believed, etc.

II. ITS ENDURING NATURE. (8.) PROPHECIES... FAIL, "be done away." It is the same word as "vanish away" in v. 8, and "put away" of v. 11; come to nothing, by the withdrawal of the gift when no longer needed; TONGUES... CEASE, the gift of tongues was not long continued, and all human languages pass away. (9.) IN PART, partially. (10.) PERFECT IS COME, the complete consummation of the kingdom of God. (11.) A CHILD, etc., literally, "a babe," so we are all children in our conception of future, and spiritual things; WHEN I BECAME, or, "since I have become a man," (12.) A GLASS, a mirror, usually made of polished metal; DARKLY, literally, "in an enigma" or in a dark word; THEN, in the future life; FACE TO FACE, with God, and spiritual realities, comp. Matt. 5: 8; SHALL I KNOW, or, "shall I fully know," thoroughly, as I am known of God; AM KNOWN—literally, "as I was fully known" (13.) ABIDETH, endureth permanently; FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, three graces of which Paul very often speaks, Eph. 1: 15-18; Col. 1: 4, 5; 1 Thess. 1: 3; 5: 8.

What verses in this lesson teach us—

- 1. The danger of counterfeits in religion? 2. The need of watchfulness against all evil passions? 3. The injury strife works to religion? 4. The supreme importance of love?

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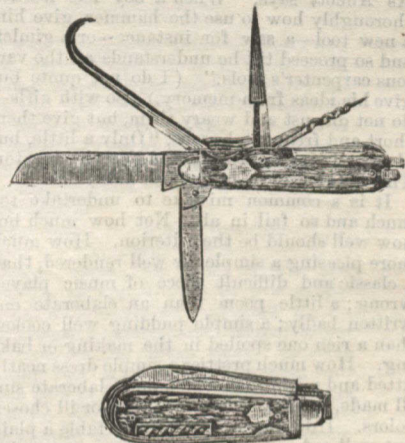
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