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SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson XII.—Third Quarter, For Sept. 18, 1910.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Matt. xxii, 15-22, 34-46—Memory Verses, 37-39—Golden Text, Matt. xxii, 21—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

This lesson is found in Matthew. Mark and Luke and tells how by the Herodians and Sadducees and Pharisees they sought to entangle Him in His talk. Luke says that they sent forth spies who should feign themselves just men that they might take hold of His words that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor (Luke xx. 20.) Consider who He was and who they were. See the Creator watched, criticised, hated, rejected by the creatures whom He had made and to whom He gave life and health and all things, and yet He patiently suffers it and would love and bless them if they would only let Him.

The flattering words of verse 16 are nothing new, for we read in Ps. lxxviii, 36. "They did flatter Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with Him. . . . But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not." As He perceived their wickedness and asked for a piece of money and from it answered their question they marvelled at Him and held their peace and left Him and went their way (verse 22, with Mark and Luke). Do you covet such wisdom, not that you may be wondered at, but that He may be glorified? If so, remember that Stephen was so filled with faith and power that they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke (Acts vi, 8, 10). It is indeed true what they said of Jesus at this time, "Thou regardest not the person of men," so that we also may be filled with His spirit and wisdom if we will. It ought to be said of every teacher, "Thou art true and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man" (verse 16), for it is also written by the Spirit that our attitude should always be "not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts." And again, "If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ" (1 Thess. ii, 4; Gal. i, 10).

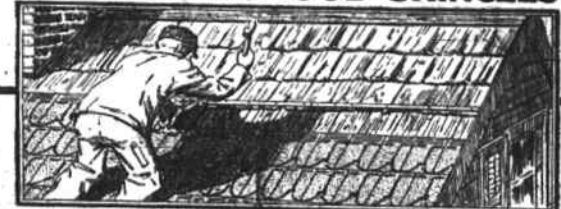
When questions arise about the right or wrong of this or that, let us first ask, Whose image do I bear? and that ought to settle it easily. As the deemed of the Lord, the world, the flesh and the devil have no just claim upon us, and it is our privilege gladly to render all to God, whose we are. They left Him and went their way (verse 22). We are too apt to do this. Let our prayer be, "Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies" (Ps. xxvii, 11).

The same day came the Sadducees with a question which they thought would perplex Him, but His reply to them was, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God" (verse 29). Dr. Schofield's note is worth quoting: "Jesus' answer gives the three incapacities of the rationalist—self deception (Rom. i, 21-22), ignorance of the spiritual content of Scripture (Acts xiii, 27), disbelief in the intervention of divine power (1 Pet. iii, 5)." Note how our Lord emphasizes the great truth of resurrection (30-32) and see the plain teaching of Job ix, 25, 27; Isa. xxvi, 19; Dan. xii, 2, etc. See also how our Lord says that Ex. iii, 15, teaches not only life apart from the body, but also the resurrection of the body, and note how He indorses the story of the burning bush, which is today ridiculed by the wisdom of this world (Mark xii, 26; Luke xx, 37). In verse 31, in the words "Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God?" we have our Lord's indorsement of Rom. xv, 4. "Whatever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." Unless we hear God speaking to our souls as we read His word we have not read with profit and should read until His word takes hold of us with power. In verse 30 His word that in the resurrection we shall be "as the angels," or, as in Luke, "equal unto the angels," is explained by His saying concerning marriage.

The next tempter is a lawyer scribe who wants to know which is the first or great commandment in the law. To him Jesus quotes Deut. vi, 5; Lev. xix, 18, summing up the Ten Commandments in love to God and to man and adding, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (verse 40). "There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mark xii, 31). Mark records the scribe's reply to Jesus and that Jesus said to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." He seemed to understand the truth, but went away to continue to establish his own righteousness, not submitting to the righteousness of God (Rom. x, 2-4). As to this summary of the law see also Rom. xiii, 8-10.

And now Jesus has a question for the Pharisees as to whose Son the Messiah is to be, to which they promptly reply, "The Son of David." Then come from our Lord the quotation from Ps. cx and the question, How can He be David's Son since David by the Spirit calls Him Lord? No one could answer, and this shut them up for the present. As a man Jesus was of the house of David (Rom. i, 3). As God He was David's Lord—truly a man, truly God, both the root and the offspring of David (Rev. xxii, 16).

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