

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON XXXV.

August 20, 1874. POWER OVER DEATH. { MARK V. 22, 29, 33-43 }

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 35, 36. PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Matt. ix. 18-20; Luke viii. 41-56. With vs. 35, 36, read Matt. xxi. 22; with v. 37, read Matt. xvi. 1; with vs. 33, 39, read John xi. 11; with v. 40, read Acts ix. 40; with vs. 41-43, read Matt. xii. 16, 17, and Isa. lii. 13.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Christ conquers death. LEADING TEXT.—The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.—John v. 25.

We can in an orderly way study this lesson, as a miracle prayed for; delayed; performed; and witnessed; four points of easy recollection, round which all the facts and truths can be grouped.

I. THE MIRACLE PRAYED FOR, v. 22. The synagogue was like our "church," meaning sometimes the building, sometimes the people worshipping there. The word means meeting-house. The Jews met on their Sabbath for Scripture-reading, prayer, praise, and instruction in the Word. As churches among us elect officers to regulate and manage, so they did in the synagogues. They of course chose their best men, called them rulers and also "elders of the Jews" (Luke vii. 8; see; Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 24), and very properly, respected them much. They had usually several in each synagogue. (Acts xiii. 15.)

One of them, apparently in Capernaum. Called Jairus, came to Christ with his great sorrow. He showed respect, not perhaps worship as to God, to Jesus by falling at his feet. Grief is eloquent and simple. We almost see and hear him plead: "My daughter—my little daughter—my only daughter (Luke viii. 42)—is just dying—hardly living now—as good as dead (Matt. ix. 18)—we can do nothing. Oh, come and lay thy hand upon her, that she may be healed! I know if thou wilt, she shall live."

He did not see everything clearly, as for example that to speak the word would serve (see Luke vii. 7-9, but it was a great deal for "a ruler." The reply was in deed; "Jesus went" (v. 24), and the spectators, intent on a scene, and taking Christ's act as a promise of compliance, crowded along.

While the mighty and meroful deed of our last lesson is being done, and before we go to the house of mourning, let us pause and think, Parents, with little daughters, they may sicken and die. Do not depend too much on them. Brothers, your bright little sisters may die. Be very kind to them. Girls you may be called out of life even as girls of twelve. Be sure you know, love, and obey Christ, that you may go to a better life, whenever you are called away.

II. THE MIRACLE DELAYED; by that of the last Lesson, and so is the report of it. While Jesus heals and helps the woman on the way, the report comes that all is over. Can anything be learned from the delay? Christ's ways are not as ours. He was sent for in a case of life and death, and a woman sick for twelve years, who might well afford to wait, stops him. We should have hastened him to Jairus' house, as earnest supplicants for child, or wife, or husband desire the answer to prayer, just now. But the delay was better here than haste, as raising from the dead is greater than raising from a sick bed.

Was Jairus impatient of the delay? He certainly was ill-informed as to Christ's power, when he thought "laying hands" on his child essential to a miracle by Christ. Let him see the cure of a sufferer of twelve years' living death. It will help him believe that in any way He pleases, Jesus can deal with his child of twelve years' life. And according to faith is the blessing.

"One thing at a time" is a good rule for weak men in common things; but we must not bind by it the infinite and almighty Saviour. And indeed his people grow to resemble him, and with main objects before them, yet do a great deal by the way. Jesus had not forgotten the original request; nor did he forget the feelings of the man whom he was teaching and preparing to help; for when the bar news travelled fast, "Thy daughter is dead" (v. 35), he hastened with the word: "Be not afraid, only believe" (v. 36).

III. THE MIRACLE PERFORMED. The Saviour, unheeding the message that the child was dead, except to re-assume the father, reaches the house, finds the usual noise and excitement, very noticeable among those unrestrained by conventional propriety, everywhere expected and arranged for in the East. He is calm. "Why make ye this ado and weep? She is, &c., v. 39. (See the scene in the case of Lazarus—the delay thou—the trial of the sister's faith—the crowd of Jews—the glory of God.) "Sleepeth" describes not a death-like sleep, or swoon, but death, real, as in the case of Lazarus. (John xi. 11.) The "sleep" in both cases respects his intended awaking, and is used not only as all men imply the word, but to keep up expectant faith in the father.

