

THE INVISIBLE TOUCH.

BY BELLE V. OHISHOLM.

The morning had been full of worry and vexation, and it was not much wonder that little Mrs. Marlow sighed wearily as she gave the finishing touch to the bright, cosy living-room and took up the half-made garment she had laid aside the night before. It was a boy's jacket and her delicate fingers had never been used to such coarse work, but in spite of the financial reverses that had made it necessary to dismiss the servants, boys' clothes would wear out, and in addition to her household cares she had taken up the heavy burden of the family sewing.

But it was not overwork alone that rased this mother's nerves; it was worry, worry, not only over her husband's reverses, that made him so silent and preoccupied and left her almost companionless in her arduous labors; but Ben, their eldest-born, the bright boy who had given such promise of future usefulness, had fallen in with dissolute companions, and more than once he had returned home with a dangerous light in his eyes and the unmistakable perfume of wine upon his breath.

"O God," she cried, "my burden is greater than I can bear!" For a few minutes she gave herself to bitter weeping; then resolutely drying her tears, she again took up her task, but the sight of her neglected Bible upon the window near her rose up as a swift witness against her. Opening it now at random, her eyes fell upon these words, "Jesus himself drew near and went with them." A sudden realization of the presence of the invisible Saviour filled her with inexpressible joy.

If He cared for the sorrows of his disciples while he was upon earth, he would not leave her to suffer alone, even though she were one of the despised little ones. Jesus drew near them and went with them, and he was near to her and would go with her and strengthen her for all her trials. With a prayer of thanksgiving upon her lips for the timely aid he had vouchsafed, she left the burden that had fallen from her shoulders at the foot of the cross and with a song in her heart resolved to make a cheerful home for her Christless husband and godless son.

After that the whirr of the machine seemed like music in her ears, and the work progressed as if by magic under her skillful fingers. All anxious care and worry were gone, and in their place that peace that passeth understanding reigned supreme. His strength, not hers, would be sufficient for all future trials and heart-throbs. Both husband and children caught the infection of the sunny, restful spirit that pervaded the home when they returned to luncheon.

"You have good news, my dear," the husband said as he took her hand at parting. "Can you see a way out of the darkness?"

"The very best of news, my beloved, and the shadows have all flown away," she answered with a thrill of gladness.

With breathless interest he waited for the revelation of the secret that had wrought such a marvellous change on the woman who stood by his side. For a moment she hesitated. How could she lay bare her heart to a man who knew nothing of the power of the love that had transformed her very being? But Jesus was with her, strengthening her, and the short, sweet story of her triumph fell upon his ears like oil upon the troubled water.

Instead of a shade of disappointment clouding his face, he looked up with shining eyes and said brightly, "I am so glad, Anna, that you have found a resting-place. In these troublesome days I have so longed for a refuge from the storm, but when your religion failed you I doubted its sustaining power, for I had all faith in you; but now I feel as though an angel had suddenly appeared unto me, strengthening me."

Bowing her head in silent prayer for a moment, Mrs. Marlow went back to her work with new impressions of duty staring her in the face. She trembled when she thought of how near she had come to making shipwreck of her husband's faith, and that night the home was so cheery that even Ben forgot his appointment at the club.

Though the dear old home was exchanged for a little four-roomed cottage in order that every creditor might have his own, it was the most blessed spot on earth, for a happy mother was there and she was rich in her loved ones who in the days of adversity had learned to consider.

"I can see it all now," she said, "how everything works together for good to those who love God; and I would not have the ordering of my life in my own hands, for I would be continually making mistakes that could never be rectified."—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

AN EIGHTH DAY NEEDED.

