THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson IX.—First Quarter, For Feb. 27, 1910.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Matt. vii, 13-29. Memory Verses, 13, 14—Golden Text, Matt. vii, 21—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

Life eternal is the gift of God in Christ Jesus and can be obtained only as a free gift wholly apart from any works or merit of ours. But He came to give us not merely life, but life abundantly (Rom. vi, 23; John x, 10). All who have eternal life shall enter the kingdom, but there may be an abundant entrance into the kingdom (John iii, 3, 5; II Pet. i, 10, 11). There may be a saved soul and a lost life, a saved soul and no service to be rewarded, no crowns to cast at His feet, but such is not His desire for His redeemed (I Cor. iii, 11-15; II John 8; Rev. iv, 10). Concerning life as the gift of God, Jesus Christ Himself is the way, and the only way, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved (John xiv, 6; Acts iv, 12). While any one who will may enter through this strait gate upon this narrow way, comparatively few find it because few are willing to acknowledge themselves lost and deserving of hell and, pleading guilty, put all their trust in the precious blood of Christ.

The gate is entirely too strait for any who insist upon bringing with them a single shred of their own righteousness, and the way is too narrow to permit any but the Lord Himself and those who are wholly His to walk with us in it. Let us, however, praise God for the words "Him that cometh" and "whosoever will." In Luke xiii, 24, 25, we read that a time will come when many will seek to enter in and shall not be able, but that time is not yet, for the door is still open and the Lord waits to be gracious. He has not yet risen up to shut the door. The false prophets are abounding more than ever in these days, concerning whom the Lord said long ago, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied;" "They are prophets of the deceit of their own heart" (Jer. xxiii, 21, 26). Those who deny the supernatural birth of Christ or His deity or His suffering in the sinner's stead or His literal resurrection from the dead are not bearing messages from God, but from the great adversary. Yet multitudes are willingly deceived by the god of this world, who is in so many ways blinding the minds of them who believe not.

Many of those who deceive and are being deceived seem to bear a form of good fruit, but that cannot be good fruit in the sight of God which does not proceed from the True Vine. The Lord Jesus said that false Christs and false prophets should arise who would show great signs and wonders and, if possible, deceive the very elect (Matt. xxiv, 24). The Spirit through Paul said that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (II Cor. xi, 14).

While it is true that God gives eternal life as a free gift to all who truly believe, apart from any works of ours, as the Spirit teaches everywhere, yet it is equally true that no mere word of mouth which is not born of the heart amounts to anything, and where there is a living faith, a faith that saves, there will be a life corresponding. "Not every one that saith, but he that doeth." The light must shine, the works must be manifest, according to Eph. ii, 10; Tit. iii, 8. But these works must be works wrought by God through us; otherwise, however good they may seem to men, they will not stand. According to verse 22, there may be teaching and casting out demons and many wonderful works, but all disowned of God. Note carefully this teacher who says, "Many will say to me in that day; * * * then will I profess to them: I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." He is the same King who will say to some, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (xxv, 41). He is the appointed judge of all mankind, to whom every one shall give account, either at His judgment seat for believers or at the great white throne a thousand years later. Jesus is God, the only Saviour of sinners, the Great Head of the church, the Messiah of Israel, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the only one with whom we have to do, and with us it is a question of life or death.

Shall we hear His word and believe it and receive Him and live, or shall we turn our backs upon Him and His word and make lies our refuge and perish? His word is truth; He is the truth and the only foundation. All else is a lie and from the adversary, but His wrath shall sweep away the refuge of lies (Isa. xxviii, 16, 17). We are either in the ark and safe from the coming storm or outside and under the wrath of God. We do not wonder that the people recognized an unusual power in His words, for in Him was fulfilled the prophecy, "I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak them unto them all that I shall command Him" (Deut. xviii, 18). If we are His faithful messengers and will speak only His message we can count upon His honoring His own word, even as He assured Jeremiah (Jer. i, 7-9) and the apostles (Matt. x, 20, 40) and manifested it in Stephen and the others (Acts ii, 41; vi, 10; x, 44; xiv, 1).

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How To Burn Snow.

"This snow is tiptop, grand" remarked little William.

"It doesn't look so very grand to me," answered brother Fred, "for it means that I will have to shovel snow for a good while this morning."

Aunt Marcia looked up with a kindly twinkle in her eye and said to Fred, "Have some fun, dear boy, out of the snow you shovel from the walks."

"As if any boy on earth could have the least bit of fun while having to shovel snow! I don't believe such a thing is possible, Aunt Marcia."

A little later there was a whispered conversation between Fred and his aunt. Then Fred picked up his snow shovel and surprised the household by whistling merrily as he went out to shovel snow.

