

Lesson V.

THE SIGN AND THE LEAVEN

November 3, 1912

LESSON SETTING—This Lesson finds Jesus in Dalmanutha, and then in Bethsaida. There is no incident between this and last Lesson. Jesus gets away from the crowd only to be interrupted by the hostile Pharisees.

GOLDEN TEXT—Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.—John 8: 12 (Rev. Ver.).

Memorize vs. 14, 15. THE LESSON PASSAGE—Mark 8: 11-26. Read Matthew 16: 1-12.

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek ¹ after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13 And he left them, and ² entering into ³ the ship again departed to the other side.

14 ⁴ Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and ⁵ of the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned ⁶ among themselves, saying, ⁷ It is because we have no bread.

17 And ⁸ when Jesus knew ⁹ it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? ¹⁰ perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart ¹¹ yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

Revised Version—Omit after; ² again; ³ the boat departed; ⁴ And they forgot to take bread; and they had not in the boat with them; ⁵ Omit of; ⁶ one with another; ⁷ Omit three words; ⁸ Jesus perceiving it saith; ⁹ do ye...ot yet perceive; ¹⁰ Omit yet; ¹¹ the; ¹² broken pieces; ¹³ basketfuls; ¹⁴ say unto him; ¹⁵ Do ye not yet understand; ¹⁶ they come unto Bethsaida; ¹⁷ to him a blind man, and beseech him; ¹⁸ hold of; ¹⁹ brought; ²⁰ village; ²¹ laid; ²² Seest thou aught; ²³ for I behold them as; ²⁴ Then again he laid his; ²⁵ Omit again; ²⁶ he looked stedfastly, and was; ²⁷ all things; ²⁸ home; ²⁹ Do not even enter into the village.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—The sign and the leaven, Mark 8: 11-26. T.—An evil generation, Luke 11: 29-36. W.—“Purge out the old leaven”, 1 Cor. 5: 3-8. Th.—Pharisees and their traditions, Matt. 15: 1-9. F.—The disciples warned, Matt. 16: 1-12. S.—“Wee unto you”, Luke 11: 45-54. S.—“Blessed shalt thou be”, Deut. 28: 1-6.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. SEEKERS REBUKED.—11. The Pharisees came forth; perhaps, as in Lesson II. (ch. 7: 1), these had come from Jerusalem. Matthew adds (ch. 16: 1) that the Sadducees were with them. These easy living non-believers in the resurrection were antagonistic to the Pharisees, but joined with them in enmity to Jesus. Began to question; their old policy. Sign from heaven; “some physical startling phenomenon which would conclusively prove that Jesus was the Messiah, requiring no spiritual insight and obviating any need for moral decision.” Tempting; testing Him, with the hope that He would fail or blunder.

12, 13. Sighed deeply in his spirit; a sigh that expressed, not physical pain or weariness, but mental agony. Christ saw the final result of the Pharisaic spirit of bigotry and hate to Him and themselves. There shall no sign be given; literally, “If a sign shall be given”—supply, “May I die”; or some such expression: a Hebrew form of emphatic negation. Left them. Jesus could do nothing for people in such a frame of mind. Their hearts were closed and barred against Him. Other side; direction not



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known, as we do not know where Dalmanutha was. By and by He comes to Bethsaida.

14, 15. Forgotten to take bread; departure hasty and unexpected. The one loaf they had was not sufficient for the journey. Beware of the leaven. Use of leaven during the Passover and in connection with certain offerings was strictly forbidden; it became the figure of secret, penetrating insidious evil. Only in the parable of the leaven (Matt. 13: 33) is it without its evil significance. Of the Pharisees... of Herod; two kinds of evil leaven: The Pharisaic leaven, which works its evil in religion,—pride, arrogance, insincerity; the leaven of Herod (Matthew says, of the Sadducees), works its evil in the world of life,—sin, worldliness.

16-21. Reasoned; talking with each other about Christ's warning as if it applied to their neglect in providing bread. Perceive ye not...neither understand? A note of reproach.

Hardened; proof against impression. Having eyes, see ye not? He applies Isaiah's saying to the disciples as He had formerly applied it to the crowd, ch. 4: 12. Do ye not remember? They had neglected