"He put them all out," but the intended witness. He entered the room—life invading the realm of death—he took in his cold, nerveless hand, he said there we know the very syllables Jesus uttered in Aramaic two words, *Talitha cumi*. They are literally rendered, but not in spirit. "Talitha" is a word of *petting*, of endearment, derived, Gesenius thinks, from the word for "lamb" (they call a child "lambie," in Scotland, as a term of endearment). "Darling arise," it has been said, would better reproduce the tone of this kind; life-giving word. "And straightway," so immediate and obvious was the result, she arose and walked (v. 42), for she was not a mere infant as might be inferred from the term first employed by the father—a diminutive of affection (v. 23), but twelve years of age. They were astonished (v. 42), as well they might be, but Jesus does not

linger to enjoy the surprise (nor does the writer expatiate on it). He has his fathers work to do. What was quite necessary to one brought to instant health, after a wasting and fatal sickness, and might in the joy of the time have been overlooked by the rejoicing household, the never-forgetting Jesus' orders, "Give her no moment" (v. 43). And with the restraint imposed on their tendency to voluble news-carrying (which we consider under IV.), the record of this incident of strange beauty closes.

IV. THE MIRACLE WITNESSED. We should have said, let all the crowd see and be silenced! Not so Jesus. Apart from delicacy of feeling toward this young girl, there was an usefulness in this crowd for such a spectacle. These scoffers that "laughed him to scorn" (v. 40), these hired mourners, who according to the custom of the East sold their noisy grief by the day or hour, these mere sight-seers whose shallow levity is foreign to anything deep or real, what would it avail that they thronged the room to see how he did it.

He has witnesses enough (Deut. xvi. 6)—the father and the mother, who had a natural right to be there, and whose presence would reassure her. Peter, James and John, who, as on two other later occasions (Matt xvii. 1, and xvi. 37) were alone with him, to remember it themselves, and report to the disciples; the necessary testimony of all who knew her to be dead, and had set about the funeral pomp, who laughed at the idea of her being anything but dead, and deprecated "troubling the Master with a hopeless case" (v. 35). These could testify in due time. They saw her walk, and had evidence of her restoration.

Jesus shows himself able to overcome death. He educates the disciples into this belief, by an ascending series of wonders—a young girl just dead, a widow's son on the way to the grave, and presumably seeing corruption. So he can deal spiritually with the *simply ungodly*, barely dead, like this young girl; with the *wicked*, far gone in sin, obviously on the way to ruin; and with the *most abandoned* "twice dead," who are "utterly perishing in their own corruption." Nothing is too hard for the Lord: and if men perish, it is not because the case was beyond his power, but because it was not brought to him.

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

Where was this miracle wrought—for whom—what was Jairus—how rulers chosen—for what purpose—how regarded—the favour asked—the extremity of the case—the Lord's compliance—the interruption—the lessons to us—to Jairus—the manner of restoring—the consideration of Jesus—the witnesses—why exclude the crowd—why admit the parents—the Lord's words—the accompanying act—the result—the impression—the charge given and the lessons to us.

Thoughts on Dress.

As I walk along the streets I am grieved at the many instances of deformity among the female sex. Pity is awakened, although these monstrosities are not natural. O if woman had come from the hand of the Maker thus misshapen and distorted, what repining there would be! But, slaves to inexorable Fashion, they tamely wear their chains, and submissively stoop to her tyranny.

Walking beside a straight, naturally-formed man, how pitiable appear the poor deformed creatures. Looking at one of these wasp-like waists, carrying its load behind, one instinctively draws a long breath, and wonders if it has a diaphragm, and whether there is room for those vital organs that lie about it. Seriously, is it not sad that one should not only abuse the "temple of God," but squander thought and time on mere outward adornment, when so many noble pursuits might occupy the time, and dignify the talents of immortal beings? Think of days and weeks spent fixing up these fashion-plates, with puffs and folds, frills and flowers! Why must a refined, intellectual, virtuous woman be bound in this thralldom of fashion, following unquestioningly in ornament and dress the lead of French courtisans and heathen savages, piercing the flesh for trinkets, and burdening head and hips with unseemly appendages?

