

General Statement.

Six months intervened between the events of the last lesson and those of the present, between the feast of the passover and that of tabernacles. Jesus did not attend the third passover of his ministry, knowing that to visit Jerusalem would endanger his life before his work was finished. His ministry in Galilee was complete, as he had visited every part of the province, and he went into retirement for a time with his disciples that he might impart to them the deeper truths of his teaching. In succession he visited the borders of Galilee on the east, the west, and the north; Phenicia, Decapolis, and Mount Hermon. At the last place he was transfigured, and thence returned to Capernaum. He was no longer followed by the multitudes. He journeyed through Samaria and was rejected by its people, and at last reached Judea at the time of the feast of tabernacles, in the fall of the year, just six months before his crucifixion. The city was thronged with visitors, and, in commemoration of their ancestors' life in the wilderness, the entire population was living out of doors and sleeping in booths and huts made of green trees. Special sacrifices were offered in the temple and services of thanksgiving were held. The rejoicing culminated on the eighth day, the last day of the feast, when the priests brought water from the pool of Siloam in a golden pitcher, and poured it upon the altar. In the moment of silence, while the people were watching the ceremony, a voice rang through the temple, and thrilled every heart: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink!" It was the voice of Jesus, who stood unseen in the throng. His utterance awakened great questioning. Some thought the Messiah had come; others, that his forerunner had appeared. The rulers endeavored to seize the Saviour, but the awe inspired by his personality, and the power of his words, held back the officers who would have arrested him.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 31. And many of the people believed. Rather, "But." The populace contrasted favorably with the prejudiced rulers. **Christ.** The Messiah, the anointed One. **Do more miracles.** Work greater signs, or better justify Messianic claims than this man.

32. The Pharisees heard. They watched Jesus as self-appointed guardians of orthodoxy watch a hated heretic, as selfish capitalists watch a greased revolutionist, as ritualistic hypocrites watch eager sincerity, as wary politicians watch a dangerous rising rival. **Officers.** The report of these men may be found in verse 46, which read. This verse is parenthetical.

33, 34. A little while. Six months after this he was crucified. **Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.** It is strange that there could be any doubt on the part of the Jews concerning Christ's meaning.

35. Then said the Jews among themselves. "Whether this was the utterance of genuine perplexity, or of scorn and contempt, it is hard to say."—*Abbott.* **The dispersed.** Rather, "the dispersion." This was a name commonly given to those Jews who lived in foreign lands, especially in Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria.

37. In the last day. The eighth day of the feast of tabernacles, upon which the rejoicings of the people rose to a height. It was burning autumn weather. **That great day.** On this day the priests marched in procession seven times around the altar, bearing a pitcher of water from the pool of Siloam. **Of the feast.** The feast of tabernacles, commemorating at once the life of the Israelites in the wilderness and a thanksgiving for the harvest. **Jesus stood and cried.** Giv-

ing an explanation of the spiritual import of the scenes which were enacted in the temple. **If any man thirst.** Thirst is one of the most imperative of bodily needs, and well represents the eagerness with which every soul should desire the blessings of salvation. (1) *There is a thirst of the soul which only God can satisfy. Let him come unto me.* Jesus Christ is the Fountain of salvation. Just as there was but one Joseph to feed the hungry Egyptians, so there is but one Jesus who has the water of life. **And drink.** We must not only come to Jesus, and know of him, but must also appropriate the redemption which he has obtained for us. (2) *Notice three words, "thirst," "come," "drink."*

38. As the Scripture hath said. This is not a verbal quotation, but a reference to such passages as Isa. 55. 11; Zech. 14. 8; Prov. 18. 4. **Out of his belly.** Or, as we would say, "out of his heart." **Shall flow rivers.** The water which he drinks becomes in him a spring. (3) *He who has been blessed becomes a blessing.* **Living water.** The Gospel of Christ, in an abundant current of joy and grace.

39. This spake he of the Spirit. The Spirit of God in the hearts of believers is the high privilege of Christian experience. **For the Holy Ghost was not yet given.** Literally, "for the Spirit was not yet," meaning not that the Spirit was not in existence, but that he was not as yet fully manifested. **Jesus was not yet glorified.** "Glorified" is the word used everywhere in John of the sufferings, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, taken as a whole.

40. This is the Prophet. The Prophet promised by Moses in Deut. 18. 15, whom some ex-