

the regions immediately adjoining. Now the writer leaves Galilee, and returns to it no more. (*McGarvey*)

### III. THE PEREAN MINISTRY 10:1-52

Jesus Leaves Galilee, 10:1 (on His way to Jerusalem)

*TEXT* 10:1

"And he arose from thence, and cometh into the borders of Judea and beyond Jordan: and multitudes come together unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again."

#### *THOUGHT QUESTIONS* 10:1

495. Please note the expression: "he arose from thence" has more meaning than just a move from one place to another. What significance is there here?
496. Please locate this move on the map—just what is involved in "the borders of Judea"? Where is "beyond the Jordan"?
497. Refer to the parallel passage in Luke. Explain the harmony—or lack of it.
498. What was the purpose in the gathering of the multitude?
499. Do the gospel writers indicate that teaching was the major work of Christ? Discuss.

#### *EXPLANATORY NOTES*

"1. *And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther,*" etc. It will be necessary to say a word or two respecting the sequence of events. Gresswell, with whose "Harmony" most commentators substantially agree, having inserted as the continuation of this discourse, as given in Matt. 18:10-35, the dealing with an offending brother, and St. Peter's question respecting how often he ought to forgive, and the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, then puts down the events from Jesus' going up to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Tabernacles in John 7:2, to the departure of the Lord, after His discourse respecting the Good Shepherd, to Bethany, beyond Jordan, where John first baptized (John 10:40). Either during this stay at Jerusalem, or at its conclusion, the Lord enters into a certain village, no doubt Bethany, near Jerusalem, where He is entertained by the sisters Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38). After this when in Bethany, beyond Jordan, he hears of the sickness of Lazarus, and returns to Jerusalem and raises him from the dead, then He again retires, but now into the "city called Ephraim" (John 11:54). Between this retirement and the final entry into Jerusalem occur most of the events recorded between Luke 10:1 and Luke 18:14, and at the account of the Lord's taking up and blessing the little children the three Synoptics again coincide (Matt. 19:13; Mark 10:13; Luke 18:15) and substantially continue to do so to the end.

We cannot then understand the word "thence" as referring to the place where the Lord had been speaking of the salt losing its savour, and was urging the Apostles to "have salt in themselves." It is quite necessary to understand it, so far as we are concerned, indeterminedly as referring to some place in Galilee not mentioned.

"Cometh into the coast of Judea by the farther side of Jordan," i.e., by Peraea. This was the second residence in Peraea, and so the Evangelist intimates, by twice making use of the word "again."

"And the people resort unto him *again*; and as he was wont he taught them *again*."

#### A. JESUS IS QUESTIONED ABOUT MARRIAGE 10:2-12

##### TEXT 10:2-12

"And there came unto him Pharisees, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement and to put her away. But Jesus said unto them, For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of the creation, Male and female made he them. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh: so that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. And in the house the disciples asked him again of this matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery."

##### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 10:2-12

500. Where was Jesus when the Pharisees approached Him?
501. Read the parallel account in Matthew to understand the question was not only a matter of divorce but of the cause for divorce.
502. In what sense was this a trial question?
503. Read Deut. 24:1—Tell what relation this text has to the question.
504. Both Jesus and the Pharisees referred to Moses but with very different results—show why.
505. What is meant in vs. 5 by the statement "hardness of heart"?
506. Wasn't Moses compromising the law of God by writing the commandment of Deut. 24:1?
507. Why refer back to the conditions existing at the time of creation?
508. For what cause will a man leave his father and mother?
509. What is the meaning of the word "cleave" as here used?
510. Just how is the relationship of "one flesh" effected? In what sense are the two one?

511. When, where and how does God join the husband and wife together?
512. Is Jesus forbidding all divorce?
513. Discuss the force of the expression "put asunder."
514. Why did the disciples continue the question of the Pharisees?
515. Please show how completely and finally the words of Jesus answered the question.
516. Can marriage ever become adultery? When?
517. Are there any innocent persons in these acts of adultery? Discuss.

• COMMENT 10:2-12

TIME—A.D. 30—Probably the month of March.

PLACE—On the farther side of the Jordan, near the borders of Judea.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 19:3-12.

OUTLINE—1. The trial question, vs. 2. 2. The answer of Jesus, vs. 3-9.  
3. The disciples ask further questions, vs. 10-12.

ANALYSIS

- I. THE TRIAL QUESTION, VS. 2.
1. Posed by Pharisees.
  2. Asked as a snare.
  3. Can a man divorce his wife? (for every cause)
- II. THE ANSWER OF JESUS, VS. 3-9.
1. What did Moses command you?
  2. Moses was very lenient as recorded in Deut. 24:1.
  3. This commandment was a concession for your weakness—and hardness of heart.
  4. From the beginning God created two to become one.
  5. What God has joined together man can not and should not divide.
- III. THE DISCIPLES ASK FURTHER QUESTIONS, VS. 10-12.
1. This occurred in a house.
  2. The reason a man should not divorce his wife (except for fornication) is because when he marries again he commits adultery against his wife.
  3. The same principle applies to the wife in regard to her husband.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. THE TRIAL QUESTION.

"2. The questioners are *the Pharisees*—omnipresent tempters!—and the old practice of trying to catch him by questions still survives.—*Is it lawful*. Perhaps not asked in the narrowest technical sense, as if calling for an interpretation of the Mosaic law, but more generally, asking the judgment of the Rabbi: "May a man put away his wife?" The law of

divorce in Deut. 24:1 was not entirely plain in the statement of the admissible grounds of complaint against a wife, and the ambiguity had occasioned endless discussion. The schools of Shammai, the stricter, and Hillel, the more lax, contended about it, and the people were divided. Therefore, however Jesus might reply, his answer could be trusted to make him enemies. Moreover, he was in the territory of Herod, under whom the Baptist had suffered for his boldness in the matter of an adulterous marriage. Matthew's addition, "for every cause," was as nearly as possible the translation of the current phrase justified by the lax school of Hillel; and so the question meant, "Is the lax school right?"

## II. THE ANSWER OF JESUS.

"3,4. His answer drove them back to their own authorities. The law under which all their discussions were, and ought to be, conducted was the law of Moses, and what he said must be first considered. *What did Moses command you?* was the first legitimate question. But their answer was evasive. They stated the permission as if it were unlimited, omitting all references to the occasions of divorce which the law recognized.

5-9. Yet he accepted their report of the law, imperfect as it was, without criticism. They had omitted the crucial point, the determination of occasions for divorce, and so would he. They had spoken of permission; of permission he would speak. Divorce was a permitted thing, and the permission was so vague that there might be difficulty in defining its limits. It was permitted, but why? *For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.* The preposition means "on account of," or "out of regard for." The noun means "hard-heartedness;" "spiritual dullness and incapacity;" "unresponsiveness to God," amounting to inability to accept high motives. Moses wrote you this precept, said Jesus (in Matthew, "he suffered you to put away your wives"), because you were not up to the level of a better precept. He said that Moses wrote the precept; but, according to their view of the matter and according to his (see Mark 7:13), the legislation of Moses expressed the appointment of God. It was Jehovah himself who permitted them to put away their wives.—But this precept was not given because there was not a better one at hand. A better was provided in the constitution of man. *From the beginning of the creation—from the very origin of things—God, the Creator, made them male and female.* An exact quotation from Gen. 1:27, Septuagint. Verse 7 and half of verse 8 are exactly quoted from Gen. 2:24, Septuagint, though in Mark some manuscripts (and Tischendorf) omit *and cleave to his wife.*

This passage from the narrative of the Creation was cited to show that the distinction of sexes was originally constituted the ground of

marriage. By this law marriage is the union of a male and a female of the human race; and it is such a union as shall form a new centre of life to both. For this cause—i.e. because he created them male and female—a man shall leave the parents, into natural unity with whom he was born, and find the centre for a new unity in his union with a fellow-being of the opposite sex. Thus the distinction of the sexes was given as the foundation of the family.—Now, the duration for which God intended this union may be inferred from his own testimony as to its closeness and completeness. This testimony Jesus now quotes—and *they twain shall be one flesh*—and then he adds his own emphatic restatement of the fact: *so then they are no more twain, but one flesh*—that is, the union that is founded on the relation of the sexes makes the two to be one flesh, makes each to be, physically, part and property of the other. Marriage has wrought an actual unity which is not to be broken. It is the union of one man and one woman, and the blending of life in sexual union establishes between that one man and that one woman a real unity. By establishing such a relation the Creator showed his intention that a union thus formed should be irrevocable and inviolable, to be legitimately terminated only by death.”

In verse 9 is given the better precept that springs from this original order. The verb is in the aorist, not in the perfect; and the reference is not to special cases in which God *hath joined together* two given individuals, but to the original constitution of the race, in establishing which he *joined together* in permanent unity every pair who should ever come together in the union of sex with sex.—*What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.* That one flesh or one body (see 1 Cor. 6:16, where Paul expressly recognizes the truth that physical union establishes true and permanent unity) which has been formed in accordance with God's appointment in the creation of man, let not man put asunder.—Note the contrast between God and man: man may not break what God has made. Man may break this unity, either by personal unfaithfulness to the obligation of marriage or by contradictory enactments permitting dissolutions that God does not permit. Of the possible dissolution, for one cause, he speaks below.

This law of exclusive and permanent union was the original law of marriage; and this law Jesus reaffirms. But a lower law was given in that legislation which Jesus distinctly recognized as the work of God. Now, Jesus declares that that law was given because of the incapacity of men for this. He thus announces the imperfection of the Mosaic law—not only its incompleteness, but its imperfection—and asserts also its educational purpose. It was meant to train men for a better life than they

could then accept. Accordingly, there was in the law a certain amount of what is called accommodation. "God often speaks and gives law, not as he himself is able to do, but as we are able to hear" (*Chrysostom*, on Ps. 95)—a sound principle, but always to be accompanied by this: "When God thus speaks and gives law, it is in order that he may make us able to hear all that he is able to say to us." We need have no difficulty in admitting that God has dealt in rudimentary instruction, and, so far, in inferior instruction, if only we keep steadily in view his purpose of moral education for men."

