

choice of good seed, watering, weeding, the pleasure of seeing the plants springing up.

Scene of Lesson—Shore of Sea of Galilee near Capernaum (Map). Jesus sitting on the shore; crowds flocking to him. He, getting into a little boat so that everybody could hear Him, began to preach. He sometimes told the people stories about things they saw around,—“parables.” These were always meant to teach about the heavenly Kingdom. Picture the country around, beautiful green hills, waving trees, ploughed fields. Picture the farmer with his basket, the right hand scattering the seed. (Children may stand and make motions of scattering seed.)

Sand Tray or Black Board—Mark off on tray or board a field, with hard beaten “wayside.” Prepare ground as described in the lesson, “rocky,” “thorny,” “good ground.”

Tell the story Jesus told about the farmer sowing grain, scattering it about. It fell here and there (scatter seed). Help the children to understand what would become of seed in these different-kinds of ground.

Draw four hearts. Jesus told the meaning of this story. These different kinds of ground are pictures of four kinds of hearts.

The Seed—Show Bible, not much like a seed, but Jesus said (Golden Text). Seeds must be sown somewhere, if they are to bring forth flowers, fruit, grain.

The King's Gardens—Our hearts are God's gardens. David said, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart.” He planted the loving promises deep in his heart.

The “wayside” heart hears God's word, but Satan catches away the truth before it can take root. In the “stony ground” heart, God's truth is not deeply rooted—not willing to please our King except when it is easy to do so. The “thorny ground” heart has too many other things in it (pleasure, money, friends, cares—for children have their cares too); love to God is crowded out. The “good ground” heart, brings forth good fruit (love, patience, kindness, unselfishness, etc.).

Practical Thoughts—Ask God to prepare your heart for His word, to take out all stones and thorns and make the seed grow.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

What shall the Harvest be?

NONE? SOME? MUCH?

Let the review be directly practical. The appeal of the parable is an appeal to common sense. The farmer sows, expecting to reap. He counts everything lost that does not yield. He keeps the harvest in view when sowing, and so strives to get his seed into the ground rather than into the crops of the wayside birds, and to have his soil so deep and clean that it will bring forth abundantly and to perfect ripeness. Common sense expects an answer, and the right answer, to the question, “What shall the harvest be?” It may be one of three—as on the blackboard. There will be no harvest if we do not drive away the birds, or if we neglect to deepen the soil by study of the Word and prayer, or if we are not on our guard against allowing the seed to be smothered. There will be a great yield when the soil is right, and is kept right, and when we carefully cultivate the growing grain until it is fully ripe.