

sacred record." The final words are important and striking:—

"He occasionally drops a phrase to provoke a smile from the soft cheeks of ladies and gentlemen, and to make them think for the moment that they could say the thing better. Even the confidence with which he speaks is apt to shock those who would rather treat every author as still open to discussion, or would prefer to wind about a point instead of going straight at it. We are not sure that Latimer's and Ridley's sermons would not jar on modern refinement quite as much, but they would never have reformed the Church of England with smooth words and a pure classic style."

The *Pall Mall Gazette* publishes two lengthy papers and gives in the notes of an interviewer Spurgeon's own account of his life. The *Standard* observes: "Mr. Spurgeon has achieved a success which it would be as idle as it would be ungrateful not to recognize. Since the days when Edward Irving was at the height of his popularity," this journal declares, "no one has drawn such company to his pulpit." It adds—"One result of his example is visible, we should say, in the sermons of the Church clergy." The *Daily News* remarks:—"Mr. Spurgeon is not merely a preacher. His life has been one of active benevolence, of self-sacrifice for the good of others. What Mr. Spurgeon's countrymen chiefly respect in him is the integrity and manliness of his personal character." These are culled from the tributes of the leading press and indicate what a strong hold the great preacher has upon the love of his countrymen, and the power of a life and work which have turned ridicule and hatred into respectful admiration and genuine appreciation.

Towards the close of the meeting there was presented to Mr. Spurgeon a cheque for £4,500. On receiving it Mr. Spurgeon intimated, amidst great cheering, that he should return £1,000 for the Tabernacle House, make a contribution to St. Thomas's Hospital, from which some of their people had derived benefit, and appropriate another £1,000 for various philanthropic purposes. When £6,000 was presented to him on the occasion of his silver wedding, he returned the whole for the benefit of the Tabernacle Almshouses; but he felt bound to accept a portion of the present testimonial, as some of the contributors subscribed on the condition that the money should not be handed over to any institution.

Mr. Moody's wonderful work in London was fittingly concluded by the grand meeting of 6,500 people who came to bid him farewell. The scene was a most touching one. Throughout the whole of the last week special meetings were held. At one of them the Bishop of Liverpool offered the opening prayers. The Bishops of Rochester and Sodor and Man have also taken part. One of the most remarkable gatherings was the United Communion service at which 4,000 communicants both clerical and lay of all the Protestant churches, including the Church of England, received the memorials of the Saviour's dying love. The communion plate was lent by the surrounding churches, Episcopal and Nonconformist.

It is difficult to give an adequate estimate of the great work accomplished. In thirty-two weeks 360 meetings were held, with an average attendance of 5,000. It is stated on good authority that not less than 45,000 persons have been brought to the Saviour and received radical and abiding benefits through this great mission.

The Sunday School.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

8th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, AUG. 3rd, 1884.

BIBLE LESSON.

David's Repentance.—Ps. 51: 1-19.

This Psalm, the sinner's guide, as it has been called, originated in the darkest tragedy of David's life, the most heinous sin and the bitterest sorrow. The events to which it refers are related in 2 Sam. xi. and xii. In our outline we cannot give an exhaustive comment upon this incomparable psalm, but only its salient truths. It is well for the teacher to make the lesson in part at least historical. This we have aimed at in our notes.

I. DAVID'S FALL. David has fallen into sin and shame.

1. *Let us see how he had fallen.* The custom of the times allowed many wives. ("From the beginning it was not so." See Matt. xix. 8). David cruelly robbed a man of his wife. He had seen her—wished to have her—at last took the wife of another.

2. *How one sin leads to another!* David wants to hide his sin. Tries this way and that to hide it. At last wants Uriah, the husband, out of the way. Yet Uriah a faithful soldier fighting for him at Rabbah! See the message David sends to Joab, Uriah's general (2 Sam. xi. 14, 15). What is the result? Uriah is dead. David is really *his murderer!* What a fall! How he has been led from one crime to another! Sin—a slippery path. Once start we easily go on and on.

3. *What a blot on David's fame!* Once been the "man after God's own heart." What a blemish now on his character? Think David knew this? What inward voice would tell him? The conscience often speaks. It is like a good friend standing at our elbow—an alarm! See what sort of a conscience we should strive to have. 1 Tim. i. 5, 19; Acts xxiv. 16.

4. *What a scandal on religion!* David had disgraced not only himself but his profession of religion. Imagine the scoffers: "This is your man after God's own heart!" So was it with David. See 2 Sam. xii. 14. Let us be careful lest the "Name of God is blasphemed" through us. People always ready to point at us. "There's your church-goer—what the better is he for it?" Take St. Paul's advice, Eph. v. 15.

II. DAVID'S RESTORATION.

1. *He knows his sin.* This is the first step in the way of return. "I know," he says, "my transgressions" (ver. 3). How was he brought to this knowledge? God sends a messenger—the prophet Nathan. He tells the king he has a case for him to decide. Let us hear what it is. It is a simple story: 2 Sam. xii. 1-4. A rich man had many flocks and herds—a poor man one dear little lamb. Yet the rich man robbed the poor man of his lamb and killed it! What a shame! So David thought. How indignant—how angry he is! "He shall surely die!" he exclaims. But did the Law say so? See Ex. xxii. 1. Compare Luke xix. 8. Nathan fixes his eye on the king. "THOU ART THE MAN!" How pale David grows! He trembles, hangs his head with shame as Nathan speaks.

