Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Adapted from Peloubet's Select Notes.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson IV. Oct. 23 Mark 2: 1-12.

A PARALYTIC HEALED.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.—Mark 2: 10.

EXPLANATORY.

SEEKING TO SAVE MEN FROM SIN.

I. THE MISSIONARY TOUR THROUGH GALILEE.—Mark 1: 35-45. After the severe and prolonged labors of the Sabbath, described in our last lesson, Jesus rose early the next morning and went into a retired place to gain rest and spiritual strength through communion with his Father in heaven. Like Moses, we all need at times to go up on the mount alone and talk with God face to face, that we may breathe the invigorating air of heaven, and be fed with the bread of eternal life.

HEALING OF THE LEPER. Only one incident of this tour is related. A loathsome leper was made clean, like Naaman, whose flesh became pure as a child's. This was a parable of redemption enacted before the eyes of the people. In the leprosy, a constitutional, inherited, loathsome, defiling, painful, contagious, permeating, incurable disease, was seen the type of all sin. Jesus, in curing him, making him clean and pure, rejoining him to his kind, showed that his work was to cleanse the soul from sin, and make it pure and heavenly, and that the power which could cleanse the leper, could forgive and purify the sinner.

II. JESUS PREACHING IN A PRIVATE HOUSE IN CAPERNAUM.—Vs. 1, 2. 1. "And again." At the close of his missionary tour in Galilee. "He entered into Capernaum": which was his home, or headquarters, for more than a year and a half. "After some days." Some days after the healing of the leper, and when the excitement concerning that miracle had quieted down. For a time he was compelled to avoid the larger towns (Mark 1: 45). "It was noised." Rumored, reported. "That he was in the house." Either the house which he occupied with his mother and his brethren (Matt. 4: 13), or possibly that of St. Peter. The article being wanting in the original, the phrase is equivalent to "at home.

2. "Insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door." Among them were many leading people from all parts of the country, attracted by the fame of Jesus (Luke 5: 17). "And he preached the word": God's word—the message of good news to men. This was a gathering of great power. Preaching and healing went together and made a powerful impression.

Crowds are no proof of success in preaching, for the real success depends on what is done for the crowds after these are gathered. And yet true preaching, which feeds the soul, tends to draw crowds, and gives the larger opportunity to the teacher. There is nothing which so attracts as the pure gospel so preached as to meet the needs of the soul.

A LIVING PARABLE OF SIN.

III. A MAN WITH THE PALSY SEEKS FOR HEALING.—V. 3. (During divine service.) 3. "And they come unto him": while he was speaking. A number of persons, relatives or family friends, seem to have accompanied the sick man, though he was "borne of four" persons, each one holding a corner of the light wooden frame, with a network of cords, on which the thin mattress or bed was placed. "Bringing one sick of the palsy." "Palsy" is a contraction of the word "paralysis."

THE PALSY AS A TYPE OF SIN. Sin in the soul takes all the forms which paralysis does in the body. (1) Sometimes it takes away or dulls the sense of feeling. Its victims are insensible to the goodness of God, the appeals of reason, the truths of religion. They are, as the Apostle says, "past feeling." (2) It sometimes weakens the will, so that even when men would do good, evil is present with them. They put off duty; they know, but will not come to a decision. They become like a patient in one of our city hospitals, described in one of the illustrations below, where the will itself had lost its power of action. (3) Sometimes sin, like what in those days came under the name of palsy, produces a fixed condition of evil, with intense tortures of conscience.

SEEKING SALVATION.

IV. LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF INTO THE PRESENCE OF JESUS.—V. 4. "And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press": or crowd which filled not only the room, but the court, and the narrow street on which the gate was. If it had been merely a crowd in a room and around its door, they would have made way for the sick man; but under the circumstance this was impossible. "They uncovered the roof where he was." The dirt-covered roof of the room. They could reach the roof by means of the outside stairs common in Eastern houses. "And when they had broken it up": literally "dug through." "They let down the bed." The "bed" was doubtless a thin mattress, or a well-wadded quilt, the inner material being wool. The roof was so low that they could let it down so that those below could receive it, without the aid of ropes, but simply by holding the corners.

