



LESSON III.—July 15.

The Gentile Woman's Faith.

Mark vii., 24-30. Memory verses, 27-30.
Read Mark vii., 1-23.

Daily Readings.

- M. Parallel.—Matt. xv., 21-31.
T. Little Faith.—Matt. xiv., 22-33.
W. According to Faith.—Matt., ix., 27-31.
T. Urgent Plea.—Luke xviii., 35-43.
F. Commendation.—Luke vii., 1-10.
S. Salvation.—John x., 1-13.

Golden Text.

'Lord, help me.'—Matt. xv., 25.

Lesson Text.

(24) And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it; but he could not be hid. (25) For a certain woman, whose daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet; (26) The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. (27) But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto the dogs. (28) And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. (29) And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil has gone out of thy daughter. (30) And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out and her daughter laid on the bed.

Suggestions.

The Lord Jesus had had long days of weary travelling and ministering to the multitudes who day after day came thronging to see and hear him, and to bring him their sick and afflicted friends. When he took his disciples away for a little rest and quiet time in the mountains near Bethsaida, on the Sea of Galilee, there the multitude quickly followed, and our Lord in his loving compassion, instead of sending them away, healed their diseases, comforted their souls, and finally bade them be seated to partake of that wonderful feast furnished from the five small loaves and two tiny fishes.

That night was spent by Jesus in prayer alone on the mountain; thus he gained strength by contact with his Father. The next day was filled with wearying opposition from the Scribes and Pharisees. They argued and contradicted everything that the Lord Jesus said, and even many of those who had followed him before fell away from him when he taught them that he was the Bread of Life, sent down from God. (John vi., 57-60, 66.)

Again, Jesus and his disciples left the city of Capernaum and journeyed up the country until they came to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. But no rest could be found here, no time for quiet fellowship and communion. As soon as they arrived, a woman came to Jesus beseeching him to heal her little daughter, who was possessed by an unclean spirit. This woman was a Gentile and a heathen, but she had heard of the works of Jesus and believed that he would heal her daughter. She knelt at his feet as he sat in the house, then as he probably got up and walked away with his disciples, she followed, crying after them to have mercy on her child. (Matt. xv., 22, 23.)

At first it seemed as though the Saviour paid no heed to the woman's cries of entreaty. The disciples begged him to send her away; perhaps they wanted her request granted simply so that she would not worry them by her crying. Jesus answered that his work was among the Israelites, who belonged in a special way to God, rather than with the heathen peoples roundabout. The Jews were given the first call to the kingdom of God; those who accepted were to have the privilege of extending that call to

all the world, but not until after the death and resurrection of our Lord was the great commission given.

But the woman could not be put off. She drew nearer and repeated her request. This time Jesus answered her, but not as he had answered other like requests. With seeming harshness he told her that it was not suitable to give the children's bread to dogs, meaning that the Israelites were God's chosen people, his children to whom the bread of life was sent, and that the heathen, with their passionate, selfish, impure natures were like dogs who could not understand nor appreciate such a gift. This test made the woman's faith greater rather than less. She accepted the position and acknowledged her unworthiness. But she pleaded with humility and faith that even though she were no better than a dog, not worthy of receiving God's love, yet surely she might be given some of the little crumbs of mercy, as even dogs were not allowed to starve in their master's house.

The Lord Jesus was so pleased with the unflinching faith of this woman that he quickly granted her request, and her daughter was cleansed and made whole from that very hour. This heathen woman had such faith in the Lord Jesus as to be an example to believers. She kept on crying to the Lord for mercy, until she received from him the desire of her heart. She was not discouraged when he did not answer her at first, nor when he afterward reproved her. She was humble; she did not say that she was just as good as most people. She acknowledged that she was a sinner, and terribly in need of mercy. Her faith was a proof of that saying of our Lord, that if the heathen cities had seen the same mighty works as did the cities of Israel (Matt. xi., 20-24), they would at once have believed and repented.

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let
thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day;
For what are men better than sheep or
goats,

That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of
prayer,

Both for themselves and those who call them
friends?

For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
—Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King.'

Questions.