2. *He confesses his sin.* He says to Nathan, "I have sinned." Why does he say this? Because he has been found out and is afraid of the consequences? No. "I have sinned," he says, "against the Lord." Compare verse 4:—"against thee, thee only, have I sinned." This is what St. Paul calls "godly sorrow." 2 Cor. vii. 9-11. An evil deed is aggravated when committed against a generous benefactor. This makes sin so black in its rebellion and ingratitude. We do despite to the greatest and best of Beings, to Him to whom we owe everything. To feel this is a sign of genuine repentance. David is anxious to exonerate God. He would vindicate God's righteousness and goodness even in His judgments. He makes his confession, he says, that God may be justified when He speaks, that is, in judging and condemning the sinner, and that He may be clear, that is, seen to be just and true, in His judgments.

3. *He seeks deliverance from his sin.* How can this be? He cannot undo the past; nor can anything in the future atone for it. But what man cannot do, God can do. God has provided a remedy for sin, which completely meets the necessities of the penitent sinner. What David seeks, God supplies. In the divine remedy for sin three things are effected; the sin is forgiven, the sinner is cleansed, and the evil overruled for good.

(a) *Forgiveness.* This is David's great want, and he finds a plea, not in himself, but in God. In the very Being against whom he has sinned is all hope of deliverance. He casts himself upon God's mercy, His pity to the undeserving. He makes mention of God's kindness. It is loving-kindness, the fullness of all that is patient and tender, of sympathy and gentleness. The mercy is tender mercy, which cherishes the feeblest, Matt. xii. 20. It is not merely mercy, but mercies, a multitude of gracious thoughts and acts. If our sins are more in number than the hairs of our head, Ps. xl. 12, God's mercies are countless as the sands or as the stars. "Blot out," he cries, "my transgressions," erase them, cancel the debt, remove the guilt. See Isaiah xlii. 22; Ps. ciii. 12. In vers. 7-9 the psalmist repeats his prayer for pardon. With hyssop, Moses sprinkled the people with the blood of the sacrifice, Heb. ix. 19; Exod. xxiv. 8. In like manner the leper was purified, Lev. xiv. 14. David prays that the atoning blood, of which the blood of the Levitical sacrifices was but the type or emblem, might cleanse his conscience from guilt, Heb. ix. 14; 1 Peter i. 19; 1 John i. 7. He longs to hear the voice that brings joy and gladness, the voice of forgiveness. How glad it made the prodigal son. He prays that God may hide His face from his sins, that is, may not regard them so as to punish them, but in His wonderful forgetfulness remember them no more. What a happy man will he then be; crushed he has been under the load of guilt, like one whose bones are broken. Now he will rejoice, because he is clean, every whit, whiter than snow, Isaiah i. 18.

(b) *Cleansing.* Forgiveness is not enough. The criminal may be pardoned and set at liberty; yet he may go forth unchanged in his character. God's method is more thorough. He not only forgives the sin, He cleanses the sinner. In verses 5 and 6 David gives two reasons for this cleansing. The repetition of the word "behold" at the beginning of each marks the connection of the two. The reason given in verse 5 lies in David himself. He has not only committed a sin which needs pardon, but he himself is a sinner and needs cleansing. The reason given in verse 6 lies in the nature of God. He looks not upon the conduct merely, but upon the inward consciousness. He desires truth through and through; in the motives, desires, and whole being. And He alone can write the law upon our hearts and place within us the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. Ps. iii. 10. In verses 10-12 the psalmist prays for this inner cleansing. The heart is the source whence the evil in the life proceeds, Matt. xv. 19. It must be renovated, and only God's creative power can do that. In Christ Jesus we are made new creatures, Gal. vi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 17. The new creation is wrought by the Holy Spirit, for whose indwelling David prays. The words, "right spirit" and "free spirit," both apply to the renewed man in whom the Divine Spirit dwells. The right spirit is, as the word implies, a steadfast spirit, one steady in the right way, stayed upon God. A free spirit is a willing spirit, ready and prompt in its obedience. Such a spirit upholds and sustains man in his work and warfare. God's salvation, which brings joy, saves from all sin, from its power as well as its guilt, from the love and practice as well as the punishment of sin.

(c) *The Fruits.* God can and does bring good out of evil. He overrules even sin to magnify His goodness and to promote truth and righteousness. The results are seen in three directions. First (vers. 14-17), in the sinner himself there are enkindled gratitude and love. He offers himself a living sacrifice. Compare Rom. xii. 1; 1 Cor. vi. 20. No costly offerings or elaborate services are to be compared with the sacrifice of a contrite heart and a loving and obedient spirit. Secondly (vers. 13 and 18), in the conversion of sinners and the extension of the Church. David could now speak from experience of the bitterness of sin and the graciousness of God. How many penitents have blessed God for this very Psalm. It is a poor and frigid interpretation which applies verse 18 to the walls which Josephus says David built around the city. The walls here are figuratively named for the safety and prosperity of the Church of Christ. David's sin had been a cause of shame and weakness, the stumbling of the weak, the triumphing of the wicked. His restoration should bring blessing and strength to God's people.

Thirdly, in glory to God (vers. 17 and 19). He would be loved and honored with true worship and thanksgiving. The salvation of sinners will reveal to the world the character of God as nothing else has. He will make known the riches of His grace and the greatness of His love.

In conclusion, the teacher may point out the nature of true repentance. Is it fear of consequences? Sorrow because found out? No. Sorrow because of