[From the Christian Helper.]

International Bible Lessons.

THE COMING OF THE LORD.

Sept. 7.-1 Thess. 4: 13-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "And so shall ye ever be with the Lord."-1 Thess.

EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT.

13. THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP. This is of course figurative language. A Christian's death is a sleep because his labors are ended and he is henceforth at rest, and because from it there will be an awaking, a resurrection. But the period between death and the resurrection is not one of unconsciousness. See Luke 23: 43, 16: 19-31, 2 Cor. 5: 6-8, Phil. 1: 23. SORROW NOT. We may sorrow for our loss; this is natural; Christ wept at Lazarus' grave; but we are not to sorrow respecting the fate of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. All is gain for them. Even as others. The heathen tain. around them from amongst whom they had lately come out under Paul's preaching. No HOPE. What terrible words! Take these expressions from Greek and Latin writers:-"Hope goes with life, all hopeless are the dead. "Once dead there is no resurrection more." "Suns may set and may return; we, when once our brief life wanes, have eternal night in sleep." "None ever wake again when the cold pause of death have overtaken." Believers of our own day have no more hope to offer others or themselves than had the heathen of Greece and Rome.

14. For. This is why we are not to sorrow even as others. If WE BELIEVE, as we certainly do; this the very foundation of our religion. The if is not intended to convey any doubt. JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN. The two glorious facts which support our hope. See Rom. 4: 25. His death was the measure of Christ's love for us, the satisfaction offered for our sins, the price at which He made us His own. His resurrection showed the penalty of our sins was exhausted, also that death and the grave are under Christ's power. Having redeemed us at such a price, and having power over the grave, will he leave us to the grasp forever? The resurrection of our Head is the proof and promise that we shall rise.

"We two are so joined

He'll not live in heaven and leave us behind." SLEEP IN JESUS. Death is sleep to us only be cause of what Christ has done. WILL GOI

BRING WITH HIM. "The declaration is designed to teach the general truth that the redeemed are so united with Christ that they shall share the same destiny as he does. As the head was raised so will all the members be."-Barnes. "Of their disembodied souls there is here no mention, but of their being raised when Jesus

15. FOR THIS WE SAY, &c. Explanation of v. 14, and explanation which would lead the Thessalonians to "sorrow not even as others." BY THE WORD OF THE LORD. This does not refer to what Christ said when on earth, but to a direct revelation given to Paul on this subject. WE WHICH ARE ALIVE, &c. There will be a living generation on the earth when Jesus comes. By using the pronoun we Panl does not mean to say that he himself expected to be alive then. He is speaking of Christians as a class. As I might say, "What political situation will we Canadians be in a hundred years from now?" SHALL NOT PREVENT. Shall not have any advantage over. The Thessalo-nians were in trouble because they thought that only those who are alive when Christ comes would enjoy the blessings of His coming, Paul here corrects that erroneous opinion. THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP. These shall be just as greatly blessed as the living.

16. Explanatian of how this (v. 15) shall be THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL NOT DESCEND. Act 1: 11. The same Jesus who died, and rose again, and descended. WITH A SHOUT, &c. Here are three expressions describing the sounds which will accompany Christ's coming. The word shout means the shout of a general to his soldiers in battle to inspire them, or of a captain to the rowers in a boat. The trumpet was used by the Jews for calling together assemblies. What the sounds accompanying Christ's coming will really be I know not, but these expressions indicate the solemn majesty of that event, the assembling of all nations, and the absolute sway of the descending Jews.. SHALL RISE FIRST. This has no reference whatever to a seperate resurrection. Paul is speaking of the two classes of Christians at Christ's coming, those who have fallen asleep, and those who are alive and remain. And he says that first, before any are caught up, &c., the dead in Christ shall rise. Conybeare thus translates: "And first the dead in Christ shall rise; then, we the hving, who remain shall be caught up with them among the clouds."

