

followers—some became Christ's disciples (St. John i. 37). Kept all fasts enjoined by Pharisees. Christ and His disciples did not. So complaint was made, Why did they not fast? Because Christ was with them, was to them as a bridegroom—full of love, care, and protection.

General lesson—things must be suited to each other—new cloth useless on old garments—new wine in old skins. Christ's presence is to bring joy, not gloom.

NOTES.

10. *Sinners came.* Not guests, but strangers—allowed to come in by Eastern custom.

17. *Old bottles.* Skins of animals—apt to crack when old.

NO. 18. FOUR MIRACLES, ETC.

To read—*St. Matthew ix.* 18—36.

I. JAIKUS' DAUGHTER. (18, 19, 23—26.) (a) *The father*, Jairus, ruler of Synagogue—many incidents of Christ's life connected with Synagogues, e.g., His sermon at Nazareth, when they sought His life (Luke iv. 16); His healing woman with spirit of infirmity (St. Luke xiii. 12).

Synagogues ruled either by one man or by council of elders, of which one supreme. (b) *The Child*, twelve years old—name unknown—at point of death—died before Christ reached the house. (c) *The Saviour*: what did He do? 1. Left the table and meal to go at once. 2. Insisted on quiet in the presence of the dead. 3. Took three chosen disciples as witnesses. (St. Mark v. 37.) 4. Spoke the word, and the dead lived.

This the first of three miracles of raising the dead. Notice the progress—Jairus' daughter just dead—widow's son being carried out to burial—Lazarus dead four days.

General resurrection only one step further.

II. WOMAN WITH ISSUE OF BLOOD. (20—22.) On road to Jairus' house. Notice:—

1. Her great *sickness*—chronic for twelve years.

2. Her great *faith*—one touch enough for healing.

3. Her great *modesty*—coming behind—trying to hide herself.

This the spirit Christ approves. Therefore notice His sympathy, encouragement, help. She was cured at once.

III. THE BLIND MAN. (27—31.) Two miracles in the Gospel of healing the blind—this in the house, privately—the other at Jericho, openly (xx. 30). Thought by Jews the most wonderful of all. (See St. John ix. 32.) What was required of them?

1. *Faith* to believe in Christ's power.

2. *Silence* as to their cure. Christ's hour not yet come. But they spread His fame everywhere.

IV. DEVIL CAST OUT. (32—35.) One other kind of miracle—man with dumb spirit. But what did the Pharisees say? Done by Satanic agency. This showed their *ignorance*—as if Satan would do works of mercy—also their *malice*, trying to prejudice people against Christ. What did Christ do in return? Did He stop His work?

1. He *went* everywhere on mission of mercy.

2. He *preached* the Gospel ("good news") of His Kingdom.

3. He *healed* all kinds of sickness.

LESSONS. All these miracles teach similar lessons—

1. To *go* to Christ in trouble, however great.

2. To *believe* in Christ as Saviour of body and soul.

3. To *acknowledge* Christ as Lord of heaven and earth.