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Pleasant Fields of Holy Writ

(Lesson for Sunday, May 16.)
Second Quarter: Lesson VII. Proverbs xxiii, 29-35.

Through the almost opaque curtain of an obstinate popular misconception the beneficent deeds of Jesus show so brightly that it came to be commonly said, "After all may not this be the Messiah?" "Certainly we never saw the like of this!" "True he seems not to be a national deliverer in the sense of breaking at once the foreign yoke, but how could anyone more completely ameliorate the condition of the people?" "Can not this perhaps be the Son of David?" "His method may be different from what was expected, but after all may not be bringing in the kingdom of heaven?"

The Pharisee finger was never off the people's pulse. The authorities of the established church knew how the popular heart was beating. The wet blanket of slander must cool the ardor of the masses. It is quickly applied, and that without compunction. Sleek and smooth-spoken ecclesiastics mix with the people, and while admitting the benevolent deeds of power yet insinuate that they are not to Jesus' credit, but to the contrary, because done by affiliation with the prince of the nether world.

Jesus did not hear their words, but he knew the slander they were uttering. His rejoinder is one of the most brilliant pieces of dialectical skill preserved in literature. He points, as was his custom, to current events and conditions. It is as if he had said, "Here for example is the reigning house of Lycaonia. If it could be conceived that the sovereign had a double personality and that one pulled down what the other built up, how long would it be before the proud dynasty would bite the dust? So Satan cannot undercut Satan and

still stand. Consequently it cannot be by Satanic power that these good deeds are done. Again, how about your own exorcists? Are you ready to say that their good deeds also are done by affiliation with Satan?" They could not so discredit those of their own party, yet they must if they allege the same of Jesus.

Instead of being in collusion with Satan, Jesus affirms that he is really his master. The reason he is able to undo his works is because he has already stormed the castle and made him prisoner. This he did in the fiery test of temptation, the moral results of which were the evolution and test of character and an affiliation with God, which put the resources of the universe at his command.

Finally, the antagonism between Jesus and Satan is so inveterate and deadly that any agreement or collusion is inconceivable. Instead of being for Jesus Satan is against him. Instead of cooperating to produce a given result, he bends all his powers to thwart it.

Nothing remains of the fallacy now after this keen and correct process of logic. Not another syllable of argument is needed. What Jesus does next is to sound a note of warning, loud, clear and fearless. They stand narrowly near the unforgivable region.

The dead hopelessness of the case appears, when after the wealth of miracles, they still ask another. They shall have their wish. It is the sign of Jonah. He preached to the Ninevites and they repented. The condemnation of this generation is that while a greater than Jonah preaches, they do not repent. Oh, for another sign, take the Queen of Sheba. She came from afar to hear Solomon. They needed no journey to hear a diviner wisdom than Solomon's. Yet they would not hear it.

The Teacher's Lantern.

Whole libraries have been written on the sign against the Holy Spirit. It has usually been conceived as something specific and arbitrary. Many poor souls have tormented themselves with having inadvertently committed it. A simple and entirely sane view is now maintained, namely, that it is no specific act, but rather a state in which the party is indurated by courses of sin, knowingly persisted in until the spirit of the man is made insusceptible to the Spirit of God. It is atrophy of the soul—impotence becoming incapacity for repentance.

Penitent Ninevites rebuking impenitent Israelites was hardly the kind of a sign the Pharisees wanted. Yet it was really the most wholesome object lesson which could have been held up to them. If they had been sincere they would have heeded and been saved. But one rising from the dead would not save those who insincerely asked a sign only that they might use it as a weapon against the wonder worker.

In his reference to Satan Jesus accepts

the popular notion. His words do not necessarily express his personal faith, or his approval of the current opinion. No doctrine can be based on this saying.

Phillips Brooks once said, "A man can not do much for others who is not much himself." Jesus proved his strength by first entering the "strong man's house and binding him."

To gather with Jesus what he gathers, and in his way, is to engage in the noblest work of men or angels. It is the garnering not of material substances, however valuable, but of the most precious thing in the world. It is harvesting not wheat, but men.

On the contrary, to dissipate moral influence and make them non-effective is dastardly business—devil's work.

A reputed half-wit once stood in a field and would not heed the signal for dinner. When expostulated with for his delay, he pointed to a crack in the sun-baked earth, and said: "The earth is going to split in two. I was waiting to see which was the biggest ball, so that I could jump on it."

Under Solomon's law he who remained neutral when tumult arose, waiting to see which party prevailed, was punished as a rebel on the restoration of order.

Queen of Sheba and the Ninevites will be the judges of the Israelites who affected to despise them as heathen. Greater opportunities made greater guilt.

"Make the tree good." Be honest for once. Say that the tree is good and its fruit good, or the tree evil and its fruit evil. I am the tree and here are the fruits which, according to your damaging concessions, are good. If my works are good then admit that I am good, and do not say that I am in league with the devil.

Young People's Devotional Service.

John vi, 26, 32, 47, 53, Christ's "Verities."—Jesus "verily" flashes like a spark struck from a flint. In the first war, he discloses the sinister motives which led people to follow him. They are after the leaves and fishes. In the light of that "verily" men see that they are dealing with the Searcher of hearts, and that it is folly to dissemble. The next "verily" reveals the sustenance of the moral nature. Jesus' ideal life of love and service is not like Moses' manna, of which the patriarchs ate but died. Jesus nourishes an immortal life. The next "verily" is a reiteration of this truth. The final "verily" in the group shows how one must participate in Jesus' life of sacrifice, in order to know the fellowship of his suffering and reign with him in immortal life.

