

THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *Daughter of Jairus raised.*—Matt. ix. 18-38.

V. 18.—*Ruler*, an elder who had the care of a synagogue. He left his daughter at the point of death, and he judged that she was by this time dead. See Mark v. 23.

In the next three verses we have an account of a great miracle, described more at large in Mark v. 23.

Issue of blood, See Lev. xv. 25. The hem or fringe, See Num. xv. 28. In this case the power of Christ was the efficacious cause; the woman's faith the instrumental cause. *Daughter* is here used as a term of endearment.

V. 23.—*Minstrels* were hired to play at funerals. The "people" made a noise with their wailing. Mourners are to this day hired in Eastern countries to make a noise at funerals.

V. 24.—"Give place:" your services as mourners are not needed here. *Not dead*; her death was but a sleep from which she was soon to awake. Bodily death is not the essential awful death which we should dread; it is but a sleep. Spiritual death is the real king of terrors. They—the hired mourners, the "flute players," laughed Him to scorn—fearing perhaps the loss of their fees!

V. 25.—Compare Mark v. 37-40.

V. 27.—"Son of David:" the Jews regarded this name as equivalent to *Messiah*.

V. 30.—Their eyes were opened by His touch. So ears were opened, Mark vii. 34; and mouth Luke i. 64. They were forbidden to publish the miracle, probably lest the Pharisees should be more bitterly exasperated.

V. 33.—See Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6.

V. 34.—As the Pharisees could not deny the reality of His miracles they seek to excite popular prejudice by ascribing them to Satan.

LESSONS.

1. Mark how faith is rewarded in the case of the ruler, the woman and the blind man. Let parents pray in faith for their children, and Jesus will hear. Let us, like the others who were healed, pray for ourselves and He will hear. Let us bring before Him the most hopeless cases, as of the man with the dumb devil, and He will aid us.

2. See from verse 34 how unbelief can concoct excuses and theories! None so blind as those that do not wish to see.

3. Mark how Jesus conquers death.—Here He raises the dead from the bed. In Luke vii. 14 He raises from the bier; in John xi., from the grave. He will yet raise all from their graves.

4. Prayer, however short, if presented in earnest faith shall be heard. V. 27.

5. We should obey Christ's commands, though we may be unable to understand the reason for them. The men whose eyes had been opened should have obeyed in simplicity. (It is curious that Roman Catholic expositors praise this act of disobedience.)

6. See in the closing verses of the lesson the compassion of Jesus for perishing souls. The harvest is still as plenteous, the need for labourers as great, the need for prayer as urgent.

DOCTRINE.

Christ is the resurrection and the life—John xi. 25, 26; 1 John i. 2. 2 Thes. i. 7-10.

FOURTH SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*Matthew called*, Luke v. 27-39.

Matthew was son of Alphaeus. He was a publican, or inferior collector of taxes at Capernaum. He had two names, the second being *Levi*. He is seldom mentioned in the gospels, never but once after this his second call: see Acts i. 13. It is stated by church historians that he preached among the Jews for fifteen years after the death of Christ. He then went, it is said, to Ethiopia. See Matt. ix. 9-13.

V. 30.—*Sinners*: persons ceremonially unclean. The Pharisees had no sense of sin, and therefore the mission of the Saviour was rather to the outcast publicans than to these self-righteous ones.

V. 33.—The Pharisees fasted often and for very absurd and useless ends, and they often pretended to fast when they feasted in secret. The disciples of John followed the ceremonial of the Pharisees.

V. 34.—*Children of the Bridechamber*, the companions of the bridegroom during the marriage feast.

V. 35.—There is special reference here to those sad and awful days when Jesus was under the power of death. Christ is the bridegroom of the church. He is personally absent now; and there are times and circumstances that render fasting proper on the part of the church and of individuals.

V. 36.—"New Garment," undressed cloth that will shrink after being wet.

V. 37.—*Bottles*, made of goatskin. New wine ferments, and it would burst these skins if they were old and well-worn or rotten. Wine kept for three years is called *old*. The attempt to join together the religion of the Pharisees and of Jesus would be like sewing new undressed cloth on an old worn-out garment; or like pouring new wine into old leathern bottles. No coalition is possible between the ceremonial religion and that of Christ. True religion was the same under all the dispensations. We should distinguish between the spirit and the form.

V. 39.—Old wine is more palatable than