

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON III.—A SABBATH IN CAPERNAUM.—OCT. 21.

Mark i: 21-34.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.”—Mark i: 22.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Christ's Divine Authority.

ANALYSIS.—**AUTHORITY** as Teacher, 21-22.
over Demons, 23-28.
Disease, 29-34.

HARMONY.—Matt. viii. 14-17. Luke, iv. 31-41.

TIME AND PLACE.—April or May, A.D. 28. The Sabbath following the draught of fishes. Capernaum, now identified with Tel Hum, on the north west shore of the Sea of Galilee.

AUTHORITY AS TEACHER, v. 21-22.—Amid the ruins of Tel Hum, now identified by many with the site of Capernaum, have been found the remains of an ancient Jewish synagogue, which in all probability was the one in which, on this memorable Sabbath, the Master taught with authority. There was that, both in the matter and manner of Christ's teaching, that astonished the people, accustomed, as they were, to the vague surmisings and suppositions of the scribes. These latter taught by tradition, and based their instruction on the wisdom of their predecessors. Christ, in marked contrast, spoke of facts and taught a wisdom that originated in Himself. His message came straight from the hand of God, and the people felt its power and marvelled. Not only did He speak, but He acted; and His works bore testimony to His words.

AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS, v. 23-28.—Demoniacal possession is too wide a subject to deal with in the space at our disposal. Suffice it to say that the Apostles, and Christ Himself, recognized in it something entirely different from ordinary disease or even epilepsy. The demon, a Satanic messenger, seems to have entered into the personality of men and women, who had probably paved the way for his coming by lives of sin and excess. In the case in question, irritated no doubt by the plain and trenchant words of the Master, the evil spirit makes use of his victims lips for the purpose of protesting against Christ's interference, at the same time acknowledging unwillingly His Divine right and authority. At the command of the Master, with one last vindictive paroxysm, and a yell of rage he leaves the poor body so long tormented. What a grand exhibition of the Divinity of Jesus. No other name than His could command the fear and obedience of devils, but at the sound of His voice they believed and trembled. The wonder of His power spread rapidly throughout the whole of Galilee, and the country was aroused to the presence of one who spoke and acted with authority.

AUTHORITY OVER DISEASE, v. 29-34.—We have the statement of Isaiah, corroborated by Matthew (Is. liii. 4, Matt. viii. 17,) that Christ took upon Himself not only our sins but our sicknesses; that He is not only Saviour of the soul, but also Saviour of the body. At His touch, in those days of yore, the burning fever ceased to waste the body, the bounding pulse was hushed to a quiet normal beat, and the germs and symptoms of disease gave way before the influx of his gift of health, vitality and life. The Christ who healed the mother of Simon's wife, and the multitude that gathered at the door when the sun was set, can heal to day with just as wondrous power. Whether it be by blessing human remedies, or whether through the direct agency of believing prayer, Christ can and does heal disease in this Nineteenth Century of unbelief. Who dares to say that if God's people gave their bodies into his care as fully as they do their souls, He would not respect this confidence which He seeks, and give as freely healing and vitality as He did when He walked the shores of Galilee?

NOTES ON THE TEXT, v. 21.—*The Synagogue*.—See Luke vii. 5. Probably the one mentioned here. V. 22. *His doctrine*.—His teaching. *Scribes*.—The copyists of the sacred books. They did almost all the writing for the people. V. 30. *A fever*.—Luke calls it a great fever, iv. 38. *Simon's wife's mother*.—Peter was married, yet the Romanists insist on a celibate priesthood. V. 32. *When the sun did set*.—The Jewish Sabbath ended at sunset. V. 34. *Suffered not the devils to speak*.—Jesus would not accept testimony from the lips of evil spirits. He would hold no parley with, and accept no praise from the servants of the arch-rebel.

Application and Illustration.

WHAT CAN I DO?

RECOGNIZE CHRIST'S AUTHORITY AS TEACHER, v. 22.—A little boy was telling his companions of something that seemed to them very improbable, but in which he had implicit confidence. At last one of them queried, “Well, how do you know?” “Because father said so,” was the quick and confident reply. It was enough to have father's word for it, on his authority the little fellow would believe anything. We must become as little children in this respect, that the word of Christ may be as authoritative to us. If He says “Go ye,” remember that He means it, and means it for you. In this reliance upon Him is the secret of a happy life.

BE STRONG IN CHRIST'S AUTHORITY OVER SATAN, v. 25.—“Father,” said a little boy, “is the Devil bigger than me?” “Yes my boy, much,” replied the father. “Is he bigger than you?” “Yes, he is bigger than me. “But, father, is he bigger than Jesus?” “No, my boy, Jesus is much stronger than the Devil.” “Then,” was the glad reply, “I am not afraid of the Devil.”

