

The Song of the Sower.

Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,
Sowing in the noonday, and the dewy eve;
Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Chorus—

Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds nor winter's chilling breeze,
By-and-bye the harvest, and the labour ended,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master,
Though the loss sustained our spirit often grieves,
When our weeping's over, he will bid us welcome,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

LESSON NOTES.**SECOND QUARTER.****STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.****LESSON VIII.—MAY 20.****PARABLE OF THE SOWER.**

Matt. 13. 1-8, 18-23. Memory verses, 22, 23.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The seed is the word of God.—Luke 8. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. The Story, v. 1-8
 2. Its Explanation, v. 18-23.
- Time 4 P. 28
- Place—By the side of the Sea of Galilee.

LESSON HELPS

1. "Out of the house"—Out of his own house in Capernaum. By the seaside—The Sea of Galilee, one of his favourite resorts for teaching.

2. "Into a ship"—A fishing vessel, pushed a little from the shore, so that he could be heard.

3. "In parables"—Illustrative truth. "A sower"—Literally, the sower. No sower was more familiar in Galilee. Some sower may have scattered his seed in the distance while Christ spoke. "Went forth"—The expression implies that the sower, in the days of our Saviour, lived in a hamlet or village, as all these farmers now do, that he did not sow near his own house or in the garden fenced or walled.—Thomson.

4. "Wayside"—The edge of the paths that crossed the unfenced Palestine fields, and that were used by horsemen and beasts of burden. "The fowls"—

"The pigeons and other birds that followed the sower reaped an immediate harvest."—Plumptre. "As in our own corn-fields, a flock of bold, hungry birds watch the sower, and as soon as his back is turned they are down with a swift-winged swoop, and away goes the exposed grain."—McLaren.

5. "Stony places"—Not gravelly soil, but rock slightly covered with soil.

6. "Among thorns"—Ground from which the thorns or brambles or wild brier had not been rooted out; such growth can be found about the edges of many fields nowadays; the ground is so covered that grain could not grow. "Sprang up"—"In rich soils and hot valleys like Gennesaret the growth of weeds and thorns is as rapid and luxuriant as that of good seed."—Farrar.



8. "Good ground"—"Through the care of the husbandmen."—Lange. "A hundredfold—Not an extraordinary yield. Herodotus mentions that two hundredfold was a common return on the plain of Babylon, and sometimes three; and Niebuhr mentions a species of maize that returns four hundredfold."—Trench.

19. "The word"—"Every form of revelation."—Plumptre. "The wicked one"—"Satan knows that God's word is the blessed means of conversion and salvation."—Quessal. "Catcheth away"—"It is done in a moment; by a smile at the end of a sermon; by a silly criticism at the church door; by foolish gossip on the way home. These are 'the fowls' whom the evil one uses in this task."—Farrar.

20. "With joy receiveth it"—"Those whose emotions are touched, but whose will and character are unchanged. They are moved by the winds of popular excitement or enthusiasm, but there is no new life."—Poloubot.

21. "Not root"—"Prosperous growth must go on at once upward and downward."—Van Oosterzee. "For a while"—Such enthusiasm is short-lived.

22. "Care," etc.—"The demands of household, society, business, encroach upon our seasons of private and family devotion, excuse us from the prayer-meeting and often from church services."—Clarke.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Parable of the sower.—Matt. 13. 1-9.
Tu. Speaking in parables.—Matt. 13. 10-17.
W. Parable of the sower.—Matt. 13. 18-23.
Th. Wayside hearers.—Acts 14. 8-20.
F. No root.—John 8. 59-66.
S. Good ground.—Acts 2. 37-47.
Su. Much fruit.—John 15. 1-8.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY

1. The Story, v. 1-8.
For what purpose did Jesus go to the seaside? Mark 4. 1.
What compelled him to enter a ship? Mark 4. 1.



ILLUSTRATION OF STONY, THORNY AND GOOD GROUND.

Where was his audience?
Where did the "great multitudes" come from? Luke 8. 4.

What form did Jesus' teaching assume?
What is a parable?
From what labourer did Jesus draw an illustration?

What became of the wayside seed?
What happened to that which had little earth?

What seed was choked in its growth?
What increase was there on good ground?

What demand was made on the hearers?

What did Jesus mean by the seed? Golden Text.

2. Its Explanation, v. 18-23.
Who received seed by the wayside?
Who was the stony ground hearer?
In whom was the seed choked?
What marked the good ground hearer?
To which class do you belong?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson may we learn—
1. How to teach?
 2. How we ought to hear?
 3. The profit of heeding the truth?

Precept freezes while example warms. Precept addresses us, example lays hold on us. Precept is a marble statue, example glows with life, a thing of flesh and blood.—W. E. Gladstone.

The Lesson Story in Song.

'Tis in the Bible that we read,
A sower went forth to sow his seed;
He flung it broadcast o'er the land,
With liberal heart and open hand.

As he sowed some fell by the way,
On hard, cold ground, and there it lay;
And it was trodden under feet,
And birds of the air the seed did eat.

Some seed upon a rock was flung,
And very soon it upward sprang;
So little earth was where it lay,
As the sun rose it withered away.

But other seed on good ground fell,
And sun and rain the seed did swell;
Firm root it took; first blade, then ear,—
An hundred fold for God did bear.

Now let us each one that hath an ear
Lend it to God and for him hear;
In each heart may God's Word take root,
Tongue, hands, and feet for him bear fruit.

Was there ever a boy who didn't have a hero? Some one character of whom he never tired of reading and thinking, and whom he longed to grow like? What is it in this hero that he admires? He was brave and led armies to victorious battle. But there is a bravery more admirable than that. It is the kind that suffers undeservedly for another's fault. Or, he was generous and kind, and helped those weaker than himself. There is One who spent his whole life in doing this, and who first taught other men to do it. Such high courage, such noble self-sacrifice, such tenderness, such heroism under suffering the world has never seen. All earth's greatest men since, who have tried to follow him, have succeeded only in being feeble imitations. Surely, there never was a greater hero than Jesus Christ, and there never was a greater mistake than the idea that to love and worship him is weak or unmanly.—Forward.

even this is hardly more foolish than it is to follow blindly the first impulse that comes into our heads. To act without stopping to think is the poorest economy in the world. Nobody wastes time so hopelessly as the person who decides without deliberation, who, because of this wrong beginning, follows the wrong path and finally is forced to retrace his steps and start again. A little hard thinking before we begin to act would save us not only much precious time but many a headache as well.

Be Careful.

Be careful what you sow, boys!
For seed will surely grow, boys!
The dew will fall,
The rain will splash,
The clouds will darken,
And the sun's 'no flash;
And the boy who sows good seed to-day
Shall reap the crop to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, girls!
For every seed will grow, girls!
Though it may fall
Where you cannot know,
Yet in sun and in shade,
It will surely grow;
And the girl who sows good seed to-day
Shall reap the crop to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, boys!
For the weed will surely grow, boys!
If you plant bad seed
By the wayside nigh,
You must reap the harvest,
By-and-bye;
And the boy who sows wild oats to-day
Must reap wild oats to-morrow.

Then let us sow good seeds now!
And not the briars and weeds now!
That when the harvest
For us shall come,
We may have good sheaves
To carry home;
For the seeds we sow in our life to-day
Shall grow and bear fruit to-morrow.

Work is only well done when it is done with a will—John Ruskin.

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