There are many dangers that beset any one coming out to the West to find a home. In the first place the ways of living are simpler, and work must be done which, at home, would be left to others. Many a family feels ashamed to go to church or Sabbath-school, as was the custom "back East," because the members cannot dress and give as they once could. They say to themselves: "We will wait until we are a little better fixed." The time never comes, in many cases, when they are so "fixed" that they resume the old habit. Carelessness and indifference soon take the empty place in the heart. A good deal of the loud-mouthed, ignorant infidelity of the West is, I am persuaded, the attempt to defend to the conscience the relapse that had its origin in grounds far from intellectual. The love of gain and speculation has also a wonderful hold on many here. Money is the one good and the one god. As money is the one road to power, it is often sought with an absorbing anxiety that has no diversion in society, pleasure, music, or even politics. In our free, broad, hearty West there is great danger of narrowness. The activities of life have fewer channels, and time seems to grow scarcer as we go West. A little girl not long ago, nor very far from this, heard her mamma read the account in Genesis of God's making the world and resting on the seventh day. She thought a little while, and then, looking up, asked: "Mamma, wasn't that long ago?" "Yes, dear." "Well, mamma, I've goin' to ask Dad to make an eighth day now for papa to go to church in." A good many in the West are sadly in need of an eighth day to go to church in.—Rev. J. C. Hall, in N. Y. Observer.

TELL ME, what would you think if your wife left you to take care of the house and put your baby to bed, and went off down to the saloon to spend her time and money there while you were suffering for the need of it, and then came home to curse and beat you? You would be horrified at the idea, but let me tell you, my friend, vice is never respectable because it wears breeches.—Finch.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON XI.—June 13.

JESUS THE CHRIST.—John 7: 37-52.

CENTRAL VERSES 43-46.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—Matt. 16: 16.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The words and the works of Jesus show him to be the Messiah.

DAILY READINGS.

M. John 7: 1-13.
T. John 7: 14-34.
W. John 7: 35-52.
Th. Lev. 21: 33-34.
F. Num. 20: 1-13.
Sa. Isa. 41: 3; 55: 1; 59: 11.
Su. Joel 2: 28, 29; 3: 18.

TIME.—Oct. 17, A. D. 29. Six months after our last lesson, at the feast of Tabernacles.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in the court of the temple.

JESUS.—Nearly 33 years old, six months before his crucifixion.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—Matt. chaps. 15-18; Mark, chaps. 7-9; Luke 9: 18-50, record the events between the last lesson and this.

INTRODUCTORY.—Jesus after spending a year and a half in Galilee goes to Jerusalem to the feast of the Tabernacles. He suddenly appears in the temple during the feast, and teaches the multitudes.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES: was a thanksgiving feast, and also commemorated the forty years' wanderings in the wilderness (Lev. 23: 33-41; Ex. 23: 16). It was the most joyous of the feasts. 37. IN THE LAST DAY: the seventh. One of the ceremonies at this feast was the drawing water in a golden pitcher from the pool of Siloam, and pouring it on the altar. It was done with a great procession. It was just after this, in a pause of the ceremonies, that Jesus probably spoke. THIRST: in his soul. Men thirst for God, for life, for pardon, for goodness, for comfort, for a better life, for a noble object of living, for love, for friendship, for eternal life. COME UNTO ME: all these thirsts are satisfied in Jesus. 38. OUT OF HIS BELLY: his heart. SHALL FLOW: the good is for others and not self alone. RIVERS: denoting abundance.

39. HOLY GHOST NOT GIVEN: in the abundance of which characterized the new dispensation. See day of Pentecost. JESUS GLORIFIED: by his atonement, resurrection, and ascension on the right hand of God. 40. THE PROPHET: Deut. 18: 15. 41. THE CHRIST: the Anointed, the Messiah. 52. OUT OF GALILEE NO PROPHET: not true; Jonah was from Galilee (2 Kings 14: 25); probably Elijah (1 Kings 17: 1), and Nahum (1: 1).

LEARN BY HEART vs. 37, 38; Isa. 55: 1-3.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How much time intervenes between this lesson and the last? Where did Jesus spend this time? What were some of the chief events? Where are they recorded?

SUBJECT: JESUS SHOWN TO BE THE MESSIAH.

I. THE SCENE AT THE FEAST OF THE TABERNACLES.—To what feast did Jesus go? (John 7: 2, 10.) Where was it celebrated? Give some account of this feast. (Lev. 23: 33-44.) Describe the ceremony of bringing water from the pool of Siloam.

Give a fuller description of this ceremony, and of the last day of this feast.

II. JESUS SHOWN TO BE THE MESSIAH BECAUSE HE ALONE GIVES THE LIVING WATER (vs. 37-39).—Where was Jesus on the last day of the feast? (John 7: 11.) What ceremony had He probably just witnessed? Of what was it a symbol? (Num. 20: 4-12; 1 Cor. 10: 4.) What did Jesus proclaim to the people? Could any mere man say this with truth? What is meant by thirst here? For what do people thirst? Can anything in this world satisfy the thirsts of the soul? How does Jesus satisfy them?

