



LESSON III.—April 17.

The Transfiguration.

Matt. xvii., 1-9.—Memory verses 1-3.

Golden Text.

'We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.—John i., 14.

Home Readings.

- M. Matt. xvii., 1-13.—The Transfiguration.
- T. Mark ix., 1-13.—Mark's account of it.
- W. Luke ix., 28-36.—Luke's story.
- T. John i., 1-14.—The testimony of an eye-witness.
- F. II. Peter i., 12-21.—'We were eye-witnesses of his majesty.'
- S. Matt. xvii., 14-27.—When they came down from the Mount.
- S. Ps. ii., 1-12.—'Thou art my son.'

Lesson Story.

Peter, James and John, the three most intimate companions of our Lord's earthly ministry, are taken up into a high mountain with Jesus to behold the glory of his transfiguration. The face of Jesus Christ did shine as the sun, and his raiment became white and glistening as light. And behold, Moses and Elias stood there talking with him. The disciples had been tired and sleepy, but the glory of the vision thoroughly awakened them.

Then the impulsive Peter spoke to Jesus, saying, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.' But as he was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed the little group and a voice out of the cloud proclaimed, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.'

When the disciples heard the voice of God, they were much afraid, and fell on their faces. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Arise, and be not afraid.' So they lifted their eyes and when they found they were again alone with Jesus, they took courage and arose. As they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them that they should tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man should be risen again from the dead.

Lesson Hymn.

I sometimes wish when the twilight ends,
And stars dip down in the tranquil sea,
That I might bend where the pilgrim bends,
And walk by the waves of Galilee.
I sometimes long with a longing great,
To tread fair Palestine's sacred sod;
To enter in at the beautiful gate
Where Jesus of Nazareth's feet have trod.

I sometimes think he would nearer seem,
If I might follow his sacred feet,
Beside the flowing of Jordan's stream,
On Jordan's mountains wild and sweet,
And yet, O wandering heart, I know,
Though eyes be holden and cannot see,
That here to-night in the starlight glow,
Doth Jesus of Nazareth stand by me.

The days have come when the heart has cried,
When thorns made weary the feet that bled,
When I have thirsted for naught beside,
But on his bosom to lay my head,
But when the hours have weary feet
I think of the long years, thirty and three,
Those thorny years with the cross complete
That Jesus of Nazareth lived for me.

Then bear me up from the things of time,
Uplift my being, Eternal Hand!
And grant my vision the view sublime,
Across the plains to the Promised Land;
And oh, thou heart, that hath borne the sting,
Dear feet, nail-pierced to the rugged tree,
Enfold my soul in thy brooding wing;
And, Jesus of Nazareth, walk with me.
—E. V. Blake.

Lesson Hints.

'Transfigured'—glorified with his original glory and majesty. Read the accounts of the other chroniclers (Mark ix., 2-10; Luke iv., 28-36.) Read also the description of Christ's glory as seen by John the Divine (Rev. i., 13-16; xxi., 22, 23.) Compare (Dan. vii., 9, 10.)

'Elias'—Elijah. Moses and Elijah had each been taken from this life in their full strength and vigor (Deut. xxxiv., 5-7; II. Kings ii., 11.) They came now to talk with Christ of his approaching death at Jerusalem (Luke ix., 31). If our Lord had so wished he might have returned then with them to heaven. But he resolutely turned from this bright vision, and chose the way of the cross with all its shame and agony, that by his death he might redeem us everlastingly from death and punishment.

'It is good for us to be here'—to behold the vision glory. It is good for us to have visions of the glory of Christ and the glory that awaits us, but we cannot stay forever before the vision; we must go down into our every day life of service and toil carrying the beauty and strength from the vision of glory.

'Three tabernacles'—abiding places. But Christ could not stay here, he had work to do elsewhere. Even at that moment a troubled father was awaiting him at the foot of the mountain (verses 14-16).

A voice—the same which spoke from heaven at the time of Christ's baptism (Matt. iii., 17.)

'Jesus only'—they saw Jesus, he filled their outward vision. Soon they were to see Jesus only with the eye of faith. He should fill the vision of our hearts. Jesus only can save, Jesus only can live in us, being our peace, Jesus only can live in us, being our all and all.

Primary Lesson.

I see four men on a mountain top. What are they doing up there, far above the rest of the world? Who is the fourth man? His face shines like the sun, his raiment is white and glistening with heavenly light. Surely this is the Son of God! Surely this mountain is filled with the glory of God!

