

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE WRITINGS OF JOHN.

A. D. 28.

John 4. 5-26.



(Commit to memory verses 23-26.)
 5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is between Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well; and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knowest, the gift of God, and who it is that asketh of thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall

LESSON V. JESUS AT THE WELL.

[May 2.]

give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband: Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jeru-salem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jeru-salem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

General Statement.

The first year of the Saviour's public ministry is known as "The Year of Obscurity," because so little is revealed concerning it. All our information comes from the first four chapters of John's gospel, in which we read of a few conversations, and hints of a few miracles. It is supposed that it was spent in Judea, perhaps in the hope that the leaders of Jewish thought might recognize the nation's opportunity, and accept its Messiah. But as the months wore away the attitude of the rulers became more and more unfriendly, and, following their lead, the people of Jerusalem opposed to their Saviour. Indeed, throughout the ministry of Jesus his strongest friends were in the provinces, and his bitterest enemies in the capital. At last he determined to leave the hard soil of Judea, and try the province of Samaria, inhabited by a people who were sufficiently related to the Jews, both in race and

religion, to be their jealous rivals. Most Jews who journeyed between Jerusalem and Galilee traveled around this alien country rather than to pass through it, but for some reason Jesus took the direct line of travel, and hence at noon on the second day of his journey found himself at Jacob's well, an ancient landmark near the foot of Mount Gerizim. Here took place one of the most remarkable conversations during the Saviour's ministry. It was with a woman, a Samaritan woman, and a woman who had been leading an uncharitable life. Yet she was at the same time a person of no common mind, but quick in perception, apt to understand the divine teachings of the Saviour, and, vital, possessing force and influence in the community. This was perhaps the reason why the Saviour chose such a person to receive some of his most exalted instructions, and the first open declaration of his Messiahship.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verses 5. Then cometh he. It was the middle of the Saviour's journey, about a day and a half after leaving Jerusalem. **Samaria.** The central province of western Palestine, named from the city which had formerly been its capital. Its people claimed descent from Joseph, but their blood was undoubtedly mixed with that of foreign races, as their religion was mingled with foreign superstitions. Their origin is related in 2 Kings 17. 23-41. A small remnant of this people still are found around Mount Gerizim. **Sychar.** This was formerly supposed to refer to Shechem, the early capital of the section; but it is now believed to have been Askar. **Near to the parcel.** This region belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph; and was the only part of Palestine that was conquered by the Israelites during the life-time of Jacob. By Jacob's dying command, this "parcel" (Heb. *Shechem*) was given to Joseph's descendants. See Gen. 48. 22.

6. Jacob's well. The traveler finds this well at the present time on a slight eminence at the foot of Mount Gerizim. It is nine feet in diameter, and seventy-five feet deep, but contains no water except in the rainy season. There is no mention in the Old Testament of this well having been dug by Jacob, but its location agrees with the account of his life, as it was evidently made by one who found the springs at the foot of the mountain already pre-occupied. **Wearied with his journey.** He had traveled on foot thirty-five miles.

Our Saviour as a man was like ourselves, susceptible to heat and cold, hunger and thirst and weariness. (1) *Let the tired traveler remember that he has a Saviour who knows his condition and can feel with him. Sat thus.* Literally, "as he was," tired and worn-out. The old apostle remembers the very appearance of his Master on that day. **The sixth hour.** Twelve o'clock, according to the Jewish notation of time.

7. There cometh. How little that woman knew that the crisis of her life was awaiting her, at that moment! How fortunate that she did not lose her opportunity of salvation and honor by one moment's neglect! **A woman of Samaria.** Of the province, not of the city named Samaria, which was seven miles distant. **To draw water.** She held her line and leathern buckets; for Oriental wells are not provided with these implements. **Jesus saith.** He saw in a moment her character, the hunger of her soul, the waiting possibilities in her nature, and he resolved to save her. (2) *For more of our Master's love of souls.* Give me to drink. He was thirsty, but he used his thirst as a means of approach to the woman's heart. How skillfully he turned the conversation from the water of Jacob's well to the water of life! (3) *Let us follow our Saviour in using our hours of resting and relaxation in doing good.*

8. His disciples. Probably the six referred to in Lesson 11, and others, as this was a year later. **Were**

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