

LESSON I—April 4th, 1897.

Peter Working Miracles. ACTS 9: 32-43.

(Commit to memory verses 33-35).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." Acts 9: 34.

PROVE THAT—We should assist the poor. Ps. 41: 1.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 95. *To whom is baptism to be administered?* A. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 45, 81, 91, 59.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Peter working miracles. Acts 9: 32-43. *Tuesday.* Christ healing a palsied man. Mark 2: 1-12. *Wednesday.* Care for the poor. Deut. 15: 7-11. *Thursday.* A helper of the needy. Job 29: 1-13. *Friday.* Rich in good works. 1 Tim. 6: 12-19. *Saturday.* Life in Christ. 1 John 5: 9-15. *Sabbath.* The King's reward. Matt. 25: 31-40. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. The preceding verse tells us that the church had rest from persecution, and increased in numbers and spiritual graces. History tells us the reason of this quiet. The Jews had other matters to engage their attention. The Emperor Caligula proposed to set up a statue of himself in the temple. The excitement which followed and the efforts to dissuade him from doing so turned aside their rage for a time from the disciples of Jesus. In our lesson we have a glimpse of the every-day christ-like labors of the apostles. Time, A. D. 40.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Helpless Healed. vs. 32-35. II. The Sorrowing Comforted. vs. 36-39. III. The Useful Restored. vs. 40-43.

32. Peter was visiting the churches. Christians are called "saints" because they have consecrated themselves to God, have received the Holy Spirit, and made holiness their aim (1 Pet. 1: 15, 16). Lydda was about 9 miles from Joppa.

33. We are not told that Æneas was a christian, but he was a poor helpless cripple, and if he did not believe in Jesus before, we may be sure he did after experiencing his healing mercy. The palsy, or paralysis, is a very painful disease sometimes.

34. Notice three things in this verse: (1) not Peter, but Jesus, healed him; (2) he was to show that he was healed by doing something; (3) he did not hesitate to try to do what seemed impossible when told, in the name of Jesus, to do it. The word for "bed" denotes the coarse sleeping mat of the poor (Jas. 2: 17; Matt. 9: 6).

35. So many became christians that it seemed as if everybody believed the gospel.

36. Tab'itha, is in the Aramaic, the language spoken by the Jews, and Dorcas is Greek. Both words mean gazelle, a species of antelope distinguished for its graceful form and soft brilliant eyes. But Dorcas had something more beautiful than these, a kind hand and a loving heart (Deut. 15: 7-11; Matt. 25: 35; Eph. 4: 28).

LESSONS. 1. Those who bear the name of Christ should be christ-like. 2. If we cannot heal the sick, we can be kind to them, and talk to them about the Great Healer. 3. We have no excuse for not "turning to the Lord." 4. The best monument is the kind deeds we have done. 5. There is no limit to what God will do in answer to prayer.

37. God always knows best and will turn sorrow into joy to those who trust him. How many people were brought to Christ through Dorcas' death and restoration to life.

38. The messengers "entreated" Peter, saying, "Do not delay to come on to us." The disciples at Joppa hoped that Peter would do something for them and they would not bury their much-loved friend until he came. Perhaps they remembered what Jesus did at the house of Jairus (Matt. 9: 23-25).

39. The words imply that Dorcas made a great many of these garments for the poor.

40. Peter wanted to be alone with Jesus for a little while. He could not raise Dorcas as the Master would have done, just by speaking the word, he must ask Christ to do it for him. When he felt that his prayer had been granted, he tried to imitate Jesus in every word and act. How beautifully Luke describes her opening her eyes, as if awakening out of sleep, recognizing Peter, and sitting up on the couch.

41. Peter helped her to arise and led her out of the room to her friends. She was quite well and strong. What a meeting that was. Luke does not try to describe it.

42. The restoration of Dorcas was the means of bringing spiritual life to many dead souls (Eph. 2: 1).