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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

LESSON XI. Dec. 14, 1919.

At the Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus.—John 18: 15-27; 19: 25-27.

Commentary.—I. Peter and John at the high priest's palace (18: 15-18). 15. Simon Peter followed Jesus—Jesus was taken first before Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, for a preliminary hearing. Caiaphas had said to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people (John 18: 14). The eleven disciples had forsaken Jesus and fled when he was arrested, but Peter and "another disciple," almost certainly John, followed Jesus to the palace of the high priest. John was acquainted with the high priest and went into the palace, but Peter remained outside. 16. Brought in Peter—The description here is minute and indicates that the writer of the narrative was a witness of what was done. John was interested in his fellow disciples and made use of his acquaintance with the high priest in favor of him. Peter, in common with the other disciples, had been quick to forsake Jesus, but he was quick to come back to see what would be done with him. 17. The damsel that kept the door—The one to whom John spoke, requesting her to admit Peter. Art not thou also one of this man's disciples—This question came with suddenness and directness to Peter. The young woman recognized him as one of the disciples of Jesus, and in her contemptuous question accused him. He saith, I am not.—John had hurried on to the room where Christ was being examined; as at the cross (John 19: 26) he kept close to the Master; and in neither case was he molested. Peter, who "followed afar off," and that more out of curiosity to see the end (Matt. 26: 58) than out of love, encountered temptation and fell.—Cam. Bib. 18. Peter stood with them—Peter mingled with the servants and officers who were warning themselves about a fire, thus hoping to escape observation.

II. Jesus before the high priest (18: 19-24). 19. The high priest—It was probably Annas, here spoken of as high priest, who was conducting the examination of our Lord. Asked Jesus of his disciples—the high priest desired to have Jesus tell him what sort of persons and how many were his followers. It was but four days before this that Jesus was received in triumph into Jerusalem. Of his doctrine—Many different reports of Jesus' teachings must have come to the ears of the high priest and he wished to receive from Jesus himself a statement of what he was proclaiming. 20. I spake openly—Jesus had nothing to hide. He had spoken openly in the synagogue and in the temple. There was full opportunity for all to hear what his teachings were. Whether the Jews always resort—Jesus gave the Jews who were demanding his death credit for being religious in their regard for the synagogue and in the temple worship. In secret have I said nothing—He had taught no doctrines which were not open to all the world. He was engaged in not plot against the government or against the Jewish ecclesiastical system. He was fostering no secret conclave. His language is a reproof applicable to the secretism of the present day. 21. Ask them which heard me—Jesus respectfully and firmly declined to review his teachings there and referred the high

priest to those who had listened to him in his ministry. They know what I said—Those who had heard him and were unfriendly to him knew his doctrines, whether they would report them candidly or not. 22. One of the officers . . . struck Jesus—This officer would show that he considered Jesus' answer an insult to the high priest and therefore inflicted the blow. He was doubtless moved also by personal prejudice and hatred. 23. Jesus answered—The reply of Jesus was unanswerable. If it was thought that he had said anything wrong or injurious, there should have been testimony offered to prove it. If he had said nothing out of the way, the blow was not deserved. In either case he should not have been struck. 24. Sent him bound—Jesus was being treated as a dangerous criminal. Jewish hatred had decreed his death, and he was being led "as a lamb to the slaughter." He was taken from the ex-high priest to Caiaphas, the high priest. In the course of his trial he appeared before Annas and twice before the Sanhedrin, also before Pilate twice and before Herod.

III. Peter's denials (18: 25-27). 25. Art not thou also one of his disciples—Peter's eagerness to know what would be done with Jesus brought him into a close place. He must take his position for Jesus or against him. He denied it—This was the second of the three denials of which Jesus had warned him. Peter was not prepared, even with all his declared loyalty to Jesus, to stand up for him when the test came. He could not use his sword to defend him, but he failed to use his tongue in the right way in the critical time. 26. Did not see thee in the garden with him. It was difficult for Peter to hide his identity. Not only did his speech betray him, but he had been seen by one of the servants of the high priest in the garden where he was prominent for his defence of Jesus. 27. He denied again—In the face of all the evidence against him Peter persisted in denying Jesus, even resorting to oaths in his denial. Immediately the cock crew—Peter was thus reminded of what Jesus had said to him. "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter" (Luke 22: 61), and this look so deeply affected him that he "went out and wept bitterly" (Luke 22: 62). His penitence was deep and effectual. He sought Christ's body in the tomb on the third day after the crucifixion. Jesus sent a special message to him after his resurrection.