Aspecially sad is it to see professed followers of Christ lay down to this yoke, instead of being a law unto themselves. Kindly I ask, is this the mind of Christ? That God looks upon thus unmeasured folly with displeasure, plain from Isaiah iii, and 1 Tim. ii. 9, and many other passages where modesty and non-conformity to the world are enjoined.

If "holiness to the Lord" were written upon our wardrobe, would not a distinction in dress appear between the children of this world and the children of the light? Did we take less thought for raiment, how much time and treasure now lost, might be consecrated to the Lord! If we have not the spirit of Christ we are none of His. He came to sanctify unto Himself a "peculiar people." My sisters, are we such?—*Guardian of Health*.

Active Benevolence.

Benevolence is not a thing to be taken up by chance, and put by at once to make way for every employment which savors of self-interest. It is the largest part of our business, beginning with our home duties, and extending itself to the utmost verge of humanity. A vague feeling of kindness toward our fellow-creatures is no state of mind to rest in. It is enough for us to be able to say that nothing of human interest is alien to us, and that we give our acquiescence, or, indeed, our transient assistance, to any scheme of benevolence that may come in our way. No; it is promoting the welfare of others, we must toil; we must devote to it earnest thought, constant care and zealous endeavor. The few moments in the course of each day which a man absorbs in some worldly pursuit may carelessly expand in kind words or charities to those around him—kindness to an animal is one of these—and are perhaps, in the sight of Heaven, the only time that he has lived to any purpose worthy of recording.—*Arthur Helps*.

The Jew and His Daughter.

As I was going through the western part of Virginia (says an American writer) an old clergyman gave me a short account of a Jew, which greatly delighted me. He was preaching to his people, when he saw a man enter having every mark of a Jew on his face. He was well dressed, and his looks seemed to tell he had been in great sorrow. He took his seat, and listened in a serious and devout manner, while a tear was often seen to wet his cheek. After the service the clergyman went up to him and said, "Sir, am I not speaking to one of the sons of Abraham?" "You are," he replied. "But how is it that I meet a Jew in a Christian Church?" In reply to these questions, he gave the following account.

He had been well educated, had come from London and with his books, his riches, and a lovely daughter of seventeen, had found a charming retreat on the fruitful banks of the Ohio. He had buried his wife before he left England, and he knew no pleasure but the company of his dear child. She was indeed, worthy of a parent's love. Her mind was well informed, her disposition amiable; she could read and speak with ease various languages; and her manners pleased all who saw her. No wonder then that a doating father, whose head had now become sprinkled with grey, should place his whole affections on this loving child. Being a strict Jew, he brought her up in the strictest principles of her religion. It was not long ago that his daughter was taken ill. The rose faded from her cheek; her eye lost its fire, her strength decayed; and it soon became too certain that death was creeping over her frame. The father hung over her bed with a heart ready to burst with anguish. He often tried to talk with her, but could seldom speak except by his tears. He spared no expense of trouble to get her medical help, but no human skill could save her life. The father was walking in a wood near his house when he was sent for by his dying daughter; with a heavy heart he entered the door of her room. He was now to take a last farewell of his child, and his religion gave him but feeble hope of seeing her hereafter. The child grasped the hand of her parent with a death-cold hand.

"My father, do you love me?" "My child, you know that I love you: that you are more dear to me than all the world besides."

"But, father, do you love me?" "Why my child, will you give me pain? Have I never given you any proof of my love?"

"But, my dearest father, do you love me?" The father could not answer.

The child added; "I know my dear father, you have ever loved me; you have been the kindest of parents, and I tenderly love you; will you grant me one request? Oh! father, it is the dying request of your daughter; will you grant it?"

"My dearest child I ask what you will though it take every farthing of my property whatever it may be, it shall be granted: I will grant it."

"Dear father," replied the girl, "I beg you never again to speak against Jesus of Nazareth."

The father was dumb with surprise.

