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Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

STUDIES IN MARK.

Second Quarter.

Lesson III. June 23. Mark 16: 1-13.

JESUS RISEN.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Now is Christ risen from the dead, and he is the first fruits of them that sleep.—1 Cor. 15: 20.

EXPLANATORY.

1. 1. And when the Sabbath was past, i. e., after sunset of Saturday. It was at this time they bought the spices, so that they would be ready to start very early the next morning, before the bazars would be open. They would not break the Sabbath even in preparation for anointing their beloved Lord, and the bazars were doubtless closed on the Sabbath. Mary Magdalene: see ver. 9.

Mary the mother of James: "the less," or "the younger," son of Alphaeus, and one of the apostles. Salome: wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John. Sweet spices. Rev. ver., spices, the idea of sweetness not being in the original. They were aromatics, substances used in embalming. Luke (23: 56) says, spices and ointments. The spices brought by Nicodemus were aloes and myrrh (John 19: 39). That they might come and anoint Him. Embalm Him; or apply these spices to His body to keep it from putrefaction. This is proof that they did not suppose He would rise again.

2. And very early in the morning. They must have started while it was yet dark (John) and reached the tomb at the rising of the sun. Came unto the sepulchre. They may have gone singly or in small groups.

3. And they said (were saying) among themselves. Unaware of the deputation of the Jewish rulers, which had gone to Pilate, and secured the sealing of the stone and the setting of the watch over the tomb (Matt. 27: 62, 66), their only anxiety was, Who shall roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? The tomb was cut in the side of a rock, like a cave, large enough for several persons to enter. The entrance was protected by a large millstone, rolled in front of the opening.

4. And when they looked: or, looking up. They have been looking down at the path in which they were walking, or absorbed in their thoughts and conversation. They saw that the stone was rolled away. By an angel (Matt. 28: 2). Not to let Jesus out of the tomb, for it was no hindrance to Him, but for the entrance of the disciples.

THE STONE ROLLED AWAY FROM THE TOMB. Difficulties in the path of duty, difficulties which we dread, which seem insurmountable, are often removed for us by God in unexpected ways, but not till we come to them: For instance, (1) the stone is rolled away from the tomb of death by the resurrection and the life. (2) The obstacles in the way of our salvation—our hard hearts, our sins, the opposition of friends, the reluctance to do hard duties—are removed from those who go forward. (3) Doctrinal difficulties are removed by doing every duty as it comes to us.

5. They saw a young man: an angel in this form (Matt. 28: 2, 5); the one who rolled the stone away and sat upon it. Luke speaks of two angels. It strikes one as very remarkable that this superhuman being should be described as a "young man." Immortal youth, with all of buoyant energy and fresh power which that attribute suggests, belongs to those beings whom Scripture faintly shows as our elder brethren. Sitting at the right side: as they entered. Clothed in a long white garment. Matthew says it was white as snow, and his countenance was like lightning. The white raiment was a symbol of purity and of fellowship with God.

6. He not affrighted: amazed at such a sight instead of the dead body of Jesus. They would naturally be alarmed at being so near such divine powers; and they would be afraid lest they had lost their Master. He is risen; He is not here: behold the place. The angel shows them the grave-clothes, and the face-cloth folded by itself, to show them that He is risen, as He had foretold them, and then he declares that they should soon see Him again.

WITH WHAT BODY DID JESUS RISE? It is of the utmost importance that we remember that the body Jesus rose with was the very same body which died on the cross. (1) to rise with a body changed, as Paul says our resurrection bodies are changed from our natural bodies, would be to vitiate the proof of His resurrection on which our faith and hope depend. (2) Jesus takes special pains to show His disciples that He is the same He declares that He is flesh and bones; He bids Thomas put his hands in the prints of the nails and in the wound made by the spear; He eats before them the same kind of food He ate before He died. (3) The fact that Jesus seemed to have peculiar power over His body, entered rooms apparently with closed doors, and appeared occasionally and for brief seasons only, is no proof that His body was changed; for Jesus gave hints of such power before His crucifixion, in escaping crowds and walking on the sea. (4) Jesus' body was doubtless changed at the ascension into a spiritual body.