### III. THE DISCIPLES ASK FURTHER QUESTIONS.

10-12. Mark alone tells of the later inquiry of the disciples. In Matthew the address to the Pharisees is continued, with the solemn assertion that he who puts away his wife, except for fornication, and marries another commits adultery. In Mark "except for fornication" is omitted; but it is sufficiently implied. The statement in both Gospels is that a man is charged with adultery when he enters into a new sexual union while the first is still unbroken—i.e. when he breaks the exclusive unity of flesh with his wife by an act of union with another. Of course an equal union of sexes can be broken by either member; and so the "except for fornication" is implied clearly enough in principle in Mark. Verse 12, indeed, distinctly enforces the principle of equal responsibility. The custom to which it alludes, of the wife putting away the husband, was a custom, not of Jews, but of Romans and of other Gentiles. Possibly Jesus saw that there was danger, under Roman influence, of its coming in among the Jews.—Here, in verses 11, 12, is our Lord's own answer to the original question, whether a man might put away his wife. It is, "No, unless she has already broken her unity with him." Sexual unfaithfulness forfeits the bond, but nothing else does.

The teaching of this passage is strong and conclusive for all who acknowledge the authority of Jesus Christ. The inviolability of marriage is grounded, not in any principles of expediency or advantage, right as these might be, but in its correspondence to the constitution of man as male and female. The sexual element in marriage makes of the two one flesh—i.e. it was meant that sexual union should be inseparable from permanent personal unity—and only by sexual unfaithfulness can the unity, once established, be broken. This is not to affirm that sexual unfaithfulness is necessarily more guilty than any other sin—a life-long course of drunkenness and abuse may be as guilty—but the sexual relation is the groundwork of the family, and its purity is absolutely essential to the physical and moral welfare of mankind. With good reason, therefore, God has made faithfulness in this relation the determining element

in the perpetuity of marriage. To this divine appointment human laws should be made to correspond. Separations for other causes than adultery there may be, but dissolution of marriage, never. If it is said that such a law works hardship in many cases, the answer is that all laws that are for the general good sometimes work hardship while sin continues. But the purity and the permanency of the family are worth so much to mankind that individuals may well afford to suffer hardship rather than contribute to the overthrow of so precious an institution.

*FACT QUESTIONS* 10:2-12

545. Is the attitude of the Pharisees the same throughout the ministry of our Lord? Why?
546. Who was Shammai and Hillel—what school of thoughts did they represent? What reference in the Old Testament was of particular concern on the matter of divorce?
547. How was the question of the Pharisees framed in such a way to put Jesus in an undefendable position?
548. Why raise the question about Moses? Who raised it—see Matt. 19:7.
549. What is meant by "hardness of heart"?
550. What was originally constituted the ground for marriage?
551. Why mention the thought of the two becoming one? When does this occur?
552. How is the imperfection and incompleteness of the Mosaic law shown?
553. What is meant by saying that in the law of God "a certain amount of accommodation is found"?
554. How can it be said that the exception of divorce for fornication is inferred by Mark? Explain.
555. Does Jesus say a person guilty of sexual unfaithfulness is necessarily more guilty than any other sinner? Discuss.
556. Does Jesus add anything to the Mosaic law by saying a wife could put away her husband?
557. Why is the home the most precious institution in the world?

B. CHRIST'S LOVE TO THE YOUNG. 10:13-22

*TEXT* 10:13-22

"And they brought unto him little children, that he should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I

say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

And as he was going forth into the way, there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him. Good Master, what shall I do that I may inheret eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honour thy father and mother. And he said unto him, Master, all these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions."

*THOUGHT QUESTIONS* 10:13-22

518. Had little children been brought to Jesus before this time? Why? Who brought them?
519. Was Jesus baptizing the children? Where was Jesus when this incident occurred?; please be as specific as possible.
520. Notice the tense in the verb "rebuked"—it denotes continuing action—what would this suggest?
521. Why wasn't Jesus patient with His disciples instead of being "moved" with indignation?
522. Does the expression "to come unto me" suggest anything about the age of the children?
523. Was Jesus saying the children were already in the kingdom of God? Discuss.
524. Specify three ways in which we should be like little children.
525. What is the meaning of "the kingdom of God" as here used? Does this refer to the church? Discuss.
526. What is the meaning of the word "blessed" as used in vs. 16?
527. In approximately what place did Jesus meet the rich young ruler?
528. Designate the urgency and eagerness of this young man.
529. Mark the humility and trust of this one.
530. What did the ruler mean by the words "Good Teacher"?
531. Was the ruler asking for the way to go to heaven or was there something more in the question?
532. Why did Jesus pick up the words "good teacher" and make a point out of them?



533. In what sense is God the only one who is "good"?
534. Did Jesus tell the rich young man that he could find eternal life in keeping the commandments? Discuss.
535. Why mention the particular six commandments He did?
536. Was the young man bragging or lying when he said he had kept the commandments since his youth?
537. Why does Mark say "Jesus looking upon him loved him"?
538. Just what did the young man lack?
539. Mention six things he did not lack.
540. This one was to trade one treasure for another—please explain how this transaction was to be made.
541. Show the connection of heavenly treasure and following Jesus.
542. As carefully as you can, tell what you believe the young man expected Jesus to say in answer to his question.
543. Was the young ruler lost? Discuss.

## COMMENT 10:13-22

TIME.—A.D. 30. This conversation probably occurred in the month of March, on Christ's last journey to Jerusalem, only a few weeks before his crucifixion.

PLACE.—On the farther side of the Jordan, near the borders of Judea. (See Mark 10:1). After the raising of Lazarus, the Lord retired to escape the storm of persecution to "Ephraim, a city of Judea," and after a short interval of rest crossed the Jordan into Perea, where he was still at this date, en route to Jerusalem. If the student will locate a point in the the Jordan valley, east of the river, not far from Jericho it will be near where the little children were brought to the Lord. This region east of the Jordan was called Perea (beyond) because it was *beyond* the river. It included the districts of Bashan and Gilead and in the time of the Savior was fertile and populous, with a mixed population, partly Jewish and partly Gentile.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—The blessing of the little children (vs. 13-16), in Matt. 19:13-15, and Luke 18:15-17. For the lesson to the rich young man, see Matt. 19:16-30; 20:16 and Luke 18:18-30.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—Many events occurred, the chief of which were: 1. The visit of our Lord to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, October, A.D. 29 (John 7:8-10), which was marked by (1) solemn discourses during the feast, and an attempt of the Sanhedrim to apprehend him (John 7:11-51, 8:12-59); (2) the opening of the eyes of one born blind (John 9:1-41), the revelation of himself as the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18). 2. Return to Galilee (October). 3. Final departure from Galilee (Novem-

ber), (Luke 9:51; Mark 10:1). 4. Ministrations in Judea, and mission of the seventy (Luke 10-13: 17). 5. Visit to Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22-39), (December). 6. Tour in Perea (Luke 13:22-17; 10). 7. The raising of Lazarus (John 11:10-46). 8. Resolve of the Sanhedrim to put him to death, and his retirement to Ephraim (John 11:47-54), (January, A.D. 30). 9. Goes to the borders of Samaria and Galilee; heals ten lepers (January, February). 10. Starts towards Jerusalem down on the east side of the Jordan (March). 11. Discourse on marriage and divorce on the way.

OUTLINE—1. Christ and the Children. 2. The Rich Young Seeker. 3. The One Great Lack.

### ANALYSIS

#### I. CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN, vs. 13-16.

1. Children Brought to the Lord. Mark 10:13; Matt. 19:13; Luke 18:15.
2. The Disciples Rebuked. Mark 10:14; Matt. 19:14; Luke 18:16.
3. Of Such is the Kingdom of God. Mark 10:14; Matt. 19:14; Luke 18:16.
4. Christ Blessing the Children. Mark 10:16.

#### II. THE RICH YOUNG SEEKER, vs. 17-20.

1. The Great Question. Mark 10:18; Matt. 19:16; Luke 18:18.
2. None Good but One. Mark 10:19; Matt. 19:17; Luke 18:19.
3. What Doest Thou? Mark 10:20; Matt. 19:18, 19; Luke 18:20.
4. A Self-Righteous Spirit. Mark 10:21; Matt. 19:20; Luke 18:21.

#### III. THE ONE GREAT LACK, vs. 21, 22.

1. One thing Thou Lackest. Mark 10:21; Matt. 19:21; Luke 18:22.
2. Christ Rejected. Mark 10:22; Matt. 19:22; Luke 18:23.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

#### I. CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN.

In this incident the very heart of Christ is published to poor sinners; and we may clearly perceive the freeness and fullness of the mighty grace of the Redeemer, who is willing to receive the youngest child as well as the oldest man.—*Spurgeon*.

13. *And they brought young children.* Of varying ages, for according to Luke, Christ called them to him. There were parents in those days wise enough to know that it was not well to wait until children were old enough to become hardened in sin before seeking for them the blessing of a Savior. We bring children to Christ (1) by daily, constant, earnest

prayer on their behalf; (2) by teaching them the truth; (3) by consecrating them to God for this life and the life to come; (4) by training them up for Christ. "Set before your child life and death, hell, and heaven, judgment and mercy, his own sin, and Christ's most precious blood, labor with him, persuade him with tears and weeping to turn unto the Lord."—*Spurgeon. That he should touch them.* An act expressive of imparting a blessing, and showing that the nearer we are to Jesus the greater the blessing which comes to us from him. Blessings come to those who are near, which cannot come to those that are afar off. This is true of physical healing, and of moral and intellectual influences. We must draw near to Christ in order to receive his blessing. *His disciples rebuked those that brought them.* "The erroneous apostles," as Richard Baxter calls them, thought that the Great Rabbi would be annoyed, and his attention diverted from matters of greater importance than anything connected with little children. They think it is to abuse the goodness and misuse the time of their Master, Dr. Tyng says: "It seems to me that the Devil would never ask anything more of a minister than to have him look upon his mission as chiefly to the grown up members of his congregation, while somebody else was to look after the children."