A LIVING PARABLE OF REDEMPTION. I.

V. JESUS FORGIVES HIS SINS.—Vs. 5-7. 5. "When Jesus saw their faith": that is, the faith of the bearers and the paralytic. Mr. Glover lays most stress on the man's faith, and thinks he was the means of inspiring his bearers with faith: for "there are no sufferers whose affliction has been hallowed who are not centres of spiritual influence to some friends or neighbors round them." Their faith had a firm foundation in the wonderful cures Jesus had already wrought and the gracious truths he taught. His faith must have led to penitence to fit him for pardon. "Son." Expressing sympathy, kindliness, and perhaps that a new and close relation was henceforth to exist between them. "Thy sins be forgiven thee": rather "are" forgiven. Matthew adds after "son," "be of good cheer." Be encouraged; take heart. It is not at all necessary to imagine that the palsy was the direct result of any particular sins of this man; but his sickness and the near approach of death had awakened his conscience and made him see his guilty condition in the sight of God. He was unprepared to meet God; unprepared to enter heaven. Hence his greatest need and his greatest desire was for forgiveness of sins; and Jesus grants the greater blessing first.

6. "But there were certain of the scribes." The scribes, or rabbis, were the leaders of the nations, the theologians, the legislators, the politicians of Israel. They had been listening to the discourses of Jesus in the house, having come up from Jerusalem and other places for that purpose (Luke 5: 17. "Reasoning." The word "dialogue" is derived from the original of this word; and the meaning literally is that they "held a dialogue" with themselves. "In their hearts"; not speaking it openly.

7. "This man thus speak blasphemies." To blaspheme is to slander God, to speak evil, impiously, of God. In this case it was arrogating to himself what belonged only to God, thus making God like a mere man. Blasphemy is practically "uttered" treason against God. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" Sins are against God, and therefore only God can forgive them; for in the nature of things only he against whom the offence has been committed can forgive. I can forgive the evil done to myself, but I cannot forgive the evil done to my neighbor. He only can forgive that. So that the reasoning of the scribes was right: "Only God can forgive sins."

A LIVING PARABLE OF REDEMPTION. II.

VI. JESUS PROVES HIS AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE.—Vs. 8-12. 8. "Jesus perceived in his spirit" by divine insight, as he had perceived the faith of the paralytic. "Why reason ye." Matthew says, "Wherefore think ye evil?" Why do you misjudge, and put an evil construction on my words?

9. "Whether it is easier to say," etc. "In our Lord's argument it must be carefully noted that he does not ask "which is easier, to forgive sins," or to "raise a sick man"; for it could not be affirmed that that of forgiving is easier than this of healing; but which is easier, to "claim this power or that; to say," Thy sin be forgiven thee, or "to say," Arise and walk? . . . It would be easier for a man equally ignorant of the French and Chinese languages to claim to know the last than the first. Not that the language itself is easier, but that in the one case multitudes could disprove his claim; in the other, hardly a scholar or two in the land." Saying "Thy sins be forgiven thee" could not be put to thee proof. But the saying, "Arise and walk," could be tested on the spot. Both were divine acts. He that could do one divine act proved that he had authority and power to do the other.

10. "Ye may know that the Son of man": the Messiah, "the head and representative of the new humanity," the Son of God manifested in the flesh. "Hath power" "authority" to forgive sins, and the "power" which such authority carries with it.

11. "Arise, and take up thy bed." Here was a test of the man's "faith," as well as of Jesus' power. "Thy bed." The original word thus rendered means a portable pallet little more than a mat, used for midday sleep, and the service of the sick. It was of the commonest description and used by the poorest.

