

to have it understood that they participated in the popular sentiment. Had they acknowledged John's mission as heaven-born, they would have had no excuse for rejecting Christ, whose forerunner he was. They could, on the present occasion, have told what they believed about John, but dared not do so before the throng of people listening to the controversy. Christ's answer to their question was wholly unexpected by them, and they were completely discomfited.

3. This was to compare them most unfavourably with the lowest people of that day,—those whom the Jews themselves affected to despise. It was tearing aside their vail of hypocrisy in the presence of those whose leaders they were, and whose good opinion they coveted. But the Saviour was not yet done with them; He would yet reveal what they, in their hearts, purposed to do to Him.
4. By reference to Luke 20:9, it will be seen that this parable was directed to the people, in order that they might render judgment against the priests, whom they would see had been leading them astray. It must have been they, therefore, who gave the decision as recorded by Matthew; for Luke goes on to say (20:16), that when the decision was spoken, those who heard it said, "God forbid." This exclamation of the priests was probably uttered because they thought that the parable was spoken against them, and they could not consent to the conclusion reached.
5. This was a quotation from Psalms 118, which was familiar to the Jews, as referring to the Messiah. It was also a part of the "great Hallel," which had been shouted by the people two days before, while waving the palm branches, also that which the children had sung in the temple immediately after its cleansing.

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LESSON 43

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

October 28, 1899.

In the Temple at Jerusalem, A. D. 31.

(Matt. 21: 23-46; Mark 11:27 to 12:12; Luke 20: 1-19)

*Side Texts to be
studied with
questions*

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| <p>1. WHEN Jesus arrived at the temple, and began again to teach, what question was asked Him by the priests, scribes, and elders? Matt. 21:23. See note 1.</p> | <p>John 2:18, 3:1, 2.</p> |
| <p>2. What reply did Jesus make to the question? Verses 24, 25.</p> | <p>John I: 19-27;
Mark II: 29, 30.</p> |
| <p>3. How did they reason with themselves? Verses 25, 26.</p> | <p>Matt. 14 : 5 ;
Luke 7:29;20: 5, 6.</p> |
| <p>4. What did they finally say in reply ? Verse. 27.</p> | |
| <p>5. Knowing their craftiness, what reply did Jesus make? Verse 27, last part. See note 2.</p> | |
| <p>6. Having brought His adversaries to confusion by His wise answer, How did Jesus begin to put them in their true light before the people? Verses 28-30.</p> | <p>2 Sam. 12:1-7.</p> |
| <p>7. When the priests were asked which of the two sons did right, and they had rendered their verdict, what application of the parable did Jesus make? Verse 31.</p> | <p>Luke 7:37-39
47-50.</p> |
| <p>8. On what ground was this judgment rendered? Verse 32. See note 3.</p> | <p>Matt. 3 : 1-6;
Luke 3: 12, 13.</p> |
| <p>9. What was the nature of the next parable Jesus laid before them? Verse 33.</p> | <p>Isa. 5:1-7</p> |
| <p>10. In this parable, how did the husbandmen treat the agents of the owner of the vineyard ? Verses 34-36.</p> | <p>2 Chron. 36:14-16.</p> |

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| <p>11. Last of all who was sent to these wicked men? Verse 37.</p> | |
| <p>12. What did the husbandmen say and do when the son appeared? Verses 38, 39.</p> | <p>Ps. 2: 2, 3.</p> |
| <p>13. What question did Jesus then ask? What answer was returned? Verses 40, 43. See note 4.</p> | <p>Luke 20:15, 16.</p> |
| <p>14. What reply did the Lord make to the exclamation of the priests? Luke 20: 17. See note 5.</p> | |
| <p>15. What judgment was then pronounced on the people? Matt. 21:43.</p> | <p>Dan. 9 :24, 26;
Eze. 21:25-27.</p> |
| <p>16. What two alternatives were then set before all the people? Verse 44.</p> | <p>1 Peter 2:6-8.</p> |
| <p>17. When the priests saw that this parable was spoken against them, what prevented them from laying hold on Christ? Verses 45, 46.</p> | |

READING

" Desire of Ages," chapters 65, 66 ;
" Spirit of Prophecy," vol. 3, chapters 2 and 3.

NOTES

1. Of these three classes the highest council of the Jews was composed. They were constituted the keepers of the temple, the only public building left by the Romans entirely under Jewish control. They believed their rights to have been invaded by one who was neither priest nor Levite, scribe nor elder, and who had taken possession of the temple as though it were His own. During the absence of Jesus since the evening before, there had evidently been a council of the Sanhedrim (Mark 11: 18), and their plans had been definitely marked out, but, as will be seen, they failed to execute them.
2. While the authorities had never acknowledged John's mission, they had never openly condemned him; indeed they did not need to, because they saw from John's course that Herod would put him out of the way. So they were willing