"I know but little," added the dying girl, "about this Jesus" for J was never taught; but I know that He is a Saviour; for He has made Himself known to me while I have been ill, even for the salvation of my soul. I believe He will save me, though I never before loved Him. And now, my dear father, do not deny me; I beg that you will never again speak against this Jesus of Nazareth. I entreat you to obtain a Testament that tells of Him, and I pray that you may know Him, and that when I am no more, you may bestow on Him the love that was formerly mine."

The labor of speaking here overcame her feeble body. She stopped, and the father's heart was too full even for tears. He left the room in great horror of mind; and ere he could recover his spirits, the soul of his dear daughter had taken its flight, as I trust to that dear Saviour whom she loved and honored.

The first thing the parent did after he had buried his child, was to procure a new Testament. This he read; and taught by the Spirit from above, is now numbered among the meek and happy followers of Christ.—*Church of England Magazine*.

Does it Pay.

The late Rev. Leland Howard, Vt., in the faithful discharge of his pastoral duties, took occasion quite often to urge, personally, on one of his hearers an attention to religion. At length the repeated conversation became so distasteful, that in an irritated manner, he repelled all further advances by declaring most emphatically that if he ever took that liberty again he would never pay another cent toward his salary. With a shrewd knowledge of human nature, and with wisdom often born of love, he forebore all further personal conversation when they met, but he would tap him on the shoulder and simply ask, "Does it pay?" Time went on, and the good, faithful pastor, crowned with years and the honors of a long and useful life, went through the gate of death to be with Christ. But his words remained like a nail fastened by the Master of assemblies; and the man whose salvation he so often sought to secure became a Christian. Then he told what feelings that brief question produced. He said, "I had rather he had said the whole than to ask the question, 'Does it pay?' And O," said he, "if he were only living now, that I could tell him so, what a privilege it would be!"

The American Board meets this year in Rutland, Vermont, and the people are already beginning to get ready for the coming up of the tribes. Dr. Scudder (Brooklyn), is to preach the sermon.

The Presbyterians are talking of a new book house and newspaper organ in Indianapolis.

Reminiscences of Renfrew

A correspondent sends us the following extract from a local paper. It will be interesting to many of our readers.—

Some time in the year 1847 (your readers will bear in mind that I am writing from memory alone, as I have not a single note or memorandum to refer to) a Mr. Coon made his appearance at White Lake. This gentleman was the first minister who preached in the County of Renfrew under the Free Church banner. From the first day of his appearance the Free Church in McNab and Horton assumed a positive form; and to-day, when I look back and note the singular rays that Providence took to bring about His own purposes, I am more and more convinced how futile it is for man to propose whilst He who rules can so effectually dispose. Scarcely had Mr. Coon proclaimed his mission, when a small but earnest few rallied around him at White Lake, at whose head was Mr. John F., an earnest workman. Then at Burnstown there was John H. and Alex. F., of Alex. F. I cannot say whether this is the great, great-grandson of the historic Janet of cutting stool notoriety or not, but this I will say of him, if earnest zeal and faith in the justness of the Free Church claims, and a holy jealousy for his Master's cause would give him a claim to such an honoured title, then I would say, "Alex., you are a true and direct descendant of Auld Janet's."—"Look here, man," said he to me, one day, in the midst of a rather hot dispute, clutching me by the arm, "do ye see the Madawaska there?" "Yes," said I. "Well, as soon as you see it running up to the head again, as expect to see the Free Church gang back and no find a filling in McNab."