IV. Jesus provides for his mother (19: 25-27). 25. There stood by the cross—There were many present at the crucifixion to "rail on" Jesus (Mary 19: 25), but there were some present who had loving regard for him. The three Marys are mentioned by name and there were other women present (Matt. 27: 55). 26. When Jesus therefore saw—He was conscious; and in the midst of his sufferings he was solicitous for his mother. The disciple whom he loved—John, who modestly refrained from mentioning his own name. Woman, behold thy son—It is probable that Joseph was dead and Mary was a widow. Jesus arranged for a new and tender relation between his mother and John that she might be well cared for. John was at the cross and received this high honor. 27. Behold thy mother—A large responsibility was placed upon John, but not a burden.

QUESTIONS.—Whether did Peter and John follow Jesus? What question was asked Peter, and what was the reply? What questions did the high priest ask Jesus? What answer did Jesus give? What insult was offered to Jesus? Who was the high priest? Who was Annas? How many times did Peter declare he was not one of Jesus' disciples? Who stood by the cross after Jesus was placed on it? What did Jesus say to his mother? What did he say to John?

PRACTICAL SURVEY.
 Topic—What the crucifixion meant to Peter and John.

I. The arrest of Jesus.



II. The trial of Jesus.
 III. The crucifixion of Jesus.

I. The arrest of Jesus. The essential significance of the events which we are studying lies in the divine intention expressed therein. They have relations of infinite depth. The connecting link between the preceding and the present lesson was the arrest of Jesus following immediately upon the agony in Gethsemane. With this began the outward shame and torture of the passion. His advance, avowal and the manifestation of His power express the wholly voluntary nature of His surrender. Afterward He spoke confidently of help available, which would have swept His enemies from the field (Matt. 20: 55).

II. The trial of Jesus. Of the disciples only John and Peter were present at the trial of Jesus, and the former, only, at the crucifixion. The accounts of the four evangelists should be carefully studied and compared. The ecclesiastical authorities were the investigators and eagerly sought to secure the consummation of their murderous purposes. By them the case had been prejudged and the end determined (John 18: 14). The whole procedure has passed into history as an unparalleled instance of brutality and injustice, branding the perpetrators with enduring infamy. Observing the letter of the law, the spirit of it was ruthlessly violated. Disagreeing witnesses nullified their testimony, which was a garbled misrepresentation of Christ's words. Upon His own calm avowal of His Messiahship and divinity He was condemned. The scene shifts to the judgment hall of Pilate, and a charge of sedition is proffered His innocence, and an effort to shift responsibility transferred Him to Herod's jurisdiction, from which He returned, mocked, bruised and beaten, but acquitted. A re-examination by Pilate confirmed his earlier decision and enlisted renewed efforts to secure His release, which should have rested upon a judicial decision wholly. The result was a shameless surrender of personal and judicial honor, the release of a bandit and the surrender of Christ to the demands of the mob, instigated by the high priests.

III. The crucifixion of Jesus. The purpose of destruction which from infancy had followed Jesus was about to be fulfilled. Two things we must hold firmly in mind. His death was voluntary. It was expiatory. He who was the "Life" could not die by disease or accident. The alternative was a voluntary surrender of life, which He accomplished by a violent death at the hands of His enemies. The cross and the victim were both ready, and heaven consented to the sacrifice. It was the great day of world atonement. In the crucifixion sin attained its last possibility and redeeming love its highest expression. The cross has become the most expressive of earthly symbols because it exhibits Christ's perfect identity with sinful men. It is worthy of remark that representative of the race, Jews and Gentiles, united in an unwitting accomplishment of a redemption including all. In the hours on the cross lay the crisis of the world, and in its agony the conflict of the ages concentrates. The gloom which enveloped the "whole land" was but the twilight of the divine forsakenness.

Meat vs. Vegetables

How did our ancestors take to eating flesh food? Did one of them suddenly conclude to serve up one of his enemies for lunch after he had slain him in combat? Or did he take to eating meat from physiologic necessity, after the stores of wild vegetable proteins had failed him? And has his meat diet improved his abilities as a fighter? Here, apparently, vegetarians and flesh-eaters do not agree. The war just ended has certainly demonstrated that there is still in man much of the wild beast. Dr. Harry Campbell, a London physician, who believes both in fighting and in flesh-eating, seeks, in an article in the *Lancet* (London) to find an explanation for human savagery and ferocity in man's acquired carnivorous habits. He says: "It was a condition entailed by a hunting career which brought about the evolution of the primate ape into man. For, observe the curious situation—assuredly one of the most eventful and dramatic in the whole of man's evolution—when this creature took to hunting. Here was a being lacking the stereotyped equipment for slaughter, instinctive and anatomical of the carnivora, but with an intelligence surpassing that of any other creature, and endowed with prehensile hands capable of giving effect to that intelligence. "The fact that carnivorous makes for ferocity and develops the fighting instinct has this interest—that man is himself carnivorous. Indeed, in the matter of slaughter he leaves all other animals far behind. He is the arch-slayer. Since the time the prehuman ape took to hunting he and his human descendants have

wrought ruthless havoc among the lower animals, and at the present day man not only hunts them, but breeds them for the express purpose of slaughtering them, chiefly for food, partly for amusement. Many a person of gentle nature would be amazed and horrified were he at the end of a long life to see on his face the hecatombs of living things sent to death on his behalf.