12. "And immediately he arose": the cure was complete at once; a mark of its miraculous nature. "Took up the bed." Lo carry such a bed rolled up under the arm is an every-day affair. "Insomuch that they were all amazed." Luke adds, "They were filled with fear." The miracle awakened a religious awe in their minds, such as men ever feel in the presence of a great and mysterious power. Here was one who could read their hearts; and who would not be afraid if every secret thought were about to be brought to light? Here was one also who had unlimited power; what might he not do to them? But they also saw the goodness of God; his forgiving love; his readiness to help; and this, too, for the sinful and helpless. This was the most amazing thing of all. "And glorified God." They ascribed the honor and glory to God, as the source of this beneficent power. The good deeds of God's children honor God, and lead the souls of men toward him (Matt. 5: 16).

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B. Y. P. U.

OUR OBJECT.

The unification of Baptist young people; their increased spirituality; their stimulation in Christian service; their edification in scriptural knowledge; their instruction in Baptist history and doctrine; their enlistment in missionary activity, through existing denominational institutions.

OUR FELLOWSHIP.

All Young People's Societies of whatsoever name in Baptist churches, and Baptist churches having no organizations are entitled to representation. We depend for our unity not upon any young people's name or method. Our common bond is in the New Testament, in the full affirmation of whose teachings

WE ARE ONE PEOPLE WITH ONE MISSION.

Kindly address all communications for this column to Rev. G. O. Gates, St. John, N. B.

Prayer Meeting Topics for Week Oct. 21.

B. Y. P. U. Subject: "How to number our days."—Ps. 39: 4.

C. Endeavor Subject: "Which of Christ's teachings seems to you most wonderful?—Mk 1: 22, Isa. 9: 6.

It will be profitable if some of the five minute papers that will no doubt be read in S. L. classes be sent to our column. Already we hear of excellent work being done in some of these classes and much interest awakened. We want the reports—brief and crisp—to come in now rapidly.

Here is your opportunity. You said that some of your friends would not go with you to prayer meeting because it was a prayer meeting only. How would it do to try and interest them in the S. L. Studies?

At the meeting in Bear River special emphasis was given to Junior Work?

Have we, since getting back home, forgotten about it? Why are not some of our enthusiastic junior workers sending our column some cheering items.

Let some who have been successful in this department answer the following: How we organized our Junior Society. How we conduct our meetings. What encouragements are ours in this work. Our greatest discouragement.

Just a word now to one of the older members of your Union. Has not the Master a place for you in loving service for boys and girls? Will you not enter the closet and ask Him? Getting His answer will you not, in His name, take up the work at once? "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me."

Reports are slowly coming in. This week Chipman, N. B.; Liverpool, N. S.; Springhill, N. S.; Elgin, N. B., and Halifax local union.

CHIPMAN, N. B.—The B. Y. P. U. of Chipman church was organized May 20, 1894, with a membership of sixteen active and four associate. Since then the membership has increased to 27. The interest is good God is blessing our work. Our officers are R. Willard Lemming, president; Miss Lillie Fleming, vice-president; Miss Hannah Lloyd, secretary treasurer.

LIVERPOOL, N. S.—A Baptist Young Peoples' Union was organized on Sept. 21 in connection with the Liverpool Baptist church. We have now 21 active and 7 associate members, and expect more to join us soon. The officers appointed are: President, Gilbert Kempton; vice-president, Allen Nickerson; treasurer, Miss Alemath Harlow. On Sept. 28th we held our first missionary conquest meeting. The programme prepared for this occasion was well rendered, and all felt the meeting to be deeply interesting and instructive. The prayer meetings are well attended.

LILLIAN E. STUART, Cor. Sec.

SPRINGHILL.—Last year [we had a very interesting class in the Sacred Literature course, which proved to be stimulating and beneficial to our young people. This year we have formed a larger class, and believe that the present lessons on the "Struggles for Distinctive Principles" will be of marked advantage and profit to those who will give them careful attention. The interest in the Eastern Association in regard to work among the young people seems to be increasing, and no doubt at the close of the year there will be more examinees than last year. We are glad to be able to hold the banner in these provinces, but we are not working for the banner alone—we aim to educate our young people so that they may be more serviceable in the Master's cause. I would urge all pastors and leaders in this association to lose no time in taking up these valuable lessons, for already three lessons have appeared. We expect to pay considerable attention to the lecture course. H. B. SMITH.