—John H., calm and quiet but whose faith was equally strong, a fitting companion to calm the impetuous zeal of Alex. F. and John McR., men fitted to lead. Then down at Castleford there were the good old Storgys, who became as it were, by a sort of instinct, the leaders of the people. Your readers of the present day can form no idea how rapidly groups of earnest men and women formed themselves into stations at the four points I have just mentioned, and how naturally the gentleman whose initials I have given became a leader in each section. From this sprang the Free Church in the County of Renfrew. How long Mr. Coon remained I am unable to say. After him came the Rev. Ewen Cameron, whose stay was a short one. Neither of these gentlemen had I the pleasure of seeing. Then came Mr. Luck better known as Father Luck. Him I heard frequently. Then came the impetuous Andrew Melville. I will never forget the first time I heard him. It was in a small shanty, about two miles from Renfrew, known as McRena's School-house. He preached from James, first chapter and 25th verse: "But whose loatheth into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein," &c., &c. Never was a text more fully chosen, and never was a text more clearly expounded and applied to the peculiar times in which we were then living. I think that even now I could almost give the preacher's burning words verbatim. That day fixed the Free Church in Renfrew. In the meantime churches were spoken of as about to be built at White Lake and at Burnstown. After Andrew Melville came to the Rev. S. C. Fraser. Who sent for him, or how he came I cannot tell, but this I can tell, that the first night he and his family spent in Renfrew, it was under your correspondent's roof. Rather strange for such a rapid Old Kirkman to do the like; still it was. Shortly after, Mr. Fraser was inducted at White Lake; in the School-house as Pastor of the Congregation of McNab and Horton, comprising three stations, viz. White Lake, Burnstown, and Castleford. No mention of Renfrew yet as a station; but as yet not a Church was built; school-houses and barns answered the place of churches.—I could relate to you many incidents that I would give some idea of the spirit which prevailed at this time between the two parties, whose lines were now so distinctly drawn. Let one suffice. Mrs. John McR., of the Free Church party, in common with some other zealous ladies, set about raising funds to purchase a Communion service for sacramental purposes. She presented her list to an Old Kirkman and gently solicited a subscription. He, in a most abrupt and uncourteous way, said, No; he had nothing to do with such things: to go to his wife. Nothing put out by such a rebuff, Mrs. McR. gently put her hand on the shoulder of the irate man and said "W., don't be angry; you will be one of us yet." He gave a dry laugh, and went off. Mark, the sequel! In the month of July following, sacrament was dispensed at Castleford. W. was present at the Communion table, and the Communion service was to be used for the first time. S. C. took the bread, broke it, gave it to the communicants; took the cup, blessed it, gave it to the first communicant, who was none other but our stubborn friend W.

The Methodist mission press at Lucknow publishes three periodicals—an English weekly, an Urdu Roman bi-weekly, and a Persian Urdu monthly.

Berlin has 100,000 less inhabitants than New York; yet the American metropolis has 470 places of worship and the German only 60.

The joy of the spirit is a delicate, sacred deposit, and must be kept in a pure casket: an unholy breath will dim its lustre and add its freshness.—*Cecil*.

Love is like war in this, that a soldier, though he has escaped the week complete Saturday night, may nevertheless be shot through his heart on Sunday morning.—*Sterne*.

We meet selfishness everywhere, in every enterprise, but the gospel cures, or overcomes it. From the beginning it has impeded and burdened the cause of Christ, yet the good work has gone on. In raising the Memorial Fund, it resists, complains, criticises, growls, sets up all sorts of objections, but the Fund keeps growing; love of souls, faith, love for Christ, refuse to stop the work and go down into the "plains of Ono." Selfishness always gets and behaves badly, tries to make trouble when any great work is attempted for God.

'cut me Deep.'

Last summer a missionary, recently returned from India, stepped into a third class carriage on his way into the country, and seated himself at the door. As the train approached a village, one of his fellow-travellers, pointing to a cottage, said, "There is my house, sir, and in a drawer there I have a Bible that I paid fifty-two shillings for!" "A large sum, indeed!" said Mr. S.; and then putting his hand on the man's shoulder, added, "But my friend, a Bible in a drawer at home will do you no good! Let me tell you what a dying woman in India said to me. She took her Bible from under the pillow, and clasping it in both hands, said, 'I have my Lord Jesus here.' Then, putting her hand on her heart, she said, 'I have my Lord Jesus there for me.'"

The effect of these words on the man was as if he had been shot. He flung himself back in the seat, covered his face with his hands, saying again and again, "You've cut me deep—you've cut me deep." Just at that moment, the train arriving at the station, the poor fellow took hold of both of Mr. S.'s hands, saying, "God bless you, sir! God bless you! but oh! you've cut me deep!" and disappeared, overcome by his feeling.

