

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON L.

Dec. 15. } THE WALK TO EMMAS. [Luke xxiv. 13-35.]

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And they said to one another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"—Verse 32.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Matt. xxvii. 57-66. The sepulchre made sure.
T. Matt. xxviii. 1-15. The resurrection.
W. John xx. 1-10. Peter and John at the sepulchre.
Th. John xx. 11-18. Mary at the sepulchre.
F. I Cor. xv. 1-20. Christ the first-fruits of them that slept.
S. Luke xxiv. 13-32. The walk to Emmaus.
S. Col. iii. 1-15. Risen with Christ.

HELPS TO STUDY.

The sacred body of Jesus had been hastily taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb of Joseph, on the eve of the Sabbath. But when at the dawn of the first day of the week, the women hastened to the sealed and guarded sepulchre, to complete the last offices of affection, lo! they find the stone removed and the tomb empty. But one, Mary Magdalene, remains to weep, while the others depart to tell what they have seen. And, to the weeping Mary, the risen Jesus first of all reveals himself. Next he appears to the other women, and then to Simon Peter. Our lesson sets before us the fourth revelation of Himself which Christ made—and what a difference this coming of Jesus, and the revealing of himself makes. He finds hearts that are sad; He leaves hearts that burn.

I. HEARTS THAT ARE SAD:—Vers. 13-24.

Two disciples, one named Cleopas (Note 2), (ver. 18), the other unknown, (some think it was St. Luke himself) were in complete ignorance of the wonderful things which had taken place, walking together from Jerusalem to Emmaus, (Note 1). They, as they went, communed and reasoned. It is plain what was the subject of their thoughts. It was Christ Himself. Ought He not to be more than He is, the topic of our conversation? Mal. iii. 16. Doubtless they recalled all that they had seen and heard, while with Him; His mighty acts, His words of grace, and the glowing anticipations which they had formed, but which they now think have failed, and they are left with but the bitterness and desolation of blighted hopes. But even while the disciples speak and think of Him, the Master is present. So now He drew near to them. He will not leave them comfortless, John xiv. 18-19. But their eyes were holden, John xxi. 4. Yet only for a time, and for a gracious purpose, that He may reveal Himself at length more plainly and gloriously.

But He knows them, and reads their inmost thoughts. But still He would have them tell these thoughts, therefore He questions them. So, although He knows our desires and thoughts, He would have us open our hearts to Him in prayer. Their sorrow (John xvi. 6) fills them with concern. Why are ye sad? Troubled disciples will not long remain unnoticed and un comforted. What was it that especially drew Jesus to these unknown ones? Was it not their sorrow? Why was it He revealed Himself to Peter first of all the apostles? Was it not because it was he who had first sinned against Christ and was filled with bitter sorrow? Thus misery and need have a most powerful attraction for the gracious and compassionate Saviour.

By skillful questioning the Lord draws out all that was in their hearts. They, however, impute His inquiries to ignorance, at which they marvel. Art thou only a stranger, and not know the things which are come to pass? Evidently, then, the events connected with the trial and death of our Lord were matters of public notoriety. "These things were not done in a corner."

How well known to Jesus was the story they tell. He Himself was the subject of it all. They relate with wonderful simplicity the facts, the might of the prophet, the cruelty of the rulers, whom, however, they judge not; the disappointment of their hopes. Two things are to be noticed here—the strong influence which Jesus had acquired over those who had been with Him, who even now recognize in Him a great prophet and are not ashamed to confess their love and reverence; and the vast difference there often is between our ideas of the way in which God ought to work and His own plans, which are a continual surprise to our feeble understandings. God often finds His victories in what we set down as defeats.

Christian communion is a blessed solace and source of strength and comfort for hearts that are sad. Where even two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, there will He reveal His presence. Communion with one another will draw us nearer to Him—Ps. xlii. 1-5; cxlv. 18; Isa. lviii. 8; Mal. iii. 16; Matt. xviii. 20; xxviii. 20; John xx. 19; Jas. iv. 8.

Only they are to be pitied, whose eyes are overholden by worldliness, and upon whose hearts there is a veil so that they cannot see the King in His beauty. 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15; iv. 4. Let us pray God to open our eyes that we may see Him, or hearts that we may receive Him, and He may dwell with us.

II. THE HEARTS THAT BURN; vers. 25-30. O fools, is the burden of Christ's reproach. They were without understanding, Mark vii. 18. Unbelief is a mark of folly, not of wisdom. Sluggishness of heart was the real cause of their dulness of comprehension, and how often does a slow comprehension brighten up when the heart is touched "Great thoughts," said Pascal, "come from the heart."

Jesus shows them there is a divine necessity for the sufferings of the Christ. The very things which had convinced these two disciples that their Master was not the Messiah—

his arrest, condemnation, and death—were the very things that proved that He was.

