

A MINISTER'S SURPRISE.

BY ELIZA M. SHERMAN.

"Not a very promising evening for prayer-meeting, John," said little Mrs. Addison, the minister's wife, as her husband beat a dismal tattoo on the window-pane.

"No, I am discouraged. It rained last Wednesday also, and our attendance lately has been lamentably small. I wish I could do something to increase it. This afternoon I saw twelve or fifteen of our young ladies going into Dr. Haverland's, and I could not help wishing they would care a little more for spiritual things; but come, dear, the bell has rung;" and a few minutes later the pastor and his wife entered the chapel, where a few—very few—of his people had gathered to worship God. Deacon Cross was there—"cross by name and nature," the young folks said; and dear Father Brighthope was not, and the heart of the minister fell as he made the discovery, for Father Brighthope was the minister's right-hand man.

A few others had gathered, and the services began. The first hymn dragged drearily, for the chorister was absent. At its close the door opened, and fifteen young ladies entered. It seemed to the weary minister as if the dull, little chapel brightened wonderfully under the influence of their bright faces.

Another hymn was given out. One of the girls volunteered her services at the organ, and the sweet, old hymn floated out on the evening air and put new zest into the service.

Then the minister read one of the chapters of John; and if the prayer he made was unusually fervent, it came from a heart filled with thanksgiving to God for sending these young folks into this house of prayer.

Another song followed—"Must Jesus bear the cross alone" and then Deacon Cross made a prayer and the meeting was fairly begun.

There was, in a moment, a slight stir in the girls' corner, and sweet Grace Haverland rose to her feet, and in a voice trembling with emotion, said, "I have found Jesus, and I love him beyond all earthly telling."

Staid Helen Grant next rose: "I love God because he first loved me and gave himself for me."

There was a pause, and Effie Carrol at the organ burst into the hymn, "Wishing, Hoping, Knowing," dwelling joyfully on the chorus:

"I know he is mine,  
I know he is mine,  
No longer I'm hoping,  
I know he is mine."

"And I know he is mine, too." It was a boyish voice—the voice of Arthur Haverland—that spoke those words, and tears of joy sprang to the Doctor's eyes. He could not wait for the close of the service, and crossing the aisle, he gave the hands of his son and daughter a hearty shake.

Two more of the girls expressed a hope in Christ, and three of them, including the minister's daughter Amy, expressed a desire to come to Jesus. It was a glad meeting, for God was there; and after it ended and the minister had grasped the lad's hand, Amy whispered, "It was a prayer-meeting we attended at Dr. Haverland's, and, father, it was the sermon on Sunday that led us to think of this—the sermon you called a failure. It was from the text, 'Emmanuel, God with us,' and I think God has been with us ever since."—Church and Home.

REASONS FOR DRESSING PLAINLY ON SUNDAYS.

- 1. It would lessen the burden of many who find it hard to maintain their places in society.
2. It would lessen the force of the temptations which often leads men to barter honor and honesty for display.
3. If there were less style in dress at church people in moderate circumstances would be more inclined to attend.
4. Universal moderation in dress at church would improve the worship by the removal of many wandering thoughts.
5. It would enable all classes of people to attend church better in unfavorable weather.
6. It would lessen, on the part of the rich, the temptations of vanity.
7. It would lessen, on the part of the poor, the temptations to be envious and malicious.
8. It would save valuable time on the Lord's day.

9. It would relieve our means of a serious pressure, and thus enable us to do more for good enterprises.—Shield of Faith.

WHAT WONDERFUL IMITATORS the children are! They try to do as older people do. Especially do they try to imitate their parents. "Because father said so" is with the average boy a clinching argument, and where is the girl who does not believe her mother more than all other mothers to be a veritable cyclopedia of wisdom. If this be true, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 3.

JESUS BETRAYED.—John 18: 1-14.

COMMIT VERSES 4-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.—Mark 14: 41.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

To all come hours of conflict and darkness.

DAILY READINGS.

M. John 18: 1-14.
T. John 18: 15-27.
W. Matt. 26: 36-75.
Th. Mark 14: 32-72.
F. Luke 22: 39-62.
Sa. Psalm 1: 1-12.
Su. Psalm 96: 1-11.

TIME.—From midnight till three o'clock Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30.

