



Second Quarter.

LESSON I. — April 3.

The Woman of Canaan.

Matt. xv., 21-31. — Memory verses 25-28. Read the whole chapter.

Golden Text.

'Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.' Matt. xv., 25.

Home Readings.

M. Matt. xiv., 14-21.—The five thousand fed. T. Matt. xiv., 22-36.—Jesus walking on the sea.

W. Matt. xv., 1-20.—Reproving the Scribes and Pharisees.

T. Matt. xv., 21-31.—The woman of Canaan. F. Matt. xv., 32-39.—The four thousand fed. S. Mark vii., 24-37.—He hath done all things well.'

S. I. Kings, xvii., 1-24.—Elijah and the Gentile woman.

Lesson Story.

Jesus and his disciples went into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, a heathen country, and when they were there a Canaanitish woman came to Jesus, begging him to have mercy upon her and heal her daughter.

'Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.' But wonder of wonders, the tender, merciful Lord of Life answers her never a word!

The disciples astonished at his silence, call his attention to her request, and asked him to send her away, either by granting or refusing her request. Our Lord answered his disciples that he was only sent to 'the lost sheep of the House of Israel.'

Then the poor woman came nearer to Jesus and worshipped him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' But Jesus answered, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs.' To all appearance this was an utter refusal of her request. The woman might have gone sorrowing away, saying, 'He helps and heals other people, but of course I need not have expected he would help me.' Many of us would have had some such thought, had we been in her place.

But this woman had real faith; she saw in the apparent refusal a bright gleam of hope. She was not too proud to accept the place given to her, she realized her position and seized upon the metaphor of the little dogs under the table, and answered, 'Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.'

Her faith has stood the test, she had proved herself humble, reverent, fervent, full of that faith which cannot be denied. This is the faith which overcomes the world, this is the faith which removes mountains.

Jesus said unto her, 'O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.' And her daughter was made whole, perfectly healed, from that very hour.

Then Jesus left that country, and went to a mountain near the sea of Galilee, and sat down there. Great multitudes of people came to him bringing their sick friends. The lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed, and all those who had need of healing, were brought to Jesus and he healed them. The people were greatly astonished, when they saw the lame walking, the dumb speaking, the blind having perfect sight, and all the maimed whole: and they glorified the God of Israel.'

Lesson Hymn.

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in his justice,
Which is more than liberty.

There is welcome for the sinner,
And more graces for the good;
There is mercy with the Saviour,
There is healing in his blood.

For the love of God is broader,
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal,
Is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple,
We should take him at his word;
And our lives would be all sunshine,
In the sweetness of our Lord.

—F. W. Faber.

Lesson Hints.

'Tyre and Sidon'—commercial cities on the coast of Phoenicia.

'Son of David'—'If Christ be no more than the Son of David he has no message to heathen countries. By no such narrow name can Jesus enter into Gentile lands.' Jesus is the Son of God, the Lord of Life. No prayer can prevail if addressed only to the humanity of Christ. Christ is God, and it is as God that he has power.

'I am not sent'—to the Gentiles. The Messiah had been promised to the Jews and to them he gave his life, that they might have the joy of proclaiming his love to the Gentiles.

'Lord, help me'—a model prayer connecting heaven with earth, by that word help. Lord, help me, linking me to thyself by thy help. Anyone can learn this short prayer, and clinging faith will bring immediate answer.

'The children'—God's chosen people.

'The dogs'—the little house dogs that feed under the table, they belong to the house though in the humblest position.

'Truth, Lord'—she accepted the lowliest place. She did not answer, 'I am not a dog. I am as good as some Jews I know, and I do not make any professions, either.' If she had felt or answered in this way she would at once have lost the greatest blessing of her life. True faith is willing to take the lowliest place before God and to confess all to him, thus proving sincerity.

'Great is thy faith'—scidom did our Lord meet with such faith, even where he had performed his greatest miracles. (Matt xi., 20-22.) This woman's faith was increased by the hindrances thrown in her way. Her prayer was unselfish, it was for her child, Parents praying thus for their children must bring down great blessings upon them. Sunday-school teachers praying thus for their scholars, must see them brought into the fold of Jesus. To such prayer Jesus always answers, 'Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.'

Primary Lesson.

'Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.'

This poor woman was in the greatest trouble, her dear little daughter was being tormented in the most fearful way by an evil spirit, and she was powerless to help her.

What could she do? The strongest man that she knew was not strong enough to heal her daughter, for Satan and his evil spirits are stronger than the strongest man in the world. No medicine could help her at all. She began to fear that nothing could ever help her, no one in the world could do anything for her, for no one was stronger than the evil spirit. What should she do?