The editor of *Good Health* (The Crook, Mich.), comments what he calls Dr. Campbell's frank admission that flesh-eating, with the slaughter-house and other cruelties which it involves, tends to foster and maintain in man the brutal qualities which are manifested in the barbarities and cruelties of war. But he regards the doctor as wholly at fault in thinking that flesh-eating and hunting were essential to the development of the aggressive spirit in man, or even the fighting spirit, for—

"Man did not have to leave the forest and frugivorous diet and become a hunter and killer of animals in order to develop his brain. Primitive man sought the plain not to find animals—there were plenty of animals in the forest—but to find food, and as rapidly as possible developed the art of agriculture so as to secure to himself and his family a certain food supply.

"Man's resort to the use of flesh food was doubtless prompted by his instinctive search for complete proteins when the nut-trees (largely nut-pines, probably) were killed off by change of climate or some cataclysmic event which destroyed an essential source of complete protein without which development and life could not be maintained.

"Among the fiercest fighters of the forest are animals which are not flesh-eaters, as, for example, the buffalo of our western plains and the bison of India. Dr. Sanderson, the great elephant hunter, said he would far rather encounter a lion than a wounded bison.

"The rhinoceros, which lives on the coarsest herbage, is so fierce a fighter that the lion flees before him. The elephant, though timid, is no coward, and often gives up its life in resisting captivity.

"The gorilla has long been known as the fiercest beast of the forest. It will kill a hunter by a blow with a club, and will snap his gun-barrel with a grip of its hands, but it will not eat him.

"The vegetarian is a good fighter, but he does not torture. Cruelty is a trait peculiar to carnivorous animals. The cat often tortures the mouse for a long time before she kills and eats it.

"A certain species of wasp paralyzes a fat caterpillar and shuts it up in a cell with its eggs to be devoured by its young, piecemeal, while still alive, and incapable of making a motion in defence.

"Certainly man had abundant opportunity to develop fighting qualities in defending himself against his enemies, which the testimony of the rocks shows to have been great and numerous enough to call forth his highest means of escape and protection.

"The gorilla uses his hands as man does. He has learned to fight with a club, and uses stones as missiles. He is so skillful in the use of these weapons as to be more than a match for a man armed with the same weapons.

"The idea that man had to eat his enemy after killing him, to acquire a hankering for flesh and a thirst for blood in order to be a good fighter, is preposterous. The only mental quality man has acquired through the appetite for flesh is the disposition to slay in cold blood and not in

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self-defence or the heat of rage, to take life merely for pleasure, for sport—to take delight in cruelty."

GINGER DESSERTS

For those families whose members are partial to the spicy flavor of ginger, the wherewithal of a number of delicious desserts lies in one of the quaint blue and white jars of preserved ginger.

Both the Canton and the West Indian varieties, that may be purchased at most of the best grocery shops are excellent, but if the housewife is not adverse to a little time and trouble, a very delectable article can be prepared at home at decidedly less cost.

In making the preserved ginger at home the stem variety should always be used, as this is a finer quality than the ordinary kind. Half a pound of this loose ginger will give nearly a pint of preserve, so it is well worth the slight extra cost.

TO PREPARE GINGER AT HOME

To prepare, wash the ginger and pick out the best of the little roots; then scrape them and cut in small pieces. Place in a granite kettle, cover with cold water and let soak for several hours. Then place over a moderate heat, bringing slowly to the boiling point, set the kettle back on the range and simmer until they become tender. Drain from the water and cook until transparent in a sugar and water syrup, made in the proportion of two-thirds sugar and one-third water. Flavor with lemon juice.

As example of how this delicious conserve may be used to the best advantage, the following recipes are given:

GINGER AND BANANA SANDWICHES

Peel and chop the bananas, sprinkle with a few drops of lemon juice and dust lightly with powdered sugar. Drain a little of the syrup from the preserved ginger and chop finely. Butter thin slices of whole wheat or graham bread, lay on each a crisp lettuce leaf, dipped in French dressing and cover with a layer of the banana and ginger. Finish the sandwiches with the remaining bread slices and serve immediately. These sandwiches are very novel, and are delicious to serve with hot tea.

CANTON FROZEN PUDDING

Prepare a rich boiled custard from one pint of milk, a pinch of salt and three eggs beaten with four tablespoonsful of sugar. Cook over hot water until well thickened. Remove from the fire, and when cold, fold in half a pint of chilled double cream whipped solid. Turn into a chilled freezer, and when half-frozen stir in a small cupful of crushed macaroon crumbs, one teaspoonful of lemon juice and a cupful of preserved ginger with the syrup. Continue freezing until firm and smooth, and repack in a melon mold. Bury in ice and rock salt for three hours before serving.

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