17. THEN, as soon as the dead in Christ have been raised. WE WHICH ARE ALIVE, &c. WITH THEM. The whole company of the redeemed Normal Class Manual, shall be caught up together. In the clouds, See Matt. 24: 30, 26: 64. The region of the clouds. "The clouds forming the medium with which they shall be surrounded, and in which they would be borne up to meet their coming Lord,"—Ellicott. To MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR. "It would seem from this, that the Lord Jesus, in His coming, would not descend to the earth, but would remain 'at a distance from it in the air, where the great directions of the judgments would occur."—Barnes ions of the judgments would occur." - Barnes AND SO SHALL WE EVER BE. &c. Where shall we be? With the Lord, How long? For ever, The leading idea of heaven in Scripture and in our thoughts is that there Christ is and we shall be with Him. John 14: 3, 17: 24, 2 Cor. 5:6-8, &c. million (las disa out tod)

18. "The topics of consolation are these: first, that those who had died in the faith would not al vays lie in the grave; second, that ysijliyr him was a work at land

when they arose they would not occupy an inferior condition because they were cut off before the coming of the Lord; and third, that all Christians, living and dead, would be received to heaven and dwell forever with the Lord."-Barnes.

TOPICAL ANALYSIS.

The lesson begins (v. 13) with an offer of in- H. R. Stevens, Boston: struction as to what will become of those Christians die before our Lord's coming, and an exhortation not to sorrow concerning their destiny as if they were cut off by death from future glories. We are there directed to the great ground of hope of all Christians (v. 14), the death and resurrection of Christ, and it is indicates that believers are so joined to Christ, that His resurrection involves their rising. This being laid down as the fundamental principle then follows (v. v. 15-17) a detailed account of Christ's second coming, in which it is shewn that all Christians, whether they have fallen asleep, or are then alive, shall alike participate in the meeting with Christand the eternal glorification with Him. The lesson closes (v. 18) with an exhortation to ponder upon and talk together of those glorious prospects, and to draw from them the comforts they con

REMARKS.

- 1. Christianity alone gives certain hope. 2. The hope not a fancy but built upon facts which have transpired in our world's his
- tory, Christ's death and resarrection. What a beautiful figure, death a sleep
- "Asleep in Jesus! oh how how sweet To be for such a slumber meet? With hely confidence to sing
- That death hath lost his venomed sting" 4. Christ's second coming the great event toward which the world is ever moving, and the
- glorious event which the church anticipates. 5. There shall never be a breaking up, by death or other means, of the society of heaven. 6. Like Christ (1 John 3: 2) and with Christ
- 7. Christ gives the antidote for sorrow.
- 8. What a blessing to know one's self joined to his glorious redeemer.

Judge Religion by their Fruits.

That old Catholic woman, of whom Mr. Stevenson tells in his "Travells with a Donkey." who said to him that there was no difference between Protestant and Catholics "save that wrong was more wrong for the Catholic' who had more light and guidance," came very near telling a most important truth. That was all the difference that the good old saint herself knew, and if there were other distinctions whose import she did not quite grasp, who shall deny that she clearly stated the only lawful claim that one religion can have for pre-eminence over another? If my neighbor's religion makes "wrong more wrong" and right more right for him than my religion does for me, than his religion is for him a better religion than mine is for me. A religion that does not deepen the moral convictions and strengthen the moral purposes is good for nothing; and all religions are to be valued in proportion as they bring forth in their votaries this fruit.



Denominational Books

Baptist Church Directory Hiscox Star Book for Ministers, Baptism of the Ages, Lectures on Baptist History, (William's) Infant Baptism, (Dr. Chase), The Baptists, (Dr. Jones), Horace Wilde, Our Gold Mine, Guide to Baptism. (Pengilly), Spurgeon's Sermons, Spurgeon's Lectures. The Graves Ditzler Debate, Howell on Communion, Baptist Martyrs, The Act of Baptism (Burrage), William Carey's Biography, Wiberg on Baptism, Manual of Baptism (Bailey), Mrs. Comstock. Biography, The Baptists in Sweden, The Supper Institution, Baptist Year Book, 1879, Baptism and Baptisteries, Baptist History, (Dr. Cramp), Carson on Baptism, 19 975 203 , 308 1050 Clark's Notes on Matthew, dend to be ben our Mark. Luke, John John " Harmony of the Gospels, Christ our Life, Crowell Church Members Manual, 1.40

Ministry of the Word, (Dr. Taylor), Boston Monday Lectures, Christian Doctrines, (Pendleton), Howell on Deaconship, The Foreign Missionary, (Knowlton),

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