Oct. 8.

ELGIN, N. B.—Our union has begun the study of Sacred Literature Course for this season. Five papers are taken, and we purpose to purchase the proceedings at Toronto and "Short History of the Baptist" as a small beginning for a library. Last year we subscribed for the *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, which helped in preparation for the "Conquest Meeting." Our president of last year, Mr. H. B. Steeves, has left us to attend college. His place is well filled by Bro. W. W. Starratt. During the summer months we made a course of study for ourselves, namely, seven lessons on "Christian Baptism," one lesson each on "What Baptists believe on Fore-ordination," "The Lord's Supper," and "Christian Giving." We look forward with pleasure to our future study. H. A. SAUNDERS.

HALIFAX AND DARTMOUTH LOCAL UNION.—From a report sent by Miss Minnie M. Hubley.—A mass meeting of the Young People's Local Union of Halifax and Dartmouth was held in the North Baptist church vestry Monday evening, Oct. 1st. President G. A. McDonald in the chair. After prayer and singing, twenty-five minutes were spent in testimonies. The following were appointed officers for the year: President, H. Freeman; 1st Vice P., W. A. Freeman; 2nd Vice P., Miss Amy Johnston; Secretary, Miss Mabel Hall; Treasurer, Miss Gertie Fulton. A large number of the members of the Union are taking the C. C. Courses, believing the study to be helpful in many ways. Some friend has offered a banner to the Local Union. Halifax and Dartmouth young Baptists will do their part in seeking to win the State Banner again for the Maritime Provinces.

"Consecrated Enthusiasm."

These words can be spoken flippantly and mean nothing. So many empty words or padding for a gushing address or they can mean more than any one in this world can imagine, and possibly the first thousand years in heaven may not give time enough to sound the depths of its importance.

Consecrated Enthusiasm! What is it? We take it for granted that it is a state of the redeemed soul, and to get some more definite idea of what it is let us consider some of the things it is not. It is not a state of grace that will allow a person to sit, and sing, and dream only, till the Lord comes back. It is not simply to attend church twice on Sunday and two or three prayer meetings during the week and rest satisfied. It is not to make a resolve to speak to one soul a week, or a day, about salvation. It is not to perform a set of so-called religious exercises on Sunday, or go to a dance or card party at public or private house during the week, and do in every other way just as the ungodly world does. It is not to love intoxicating liquor or tobacco or opium more than the Son of God. It is not to swear, or give way to violent temper and use any kind of language that would not, or could not be used in the presence of God. To do such things while professing to be friends of Jesus is to stand where Peter stood when he denied acquaintance with his Lord and best friend.

May God save our denomination, young and old, from this state of things. It is not to argue by the hour for immersion as the Scriptural mode of baptism while many other Bible commands are disregarded entirely, and lay ourselves open to the retort that when the general life of your church is fairly decent we will listen to you on baptism. So much for what it is not. But what is it? Webster says: Consecrate is to set apart to sacred use; to make or dedicate to be sacred; to set apart, dedicate or devote to the service of God. A better definition is from the Word of God and mean "Hands filled with service for God," a positive not a negative attribute. Enthusiasm by the same authority means to be "inspired or possessed by the God's inspiration as if by a divine or superhuman power." Perhaps we might put in the work of God every day just the energy we put every day into the business of the farm, the store, factory, shop, the mine, the office, the household, the profession, can we? We must all grant that this is a reasonable and possible thing to do, and when steeped in prayer and knowledge of the Word what results for the kingdom now neglected? Allow me now to refer to some examples of this proper consecrated enthusiasm, other I mean than the Christ the perfect one. What about a man named John the Baptist? He had some and he had courage, too, a component part of consecration and of enthusiasm. We referred to dancing a moment ago; it killed John the Baptist other people's dancing, but not more surely than the example of older Christians who dance today, kills the soul life of the younger ones who know of it, and the influence of the performer as well. I can speak strongly on dancing as the devil stole three or four years of my life after I had started to serve my precious Jesus, and while in this backslidden state I made no effort to win souls or help weak ones onward. I knew my words would only be as sounding brass and tinkling symbol. But Herod was sorry for having given the promise, very sorry, but he did not recant, neither do some of these. The history of John's life, his preaching, his rebuke of Herod's sin makes me say he had consecrated enthusiasm. What about Peter at Pentecost when the crowd thought he and his companions were drunk, and afterwards what about the Spirit that allowed him, yes, made him go to the cross head down for his Lord? Had he any consecrated enthusiasm?