14. *When Jesus saw it he was much displeased.* The language of the original is much stronger: so it is expressed in the Revised Version, "moved with indignation." The disciples had already been cautioned about their treatment of children (Matt. 18:10-14). Some sign of displeasure was probably on his countenance. How careful we should be not to call forth his displeasure by keeping children from him! Peloubet assigns five reasons for the Lord's indignation. (1) Because they were keeping away from him those who wanted to come to him, and for whom he died. (2) They were taking away those who were the very hope of the church, the kingdom they were appointed to build up. (3) Because the children are the type of all who shall enter his kingdom. (4) Because he loved little children, and rejoiced in their love. (5) Because they were hindering the best workers in his kingdom, the mothers. *Suffer the little children to come unto me.* To refuse children access to his grace was to misrepresent his spirit, his mission, and his kingdom. In bringing the children at that moment the mothers interrupted him in an important doctrinal discourse: yet Jesus suspended his teaching, and pronounced a blessing. It signified that there was a place in his thought, in his heart, in his mission, in his church, for children. *For of such is the kingdom of God.* Such as have the childlike disposition toward God. God wants little children in his kingdom. People are most likely to come into the kingdom when children, since all must become like little children in order

to enter the kingdom. *Children in the kingdom of God in heaven.* Such as die before they have wandered out of God's kingdom into the kingdom of Satan are certainly saved, since they are "of the kingdom of heaven."—*Abbott*. Then, beyond a doubt, in that kingdom shall all the little ones be found. For it is not as children of Christians, it is not as baptized, but it is as *children*, that of such is that kingdom.—*Alford*. *Children in the kingdom of God on earth.* Perhaps it is as well for us to learn the lesson at once, so that we might accept the statement which the words of the Savior would teach; namely, that little children are the true wards of the church, and ought to be welcomed, cherished, and valued highly.—*Sunday School Times*.

15. *Whosoever shall not receive*, etc. Christ now holds up the children as an example to his disciples. He had the ideal childlike spirit, and delighted to see in little ones his own image. Purity, truthfulness, simplicity, docility, and loving dependence made them his favorite types for his followers. The apostles needed the lessons their characteristics impressed.—*Geikie*.

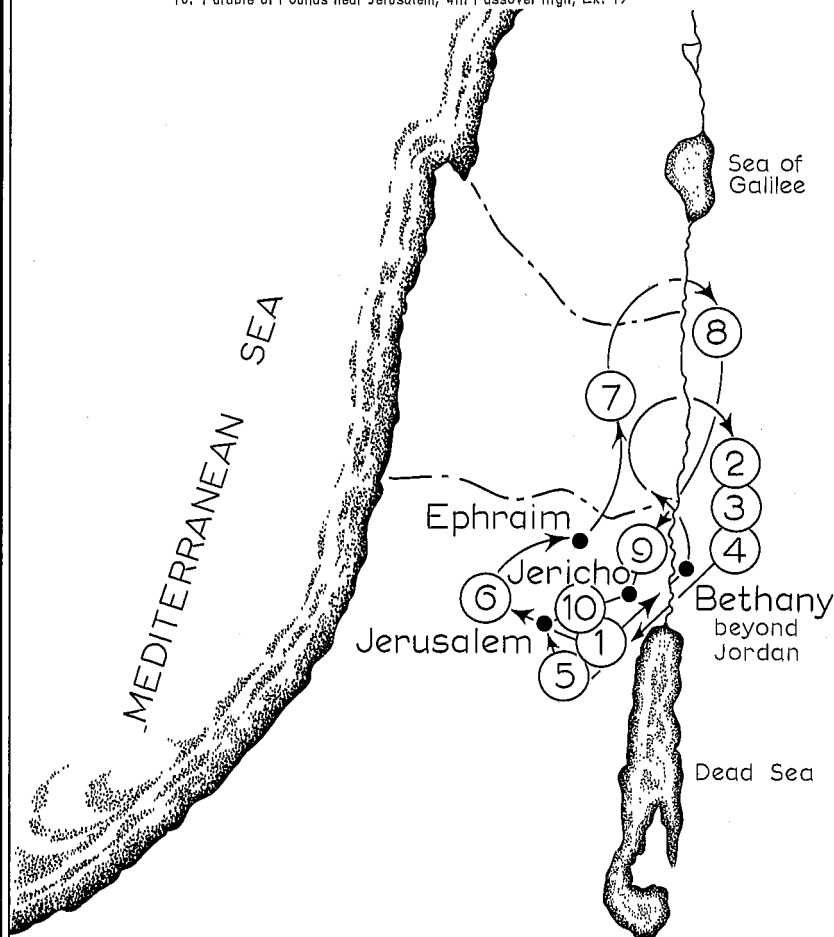
16. *Took them up in his arms.* He ever giveth more than men ask or think. He had been asked only to touch the children. He takes them into his arms, and lays his hands upon them, and blesses them.—*Cambridge Bible for Schools*. As I look at Christ in this, the most stirring period of his history, with the dark events of his last agonies thickening on his horizon, condescending to take little children in his arms and bless them, I feel deeper chords in my nature touched than when I see him hush the furious tempest, or raise the buried dead.—*Thomas*. It is well to note (1) that these children were not babes. The Lord called them to him. (2) They were not brought to be baptized, but that the Lord might touch them. (3) He did not baptize them, but laid hands on them and blessed them. (4) All parents and all mothers especially should bring their children to Christ for his blessing, should teach them of him, his demand for their hearts, and that they should obey him.

## II. THE RICH YOUNG SEEKER.

17. *When he was gone forth on the way.* Had continued his slow journey towards Jerusalem. As his aim was to teach the people, his daily journeys were very short and he often paused for days together where an open door was presented. *There came one running.* This incident is described in Matt. 19:16-23, and Luke 18:18-23. The three accounts should be carefully compared by the student. This case presents some remarkable points. (1) The man was of irreproachable moral character; and this amidst all the temptations of youth—for he was a "young man" (Matt. 19:22)—and wealth, for "he was very rich," (v. 22). But (2)

MAP NO. 6—THIRD YEAR, LATER PEREAN MINISTRY (about 3 months)

1. Feast of Dedication, Jerusalem; attempts to kill Jesus; retreats to Bethabara (place of His baptism), Jn. 10
2. Perea; journey through cities and villages; few saved, Jn. 10
3. Home of a Pharisee; rules for feasting, Lk. 14
4. Place unknown; parables of lost sheep; lost coin; lost son; Lazarus and Rich man; Lawyer's question, Lk. 15 & 16
5. Recruits call to come to Bethany; raises Lazarus; Jews seek to kill both, Jn. 11
6. Retirement to Ephraim with 12 disciples, Jn. 11
7. Journey through borders of Samaria; Galilee, Perea; heals ten lepers, Lk. 17
8. Sermon on the Mount of Olives; teaching on Divorce; little children; Pharisee and publican; rich young ruler; parable of laborers in vineyard; plainest prediction of crucifixion; James & John seek chief honors, Mt. 19-20, Mk. 10, Lk. 17-18
9. Jericho; two blind men healed; Zacchaeus, Lk. 19
10. Parable of Pounds near Jerusalem; 4th Passover night, Lk. 19





restless, notwithstanding, his heart craves eternal life. (3) He so far believed in Jesus as to be persuaded he could authoritatively direct him on this vital point. (4) So earnest is he, that he comes "running" and even "kneeling before him," and that when he was gone forth "into the way" (v. 17)—the high road—by this time crowded with travelers to the passover.—*J. F. and B. Running*. They that will have eternal life must run for it; because the Devil, the law, sin, death, and hell follow them.—*Bunyan. Good Master, what shall I do?* He sincerely desired salvation; and he imagined that some generous action, some great sacrifice, would secure this highest good.—*Godet. What shall I do?* (In Matthew, What good thing shall I do?) He had not yet learned that he needed first to be good, to have a pure and holy heart, before he could have eternal life. *To inherit eternal life?* That I may be among those that are true children, and, as such, lawful inheritors of the kingdom.—*Cook*.

18. *Why callest thou me good?* Christ does not rebuke the young man for employing what was nothing more than the language of respect by any pupil to a teacher.—*Abbott*. But he asks him whether he looks upon him merely as any other teacher; or does he recognize him as a divine teacher—the only one who is truly good; the "good master" who knows all things, and whose teaching is eternally true.—*P. There is none good but one, that is God*. He does not deny that he is good; for he is the one who is good, even God (1 John 3:5). Some have mistakenly found in these words an affirmation that Christ is not divine. To whom Stier relies; "Either there is none good but God; Christ is good; therefore Christ is God: or, there is none good but God, Christ is not God; therefore Christ is not good." There is no answer to these syllogisms but to deny the sinlessness of Christ.

19. *Thou knowest the commandments*. After uttering his mild rebuke, our Lord proceeds to answer the young man's question by exhibiting the moral character requisite as "meetness" for the enjoyment of everlasting life.—*Morrison*. St. Matthew says that our Lord first answered, "Keep the commandments;" and when the young man asked, "What kind of commandments?" he seems purposely to have mentioned only the plainest commandments of the second table, to show the young man that he had fallen short, even of these in their true interpretation, much more of that love to God which is the epitome of the first table. Thus does Christ "send the proud to the law, and invite the humble to the gospel."—*Farrar. De fraud not*. It seems as if intended to be a special application of the tenth commandment. One who had great possessions, gathered in the usual ways by which men gain wealth, needed to examine himself

specially by that text. Were there no ill-gotten gains in his treasure?—*Ellicott*. Our Lord gives this enumeration of the commandments to bring out the self-righteous spirit of the young man, which he before saw.

20. *All these have I observed*. There was, no doubt, great ignorance in this reply. He knew but little of any one of these precepts in the strictness, spirituality, and extent of its requirements, who could venture on any such assertion. Yet there was sincerity in the answer, and it pointed to a bygone life of singular external propriety.—*Hanna*.

### III. THE ONE GREAT LACK.

21. *Jesus beholding him loved him*. Jesus read his heart in a moment, and was won by the evident worth of his character. As he looked at him, so earnest, so humble, so admirable in his life and spirit, he loved him. Could he only stand the testing demand that must now be made, he would pass into the citizenship of the kingdom of God.—*Geikie*. Jesus loves all men, but his sympathies are called forth specially in behalf of those seeking for eternal life. It is out of his sympathy and love that he makes a demand on him that will reveal to the young man his own heart. *One thing thou lackest*. He thus proposed to him one short crucial test of his real condition, and way to clear self-knowledge. He had fancied himself willing to do whatever could be required; he could now see if he were really so. *Go thy way*. He now gives him proof of what he lacked. Far from arresting on their way those who believe in their own strength, he encourages them to prosecute it faithfully to the very end, knowing well that if they are sincere they shall by the law die to the law (Gal. 2:19). *Sell whatsoever thou hast*. The Lord loved him so well that he invited him to the highest honors, even to become a member of his immediate attendants, like the apostles. These had all given up everything in order to follow Christ, and the same test and opportunity was offered to this young man. It was the crisis of his life. Had he accepted the opportunity perhaps his would have been one of the great names in the early history of the church; but the world gained the victory, he loved it better than Christ, he rejected the offer and thus he disappears from sight forever. *Follow me*. All these things are parts of one whole, the Christian life. He must have all, would he enter eternal life. Note his possible future as a disciple, compared with his obscure future as a nameless rich man.