PLACE.—The garden of Gethsemane and the palace of Calaphas.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matt. 26: 36-66; Mark 14: 32-64; Luke 22: 39-55.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—After Jesus' prayer, they sang a hymn, thus closing their long and blessed meeting, and went out into the streets of Jerusalem, toward the Mount of Olives.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. BROOK CEDRON: or Kidron, a ravine, a brook in the rainy season that ran between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. 11 to 12 o'clock. A GARDEN: Gethsemane, on the lower slope of the Mount of Olives. Here Jesus uttered His agonizing prayer three times, from 12 to 1 o'clock Friday morning. 3. A BAND of Roman soldiers from the tower of Antonia. About 1 o'clock. 4. JESUS KNOWING: He went willingly, conscious of all that was before Him. Here is probably where Judas gave his kiss of betrayal. THE SAYING: spoken in chap. 17: 12. This was one fulfillment. 10. PETER SMOKE: ... CUT OFF HIS RIGHT EAR: Peter was rash in his bravery. This act was likely to cause the disciples to be arrested as rebels, and to make Jesus Himself to seem a rebel against Rome, and His kingdom a temporal kingdom. Jesus destroyed the evil effects by healing Malchus. 12. TOOK JESUS: then all the disciples forsook Jesus, and fled. 13. ANNAS: formerly high priest, and now very influential. He sent Him to Calaphas, the high priest, who first examined Him, then called the Sanhedrim (2 to 3 o'clock), and they decided He must die. During this hour, Peter three times denied his Master, who was in the hall opening into the court where Peter and John were around the fire.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Where were Jesus and His disciples the night before His crucifixion? What had they been doing? What were the two last acts in this upper room? (John 17: 1; Matt. 26: 30.)

SUBJECT: THE HOUR OF CONFLICT AND DARKNESS.

I. A GREAT BATTLE AND THE VICTORY (vs. 1, 2; Matt. 26: 36-46).—Where did Jesus go from the upper room? Why did He go there? What was the name of the garden? Where did Jesus leave His disciples? What did Jesus do here? What was His prayer? How many times did He pray? What shows the intensity of His agony? (Luke 22: 44.) Why was He so sorrowful? How was His prayer answered? (Luke 22: 43; John 18: 11.) What were the disciples doing all this time? Was there any excuse for them? Did it have any bad effect upon them? (Mark 14: 50.)

II. JESUS BETRAYED BY A FALSE DISCIPLE (vs. 3-9; Matt. 26: 47-50).—Who betrayed Jesus? Whom did he bring with him? How were they armed? About what hour of the night was this? Where did they find Jesus? What token had Judas given? Describe Jesus' voluntary giving of Himself up to them. What in this hour did He do for His disciples?

Why did they need torches and lanterns in the moonlight? Was Judas' kiss before or after the scene described in vs. 4-8? Why did the soldiers and officers fail to the ground? Did Jesus' words in v. 8 imply to the disciples that they should make their escape? What scripture was fulfilled, and why?

III. FALSE ZEAL AND DESERTION BY TRUE DISCIPLES (vs. 10, 11; Matt. 26: 51-56).—How did Peter show his courage? What harm might this have done? What reasons did Jesus give against his act? How did Jesus remedy the evil? (Luke 22: 51.) What did all the disciples now do? Where do we next find Peter? (Matt. 26: 58.) When and where did he deny Jesus? (Matt. 26: 59-75.)

IV. IN THE HANDS OF HIS ENEMIES (vs. 12-14).—Where was Jesus taken first? Where next? (Matt. 26: 58; John 18: 19-21.) Who were Annas and Calaphas? Who assembled to condemn Jesus? (Matt. 26: 57.) What time of the night was this? For whose sake did Jesus suffer all these things?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

- I. Every life has its Gethsemane of sorrow and conflict, and may have its victories.
II. In Gethsemane we are taught the nature of true prayer and its answer.

III. It is sad for the church to be sleeping while Christ is suffering and praying.

IV. Such sleep leads to desertion and denial. V. Every one in Jesus is safe. He has never lost one.

VI. There is a wrong as well as a right zeal, and the wrong brings harm where it would do good.

VII. It is dangerous to follow Christ afar off. It leads into temptation, and away from the source of strength.

LESSON II.—OCTOBER 10.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE.—John 18: 28-40.

COMMIT VERSES 36-38.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I find in Him no fault at all.—John 18: 38.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Each person must decide what he will do with Jesus.

DAILY READINGS.

M. John 18: 28-40.
T. Matt. 26: 57-75.
W. Mark 14: 35-72.
Th. Luke 22: 63-71.
F. Matt. 27: 1-27.
Sa. Mark 15: 1-14.
Su. Luke 23: 1-24.

TIME.—From 5 to 6 o'clock, Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30.

PLACE.—Pilate's palace. Either in Herod's palace in north-west angle of Zion, or castle Antonia, north of the temple.

PARALLEL HISTORY.—Matt. 26: 57 to 27: 26; Mark 14: 65 to 15: 15; Luke 22: 63 to 23: 24.