7. Tell His disciples and Peter. Observe that as Christ's first appearance is to Mary Magdalene (John 20: 18), out of whom He had cast seven devils, so His special message is to Peter, who had denied Him. Tell Peter, for it will be news more welcome to him than to any of them. That he goeth before you into Galilee. The appearance in Galilee was not the first appearance of Jesus; but they are mentioned here because Galilee was appointed to be the scene of His manifestation of Himself to the largest assembly of witnesses, and of His most decisive instructions.

8. They trembled and were amazed. Matthew adds that they had great joy as well as fear. "Fear at what they had seen, joy at what they had heard; and both mingled because the latter seemed too good to be true." Neither said they anything to any; they did not stop to tell the news to any one while on the way to the apostles.

II. OUR LORD'S APPEARANCE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION. Vols. 9-12.

FIRST APPEARANCE. 9. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. This appearance is described more fully in John 20: 11-17. She was standing near the sepulchre when Jesus appeared to her. The appearance was so unexpected that she did not recognize Him at first; but she was soon convinced. Why He appeared to Mary Magdalene: (1) To display the exceeding riches of His grace; (2) to reward her pious assiduity; (3) to give encouragement to all future penitents to the end of time. Out of whom he had cast seven devils: demons, recorded in Luke 8: 2. No wonder she loved her Saviour, and went earliest to His tomb.

10. And she went and told them. She reached the gathering-place of the disciples before the other women did, who were detained on the way by the appearance of Jesus to them; as we learn from the fact that they still mourned and wept.

11. And they... believed not. One witness was not enough to assure them that the resurrection was a fact; she might be mistaken. Moreover, why did she not tell them of her vision? Did she doubt? But "their disbelief was overruled for good; for it furnishes abundant proof that they did not invent the story of the resurrection."

FOURTH APPEARANCE. 12. After that: on the afternoon of the same day He had shown Himself to Mary Magdalene. He appeared in another form. Not in a different body, but only it seemed different to them, because, as Luke explains, their eyes were hidden. Unto two of them: Cleopas, and another disciple. Went into the country. To Emmaus, seven or eight miles to the north-west of Jerusalem. For an account of this appearance, see Luke 24: 13-31.

13. And they went: back to Jerusalem, to the upper room where the ten disciples were assembled (Luke 24: 33). And told it. They related their whole interesting interview. "Neither believed they them. And yet they said (Luke 24: 33, 34), "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." But there is no real contradiction. Sometimes they would almost receive the glad truth, and then the improbabilities—almost impossibilities—of the case would throw them back again into the dark turmoil of doubts.

PROOF OF THE RESURRECTION COMPLETE. I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidences of those who have written about them; and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the mind of a fair inquirer, than that Christ died, and rose again from the dead. (1) The apostles had the most absolute faith in the fact, so that they based their hopes and their preaching upon it, and were ready to announce it everywhere. (2) Their faith carried them into opposition to their previous beliefs and worldly interests. (3) They had every opportunity for thoroughly satisfying themselves on the point. (4) By their declaration of the fact they induced thousands of the true disciples of Christ to believe in it, and that close to the time and near the very spot on which it occurred. The early church universally believed in it; and it is incredible that a myth, a false story, should have so grown up without substantial foundation. (5) It is attested this fact not only by their lives, but by their death. (6) Only the fact of the resurrection can account for the marvellous change in the spirit and character of the apostles. The resurrection completely transformed them; inspired them with a new confidence of hopeless cases, and gave to all people of the New Testament, but by the almost universal consent of the church, which could not endure to observe as a day of joy and gladness, that on which Christ lay in the tomb, nor forbear to mark as a weekly festival, that on which He arose. (7) The very existence of the Christian church is a proof of the resurrection of Jesus. "Faith in mere visions or phantoms may produce plants, but not such a phenomenon as the Christian church, the greatest fact and the mightiest influence in the history of the world." (8) The works Christ has been doing ever since in the world are a proof that he who does them is a risen, living Saviour—the conversion of Paul, the victory over the Roman Empire, the evangelizing progress of Christianity, the marvellous works of conversion and revival, the fruits of the spirit.