22. *And he was sad*. He had been touched where weakest, but this was exactly what his repeated request demanded.—*Geikie*. *And went away grieved*. He shrank from the one test that would really have led him to the heights of glory at which he aimed. *Great possessions*. It was too much. He preferred the comforts of earth to the treasures of heaven;



he would not purchase the things of eternity by abandoning those of time; he made, as Dante calls it, "the great refusal." And so he vanishes from the gospel history; nor do the evangelists know anything of him further.—*Farrar*. Which would have been better for this young man—to leave his goods to become the companion in labor of the St. Peters and St. Johns, or to keep possessions so soon to be laid waste by the Roman legions?—*Godet*.

*FACT QUESTIONS* 10:13-22

558. How is Mark 10:13-22 to be associated with the raising of Lazarus?
559. Why is this district called "beyond the Jordan"? What territory was included in it?
560. Name five events that occurred between the feast of the Tabernacles and the healing of the ten lepers.
561. How is the "mighty grace of the Redeemer" seen in His attitude toward the little children?
562. Name three ways children are brought to Christ today.
563. What lesson can be gained from the fact that Jesus touched the children?
564. What error was made by the apostles in rebuking the children?
565. Name three reasons for the Lord's indignation.
566. Are all children who die going to heaven? Discuss.
567. In what sense are children today in the kingdom of God on earth?
568. Is it true that Jesus saw in children His own image, and therefore held them up to his disciples as examples?
569. Show how the time and circumstance of blessing the children shows something of the beautiful character of Jesus.
570. Johnson says it is well to note four facts about this incident—mention three of them.
571. Why were some of the days' journeys of Jesus very short?
572. Note three remarkable things about the one who came running to Jesus.
573. Just what was the young man seeking?
574. "Either there is none good but ————; Christ is good; therefore Christ is ————; or, there is none good but God; Christ is not God; therefore Christ is not ————."
575. In what way does Christ "send the proud to the law, and invite the humble to the gospel"?
576. How did "defraud not" apply to the young man?

577. Show how there was both ignorance and sincerity in the answer of the young ruler.
578. Why did Jesus love the young man?
579. What is meant by the phrase "go thy way"?
580. What wonderful opportunity did Jesus offer the young man?
581. Why couldn't the young man follow Christ and keep his money?
582. What is "the great refusal"?

### C. THE RICH MAN AND HEAVEN 10:23-27

#### TEXT 10:23-27

"And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished exceedingly, saying unto him, Then who can be saved? Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God."

#### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 10:23-27

544. Why mention the appearance or looks of Jesus?
545. Show how appropriate this question was.
546. What is "the kingdom of God" as used here?
547. Why were the disciples so amazed?
548. Show how the exaggerated illustration of the camel and the needle's eye fit the circumstance.
549. Did the disciples believe there was some connection between being rich and God's approval? Discuss.
550. Did the disciples think—"if a rich man cannot be saved no one can be saved"? Why?
551. What was impossible and possible in the salvation of a rich man?

#### COMMENT

TIME.—March—A.D. 30. Shortly after the conversation with the rich young ruler.

PLACE.—In Perea—the east side of the Jordan, near the borders of Judea.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 19:23-26; Luke 18:24-27.

OUTLINE.—1. Jesus states the rich man's poor chances for heaven, vs. 23. 2. The disciples are very surprised, vs. 24a. 3. Jesus repeats with emphasis and illustration His first assertion, vs. 24b-25. 4. "Who can be saved?"—God can make it possible, vs. 26, 27.

## ANALYSIS

- I. JESUS STATES THE RICH MAN'S POOR CHANCES FOR HEAVEN, VS. 23.
  1. This was said as Jesus looked intently into the faces of His disciples.
  2. It is almost impossible for a rich man to be saved.
- II. THE DISCIPLES ARE VERY SURPRISED, VS. 24a.
  1. This surprise was because of their thought that a man was rich because God had blessed him.
  2. Jesus had flatly contradicted their concept.
- III. JESUS REPEATS WITH EMPHASIS AND ILLUSTRATION HIS FIRST ASSERTION, VS. 24b-25.
  1. Jesus calls His disciples "children" (in understanding) as He repeats His statement.
  2. The possibility is like that of a camel going through the eye of a needle.
- IV. WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?—GOD CAN MAKE IT POSSIBLE, VS. 26, 27.
  1. The increased amazement of the disciples.
  2. Jesus again looked searchingly at them—"what man cannot do, God can do."

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

## I. JESUS STATES THE RICH MAN'S POOR CHANCES FOR HEAVEN.

"23. Now again the deliberate look of Jesus round the whole circle of his disciples, gazing into each face, impressed itself on the memory of Mark's informant. His saying, *How hardly*—i.e. with what difficulty—*shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!* is amply confirmed by experience. Christian men often become rich, but rich men rarely become Christians. The reason is not far to seek: the process of gaining wealth encourages self-seeking, and the possession of it encourages self-importance; but the spirit that can enter the kingdom is the spirit of a little child."

## II. THE DISCIPLES ARE VERY SURPRISED.

"24a. This remarkable verse is peculiar to Mark. The astonishment of the disciples was natural, with their ideas of the kingdom. "Hard for rich men! What can he mean?" All the splendid imagery of the prophets (as in Isa. 60) might rise in their minds to contradict him; and the idea of

delivering Israel from oppression by a kingdom that rich men could scarcely enter must have seemed to them absurd."

### III. JESUS REPEATS WITH EMPHASIS AND ILLUSTRATION HIS FIRST ASSERTION.

"24b-25. Jesus solemnly repeated his hard saying; yet his mood was tender, as his word *Children* shows, here alone addressed to them. ("Little children," in John 13:33.)—According to the common reading, the repetition of the saying explains and softens it by the modification. *How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter.* But there seems sufficient reason to accept the reading of ancient manuscripts by which the words *for them that trust in riches* are omitted. In that case the repetition of the saying removes it from the special case of rich men and applies the sentiment more widely: *Children, how hard it is to enter into the kingdom of God!* Plainly, such a remark was a natural outcome of the incident, for it was not chiefly his riches, but his heart, that sent the man away sorrowful, and a like heart is in all men. To all men, therefore, rich or poor, it is by nature *hard to enter into the kingdom of God*—hard in itself, since sin is what it is.—Let us not be afraid that such a text will prove too discouraging. It is better to know things as they are; and perhaps the doctrine of free grace has been so used as to lead to an untrue idea of the easiness of salvation.

25. *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.* This comparison may have been proverbial, as the Talmud contains, at a later date, a closely similar saying. The Koran exactly reproduces it from the New Testament. As for the popular explanation—that the small gate in the city wall, too narrow for a camel to pass through, was called the needle's eye—there is no sufficient evidence of the antiquity of such a use of the name. The comparison needs no special explanation; it is a strong way of representing impossibility: "It is so hard for sinful men, rich or poor, to enter the kingdom, that for a rich man—one who is especially involved in the unchildlike habits of the world—to enter is harder than for a camel to go through a needle's eye." This is no contradiction of any gracious and winning Scripture. It is the Saviour's emphatic statement of a fact, parallel to Luke 13:24 and 14:26-33, and to many other of his words."

### IV. WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?—GOD CAN MAKE IT POSSIBLE.

"26, 27. *Astonished* before; *astonished out of measure* now.—The inquiry was *among themselves*, a whispering of amazement. *Who then can be saved?* With such a standard, how would the kingdom receive any one? For was not the love of money everywhere? and how could the kingdom live, with a law so strict?—*Jesus looking upon them.* Again

Peter remembered his look. The word, both here and in verse 21, is the same as in Luke 22:61: "The Lord turned and looked on Peter."—*With men it is impossible*. Not now difficult, but more. On human principles or by any power of man it cannot be done; the proud man cannot be brought into the kingdom of the humble, or the worldly-minded rich man into the kingdom of the poor in spirit. So in John 3:3: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—*But not with God: for with God all things are possible*. He can make new creatures of men; he can impart the spirit of the kingdom. He has command, too, of all means, earthly and heavenly. So he can bring into his kingdom men who are spiritually incompatible with it. (See 1 Tim. 1:12-17; 1 Cor. 15:9, 10.) The implication is that, even though this case looks so hopeless, God can yet find means of bringing the unwilling rich man to a better mind. In his hands are even life and death." (W. N. Clarke)

#### FACT QUESTIONS 10:23-27

583. Why is it that Christian men often become rich, but rich men rarely become Christians?
584. What could arise in the mind of the disciples to contradict the words of Jesus?
585. Is the thought of difficulty in entering the kingdom general or specific? i.e. does this principle apply to all—explain.
586. Is there any truth in the thought of a needle's gate in the city wall of Jerusalem? Why was this explanation offered in the first place?
587. Why were the disciples particularly amazed at this time?
588. How will God make the impossible possible? Discuss.

#### C. PETER'S HASTY WORDS. 10:28-31

##### TEXT 10:28-31

"Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first."

#### THOUGHT QUESTION 10:28-31

552. Why did Peter ask this question?
553. Show the low spiritual tone in the question asked by Peter.
554. Did Peter feel he and the other apostles had done what Jesus asked the rich young ruler to do?

555. Had Jesus said anything about the advantages in following Him? (Cf. His words to the rich young ruler.)
556. Is Peter saying that he and the other apostles actually left all to follow Jesus with the thought of getting more than they left?
557. Please notice that Jesus did not direct His answer to Peter— what does this imply? There are to be rewards—but for whom? How?
558. Please be specific in your understanding of just how we can receive a hundred fold of houses, brethren, sisters, mothers, children, lands—with persecutions. If you can not give a specific answer— (one with personal meaning) think and pray and study until you can.
559. Why add the warning of vs. 31? What does it mean?

*COMMENT* 10:28-31

TIME.—March, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—In Perea—at the same time and place as the incident with the rich young ruler.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 19:27-30; Luke 18:28-30.