What about a man named Paul? you have read his history. Once he was enthusiastic, but not for God; then he was enthusiastic and consecrated to God and during this latter state, among other things he did, he besought men by the mercies of God to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God, living, not dead and useless. And said it was a reasonable thing to do. Why did Festus tell him he was mad and beside himself? Because he had consecrated enthusiasm; I sincerely wish you and I had some of the same. Now friends what are we going to do about it? Are we going to drift with the world down the stream like dead fish, and do as the world does, and go to the world's reward, outcasts of Heaven and paupers in Hell, as we are told this place was prepared for the Devil and his angels, and disappointed men are not welcome, then stop and think, and let us make it right, let us go before God and tell Him all the past, talk with Him about the present, ask His guidance for the future, and if the Spirit Divine puts no desire into our souls to do better work in the future, providing our dealings with Him have been honest then it would be supreme imprudence in the writer of this paper to urge forward, but if the pure Spirit of the Father God, the Holy Ghost does prompt to better, holier service, more errands of mercy, more study of His Word for the purpose of knowing His mind and will better, more sick and afflicted visited, more economy in the matter of personal comforts and adornments so that more money can go to spread the gospel so dear to the heart of its founder and forerunner and early followers, who were all Consecrated Enthusiasts; I say if the Spirit prompts to anything of this kind let us obey, and we will be getting ready to learn the first rudiments of Consecrated Enthusiasm. To have it to the full we must be like Christ was every day, like Paul from the day the scales fell off his eyes at Damascus till the death glaze went on them at Nero's block and we are responsible for what we can have and don't have. Suffer a note of warning: Enthusiasm is fine when well directed, when consecrated. Unconsecrated its energy is wasted, and all the enthusiasm you can crowd into the machinery of your young peoples work without the true consecration, the round of meetings and committee work is just so much pastime, may even seem to fill a duty, but there is no real benefit, Jesus is not exalted, pleased or honored. Souls are not made thirsty to get what you have, salvation, freedom, joy. Those who have wandered away in sin are not made homesick to get back into the warm, true service of their Father's house, in other words there is no Holy Ghost power. It is going to war with the power of Darkness with nothing but blank cartridges and painted cannons, and no reserve forces, followed by sure defeat and disappointment at the result. But with the true consecration born of God through the study of his word, through Jacob like prayer what a change, what love to Jesus, to christians, to sinners, to everything but sin. What joy, what peace. The rejoicing of harvest every day. The shout of victory in the battle, every shot telling. Let us have this Consecrated Enthusiasm; it can be had if we are willing to pay the price, and when we get it we will look lovingly, longingly, for the coming back of our Lord to tell Him all the joy. You can have enthusiasm without consecration, but you cannot have consecration without enthusiasm, therefore let us get consecration. Let me close by giving you one verse of the battle hymn of the Republic, written to inspire the men of the North to give their lives to free the colored slaves of the South. Let it inspire us to give our lives in loving service to free the slaves of sin:

In the beauty of the lilies
Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom
That transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy,
Let us die to make men free;
While God is marching on.

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