

International Bible Lessons

FIRST QUARTER

LESSON VI—February 5

JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL. John 4. 5-14

GOLDEN TEXT: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22. 17.

Primary Notes

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Approach. Layton lived in the country and had never seen the great city not far away. One day his father took him in with him, and the little boy was wonderfully interested in all that he saw, as he went about

the streets while his father did his business. At last he grew very thirsty and begged for a drink. "Run around the corner," said father, pointing the way, "and you will see a beautiful drinking fountain. Take one of the pretty white cups and drink all the water you wish. I will be here when you come back." "But I haven't any money to pay," said Layton. "You don't need any. The water is free. Just take it," was the answer, and Layton ran off happily. It did not come into his heart to say: "I wonder if father knows. I wonder if the fountain is really there. I wonder if the water is free." He knew that he was thirsty, he knew that his father must be right about the fountain, and the only thing he had to do was to find it, as he was told, and take all the water he could drink without paying any price at all. But if he had not felt sure that his father knew, and that he told the truth, would he have gone to find the fountain? A great deal depends on believing. Before Layton went to take a drink he believed that the water was there, because father said so.

The Lesson Story. It is about a thirsty traveler, and a woman who needed help. Where? Picture the well-side, the old rocky well which Jacob dug, and the tired traveler sitting beside it. Who? It was Jesus the Lord of all, who "sat thus on the well, wearied with his journey." The disciples were gone away to buy food, for they were all hungry after the long walk in the heat and dust.

The Woman of Samaria. Make the children see the Samaritan woman coming with her waterpot, as the custom was, to draw water, little thinking that she would meet the Lord there, who had come through that country on purpose to see her. The woman knew that she needed water, but she did not know how much

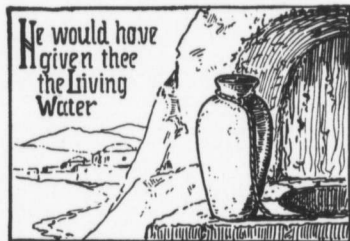
she needed the blessing which Jesus only could give. Her soul was more in need of this than her body was in need of water. Jesus first asked her for a drink. That began the talk. Describe the scene, give very simply the conversation. Jesus made the woman understand that the blessing of forgiveness for all her many sins was worth more than water to drink, and that it could be had for the taking, freely.

Go on and finish the amazing story, how the woman believed that Jesus was the Christ of God because he showed her how sinful she was. Picture her leaving her waterpot, one of her most precious things, thinking only of the good news, anxious to tell it, going back to the city, a missionary to carry the glad word about Jesus. She believed, or she would not have gone. Then, the men of the city came at the invitation and heard Jesus for themselves. They too said, "We believe and are sure." They said to the woman, "We have heard him ourselves and know." This is the way to make sure. Let us hear Jesus ourselves. That is better than listening even to stories about him. His own voice in our hearts, and in his Word, may be heard if we listen. (Teach Text.)

Some one may say, "But we cannot see Jesus as the woman could." No, we cannot see him with these eyes, but we can ask God to open our spirit-eyes, and our spirit-ears, and he will do it.

Lesson Thought: Believe and Take. As the woman let down her jar into the deep, dark well, because she believed there was water there, and as the boy Layton believed his father's word about the fountain, so we must believe Jesus and come to him, asking for his forgiveness and love. His blessing is worth more than water for our thirst. Let us take it. He waits to give it, freely.

Thought for Teachers. Talk about the difference between living water and dead, stagnant water. Jesus gives the living water of pure, kind words and deeds. What kind of water is in our heart-well? Dwell on the "whosoever will." Impress children with their power to will, to choose. Let us first apply the lesson



to our hearts. Do we "will" to "take" freely all that Jesus gives?