He worked with a will and soon removed the snow from the paths and had it made into neat heaps or piles over the yard. When everything was ready, Fred set fire to the snow heaps and then had lots of fun watching the puzzled and amazed expressions on the faces of the passers-by. It was a pretty sight to see those glittering heaps of snow blaze.

Of course you want to know how Fred or any one else can make a snow heap burn. Well, Aunt Marcia had quite a large piece of pure camphor gum. She gave it to Fred and told him to put bits of it in the tops of his snow heaps and then apply a blazing match to the camphor. He followed his aunt's instruction and had all the snow ablaze at one time. It afforded so much enjoyment that he forgot all about being tired from shoveling snow.

To set fire to any pile or heap of snow is an innocent trick that any boy or girl can play. Because the camphor gum is white, it is easily hidden in the snow. It burns with a beautiful blue flame. Try the trick once and see how surprised your playmates who are not in the secret will be.—Pacific Baptist.

Magnificent Mosaic.

The Bible is the gathered consciousness of God in many souls. As flowers in the garden give us the science of botany, as stars in the firmament give us the science of astronomy, so does God consciousness give us the Bible. The Bible is a magnificent mosaic, all the parts of which are grouped about one centerpiece, and that centerpiece is Jesus Christ, the one perfect human manifestation of God.—Rev. Dr. John Reid Shannon, Methodist Episcopal, Washington.

To Make Religion More Vital.

Give Jesus Christ the secret-most place in your soul and ever afterward carefully guard it, according him a claim upon your life which you yield to no other and punctiliously respect it, come what may or may not, wealth or poverty, social distinction or ostracism, and your religion will grow yearly more vital and positive, your faith be an increasingly precious and assured reality and your old age prove a glorious Indian summer, marked by a holy calm and alight with the reflected glow of paradise just beyond.—Rev. Dr. John Balcom Shaw, Presbyterian, Chicago.

Responsibility of God.

It may sound overbold on our part, but we speak reverently when we say that we believe that God has not denied his responsibility, for we cannot otherwise understand the New Testament, the highest and fullest revelation of God by Jesus Christ. The careful and prayerful student and reader of the New Testament is bound to ask the question, Why this revelation of God? Our text not only contains and reveals this truth; it does more—it shows that God is diametrically opposed to and therefore does not permit evil. We wish to present the subject to you in three propositions: (1) God is responsible for the creature he made; (2) sin increased his responsibility; (3) God has discharged his responsibility.—Rev. George Lloyd Ferguson, Reformed Episcopal, Brooklyn.

The Beginning of a New Life.

The very moment a man accepts Jesus Christ as his Saviour a new life begins. He wishes to be kind and unselfish and true. Such a man need not be told to be honest. He need not be told to be kind and thoughtful of others. He will need very little instruction in good citizenship. All of these valuable traits of character will grow as naturally as the fruit grows upon the tree. They will be forced out by the pressure of the life within. No man need tell the peach tree or an apple tree or an orange tree to bear its own kind of fruit. The very nature of these trees makes this fruit to come out on the branches of the right kind and in the proper season. No man can pray to Jesus Christ and then wish to do wrong. No man can have family worship and be unkind and cruel to his family. The real social revolution which is going on quietly is that of the conversion of individuals. They become the leaven of the community in which they live. After the power of Christ has changed their lives they are the restraining influences in their communities. They are the examples in morals to others.—Rev. Dr. Johnston Myers, Baptist, Chicago.

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Resolutions Of Protest

At a mass meeting representing the printers, publishers, and allied interests called to take action in regard to the proposed increase in second-class rates, held on Thursday, January 20, 1910, at Chicago, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Whereas: An advance in rates would cause incalculable injury to every branch of the publishing and printing trades of the country, and would throw thousands of employes out of employment in the various branches of this industry, representing newspapers, trade journals, publishers, printers, type founders, paper makers, engravers, ink manufacturers, etc., having annually an output of $100,000,000 in Chicago alone, enter their emphatic denial that said interests cause any deficit whatever to the revenues of the government, therefore be it

Resolved: By the united actions of the allied interests of the entire publishing and printing trades of Chicago, that we hereby register an emphatic protest against any movement or declaration coming from any source, which may have for its purpose any advance in second-class postal rates, the effect of which would be to seriously cripple the industry everywhere and greatly hamper every industrial development fostered through the instrumentality of publishing and printing.

Resolved: That request be made for suspension of all action in order to give opportunity to submit argument.

Resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Postmaster General, and to members of both houses of Congress, as expressing the views of the many trades concerned in maintaining present just rates on second-class mail matter..

Resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be also sent broadcast to the press of the country and the aid of the same be asked in behalf of our many and varied interests.

Respectfully submitted,
W. J. HARTMAN
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