Suddenly two other men appear, clothed in shining garments and speaking to the Son of God. Who are these? These are men who have lived on earth with God, and gone home to God without any sickness or pain. Their names are Moses and Elias. Perhaps they are asking Jesus, the Son of God; if he will come home to heaven without any suffering or pain. He might have gloriously ascended then, but he said, No, he must suffer and die on the cross and rise again, so that he might conquer death and redeem the world from the power of sin. 'Redeem' means to buy back. Jesus has bought our lives by his precious life-blood, we are his. We belong to Jesus only.

Do you remember what happened at Jesus' baptism? A voice came from heaven saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' At the transfiguration of Jesus, God spoke these words again, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.' So we see that Jesus is truly God as well as truly man. Because he is God he can save us, and because he is man he can comfort and sympathize with us in all our sufferings. He was tempted in every way that we can be, yet he never sinned. When we are tempted he will keep us from yielding, if we ask and trust him to do it.

Suggested Hymns.

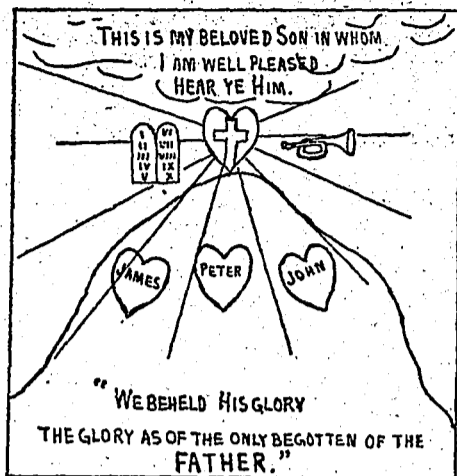
'All hail the power of Jesus,' 'There is a green hill,' 'Yield not to temptation,' 'Glory to God on high,' 'Hear the battle cry,' 'Praise Him!' 'Jesus, Lover of my Soul,' 'Glory, laud, and honor.'

The Lesson Illustrated.

Our picture tells the lesson story. The mountain, James, Peter and John watching. The Christ symbol shining with glorious light upon all the others present. The two tables of the law standing for Moses, while the trumpet stands for Elias the warlike prophet of the Lord. The voice from the clouds, God's testimony to Christ. The voice below, the witness of the three to what they had seen.

Emphasize here the truth that the three

were not permitted to remain on the mountain, but taken down to the valley to share his work and later to Gethsemane to share



his sufferings. No privilege without corresponding responsibility.

Practical Points.

April 17th.—Matt. xvii., 1-9.

The disciples mentioned in verse 1 were highly favored, on this occasion, beholding the brightness of his glory, and later witnessing his agonizing manhood. (Matt. xxvi., 37.)

In the rapture of earnest prayer may we behold the glory of God shining through the face of Jesus. (Verse 2, Exod. xxxiii., 18.)

'There is nothing that giveth me comfort like a little talk with him.' (Verse 3, Luke xxiv., 32.)

The mount of transfiguration may be a health resort for the Christian, but not his permanent dwelling, for 'there's work to do for Jesus.' (Verse 4.)

Brightest visions vanish, dearest friends depart, but Jesus will never forsake us. (Verses 5-8.)

The disciples were not able to preach the gospel in its purity and fulness till after the resurrection. (Verse 9.)

Christian Endeavor Topics.

April 17.—Lessons from great missionaries. —Acts xiii., 1-3, 13-33, 42-52.

Prayer and Study.

Devoted teachers pray over their lessons. The Spirit is the best interpreter of the Word to the earnest soul searching for the real thought and truth of the lesson. In preparing for the hour on Sunday with your class use the best help you can get. Study the best commentaries, and the best special comments on the lesson attend the teachers' meeting and there ask all the questions you don't understand, not for controversy, but for honest instruction. Be free to bring forward your thought. Weigh everything. Think, think, think about the things you read and hear, and especially about the Word itself. Pray much over it all, then my brethren and Sunday-school workers, you will be surprised that so many precious original thoughts come to your mind. The Spirit helps those who help themselves, when faithfully asked to do so. If we get too indolent to study our lessons and dig down deep into its precious truths, and then go before the Lord with empty head and ask him to help us to get something out of the lessons, God won't pay much attention to that prayer. The fisherman who skims the surface with his net catches flies, and it may be said that flies are good for bait, but remember your class wants something better besides bait, and if bait is needed it will take something better than flies to catch the bright boys and girls in your class.—T. H. Thomas.

The Home Department undoubtedly meets a great need in Sabbath-school work. There are a great many who cannot attend the meetings of the school; but there is no one who cannot secure at least 30 minutes each week for the study of the lesson, and this is what the Home Department means. We hope that very soon each of our schools may have a Home Department.—Western Paper.