Christian reader—at least, Christian by name—like the man cut deep, you have Christ in your Bible, but have you him in your heart? "Christ in you the hope of glory." He who finished his Father's work on earth is now seated on his Father's right hand in glory. He is there for God and for us who believe. Can you, with the poor Hindoo woman, say, as you look up to heaven, "I have my Lord Jesus there for me?" or is your Christianity, like the man's Bible, hidden-out of sight? Better to live and void a heathen, than with God's own word in your house to be only a Christian by name, and at the judgment to have the poor Hindoo rise up and condemn you.—*Good Words*.

Miserable Comforters.

Baldad and Elphaz had the gift of language, and with their words almost bothered Job's life out. Alas! for these voluble people that go among the houses of the afflicted, and talk, and talk, and talk, and talk. They rehearse their own sorrows, and then they tell the poor sufferers that they feel badly now, but they will feel worse after a while. Silence! Do you expect with a thip court plaster or words, to heal a wound deep as the soul? Step very gently around about a broken heart. Talk very softly around those whom God has bereft. Then go your way. Deep sympathy has not much to say. A firm grasp of the hand, a compassionate look, just one word that means as much as a whole dictionary, and you have given, perhaps, all the comfort that a soul needs. A man has a terrible wound in his arm. The surgeon comes and binds it up. "Now," he says, "carry that arm in a sling, and be very careful of it. Let no one touch it." But the neighbors have heard of the accident, and they come in, and they say: "Let us see it." And the bandage is pulled off, and this one and that one must feel it and see how much it is swollen, and there is irritation, and inflammation, and exasperation where there ought to be healing and cooling. The surgeon comes in, and says, "What does all this mean? You have no business to touch those bandages. That wound will never heal unless you let it alone." So there are souls broken down in sorrow. What they most want is rest, or very gentle treatment; but the neighbors have heard of the bereavement or of the loss, and they come in to sympathize, and they say: "Show us now the wound. What were his last words? Rehearse now the whole scene. How did you feel when you found you were an orphan?" Tearing off the bandages here, and pulling them off there, leaving a ghastly wound that the balm of God's grace had already begun to heal. Oh, let no loquacious people, with ever-rattling tongues, go into the homes of the distressed.—*Talmage*.

The New York correspondent of the *Jewish Chronicle* gives a very doleful account of Judaism in America. We are told that a little over a year ago there was only one Jewish Rabbi in all New York able to preach in English. No college existed, one that had been opened at Philadelphia had failed, and no Jewish young men showed any inclination to enter the ministry, "on as lean a salary as ever blessed a Methodist itinerant." Judaism was apparently in a dying state. The prospect of 70,000 Israelites with but one English preacher, and he verging on threescore years and ten, was melancholy for professors of the faith. A slight improvement has, however, taken place within the past year. There are now several gentlemen, most of them foreigners, able to preach occasionally in English. One of them, Mr. S. Jacobs, excites high hope in the Jewish community—his lectures "having given much satisfaction at a salary of 5000 dollars a year." The gain of Mr. Jacobs is compensated by the loss of a still more popular preacher in the person of Dr. Vivader, who has just had a singular call from San Francisco. "The doctor," says the correspondent, "was sleeping the other night or rather at early morn, when a loud knock was heard at the window. Awakened, he went to the window and received a telegram wherein he read that he had been unanimously elected rabbi preacher of the congregation of 'Shearith Israel' of San Francisco, at a salary of \$5000 in gold coin and house rent, or \$6000 and no house rent." The doctor professes himself "taken by surprise"—not at the unseemly hour at which he had been disturbed, which was to be accounted for by the difference in longitude of San Francisco and New York—but that the offer should be made to him un solicited. The correspondent had a chat just before despatching his letter, with a gentleman from New Orleans, who "does not speak glowing of affairs in that city, so far as Judaism is concerned." The Sabbath is violated, and there is "a total want of Jewish feeling in a Jewish enthusiasm." "The fact is, said the gentleman, in confidence, 'some of our people's pockets fill faster than their minds; the pockets go up in mind; the mind goes down to the dust.'"