Observe the succession here, suffer . . . enter into glory. First, the cross, then the crown, Heb. xii. 2. Or, as Peter (1 Eph. i. 11), puts it, "the sufferings unto Christ," "the glories after these." And in this, the disciple is not above his Master.

And beginning with Moses, the sacrifices and the paschal lamb, He expounded unto them all in the scriptures (see 1s. xlii; Isa. lvi.), the things concerning Himself. This is the very purpose of the Old, as well as the New, Testament, to set forth the Person and Work of Christ. All testify of Him. John v. 39.

Observe here how Christ sets His seal to the truthfulness of the Old Testament Scriptures. Both stand or fall together. We should study the Bible in order to find Christ in it.

And when they drew nigh to Emmaus, Jesus made as though He would go further. He will not stay uninvited. He loves to be entreated. And if we would have Him tarry with us, we must urge Him. "Every gift of God is an invitation to claim a greater." We want Him not to be as a wayfarer, but an abiding Presence and power in our hearts and lives, and where He comes to be a guest, he is Host and Master. He breaks the bread, and in the act some gesture or word familiar of old, is recognised, and at the very moment of recognition, He vanished out of their sight. It was expedient for them that He should go away, John xvi. 7. They must still walk by faith, not by sight. The time of full communion with the Lord is not yet, but shall be, when we shall see Him as "He is."

Two lessons are of great importance here. The disciples were not weak, credulous men, easily satisfied with any evidence of any event to which they had already made up their minds. On the contrary, they had no thought that Christ would rise, they refused to believe it, they were most difficult to be convinced. The apostles did not credit the story of Mary—Mark xvi. 10, 11. Nor did they believe the two disciples who now saw the Lord—Mark xvi. 13. Christ's enemies it seems, feared more than His friends hoped.

Christ's presence took away the chill from these hearts and made them burn. Is this an experience? How often is it that the mention of Christ casts a chill over those who profess to be Christians. Let us take our cold hearts to Him, and in the reading of the Scriptures and in prayer and worship commune with Him, until our hearts begin to burn.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. Emmaus (hot springs). The opinion has prevailed among Christian writers, that the Emmaus of Luke was identical with the Emmaus on the border of the plain of Philistia, afterward called Nicopolis, and which was about twenty miles from Jerusalem. A tradition of the 14th century identifies Emmaus with Kubeibeh, about three miles west of ancient Mizpeh, and nine from Jerusalem. Dr. Thomson ("The Land and the Book," vol. ii. p. 549) is inclined, with others, to locate Emmaus at Kuriet el Aineb, which he says, "would be the proper distance from Jerusalem."

2. Cleopas.—This is different from the name in John xix. 24, and is shortened from Cleopatros, according to Alford and Olshausen.

3. O fools.—The word rendered *fools* is more properly, *without understanding*. Unbelief is not a mark of wisdom: it is a mark of folly. Unbelievers in the New Testament are often spoken of as without understanding (see Gal. iii. 1), "their mind and conscience defiled" (Tit. i. 16).

4. Constrained him.—Let it be noted that we have several instances of expressions like this in Scripture. Abraham (Gen. xxxii. 26), Gideon (Judg. vi. 18), Manoah (Judg. xiii. 15), all show that God loves to be entreated of his people, and that those who would have much must ask much, and even use a holy violence.—*Kyle*.

We must never think our work for God done, till our life is done, and, if he prolong our days, it is because he has some further service for us to do.

MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

PARIS.—The Presbytery of Paris will meet in Chalmers' Church, Woodstock, on Tuesday the 17th December, at 11.30 a.m.

ILION.—This Presbytery meets at Clinton, on 14th Jan., 1879, at 11 a.m.

BRUCE.—In the Presbyterian Church, Port Elgin, on Tuesday, 17th December, at 2 o'clock p.m.

PETERBOROUGH.—In St. Paul's Church, Peterborough, on the third Tuesday of January.

LONDON.—In First Presbyterian Church, London, on the third Tuesday in December at 2 o'clock p.m.

KINGSTON.—In John Street Church, Belleville, on first Tuesday of January, 1879, at 7.30 p.m.

BROCKVILLE.—At Spencerville, on Tuesday, December 17th, at 3 p.m.

TORONTO.—On the second Tuesday of January, 1879, at 11 o'clock a.m.

HAMILTON.—The next stated meeting will be held in Central Church, Hamilton, on the third Tuesday of December, (17th,) at 11 o'clock a.m.

SAUGEN.—In Knox Church, Harriston, on Tuesday the 17th Dec., at 2 o'clock p.m.

WHITBY.—At Bowmanville, on Tuesday, 3rd December, at 11 o'clock a.m.

MONTREAL.—This Presbytery meets in St Paul's Church, Montreal, on Tuesday, 21st January, 1879.

GUELPH.—In Knox Church, Galt, on the third Tuesday of January, 1879, at 10 o'clock a.m.