OUTLINE.—1. "Look at us: we have left all to follow you." vs. 28. 2. No one has left all to follow me who will not be rewarded a hundred fold along with persecutions and in the age to come eternal life, vs. 29, 30. 3. Warning—the first may be last—The last may be first, vs. 31.

*ANALYSIS*

- I. LOOK AT US: WE HAVE LEFT ALL TO FOLLOW YOU, VS. 28.
1. Right after Jesus' words to the disciples about riches and the kingdom Peter responds.
  2. We are examples of those who have left all to follow. (What shall we receive in return?)
- II. NO ONE HAS LEFT ALL TO FOLLOW ME WHO WILL NOT BE REWARDED A HUNDRED-FOLD—ALONG WITH PERSECUTIONS—IN THE AGE TO COME ETERNAL LIFE, VS. 29, 30.
1. Jesus replied emphatically—"truly"—
  2. This principle applies to all—anyone who leaves all to follow Me will be rewarded a hundred-fold and at the end—eternal life.
  3. Such reward will be accompanied with persecution.
- III. WARNING—THE FIRST MAY BE LAST—THE LAST MAY BE FIRST, VS. 31.
1. Some—like you, Peter—start poorly but finish well.
  2. Some—like the rich young ruler—start well but do not finish.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

## I. LOOK AT US: WE HAVE LEFT ALL TO FOLLOW YOU.

"28. Peter, as usual, speaks for them all, saying, in substance, "We have done what this man would not; we have accepted the kingdom on the right terms at personal sacrifice." The question, "What shall we have, therefore?" added in Matthew, is plainly implied here and in Luke. Here is a frank statement of self-seeking, even in self-renunciation; self-denial in the hope of direct returns. The apostles were still hoping that their special honors in the kingdom would make amends for everything. Yet in the words of Peter now there may be a tone of despair, in view of the depression of their prospects implied in the words just spoken: "What shall we have, what amends, if the kingdom is to be of this exacting and unambitious kind?" No concealment anywhere of the low spiritual tone of the disciples."

## II. NO ONE HAS LEFT ALL TO FOLLOW ME WHO WILL NOT BE REWARDED A HUNDRED-FOLD—ALONG WITH PERSECUTIONS—IN THE AGE TO COME ETERNAL LIFE.

"29, 30. How tender and wise the answer! There is no distinct rebuke, but there is a silent one in the fact that the promise is made, not to the apostles only, but to all who make such sacrifices as they speak of. Apostles have no exclusive claim, nor even an assurance of pre-eminence in this respect. The rewards of the kingdom are for all the faithful, all who, *for my sake, and the gospel's*, have forsaken what they held dear. Note the true suggestion—that the forsaking must be for a person and for a principle. Jesus wishes not to be regarded apart from the gospel, nor can the gospel be regarded as a true object of sacrifice apart from Jesus. So in chap. 8:38. The promise seems to mean (for of course the promise of multiplication of goods cannot be taken literally) that all good that is given up for Christ shall be immeasurably more precious to the soul for the surrender. It shall be given back to the soul, if not to the hands, enhanced a hundred-fold in value. It may be given back to the hands—i.e. sacrifices may be required in spirit that are not called for in the course of divine providence—and in that case the hundred-fold of new preciousness is always found. But to the soul all that is given up for Christ shall be returned, and thus graciously multiplied. (The possible thoughts of the lad who gave up his loaves and fishes, John 6:9). The principle of self-sacrifice sweetens life instead of embittering it, and the experience of self-denial surprises the soul with unthought-of wealth. So much at present; and in the age that is coming, with its full spiritual rewards, eternal life. So 1 Tim. 4:8.—But the warning lies in the solemn reservation, preserved by Mark alone. *With persecutions*. No

easy way leads to these honors and rewards (2 Tim. 3:12; 2 Cor. 11:23-27; 6:4-10). Even when outward persecution is not, still the principle is the same: it is no easy way.—The *hundred-fold* will not prevent the persecutions; but neither will the persecutions interfere with the coming of the hundred-fold.”

### III. WARNING—THE FIRST MAY BE LAST—THE LAST MAY BE FIRST.

“31. A wise caution. “The judgment of God is according to truth,” and rank will finally be determined by true judgment and not according to present appearances. Let no man boast; even the rich young man who has gone away sorrowful may possibly yet outrank the apostles. Here, according to Matthew, our Lord adds the parable of the Laborers (Matt. 20:1-16) to illustrate the solemn warning, *many that are first shall be last; and the last first*, to which, at the end of the parable, he returns.—The rich young man we see no more, unless under his proper name. Those who think that he may have been Lazarus suggest that his sickness, death, and resurrection, or some part of that great experience, may have been used by God, to whom all things are possible, in bringing him to the spirit of the kingdom. Whoever he may have been, we cannot suppress the hope that he who is said to have loved him did not leave him to himself.” (W. N. Clarke)

#### FACT QUESTIONS 10:28-31

589. Is there in the words of Peter a tone of despair? Why?
590. Show how there is not a distinct rebuke to Peter but a very real silent one.
591. What was said about a person and a principle?
592. What sweetens life? What surprise is in store for the soul who exercises self-denial?
593. Why say “with persecutions”—Show how this principle is reflected in other references.
594. Read Matt. 20:1-16 and show the connection with Mark 10:31.
595. Why do some say the rich young man was Lazarus? or Saul of Tarsus?

### C. JESUS FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION 10:32-34

#### TEXT 10:32-34

“And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were to happen unto him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests



and the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles; and they shall mock him, and shall spit upon him, and shall scourge him, and shall kill him; and after three days he shall rise again."

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 10:32-34

560. What was the reason for the amazement of the disciples? Please remember the purpose of going to Jerusalem.
561. Who were "those who followed" mentioned in vs. 32?
562. When and where had Jesus before mentioned His death and resurrection?
563. List the eight particulars in the prophecy made by Jesus.
564. Who were "the Gentiles" to whom the priests and scribes were to deliver our Lord?

### COMMENT

TIME.—March, A.D. 30.

PLACE.—In Perea—at the same place and time as the previous incident.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-34.

OUTLINE.—1. On the way to Jerusalem the disciples were filled with fear as they anticipated what would happen to them in the city. Jesus confirmed their fears, vs. 32. 2. Jesus details in prophecy what would happen to Him at Jerusalem, vs. 33, 34.

### ANALYSIS

- I. ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM THE DISCIPLES WERE FILLED WITH FEAR AS THEY ANTICIPATED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THEM IN THE CITY. JESUS CONFIRMED THEIR FEARS, VS. 32.
1. Going up to Jerusalem—Jesus led the way.
  2. He spoke privately to the twelve of His coming passion.
- II. JESUS DETAILS IN PROPHECY WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM AT JERUSALEM, VS. 33, 34.

The Son of man will be: (1) delivered to the chief priests and scribes. (2) condemned to death. (3) delivered to the Gentiles. (4) Mocked. (5) Spit upon. (6) Scourged. (7) Killed. (8) After three days raised from the dead.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

- I. ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM THE DISCIPLES WERE FILLED WITH FEAR AS THEY ANTICIPATED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THEM IN THE CITY. JESUS CONFIRMED THEIR FEARS.

"32. *And they were in the way* (or on the road) *ascending to Jerusalem*, i.e. they were still upon their journey when the following discourse was uttered. This is another intimation that we have before us a con-

nected narrative. *And Jesus was going before them* (or leading them forward), which seems to imply some unusual activity or energy of movement, as if he was *outstripping* them, in token of his eagerness to reach the scene of suffering. This may throw some light upon the next clause, *and they were amazed*, or struck with awe, the same verb that is used in v. 24, here denoting probably some dark foreboding of the scenes which were before them in Jerusalem, a feeling which would naturally make them slow to follow in that dangerous direction, and dispose them to wonder at his own alacrity in rushing, as it were, upon destruction (John 11:8). *And following they feared* (or were alarmed), i.e. although they followed him, it was not willingly, but with a painful apprehension of danger both to him and to themselves. There is something very striking in the picture here presented of the Saviour hastening to death, and the apostles scarcely venturing to follow him. This backwardness would not be diminished by his *taking again the twelve*, i.e. taking them aside from the others who accompanied him on his journey. *He began* (anew what he had done more than once before) *to tell them the (things) about to happen to him*. This is commonly reckoned our Lord's third prediction of his passion to the twelve apostles; but including the less formal intimation in 9:12 it may be counted as the fourth."

## II. JESUS DETAILS IN PROPHECY WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM AT JERUSALEM.

"33, 34. *Behold* invites attention and prepares them for something strange and surprising, as the intimation of his death still was to them, although so frequently repeated. *We are ascending to Jerusalem*, the form of expression always used in speaking of the Holy City, on account both of its physical and moral elevation. (Compare Luke 2:42. John 2:13; 5:1; 7:8. 10. 14. 11:55. Acts 11:2; 15:2; 18:22; 21:4. 12. 15. 24:11; 25:1. 9. Gal. 2:1. 2.) The prediction is the same as in the former cases, but with a more distinct intimation that he was to suffer by judicial process, or by form of law. *They* (the Sanhedrim, the national council or representatives) *shall condemn him unto death, and deliver him to the Gentiles* (literally, nations, meaning all nations but the Jews) for the execution of the sentence, all which was literally fulfilled, as we shall see below.

This verse describes the part to be taken by the Gentiles in the sufferings of Christ, every particular of which has its corresponding facts in the subsequent narrative; the mocking; the scourging; the spitting; the killing; and the rising. Here again the terms of the prediction may appear to us too plain to be mistaken; but, as we have seen already, the correct understanding does not depend upon the plainness of the lan-

guage, but upon the principle of interpretation. If they attached a mystical or figurative meaning to the terms, it mattered not how plain they might be in themselves or in their literal acceptation, which they probably supposed to be precluded by the certainty that he was to reign and to possess a kingdom." (J. A. Alexander)

*FACT QUESTIONS* 10:32-34

596. What intimation do we have in these verses of a connected narrative?
597. What is striking in the picture in these verses?
598. Do we have here the third or fourth prediction by Jesus of His death? (Cf. 8:31; 9:31; 9:12)
599. Why always speak of "going up to Jerusalem"?
600. Why say "behold" before the comment Jesus made?
601. What was added in this prediction not found in the former ones?
602. How was it possible for Jesus to be so plain in His words of His coming death and still be misunderstood by His disciples?