At last one day she heard that a wonderful prophet had come from Galilee, and that in his own country he had healed many persons who were tormented by evil spirits. 'Oh,' she said, 'I must go and ask him if he will heal my daughter. I am sure he will, they say he is so good and kind.' So she went to Jesus, and told him about her daughter and said, 'Lord, help me.'

She knew he was able to help her. She knew that she had at last found one who was stronger than Satan. She had come to the only person who could possibly help her. She had come to the Son of God, the Lord of all life and strength.

'Lord, help me,' she cried, and though he did not answer her at first, she persevered, and he did help her. Because of her faith her daughter was made perfectly whole from that hour, and never troubled in that way again.

Faith is the measure of our love to God.

Suggested Hymns.

'Faith is the victory,' 'Have faith in God,' 'I do not ask to understand,' 'God holds the key,' 'Hold thou my hand,' 'The hem of his garment,' 'Simply trusting,' 'Leaning on Jesus,' 'A little talk with Jesus makes it right.'

Practical Points.

April 3. — Matt. xv., 21-31.

A. H. CAMERON.

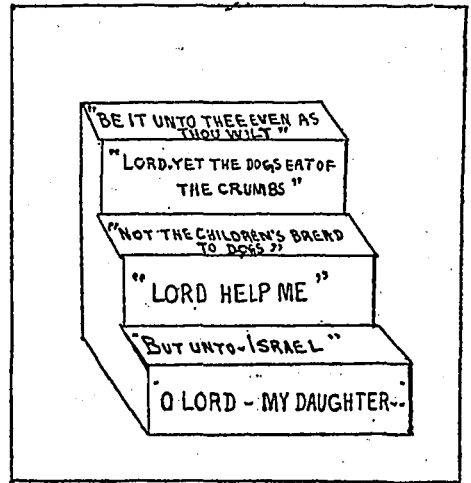
When Jesus withdrew from one part of his vineyard, it was only to enter another. Verse 15: John v., 17. Our prayers are often in accordance with God's will, though the answer be deferred, and scoffers have opportunity to deride. Verses 22, 23. While sometimes we may think the trial of our faith is severe, we must remember it is also precious. Verse 24: I. Pet. i., 7. The

prayer recorded in verse 25 was as powerful as it was brief. Matt. xiv., 30. They who are much in prayer will not stumble in the valley of humiliation. A crumb that falls from God's table will be sweeter than the richest delicacies the world can present. Verses 26, 27. Nothing pleases our Father so much as the faith of his children. Verse 28: Heb. xi., 6. After we have come to Jesus and been healed, it is our duty to bring others to the Great Physician. Verse 29, 30. We are tempted to wonder less at a soul being saved than at the so-called medical miracles. Yet the former is the greater miracle. (verse 31), and Jesus healed both soul and body.

Tiverton, Ont.

The Lesson Illustrated.

Here our illustration shows the three steps of faith that the Syro-Phoenician woman took one by one, until she obtained her desire in the healing of her daughter. The first difficulty she had was in coming to Christ at all, since he was of another nationality, but mother love triumphed over prejudice, and she came. Her heart rose up in the first prayer, four words of which are placed upon the first step. Then to test



her faith, Jesus interposed as an obstacle in the way, that he was but sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. She crosses this, though, and again reaches up to him in her second prayer. To this he again interposes the objection that the children's bread should not be given to dogs. Again her faith and desire crosses this, standing even upon it she rises again in prayer for the crumbs. Jesus then grants her prayer fully, hearing her because of the very difficulties in her way, higher in life, stronger in faith, and an example for centuries to come. God's obstacles are never walls, but always steps—to lift us up.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

April 3.—The grace of hospitality. — Gen. xviii., 1-10: Heb. xiii., 2.

How to Make the Sunday-School a Success.

The Sunday-School superintendent who wishes for the largest measure of success will find the secret in the word 'organization.' Every school, no matter how small or how large, possesses within itself the elements of success. Every member, from the oldest, who is almost ready to teach, down to the youngest tot in the primary department, has at least one talent. It should be the first duty of the superintendent to discover that talent, and then find employment for it.

The wise superintendent, without being unduly inquisitive, will ascertain just how each scholar may be most helpful. It will not be found necessary to put each pupil through a civil-service examination in order to find out who are musical, or who the best bible scholars, or who can best interest the little ones. This is the first step towards organization. The usher and the door-keeper should be chosen for their punctuality and pleasing address—two requisites in introducing and welcoming strangers and visitors.

Next the musical talent comes into play. Accidents will happen even in the best regulated Sunday-schools, and there should always be some one ready to take the organ or lead the singing at a moment's notice. — Temple Magazine.