What is it to come to Jesus? What promise did He make to those who believed on Him? What is meant by living water? How does it flow from Christians? Why is it spoken of as "rivers"? In what respects is the gift of the Holy Spirit like living water? Where was this fulfilled? (Acts 2: 1-18.)

III. BY THE VERY OBJECTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST HIM (vs. 40-44).—What discussion arose among the people? Why did some think He was the Messiah? What objection did some make? Did Jesus fulfill these scriptures? (Matt. 2: 1-8; Acts 2: 22-32.)

IV. BY HIS MESSAGE TO MEN (vs. 45-52).—Who had been sent to arrest Jesus? (John 7: 32.) Did they succeed? Why not? What was their report of Jesus? In what respects did Jesus speak differently from other men? How did Nicodemus defend Jesus? What have you read of Nicodemus before?

What kind of arguments did the Pharisees use? Do sneers ever help the truth? Were the rulers inconsistent? Is this usually true of those who argue against Christianity? Was Nicodemus a true disciple? Was he growing nearer to it? Did it require special courage for him to do as he did?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. All have thirsts of the soul which this world cannot satisfy.

II. Among these thirsts are the longing for life, love, comfort, pardon, goodness, a life worth living, happiness, heaven, God.

III. Jesus Christ can satisfy these thirsts.

IV. The living water is pure, refreshing, abundant, life-giving, cleansing, free, abiding, flowing to others.

V. Those who have this living water love to impart it to others.

VI. Jesus speaks as never man spoke, (1) as to truth, (2) with the authority of one who knows, (3) in the best manner, (4) accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

LESSON XII.—JUNE 20.

JESUS AND ABRAHAM.—John 8: 31-35, 44-59.

CENTRAL VERSES 32-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it, and was glad.—John 8: 56.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Jesus gives true freedom to his disciples.

DAILY READINGS.

M. John 8: 1-30.
T. John 8: 31-46.
W. John 8: 47-59.
Th. Gal. 4: 1-31.
F. Gal. 5: 1-26.
Sa. Rom. 8: 1-21.
Su. 1 John 2: 1-17.

TIME.—The next day after our last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in one of the temple courts.

INTRODUCTION.—Jesus returned to the temple the next day after our last lesson (8: 2), where crowds still assembled, and taught first in the court of the women where the treasury chests were placed (8: 20), and afterwards in one of the porches around the Court of the Gentiles. Here His words convinced many, and they believed on Him. To some of these He spoke the opening words of the lesson.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

31 DISCIPLES: learners, those who go to school to Christ, taking Him for their teacher, and learning to be good like Jesus. 32 MAKE YOU FREE: from sin, from prejudice, from bad habits, from fear of punishment, free to do right.

33 NEVER IN BONDAGE: personally. They were never slaves, though subject to the Roman government. 34 SERVANT: slave. OF SIN: because a sinful heart and sinful habits would not let them do as they wished; as people are sometimes slaves of intemperance. They also had to suffer against their wills. 37 SERVE TO KILL ME: chap. 7: 32-44. 38 SEEN WITH: in heaven. 44 A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING: by tempting the human race in Eden he brought death into the world, and so all men die. 48 A SAMARITAN: an enemy of the Jews, who would misjudge them. 51 NEVER SEE DEATH: his existence will never cease. Death to him is but a change from life here to life in heaven. 56 ABRAHAM REJOICED TO SEE MY DAY: in promise, by faith (Gen. 15: 4-6; 22: 18-19). My day refers to the time of the Messiah, the gospel dispensation. HE SAW IT: in heaven he saw Christ come on earth, as we know Moses and Elijah did (Luke 9: 30; 31). 58. I AM: because he always existed (John 1: 1-3).

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Where did Jesus go after the

last lesson; (Chap. 8: 1.) When did he return to the temple? (8: 2.) Where in the temple did he teach? (8: 20.) What was the result of his teaching? (8: 30.)