**D. SELFISH AMBITION REPROVED.** 10:35-45

*TEXT* 10:35-45

"And there came near unto him James and John, the sons of Zebedee, saying unto him, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We are able. And Jesus said unto them, The cup that I drink ye shall drink; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: but to sit on my right hand or on my left hand is not mine to give: but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began to be moved with indignation concerning James and John. And Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them: and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

*THOUGHT QUESTIONS 10:35-45*

565. Your understanding of this section is not going to be at all complete unless you also read Matt. 20:20-28. Please read it!
566. Who actually voiced the petition?
567. Isn't it strange such a thought even entered the heart of those who made it? Discuss.
568. In what manner did these three look upon Jesus?
569. James and John wanted to sit at His right and left in His "glory"—what type of "glory" did they contemplate?
570. What was "the cup" and "baptism" of vs. 38?
571. Why did Jesus ask the question about the cup and baptism? Did they understand the question?
572. When did James and John drink the cup and experience the baptism?
573. For whom was the right and left of Jesus' throne prepared?
574. Why were the ten indignant? Be specific.
575. Why wasn't Jesus angry with the sad lack of understanding evidenced by the apostles?
576. Why not refer to the Jews in their exercising of power? Who were "the Gentiles" of vs. 42?
577. What a revolutionary thought Jesus proposed in vs. 43, 44—! What type of greatness did Jesus envision?
578. Why refer to Himself as "the Son of man"?
579. Show how Jesus fulfilled His purpose.
580. In what sense was Jesus' life "a ransom for many"?

*COMMENT*

TIME.—March A.D. 30.

PLACE—Perea—across from Jericho.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS—Matt. 20:20-28.

OUTLINE—1. The selfish request, vs. 35-37. 2. Jesus' answer and rebuke, vs. 38-45.

*ANALYSIS*

## I. THE SELFISH REQUEST, 35-37.

1. Made by James and John the sons of Zebedee (through their mother).
2. Asked as to a great potentate who had all power (—as well as favorites).
3. A bold, blantant request for special favor.

## II. JESUS' ANSWER AND REBUKE, VS. 38-45.

1. You ask out of ignorance.
2. You want to share my glory. Are you ready to also share my suffering?
3. Without understanding the apostles answer "yes." Jesus confirms that they will indeed share His suffering.
4. He could not grant preference.
5. The ten were angry with James and John for making such a request.
6. Jesus explained by comparison the place of true greatness.
7. The Son of man is come to serve not to be served—indeed His life is given as a ransom for all.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

## I. THE SELFISH REQUEST.

"35. *James and John, the sons of Zebedee.* They were among the earliest disciples, John having been, with Andrew, one of the first who followed Jesus (John 1:36-40), and James having probably been brought by John to Jesus on that same day (John 1:41, where the form of expression in the Greek implies that, though Andrew was the first to find his brother, Simon, and bring him to Jesus, John also quickly found his brother, James, and brought him too). James and John were two of the three nearest to Jesus. In Matthew the request at this time comes from their mother, whose name was Salome (compare Matt. 27:56 with Mark 15:40), and who was probably the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The request was probably suggested by the words just spoken, and recorded only by Matthew (19:28): "When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Of course they took this literally, or nearly so; and now the two disciples, or their mother for them, came asking for the two thrones nearest the King himself. Their personal nearness to him in the apostleship and the early date of their following may have emboldened them to this; and if they were first-cousins to him, as seems probable, this would be another reason for expecting a favorable answer. —Yet, as if they feared failure, they would try, with a genuine human impulse, to pledge the answer in advance. *We would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire*, or, rather, "ask." He gave no pledge but asked for their request; when, behold, in spite of all that he had said, now of death, and before (chap. 9:35) of humility, it was the most ambitious request that could be made—a request for the two chief thrones."

## II. JESUS' ANSWER AND REBUKE.

"38. Personal loyalty was at the bottom of the desire: they had cast in their lot with him and with him they desired to have their portion. Yet it was a childish desire, an ambition for the end in profound ignorance of the way.—*Ye know not what ye ask*. It is like the reply of a father to foolish children. When addressed to men—ambitious men—how humiliating! yet in this case how searchingly appropriate! It is not less appropriate with reference to many of our requests to our Heavenly Father; for often do we pray for the end in ignorance of the way, and often when the way be by no means acceptable to us.—The principle of his rejoinder is that of Matt. 10:24: "The disciple is not above his master." There is but one way to all the thrones, the way the King has taken.—*Can ye drink* (not "drink of") *the cup that I drink*—i.e. which I have to drink, and in spirit am already drinking, the cup of utter self-sacrifice, even unto martyrdom. He drinks the cup, he does not merely drink of it; and he proposes the same to them.—*And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?* "that I am already in spirit enduring?" Another simile for the coming death, omitted by Matthew. The baptism is the overwhelming in pain and death; the woe is to come like the rushing of the water over the body of one whom John plunged in the Jordan. Perhaps he could not have found, within the range of their common thoughts, a stronger simile for his purpose; but he seems to have chosen it partly, also, because it was a sacred simile, the sanctity of baptism having given to the form a suggestive character that made it especially suitable for his use. When it comes to this symbolic use of the word, no one doubts that the act which forms the basis of the symbolism is a complete immersion.—The two questions mean the same, and the thought is, "You ask for thrones: can you die, and in spirit suffer death before death, as I do? Can you take up the cross and come after me, and go to the throne by the way that I take?"

39. Their unqualified *We can* contained both good and evil. They knew that they were attached to Jesus, and it was their loyal hearts that spoke. But they knew not themselves, and spoke in ignorant assurance. The third of the special three put himself similarly on record (Luke 22:33); so that Peter, James and John are the men to whom we owe the most remarkable utterances of the confidence that is easy to an ignorant heart. Yet the *We can* of James and John and the profession of Peter came true in later times, when they had learned the secret of their Master more deeply. Their claims of victory were premature, but their hearts already had the secret of future victory.

The kindness of the answer is something wonderful. There is no tone

or spirit of rebuke in it, although there was so much room for reproof. On the surface it is a denial of the request—at least, it would put an end to all exclusive expectations. Yet the prediction *Ye shall indeed drink the cup that I drink* is really a promise of all that is precious in what they asked for. If he could truthfully say, "Ye shall suffer in my spirit," the thrones were assured, though no promise was given of the special ones that were ambitiously chosen. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Rev. 3:21). This prediction scarcely amounts to an announcement of martyrdom for each of the two brothers; it might be fulfilled by life in the martyr's spirit. But James drank that cup (Acts 12:2) and John suffered, if he did not die (Rev. 1:9). Both attained to high seats at the Master's side, but thrones how unlike all that they were thinking of! and by a way how different from all that they expected! In both aspects was the answer true, that they knew not what they asked. The real thrones were more glorious than they thought, and the way was such as they knew not.

"40. The remainder of the answer surprises us; for, instead of giving them some reason why they must beware of looking too high or expecting too much, he disclaims the power to grant their request. *To sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give*: "but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared." So, correctly, in the Revision. Matthew adds "by my Father."—*But* (alla) is not equivalent to "except;" as if he had said, "It is not mine to give, except to those for whom it hath been prepared." Such a translation, though sometimes proposed, is inadmissible. Two statements are here—that the assignment of the highest rank is the prerogative of the Father, which reminds one of the language of Mark 13:32, and that the highest rank shall be assigned by him to those for whom it has been prepared. But who are they for whom the highest rank has been prepared by the Father? (See verses 42-44). They are the disciples who are most like the Master. The nearest thrones are prepared for the truest followers, just as the crown is prepared for the successful contestant (1 Cor. 9:24). Here, again, the last may be the first, and even the chief apostles cannot be sure that some servant of humbler name may not at the end be above them.

41. *The ten*—the remainder of the apostolic band—*began to be much displeased with James and John*. Began, but were soon interrupted and brought to account by the Master.—*Displeased*. The same word as in verse 14. Why displeased? Had they not all been questioning who should be greatest (chap. 9:34)? and would they not all have been glad of the places James and John had chosen? It was human nature: they thought it very wrong when two petitioned for what all would gladly have claimed.

42. *Jesus called them*—not necessarily the ten—apart from James and John; this word was for all.—First he states the worldly principle of greatness—a principle with which he says they are familiar. *Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles*, or “the nations” i.e. the recognized and accepted rulers of the world—*exercise lordship*, or “lord it,” *over them*—that is, over the Gentiles, or nations, their subjects—and *their great ones exercise authority upon them*. This is the ordinary human conception of greatness. Recognized greatness among the nations of the world implies the exercise of domination over men; the great ones lord it. This is the ideal of greatness and a kingdom which Jesus rejected in the wilderness, and again when the Jews became his tempters (John 6:15).

43, 44. *But so shall it not be*—or, on manuscript authority, “it is not so”—*among you*. Your principle is not the principle of the world, and you have your own type of greatness and your own way of becoming great. Accordingly, he proceeds to tell of the Christian way of becoming great. The verbs in the future tense may best be rendered by “will” instead of *shall*, for Jesus is telling not what he requires, but what a man will do who intelligently seeks the Christian greatness in the Christian way. Also, instead of *whosoever will be great*, read “whosoever wishes to become great,” and, in verse 44, “whosoever wishes to become chiefest,” or “first.”—What, now, is the Christian principle of greatness and the way by which a wise Christian will seek high rank? The Christian greatness consists in humble service; and a Christian who wishes to be great will seek it, if he seeks as a Christian, only through humble service.—The desire for greatness is here represented in two degrees, “whosoever wishes to become great among you” telling of the general desire for eminence, and “whosoever of you wishes to become first” expressing the still higher desire for pre-eminence. It is not “the first,” as if a Christian could distinctly set his ambition on that it is “first”—that is, a person of first rank, one of the highest.—Observe particularly that our Lord does not forbid or discourage such desires; he does not say that there are no honors in his kingdom or bid us look for a dead-level of spiritual equality; and he does not hint that it is wrong to desire to have a place among the “first.” But he proceeds to tell how a Christian, if he intelligently adopts the Christian principle, will act on such a desire. Does he wish to become great? he will be *your minister* (*diakonos*), attendant, or assistant—i.e. he will make himself a helper to his brethren. Does his ambition reach higher, so that he wishes to become a man of first rank? he will bow still lower, and be *the servant of all*, a slave (*doulos*) for the service of all to whom he can be useful. There is a threefold climax. “First” is higher than “great,” indicating a higher ambition in the aspiring soul.