ORDER OF EVENTS.—(1) MOCKERY BY THE SERVANTS. In the court of Calaphas' palace, 3 to 5 o'clock Friday morning (Matt. 26: 57, 58; Mark 14: 65; Luke 22: 63-65). (2) THE SANHEDRIM RE-ASSEMBLED AT DAYBREAK TO CONDEMN JESUS. Council chamber, 5 o'clock (Matt. 27: 1); because their former meeting was irregular, and they could not pronounce sentence till daybreak. (3) JESUS SENT TO PILATE. Pilate's palace, 5 to 5:30 a.m. (v. 28). (4) PILATE'S INTERVIEW WITH THE JEWS OUTSIDE THE PALACE (vs. 28-33). 28. EAT THE PASSOVER: the festive meals of the day. 31. JUDGE HIM ACCORDING TO YOUR LAW: and of course inflict the punishments allowed,—excommunication, scourging, etc. 32. THE SAYING: chap. 17: 12. WHAT DEATH: or what manner of death. The Roman mode of execution by crucifixion. (5) PILATE EXAMINES JESUS. Inside the palace, about 6 o'clock (see chap. 18: 14), vs. 33-38. 31. SAYEST THOU OF THYSELF: if he made the charge, it would be that Jesus had set up a kingdom like Rome, and in rebellion against it. To this Jesus would answer no. If the Jews made the charge, it would be that He claimed to be the Messiah, who was really only a spiritual king. To this He would say yes, as He did. 37. TO THIS END: to be a king. (6) PILATE'S SECOND CONFERENCE WITH THE JEWISH LEADERS. Outside his palace (v. 38; Matt. 27: 12-14). (7) PILATE SENDS JESUS TO HEROD. Herod's palace, early Friday morning (Luke 23: 5-12). Here Jesus was mocked again. (8) PILATE MAKES THE JEWS DECIDE (vs. 39, 40; Matt. 27: 15-25). 40. BARABAS: a kind of brigand, who had made an insurrection against the Roman power, and was hailed as a hero by the Jews.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Give the leading events in the last lesson in their order. Have you read the parallel passages in other Gospels? Name time and place of this lesson.

SUBJECT: WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH JESUS THE CHRIST.

I. WHAT HIS ENEMIES WOULD DO (vs. 28-32).—After the first examination of Jesus before the Sanhedrim, what was done with Him? (Matt. 26: 57, 58.) Why did they treat Jesus so? What is the evil of making sport of religious things? Where was Jesus next taken? (Matt. 27: 1.) Then where? (v. 28.) To be judged by whom? Where did His accusers stay? Why would not the priests enter the palace? Was this a strange freak of conscientiousness, considering what they were doing? Describe the interview with Pilate. Why would they not judge Him? What scripture was fulfilled? (John 12: 32.) How? Are evil men in attacking the Gospel still compelled to add it?

II. WHAT AN UNJUST JUDGE DID (vs. 33-38).—What was Pilate's next move? Where was Jesus? What did Pilate ask Him? Why did Jesus reply as He did? What did Jesus say about His kingdom? Over whom is Jesus King? What was Pilate's report to the Jews outside? What did Pilate next do? (Luke 23: 5-12.) What was Herod's decision? (Luke 23: 15.) How was Jesus treated at Herod's palace? Why?

III. THE CHOICE OF THE PEOPLE (vs. 39, 40).—What demand did the people now make? (Mark 15: 8.) Who was Barabbus? How did Pilate attempt to escape a decision as to Jesus? Whom did the people choose? Why? What did Pilate then say? (Matt. 27: 22.) What choice like this must we all make? What will be the result of the choice? What was the result to the Jews of rejecting Jesus? (Matt. 23: 31-38.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

- I. A bad conscience is shown by its insidiousness as to ceremonies, but dullness as to wrongs.
II. The kindest men and causes are sometimes treated with contempt,—reforms, truths, rights.
III. They are ridiculed through misrepresentation, and misunderstanding of their nature and aims.
IV. Jesus Christ is not only your Saviour, but your King.
V. Sincere seekers after truth will find Jesus Christ.
VI. To each one is presented the choice, Christ or the world.
VII. To choose Christ is to choose righteousness, love, God, truth, happiness, heaven.
VIII. To choose the world is to choose pleasure, selfishness, sin, defeat, sorrow, eternal death.

Question Corner.—No. 19.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMAS.

1.

My final name an instrument of peaceful labor, which became in the hand of my initials an instrument of death.

- 1. One whose love for his friend passed the love of women.
2. An aged prophetess who served God day and night in the temple.
3. A good high priest who died in consequence of hearing of the capture of the Ark of God.
4. A king whose mother gave him good counsel.

2.

One of the only two men who reached Canaan the first time who finally entered it; and the woman who was instrumental in aiding that entrance.

- 1. The river where Ezekiel saw the Cherubim.
2. The city of Apollos.
3. One of the towns besieged by Sennacherib.
4. The prophet who was Elijah's successor.
5. The God of Ekron.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 1. Who asked, "Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?"
2. Who said, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God?"
3. Who prayed, "Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me?"
4. What was the result of this prayer?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS NO. 18.

- Sinai.—1. Exodus 19: 20.
2. " 19: 18.
3. Psalm 64: 8.
4. Psalm 65: 17.
Deut. 31: 2.
5. Deut. 4: 12.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE CHARACTER.

Jehobo. Ex. 18: 1, 18: 14. Num. 10: 29. Judg. 1, 16, 4: 11.

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