SUBJECT: THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

I. THE CHILDREN OF GOD (v. 31).—What did Jesus say to those who believed Him? What is it to continue in His word? Why are none else His disciples? What is a disciple? What qualifications has Jesus as a teacher? What are the lessons to be learned in the school of Christ? (v. 32. Gal. 5: 22, 23. Eph. 4: 13.) Out of what books does he teach them? (Ps. 119: 9, 71; 19: 1, 7.)

II. THEIR GLORIOUS LIBERTY (vs. 32-37).—What would knowing the truth do for them? What is the freedom here spoken of? What does Paul say of it? (Rom. 8: 15, 21. Gal. 5: 1.) How does the Son make us free? Who does Christ say are slaves? Can you show how this is true?

Do people generally think that to be a Christian is to be free? Why not? Can you show why he only can be free? Describe this freedom. Why cannot those who do wrong be free? Give examples of slavery to bad habits. To past sins or crimes.

III. CHILDREN AND HEIRS (vs. 38, 41, 45).—Who was the father of Jesus? What had he seen with Him? How did he prove that God was his father? Who did he say was the father of wicked men? How did they prove it? How may we know whether we belong to God? How did the Jews argue against Jesus?

Why do not all believe on Jesus since He speaks the truth? Has anyone ever found any fault in Him? How did Jesus honor His Father?

IV. THEIR TEACHER (vs. 51-53).—What is said of his sinlessness? (v. 46.) What promise did Jesus make to those who believed Him? How did this show His power? How is it true that Christians never die? What did the Jews say to this? How did Jesus show that he was greater than Abraham? What did Christ mean by "my day"? When had Abraham seen Christ's day? (Gen. 15: 4-6; 22: 16-18.) What comfort do you obtain from the greatness of Jesus? How does it give confidence in His teaching?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. We prove ourselves true disciples by continuing to study and obey Christ's word.

II. Jesus Christ is a wise, loving teacher, knowing all things.

III. We are to learn in Christ's school to be like Him, holy, true, righteous, loving, and hence fitted to dwell with the saints in heaven.

IV. Christ teaches us out of His word, by His works, his example, the discipline and duties of life.

V. Becoming Christ's disciples gives us true freedom.

VI. This liberty is freedom of Christian action, freedom from sin, from bad habits, from fears, from overburdening cares.

VII. We know whose children we are by the family likeness in our characters and actions.

Question Corner.—No. 11.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1. Where does God promise, for the comfort of those who may be wrongly judged, to make it perfectly clear that they have acted uprightly?

2. Where do we read that the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah was not merely a judgment upon the cities destroyed, but was intended as a warning to the ungodly?

3. Where, in the Old Testament, are we told that God will not only satisfy the needs of those who love and fear Him, but will grant even their desires?

4. Which of the New Testament saints are specially mentioned as having been "righteous before God"; and who is emphatically called "The righteous"?

5. Where are we told, for our comfort, that God's angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to serve the heirs of salvation.

6. On what occasions did angels minister to Jesus in the days of His weakness here below?

EASY SCRIPTURE BIOGRAPHY.—WHO WAS HE?

A man of God.

He was of Gilead.

He dwelt by the brook Cherith.

He left Cherith, and went to Zarephath.

A widow woman sustained him, whose son he raised to life.

He repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

He consecrated the altars to the Lord.

He slew the prophets of Baal.

He went forty days without food.

He prophesied before Ahab, king of Israel.

He dwelt in a cave.

He divided the waters of the Jordan.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 10.

EASY SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.—1. Apos, penecots, Solomon. 2. Camels, Rebekah. 3. Dog, Hazael. 4. Bears, Elisha. 5. Horses, Solomon. 6. Fuxes, Samson. 7. Lamb, Isaac. 8. Dove, Noah. 9. Quails, Israelites. 10. Mice, Phillistines. 11. Bats and moles, Repentant idolaters. 12. Bullock, Aaron. 13. Ram, Abraham. 14. Unicorn, Job. 15. Bear, lion, sheep, lamb, David. 16. Whale, Jonah. 17. Eagle, Edomites. 18. Ox, Enemy. 19. Wolves, False prophets. 20. Scapgoat, High priest. 21. Raven, Noah.

SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.—

1. Zachariah.

2 and 3. Zech. viii. 3.

4. Ezra v. 1.

5. Zech. xi. 12.

6. Zech. ix. 9.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Correct answers have been received from H. E. Greene, Albert Jesso French, Jennie Lyght.