Slave (doulos) is lower than minister, attendant (diakonos), indicating a deeper humility as the means of reaching the higher honor. *Of all* is broader than "of you," in *your minister*, indicating that the deeper humility will seek and find opportunities of wider as well as greater usefulness. The higher one wishes to rise, the lower will he bend in brotherly service, and the more freely will he give himself to many.—It may be asked whether our Lord's teaching is not self-contradictory here; whether, in practice, we can conceive of seeking first rank by means of humility and service; whether the two motives are not incompatible. Certainly they are incompatible, so long as we hold the worldly conception of thrones and rewards. But the idea of greatness through any elevation that would gratify vanity he has just expressly ruled out, and has placed the honors of the kingdom in something else. The honor in this kingdom consists in being like the King, and the first rank in being most like the King. Whoever seeks this intelligently will seek it exactly as Jesus said, by humble and loving service to many. In this view of the matter it is evident that the honors are not altogether in the future. Whoever is doing the service in the Master's spirit is already of high rank, already on the throne. But the aristocracy in the kingdom is unconscious. They who belong to it are the last to suspect the fact, and any who may suppose themselves to belong to it are wrong (Matt. 25:37-39).

45. The great illustration and example is the Christ himself, in whose glory the ambitious disciples were hoping to share. He came to illustrate, not the human idea of greatness by being served, but the divine idea by serving. The great God himself is greatest in his helpfulness of love, and when he came nearest to men to show them his glory he came thus, in the self-sacrificing Son of man.—*Not to be ministered unto*. Not to "lord it" or "exercise authority" over men, after the manner of the Gentiles, *but to minister*, "serve," *and to give his life a ransom for many*. The extreme act of service. Compare the similar teaching at another time, in Luke 22:24-27, culminating in the words, "I am among you as he that serveth," and the matchless object-lesson in John 13:1-17; also Rom. 15:1-3; Phil. 2:5-11. In all these passages, and in many more (as Gal. 6:2; 2 Cor. 8:1-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4), the footsteps of the Master are shown to the disciples that they may follow. The act of God in providing the propitiation for our sins, and the act of Christ in laying down his life for us, are given as the supreme examples for us in 1 John 4:10, 11; 3:16. This was our Saviour's way to glory: the chief throne was prepared for the chief servant, and it will be found that the king is he who has done the most for his brethren. This is the only way by which any throne in his kingdom can be reached. (See John 12:26, spoken when only death remained to him.)—*To give his life a ransom for many*. A

ransom is the price paid for the release of prisoners or captives. The word *for*, in the sense of "instead of" ("a ransom for many"), is entirely appropriate, since a ransom is naturally conceived of as taking the place of the persons who are delivered by it, or serving instead of them. An idea of vicariousness, or action in the place of others, resides in this word, as well as in the word *ransom* itself. The phrase falls in with the other language of Scripture which represents the giving up of his life as the indispensable means for the deliverance of men from sin; and of this he was thinking when he spoke of the supreme act of service, the giving of his life a ransom for many. In order to *minister* thus to men he came into the world.—We often think of his way to the cross as rich in example for us; but here the cross itself is made the chief example. So Eph. 5:2. Here we are called to the spiritual "fellowship of his sufferings." (W. N. Clarke)

*FACT QUESTIONS 10:35-45*

603. Of what is this section a living illustration?
604. Give three facts concerning the former association of James and John.
605. Who was the mother of James and John?
606. Can we catch anything in the words of Jesus to indicate why James and John made the request they did?
607. Did James and John have any special nearness to Jesus that would encourage such a request? Discuss.
608. Did James and John actually believe Jesus would grant the request even before He knew what it was?
609. What was the basic motive in making the request?
610. Show how humiliating were the words of Jesus "Ye know not what ye ask."
611. Please explain the symbolism of the two figures of "the cup"—"the baptism."
612. Show how the immediate answer of "we can" contains both good and evil.
613. Show how James and John indeed were given "high seats at the Master's side."
614. Who are they for whom the highest rank has been prepared by the Father?
615. Show how the Father gives such positions and not the Son.
616. Show the inconsistency of the disapproval of the ten.

617. What is the worldly principle of greatness? When and where had Jesus rejected this principle?
618. What is the Christian principle of greatness?
619. Does Jesus discourage ambition by His words of rebuke for a certain type of greatness? Discuss.
620. Show the "threefold climax" in the words of Jesus.
621. What will be found by the "deeper humility"?
622. Aren't the two concepts of humility and greatness contradictory? Discuss.
623. What of the "aristocracy" of the kingdom?
624. Show how Jesus was the greatest and grandest illustration of what He taught.
625. How does the example of God also illustrate the principle of true greatness?
626. In what sense is the word "ransom" here used?
627. In what manner can we share in the "fellowship of his sufferings"?

## F. BLIND BARTIMEUS 10:46-52

*TEXT* 10:46-52

"And they come to Jericho: and as he went out from Jericho, with his disciples and a great multitude, the son of Timeus, Bartimeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the way side. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but he cried out the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and said, Call ye him. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good cheer; rise, he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garments, sprang up, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered him, and said, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And the blind man said unto him, Rabboni, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And straightway he received his sight, and followed him in the way."

*THOUGHT QUESTIONS* 10:46-52

581. Read Luke 18:35-43 and note the difference in the location of the healing—please attempt an explanation.
582. Why was there a great multitude with the disciples?
583. Why mention the father of Bartimeus?
584. Why were there more beggars in the days of our Lord?

585. How did Bartimeus come to have faith in Jesus?  
 586. Why call Jesus "son of David"?  
 587. What is the meaning of "mercy" as here used?  
 588. Give two possible reasons for the attempt of the disciples to silence this beggar.  
 589. How account for the change in attitude of the disciples from vs. 48 to vs. 49?  
 590. Why ask him what he wanted? (as in vs. 51)  
 591. What is the meaning of the expression: "Go thy way"?

### COMMENT

TIME.—A.D. 30; the latter part of March.

PLACE.—Jericho, the "city of Palm Trees," situated fifteen to twenty miles northeast of Jerusalem, in the valley of Jordan, at the foot of the pass that led up from the Jordan valley to the central highlands and to Jerusalem. It was about six or seven miles north of the Dead Sea and about five miles from the Jordan at the base of the mountain rampart. After Jerusalem, it was at this date the most important city of Judea. It was 900 feet below the Mediterranean, and about 3,400 feet lower than Jerusalem. See the section of Palestine from east to west. The district was a blooming oasis in the midst of an extended sandy plain, watered and fruitful, rich in palms, roses and balsams; hence the name, "the fragrant city." Built by the Canaanites, and destroyed by Joshua, it was rebuilt and fortified at a later day, and became a seat of a school of the prophets. Herod the Great beautified it, and it was the most luxuriant spot in Palestine. In the twelfth century scarcely a vestige of the place remained. There is now on the site a wretched village with about 200 inhabitants. Sloping gently upwards from the level of the Dead Sea, 900 feet under the Mediterranean, it had the climate of lower Egypt and displayed the vegetation of the tropics. While snow is falling at Jerusalem, thin clothing is comfortable in Jericho.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43; 19:1.

LESSON OUTLINE.—1. The Blind Beggar's Petition. 2. The Lord's Call. 3. The Blind Beggar Healed.

### ANALYSIS

#### I. THE BLIND BEGGAR'S PETITION, VS. 46-48.

1. The Beggar by the Wayside. Mark 10:46; Matt. 20:30; Luke 18:35.
2. Appeal to the Son of David. Mark 10:47; Matt. 20:31; Luke 18:38.
3. The Beggar Rebuked. Mark 10:48; Matt. 20:32; Luke 18:39.

## II. THE LORD'S CALL, VS. 49, 50.

1. The Lord Hears the Cry for Mercy. Mark 10:49; Matt. 20:32; Luke 18:40.
2. The Beggar Comes to Jesus. Mark 10:50; Matt. 20:32; Luke 18:40.

## III. THE BLIND BEGGAR HEALED, VS. 51, 52.

1. The Prayer for Sight. Mark 10:51; Matt. 20:33; Luke 18:41.
2. Saved by Faith. Mark 10:52; Luke 18:42.
3. Following Jesus. Mark 10:52; Matt. 20:34; Luke 18:43.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

## I. THE BLIND BEGGAR'S PETITION.

46. *They came to Jericho.* The Lord and his disciples, on their way to Jerusalem. The exact position of the ancient Jericho is not known, but it was not far from the site of the present village, and was from five to seven miles from the Jordan on the great highway from the Trans-Jordanic county to Jerusalem. It was several hundred feet above the Jordan level, but still many hundred feet below the level of the sea, and there was a continual ascent from thence to the highlands on which stood Jerusalem. *His disciples and a great number of people.* At this season Jericho would be full of people who were going up to attend the Passover. The number would be greatly increased by those coming from Galilee by the way of Perea, to avoid passing through Samaria. These, added to the Trans-Jordanic pilgrims, would, within a week or two of the Passover, crowd the great highway at Jericho with travelers. Besides, curiosity and expectation caused the crowds to travel in the company of Jesus. *Blind.* Ophthalmia is fearfully prevalent, especially among children, in the East, and goes on unchecked, in many or most instances, to its worst results. It would be no exaggeration to say, that one adult out of every five has his eyes more or less damaged by the consequences of the disease.—W. G. Palgrave. *Bartimeus, the son of Timeus.* His being mentioned by name implies that he was well known. His father, too, would appear to have been noted for some reason or other. Perhaps they both became ultimately attached to the cause of the Savior and the fellowship of the disciples. *Bar* is the Aramaic word for *son*, *Timeus* being the name of the father. Matthew mentions two beggars. He was present. Mark and Luke who wrote upon the testimony of others only mention the more prominent one whose name had been preserved. Dean Howson says: "These difficulties we may dismiss. The particular spot is of no consequence; and, if there were two blind men, there certainly was one. Our attention is to be fixed on this one, Bartimeus." *Sat by the wayside begging.* Both

beggary and blindness are much more common in the East than with us—the former owing to unjust taxation, uneven distribution of wealth, and the total absence of public and systematized charities; the latter owing to lack of cleanliness, and to exposure to an almost tropical sun, and to burning sands.—*Abbott*.