TELL HIM, v. 30.—Do not talk over your trouble with earthly friends. It may be they have all they can bear of their own.

Tell Him, and trust it all with Him. Do not secretly brood over it, and resolve somehow in your own might to bear it. Tell Him and let Him help and comfort you. A devoted Christian woman had a son who had been persuaded to join a boating expedition. The mother knew there would be drinking and carousing, and exerted every influence to keep the young man at home. When he refused to listen to her, she went quietly to Jesus and told Him. The night the young man was to sail he was taken violently ill. It seemed that he would die, but the mother's faith never faltered. The next morning he was entirely well and perfectly resigned to the fact that he had been left at home.—S. S. *Illustrator*.

SEE CHRIST AS MY SUBSTITUTE, v. 32-34. Matt. viii. 17.—Matthew tells us that Jesus healed all that were sick because it was promised that He would bear all our sickness. Jesus took our place as our substitute for sin and sorrow and sickness. An old man who, late in life, was obliged to earn his living with his violin, one morning found himself too feeble to play. As he sat by the roadside weeping a gentleman approached him and said, “My friend, you are old and feeble; give me your violin.” The stranger played the most simple music and the crowd gathered and threw coins into the old man's hat until it was full. Then he gave him back his violin and went away. “Who is it?” they whispered. “That is the great violinist, Bucher,” said they who knew him. He had taken the sorrowful man's place and assumed his burden and accepted his poverty and earned his livelihood. So Christ comes to us in the midst of our troubles, “and across the strings of His own broken heart He strikes a strain for us that wins for us the attention of heaven.” He bears our sins, our sorrows, our sicknesses.—S. S. *Illustrator*.

GATHERED GOLD.—Worship is a good beginning for a day of work or rest. Are we as alarmed by sins diseases, as we are by bodily ailments? The busiest and best day will draw to a close. Our time for work is limited.

SELECTED HYMNS.—S. S. Hymnal, 156, 158, 61, 38, 243. Moody and Sankey, 49, 431, 707, 521, 272.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

Daily Readings.

First Day—God—John iv. 19-26.

Second Day—Life—John v. 7-23.

Third Day—Fruit—Matt. xiii. 1-23.

Fourth Day—Reward—Matt. xix. 23-30.

Fifth Day—Warning—Mark ix. 38-50.

Sixth Day—Pardon—Luke xv. 11-32.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Oct. 21.—“Which of Christ's teachings seems to you most wonderful?” Mark i. 22. Isa. ix. 6. “His name shall be called wonderful,” said the prophet, six hundred years before His birth, and gave us I think the key to our topic, the answer to our question. If from among all His wonderful teachings we are to take any one, and say this is the greatest, the deepest, the most wonderful, I think that one will be his teaching concerning Himself. In John xiv. 6, He says, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Wondrous definition! How aptly it sums up His character and purpose. Man was lost. He had been driven by his own sin from the Paradise of God, and vainly he sought again to find it. But Christ came and declared Himself to be “The Way,” a ladder which rests on earth and reached to heaven, the link that unites the human with the Divine, and makes it possible once more for man to return to communion with God. But that is not all. This wonderful teaching is beautifully progressive. “The Way,” at last was found; but there were problems difficult of solution, conflicting theories and beliefs that led men to ask, “What is the Truth?” and again the answer came, “I am the Truth. No problem but has its complete solution in me; theories and beliefs, in whatever they are worthy, converge in me. I am the Truth.” And yet this revelation is not completed. Man's needs are not satisfied, the way is clear, the solution to life's problems found; but where is life to tread that Way? Where is power to apply that Truth? And once more we have the answer “I am the Life.” Marvellous teaching, beyond which there is none higher! Christ our Life. Can we not go forward confidently if He is our life? We are dead, helpless, unable to do anything of ourselves; but He comes and resurrects us, gives us His own life, strong, pure, sinless, divine. Can there be teaching more wonderful than this? The Way, the Truth, the Life; what a grand ascending scale, what a magnificent climax! God help us to make this teaching our own. References—John iii. 34; vi. 67, 68; vii. 15-17, 46; Luke iv. 17-22, 32; Matt. vii. 28, 29; xiii. 54; xxii. 22, 33, 46; Heb. i. 1, 2; Col. ii. 3; Matt. xi. 29.

JUNIOR TOPIC, Oct. 21.—“Which of Christ's sayings is most dear to you and why?” Mark i. 21. Jno. vii. 45, 46.

Boston '95!

Boston '95 is now the watchword. The railways having failed to arrange rates for San Francisco, the Pacific town loses the Convention. We are sorry for San Francisco, but we cannot help a feeling of pleasure in the increased changes for a large Canadian delegation. Which are gained by transferring the Convention to Boston. We believe it is the guidance of Providence and look forward to a grand gathering in '95.