For Neuralgia—a novel cure—which we hardly believe if true, will ever become popular—is vouched for, it is said, by a correspondent of the New York Sun. An Irish girl in Patterson, N. J., had suffered with Neuralgia of the head and face until almost frantic with pain; actually beating the wall with her head to cause insensibility. Her employer having heard that a Dr. Tere had cured rheumatism by the sting of a wasp, asked the girl the reason for her courage born of despair she exclaimed, "Any other torture would be a pleasure beside this." A yellow wasp was obtained, and vexed into stinging her face. Within a few moments the pain ceased, the girl fell asleep, and, strange to say, never again had an attack of neuralgia. Well, we don't blame her. The remedy was probably too heroic for a second dose. A learned specialist when told this yarn remarked, "The pain may have stopped temporarily, but you can only believe it temporary." Continued he, "It is a fact that a sudden shock to inflamed and painful nerves will stop pain," but the remedy is worse than the disease, as many unthinking people in after years find out, who apply fiery and dangerous compounds externally to stop Neuralgia and Rheumatism. They only continue to shock their nervous system, ignorant of the fact that, as in the morphine or alcohol habit, their mental and moral nature is thus gradually being destroyed. Make haste, slowly, if you expect to cure any nerve disease; was the advice to a lady by a friend who had been cured of chronic Neuralgia by using

for some time Johnson's Anodyne Linctus inhaled, taken internally, and applied externally, as advised in the wrapper around every bottle. Neuralgia is a fever or inflammation of the nerves, and only by degrees can any inflammation be cured; and then only by an anodyne treatment. Old Dr. Johnson had this in mind when he devised his Anodyne Linctus; a remedy now known to nearly every one, and it deserves to be. Surely, medicine without real merit could not have survived for eighty years, as this one has done.

The average man usually finds himself at sea when he undertakes a description of a lady's dress. An old farmer, returning from the wedding of a niece in a distant city, was eagerly questioned by his family as to the bride's costume. "Well," said he, "she had on some sort of a dress, with a lot of flub-dub-berry of some kind or 'nother down the front of it and a thing-a-ma-jig on the back of it, with a long tail of some kind, and I don't know what it was, dragging out behind, and a lot of flip-flop founces over the whole thing. The wa'n't no arms to it, and she had a lot of white truck, soft and floppy like, on her head, and that's just all I know about it." All of which must have been very unsatisfactory to the ladies of his household.

A box of Ayer's Pills has saved many a fit of sickness. When a remedy does not happen to be within reach, people are liable to neglect slight ailments, and, of course, if serious illness follows, they have to suffer the consequences. "A stitch in time save nine."

Each single, separate little day should be a miniature life, complete in itself. God gives us life by days, and with each day he gives an allotment of duty, a portion of his plan to be wrought out, a fragment of his will to be done. Says Faber: "Every hour comes with some little fragment of God's will fastened upon its back." Our highest mission is to find that bit of divine will and do it. Well lived days make completed years, and the years, completed as they come, make a life beautiful and full. In such a life preparation for death is needed. He who lives thus in the next, and the last day prepares for glory. A true life is a ladder, and the days each lift the feet a step higher, and the last one brings us to heaven's gate.—Presbyterian Observer.

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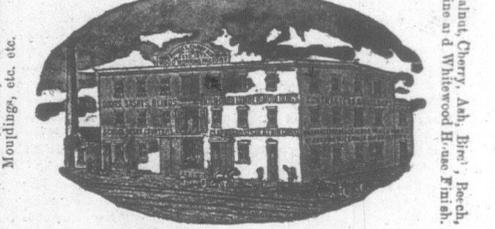
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