47. *When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth.* A designation never used by the evangelist, save in recording the words of others. He was familiarly, and also contemptuously, known as the *Nazarene*—inhabitant of Nazareth. He had heard of him before—heard of healings wrought by him, of blind eyes opened, of dead men raised. It had never crossed his thoughts that he and this Jesus should meet, when now they tell him that he is near at hand. He can do that for him which none but he can do. It is his one and only chance. *He began.* Immediately, as soon as he heard this, and continued so to do until he gained his end. *To cry out.* For God loves to be entreated, he loves to be compelled, he loves to be even vanquished by our persevering importunity.—*St. Gregory.* *Jesus, thou son of David.* He therefore believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the son of David, i.e., the expected Messiah. The cry of the blind man was a recognition of Christ's dignity as the Messiah; for this name, "son of David," was the popular designation of the Messiah. There was, therefore, upon his part, a confession of faith. *Have mercy on me.* The emphasis naturally falls on the word "me"; for Bartimeus, hearing that it was Jesus, and knowing his own disadvantage from his blindness in the crowd, fears he may be overlooked.

48. *Many charged him that he should hold his peace.* Not because he called Jesus the son of David, but (1) because he presumed to intrude a private grief upon the King of Israel, when, as they supposed, he was going in triumph to Jerusalem to assume his throne and deliver the nation. This spirit of rebuke is exactly the same as that of Matthew (19:13). (2) Perhaps from selfishness, not wishing to have the Lord's attention called away from their instruction. (3) From indifference to other's needs. (4) *They thought they were pleasing the Master in defending him from a beggar.* *Cried the more a great deal.* They were not to be silenced, and the litanies of Christendom for centuries have been modeled on the *Kyrie Eleison* (Lord have mercy on us) which came from their lips.—*Plumptre.* Methinks we hear his shout. There would be the very strength and might and blood and sinew of that man's life cast into it; he would be like Jacob wrestling with the angel, and every word would be a hand to grasp him that he might not go. The gate of heaven is to be opened only in one way, by the very earnest use of the knocker of prayer.—*Spurgeon.* *Thou son of David.* He suffers himself now to be

publicly appealed to as the Messiah in the presence of all the people, which he had never done before. The time for his acceptance of, and sympathy with, the Messianic hope of his people had now arrived.—*Lange*. It was a great act of faith in this blind man to call him the son of David, whom the people pointed out as being Jesus of Nazareth.—*Bengel*. *Have mercy on me*. This is prayer. There is no preamble, no vague utterance, no redundancy of expression in real prayer. Much of what is called prayer in these modern times is nothing but a weak and windy string of sentences.—*Thomas*. Jesus was passing by—would soon be past—might never pass that way again. It was a short opportunity; it seemed likely it would be the only one.—*Tyng*. The preaching of the gospel is a perpetual announcement that Jesus is near.—*Luther*.

## II. THE LORD'S CALL.

49. *Jesus stood still*. The multitude had rebuked the blind Bartimeus for his intercession, but the Lord stopped at his cry. He is kinder than men. He is no respecter of persons. The blind beggar is to him as the rich ruler. He came to die for both. *And commanded*. This is a reproof of the reprovers. *To be called*. Making those help who had hindered. *They call the blind man*. Nothing could be more natural than the sudden change which is effected in the conduct of the multitude, as soon as they observe the favorable disposition of Jesus. *He calleth thee*. The call of Christ is always full of cheer—always, too, a call to do something as a token of trust in him.—*Abbott*. His call is always a call for an act of faith. He bids Bartimeus come.

50. *Casting away his garment*; i.e., his outer garment. This was his cloak, or mantle, which is often used by the poor at night for a covering, and which the law of Moses gave them a special claim to, that it should not be kept from them over night when it was given as a pledge. The outside garment hindered his speed, could be spared, and is therefore thrown aside. In dead earnest is he, and can brook no delay. *Rose*. The Revised Version says Bartimeus threw off his "garments," so sinners should throw away everything that hinders their going to him—everything that obstructs their progress—and cast themselves at his feet. No man will be saved while sitting still. The command is, "Strive to enter in;" and the promise is made to those only who "ask" and "seek" and "knock." *Came to Jesus*. The blind man runs to Jesus without seeing him. So must we hasten to him in faith, though we see him not. He does not need to be told a second time; he does not wait for any guiding hands to lead him to the center of the path. A few eager footsteps, he stands in the presence of the Lord!

## III. THE BLIND BEGGAR HEALED.

51. *What wilt thou that I should do?* With a majesty truly royal, Jesus seems to open up to the beggar the treasure of divine power, and to give him, if we may so speak, *carte blanche*.—*Godet*. Jesus asks, not for information, but to draw from them an expression of their desire. The gift is of more value when given in answer to prayer. *Lord*. Better, *Rabboni*, as in the Revised, the word being the same as in John 20:16, and occurring in these two passages only. The word was an augmentative form of Rabbi, and as such expressed greater reverence. The gradations of honor were Rab, Rabbi, Rabban, Rabboni. *That I might receive my sight*. Not *how* or *why*, but the *desire*, which he believes the Lord can grant in the best way. The man, whose cry has been hitherto a vague, indeterminate cry for mercy, now singles out the blessing which he craves, designates the channel in which he desires that his mercy should run.

52. *Go thy way*. Matthew states that he touched his eyes. Other blind men had called him the son of David, but he had straitly charged them not to make him known. No such charge is given to Bartimeus. He is permitted to follow him, and glorify God as loudly, as amply as he can (Luke 18:43). As the time draws near, all the reasons for that reserve which Jesus had previously studied are removed.—*Hanna*. *Thy faith hath made thee whole*. It was the confidence which the blind man cherished in the ability and benevolence of Jesus that induced him to seek aid from Jesus, and that induced him to persevere while the crowd sought to restrain him. Such confidence Jesus delighted to acknowledge and to honor. The faith of this man was great; because, being blind, he could not see the miracles which Jesus did. Faith came to him by hearing. He believed on the testimony and report of others; and so he inherited, in a manner, the promise of the Lord his Savior, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:20). Christ was always ready to heal. No one was ever refused who asked him. It rested with the man; the healing could not have its way and enter in, save the man would open his door. Hence the question, and the praise of the patient's faith. *Made thee whole*. Complete, sound, nothing wanting. A sinner is never whole; never a complete, perfect man. Christ makes us whole. *And followed Jesus*. Glorifying God, as Luke adds (18:43), and joining the festal company of His Healer, who all likewise gave praise unto God for the miracle which they had witnessed. Compare Acts 3:8-10. Thus, as our Lord journeyed toward Jerusalem, he gathered in his train fresh monuments of his power. The march of earthly conquerors is tracked with blood; smoking villages and mangled corpses



mark the way which they had trodden, while weeping captives are chained to their triumphal chariots. But the Savior left joy behind him wherever he went, and collected new trophies of his mercy.—*Tyng*.

APPLICATION.—This miracle is in one sense a parable. It teaches most forcibly the doctrine and methods of salvation by faith. It has been so represented by commentators of all ages. The blind man represents one, without faith, who is blind to the unseen interests of his soul. In his darkness, "the passing of the Saviour," in his gospel preached, may stir him to a sense of his needs. He then calls for mercy upon Jesus, confessing his faith in him as the Messiah King and Healer. Men may try to hinder him coming to Jesus. The Lord calls him, but he has first called unto the Lord. The Lord gives him the election who has elected the Lord. The sinner is required to arise and go to Christ in obedience, is then healed of his sins and blindness and follows the Master.

FACT QUESTIONS 10:46-52

628. Give five facts about Jericho.
629. Why would the great number of persons already in Jericho be greatly increased at the time Jesus and His disciples came into it?
630. What type of blindness did Bartimeus have?
631. What is implied by mentioning Bartimeus by name?
632. Why does Matthew mention *two* beggars? How reconcile these accounts?
633. What designation concerning our Lord is never used by the evangelist Mark except in recording the words of others? Why?
634. How did Bartimeus know Jesus?
635. What example for us is in the cry of the beggar?
636. What did the designation "Son of David" indicate?
637. Give three possible reasons for asking Bartimeus to hold his peace.
638. How was the response of Jesus to the acknowledging Him as the Messiah by Bartimeus different than others?
639. How did Jesus reprove the reprovers?
640. What is always included in the call of Christ?
641. Why did the beggar cast aside his garment? In what manner did he arise?
642. How could he so eagerly come to Jesus if he could not see Him?
643. Why did Jesus ask the question: "What wilt thou that I should do"?
644. What was the meaning of the word "Rabboni"?
645. What was included in the expression "Go thy way"?
646. Show how great was the faith of the blind man.
647. What is added by Luke 18:43?

## SUMMARY 10:1-52

In this section Jesus is exhibited as a teacher, a prophet, and a worker of miracles. His instruction on the subject of divorce (1-12), displays a knowledge of the primary intention of God concerning the relation of the sexes, and an insight into the design of the Mosaic statute on the subject, which not only rose high above the Jewish learning of his own age, but laid claim to a knowledge of the unrevealed counsel of God. None but the Son of God, or one specially commissioned to speak the mind of God, could blamelessly speak as he speaks on this subject. He sets aside, for the future, the statute of Moses, stating the reason which governed the mind of God in giving it, and restores as the law of his kingdom the original law of wedded life prescribed in the garden of Eden.

His teaching, in the same section, on the spiritual relations of infants; on the duties and dangers connected with riches; on the rewards of self-sacrifice for his sake; and on the true exercise of ambition, are alike suited to his character as the Son of God, and to the highest happiness of mankind. It is inconceivable that they can be the teachings of an ignorant or a wicked pretender.

While his superhuman wisdom is thus displayed in his teaching, his ability to look with divine foreknowledge into all the details of future events is demonstrated by minute description of the sufferings which awaited him.

The account of blind Bartimeus, while it proves again his power to heal, reflects additional credibility on the account of his previous miracles. This man, being blind, could have known of the previous miracles only by hearsay; he could not have seen them for himself. That he did, then, believe in the power of Jesus to heal, shows the abundance and sufficiency of the testimony; and the very existence of this testimony in regard to a matter about which men could not be mistaken, is proof that real miracles had been wrought. (*McGarvey*)