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B. F. MATTHEWS, Manager

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Greensboro Drug Co., AGENTS

Prof. W. H. Swift returned yesterday from Kennesawville, N. C., where he delivered the commencement address at the graded schools.

Van Williams arrived last night from Birmingham, Ala., and will spend several days on a visit to his parents, Dr. and Mrs. B. B. Williams.

Mrs. A. F. Young, of Winston-Salem, spent yesterday in the city with friends and relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. Archibald Henderson, of Chapel Hill, spent yesterday in the city with friends and relatives.

J. Walter Myatt, of Clayton, is spending a few days in the city with friends.

Misses Mary Moore and Eunice Thompson, of Danville, spent last night in the city with relatives.

R. E. Gray, of Winston-Salem, was a visitor in the city yesterday.

Mrs. D. T. Hayden is visiting friends and relatives in Burlington.

J. Leslie Abbott is on an extensive business trip to Chicago.

Mrs. Erving Eldridge is visiting friends and relatives in Charlotte.

Dr. Stephen B. Weske, of Trinity, is spending a few days in the city.

Mrs. T. J. Shaw and little son left yesterday for Charlotte, where they will spend several days visiting relatives.

John Oliver, editor of the Reidsville Review, spent yesterday in the city on business.

L. B. Cole, of Chapel Hill, spent yesterday in the city with friends.

Miss Fannie Powell and brother, H. H. Powell, are visiting friends and relatives in the city.

W. H. Simpson, of New Bern, is spending a few days in the city with friends.

Mrs. W. B. Green, of Winston-Salem, spent yesterday in the city with friends and relatives.

Ernest Clapp returned yesterday from an extensive business trip to Memphis, Tenn.

V. G. Davis, of Henderson, was a business visitor in the city yesterday.

Miss Alice Johnson, of Charlotte, is visiting friends and relatives in the city.

C. M. Vanzosty returned yesterday from Salisbury, where he attended a state meeting of the Masonic grand lodge.

Miss Ethel Huffines, who is a student at Guilford college, arrived last night to spend Sunday with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Huffines.

John W. Boyd and John W. Tiftz, of Salisbury, were business visitors in the city yesterday.

Mrs. Spencer R. Adams returned last night from Danville, Va., where she has been visiting friends and relatives for a few days.

D. E. Lacy, of Liberty, was a visitor in the city yesterday.

J. W. Scott has returned from a business trip of the southern part of the state.

Mrs. J. B. Graham has returned to her home in Durham after a visit to friends and relatives in the city.

Mrs. J. M. Apple has returned to her home in Rossmore, Va., after a visit to her parents, Maynor and Mrs. E. J. Stafford.

Mrs. C. W. Bannor and little son left yesterday on a visit to relatives at Mt. Airy.

L. A. O'Brien, of Winston-Salem, was a business visitor in the city yesterday.

Mrs. George D. Stern will leave next week to join her husband at Little Rock,

PERSONALS

Ark., where they will reside in the future.

C. N. Cone and S. W. Bawing, of Olinville, spent yesterday in the city with friends.

Mrs. George Vanzosty has returned from a visit to her sister, Mrs. Lyau B. Williamson, in Burlington.

Miss Mary Blackburn has returned from Reidsville, where she attended the wedding of Miss Louise Rankin.

Mrs. J. C. Peck, the district nurse, has gone to New York to undergo an operation on her ear.

P. M. Dellinger, of Newton, was a visitor in the city yesterday.

Misses Virginia Chuard and Donna Burns have returned to High Point, after a visit to Miss Flossie Byrd.

Mrs. J. L. Brookman and Mrs. W. M. Adams have returned from a visit to friends and relatives at Henderson.

Hair Dressing and Manicuring!

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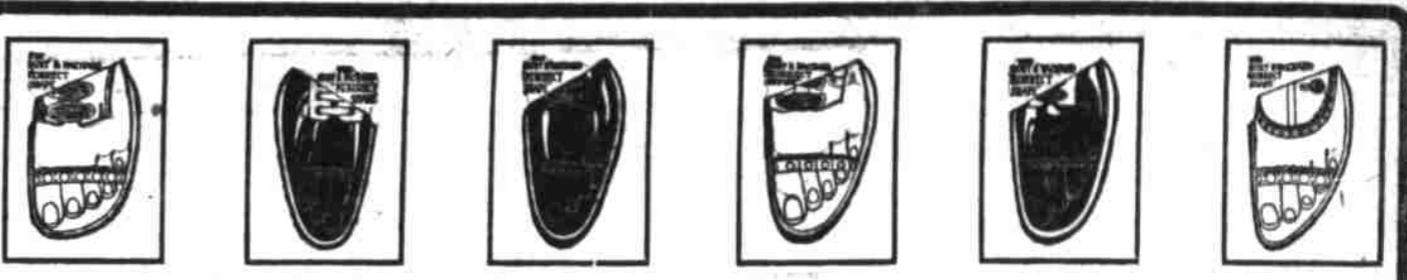
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