CHATHAM.—This Presbytery will meet on Tuesday, the 17th December, at Chatham, in Adelaide Street Church, at 11 o'clock a.m.

LANARK AND RENFREW.—On third Tuesday of January, 1879, at half-past one, p.m.

BARRIE.—On Tuesday, 28th January, 1879.

WORDS OF THE WISE.

LEARNING is pleasurable, but doing is the height of enjoyment.—*Norvalis*.

THE greatest difficulties are always found where we are not looking for them.—*Goethe*.

THAT laughter costs too much which is purchased by the sacrifice of decency.—*Quintilian*.

MAKE but few explanations; the character that cannot defend itself is not worth vindicating.—*F. W. Robertson*.

THOUGHT clouds and darkness encircle God's dispensations, yet faith relies on the assurance that all his procedures are uniformly regulated by unerring wisdom and infinite goodness.

THE sweetest life is to be ever making sacrifices for Christ; the hardest life a man can lead on earth, the most full of misery, is to be always doing his own will and seeking to please himself.—*Edward Bickersteth*.

THE intellect has only one failing, which, to be sure, is a very considerable one; it has no conscience. Napoleon is the readiest instance of this. If his heart had borne any proportion to his brain, he had been one of the greatest men in all history.—*Lowell*.

SORROW for sin only because it exposes to punishment is not true repentance. He that sorrows after a godly sort would not sin, though escape from consequences were possible; for his heart is changed; he is renewed in the spirit of his mind; he loves God and His service, and has lost his relish for the pleasures of sin.—*Walker*.

A WELL-BALANCED mind, a well regulated heart, and a well-ordered life, manifest the power of divine grace, the presence of the indwelling Saviour. Then it may be said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." What a precious truth! Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me. Heartily accepted with child-like trust, it secures peace with God, and a holy life. There is power enough in it to save a world.

RUTHERFORD says: "We love well summer religion, and to be that which sin has made us—even as thin-skinned as if we were made of white paper—and fain would be carried to heaven in a close-covered chariot, wishing from our hearts that Christ would give us surety and his hand-writing and His seal for nothing but a fair summer, until we be landed in at heaven's gate." We have many such religious summer disciples satisfied with a measure of grace, sustaining them in seasons of summer prosperity, but failing them in hours of wintry temptation. What we need, and ought to have, is a vigorous, symmetrical, whole-hearted Christianity, growing, not only under the rays of the summer sun, but holding bravely up its head amid the blasts of winter; finding a living atmosphere for itself alike in the torrid and the frigid zone.

WHY do men put windows in their houses to let in the sunlight? Why don't they have gaslight? The sun has been shining so many years. Why don't they say, "It is so old we don't want it?" Why don't they say, "Let us have a new light. Let us shut out the light of heaven by boarding up our windows?" There would be just as much reason in that as in their talk about the good old Bible. We have not outgrown it. It is what we need. Take all the books in the world, and that Bible will outweigh the whole of them. Let these men who talk about the Bible travel into some country where they have no Bible, and they would not stay in such a place. Take a town with five or ten thousand inhabitants, and no Bible and no ministers, and see if these infidels that are talking about the Bible will live there. They would go out of it as Lot got out of Sodom.—*D. L. Moody*.

JOHN JANEWAY, in dying, exclaimed: "More praise still! Oh, help me to praise Him! I have nothing else to do. I have done with prayers and other ordinances." Such are often the ecstatic realizations of dying saints; and not a little of it in life, too. Praise is the Christian's sweet employ in earth and heaven. The hymn says,

"He learns to pray when first he lives."

Aye, and he learns to praise, also. Praise signals his entrance into the kingdom of grace, dispels the tedium of his pilgrimage to the celestial city, and heralds his triumphant passage of "the crystal ports of light." Saints, be full of praise in darkness and light, by day and night, in prosperity and adversity! This being your life-atmosphere, it will surely be so in the valley and the shadow of death. Yours will be a Janeway-like passage.

RECEIVE thankfully the marvels of grace; but at the same time cultivate assiduously the modest virtues, and be attentive to the minor and humble duties of the Christian calling. The silent forces of a religious life are the more important. The thunder storm is occasional; the sunshine, the dew, the breezes, are perpetual. A marvel does well as dessert, but damages digestion when served as a stated article of diet. People who are ever straining after the wonderful, are usually little prepared to appreciate those ordinary means on which, nevertheless, a healthy and symmetrical religious development so greatly depends. The attempt to ascend by the aid of some sign to a higher level, usually results in landing the parties in a lower place than that occupied by the less pretentious. The fact is, your religion is given to be used in this common sense world, and will never be improved by being drawn into the sphere of marvel.

Births, Marriages and Deaths.

NOT EXCEEDING FOUR LINES 25 CENTS.

BIRTH.

At Kilsyth, on Sabbath, the 24th ult., the wife of Rev. A. F. McKenzie, of a son.