1. Where did our Lord go on this day?
2. Whom did he meet there?
3. What did she want?
4. What was wrong with her child?
5. Could Jesus heal her?
6. Why did he not do so at once?
7. Should discouragement strengthen our faith or make it less?
8. What did the woman say about dogs?
9. How did the Lord Jesus reward her faith?

Junior C. E. Topic.

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

Monday, July 9.—We are God's witnesses.
—Isa. xlv., 8.

Tuesday, July 10.—Witnessing in life.—
I. Tim. vi., 12.

Wednesday, July 11.—Our encouragement.
—Heb. xii., 1.

Thursday, July 12.—Testify to his goodness.—
I. Cor. xv., 10.

Friday, July 13.—Tell of your salvation
through him.—Acts iv., 12.

Saturday, July 14.—Tell of his daily helpfulness.—
Acts xvii., 28.

Sunday, July 15.—Topic—How can we 'be
witnesses' for Christ? Acts i., 4-8.

C. E. Topic.

July 15.—How mission work will gain success.
Acts i., 6-14. (Quarterly missionary meeting.—
The Islands.)

Pray for Your Scholars.

No Sunday-school teacher can expect the blessing of God upon his labors unless he prays daily for each member of his class. The power of prayer is not a question for our discussion; we all believe in it. We can never teach successfully if we leave our best weapon unused.



Alcohol Catechism.

(Dr. R. H. Macdonald, of San Francisco.)

CHAPTER XVIII.—WATER AND TEMPERANCE DRINKS.

1. Q.—Why does alcohol harm the system so much?

A.—Because it goes through all parts of the body unchanged, and by its affinity for the water in the blood, the brain, and all the soft parts of the body, it injures every part it touches.

2. Q.—What does it do?

A.—It mixes with the water in the blood and hardens the albumen and all the glue-like substances of the body.

3. Q.—What is albumen?

A.—Substance like the white of an egg. If you pour alcohol over the white of an egg it will make it hard.

4. Q.—Where do we find albumen?

A.—In all the soft parts of the body.

5. Q.—Why should the affinity of alcohol for water injure the body?

A.—Because the body is largely composed of water.

6. Q.—How much water is there in the body?

A.—About seventy parts out of every one hundred parts are water.

7. Q.—If a person weighs one hundred and fifty pounds how much of it is water?

A.—One hundred and five pounds, or about twelve gallons.

8. Q.—How much water does a healthy person require each day?

A.—About a quart and a half.

9. Q.—Give an example of affinity for water?

A.—If you pour water on quicklime the water unites with the quicklime and disappears. It helps make the white substance used for plaster, but it is entirely changed.

10. Q.—What is meant by affinity?

A.—The readiness which many substances show to unite with other substances and change their nature.

11. Q.—Can any other fluid take the place of water as a drink?

A.—No; unless a man drinks about a quart and a half of water a day he dies within a short time.

12. Q.—Are there not many people who drink little or no water?

A.—Yes.

13. Q.—Why do they not die?

A.—Because the drinks they take consist mostly of water. No drink that does not contain a great deal of water can ever quench thirst or do the body any good.

14. Q.—Are there drinks that can supply the place of water?

A.—Milk contains food as well as water; with this exception, no drink can supply the place of water.

15. Q.—How is it with alcoholic drinks?

A.—In alcoholic drinks the alcohol does nothing but harm, the water they contain is all that does the body any good.

16. Q.—Are there harmless drinks made up partly of water, that do not hurt children?

A.—Yes; fresh fruit juices, mingled with water, often make cooling and refreshing drinks; lemonade; for instance.

17. Q.—Children, which would you rather do, use harmless drinks, and grow up healthy and happy, or drink wine and other alcoholic drinks and become miserable drunkards?

A.—We will drink water, milk, or lemonade; try to be useful and good; we will work, and try to earn and save money, so we can take care of ourselves, and have homes of our own instead of becoming burdens to others.

'Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely.'—Rev. xxii., 17.

A Healthful Example.

Some of the civilized nations of the west might well take counsel of that most progressive of all the nations of the east, Japan, in regard to questions of moral reform. State legislatures have legislated