



LESSON IV.—JANUARY 26.

The Lame Man Healed.

Acts iii., 1-10. Read the whole chapter. Memory verses.

Daily Readings.

Monday, Jan. 20.—Acts iii., 1-16.
 Tuesday, Jan. 21.—Acts iii., 17-26.
 Wednesday, Jan. 22.—Matt. ix., 1-8.
 Thursday, Jan. 23.—Luke x., 1-9, 17-20.
 Friday, Jan. 24.—John v., 1-9.
 Saturday, Jan. 25.—Phil. ii., 1-11.
 Sunday, Jan. 26.—John xx., 24-31.

Golden Text.

'The Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation.'—Exodus xv., 2.

Lesson Text.

(1) Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. (2) And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; (3) Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. (4) And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. (5) And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. (6) Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. (7) And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. (8) And he leaping up stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. (9) And all the people saw him walking and praising God: (10) And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. (11) And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's greatly wondering. (12) And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power of holiness we had made this man to walk? (13) The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. (14) But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; (15) And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead: whereof we are witnesses. (16) And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Suggestions.

(From 'Peloubet's Notes.')

Now Peter and John. Two chiefest among the apostles, and most advanced in the knowledge of Jesus. 'The eldest and the youngest, probably of the noble twelve.' They were old friends at Bethsaida, and partners in the fishing business on the Sea of Galilee (Luke v., 10). They were both disciples of John the Baptist. Both had followed Jesus almost from the first. Both were with him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and within the gates of Gethsemane. Widely different in character, they were closest of friends, alike in principle, devotion, and purpose. They were like different notes in a harmony, different instruments in an orchestra, different colors in the spectrum. Went up. 'Were going up' as in R. V. From their homes, or some meeting-

place of the disciples, they ascended the temple hill, and were going up from one terrace to another in the temple courts. For each inner court was on a higher level than the adjoining outer one. They had come into the temple. That is, into the great Court of the Gentiles, and were crossing toward the Court of the Women, which, according to Kitto, 'was the common place for worshippers, both men and women.' It was the custom of the early Christians to worship in their old accustomed way, as well as in the new ways taught them by the Spirit. If they broke 'the old bottles' before the new were prepared, they would lose the very spirit and power of worship. As it was, they filled the old forms full of the spirit of worship. At, *in* 'for.' So as to be there at the hour of prayer. The hours of incense and of sacrifice were hours of prayer. See Luke i., 9-10, where it is said that the people were praying while the priest offered the incense. Being the ninth hour. Or about three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the evening sacrifice.

2. And a certain man lame. All we know of his history is (1) that he was born with the cause of his lameness, making the cure more wonderful; (2) that it was caused by a weakness of the feet and ankles (v. 7); (3) that it was so bad that he could not walk, but had to be carried; (4) that he was poor; (5) that he was over forty years old (Acts iv., 22). Was carried. 'The man was being carried at the hour of worship, when the temple would be filled with worshippers.'—Knowing. And they were in the act of carrying him at the time Peter and John were going in. The two arrivals were coincident.

Silver and gold have I none. Peter had left all to follow Jesus, and was dependent on others for his support, as Jesus had commanded (Matt. x., 9). The statement shows that the apostles had not enriched themselves by the generosity of the new converts, but joined with them in their benevolence. No one had given up more for Jesus than they; but they asked for themselves no more than the most obscure believer. But such as I have give I thee. The presence of the Holy Spirit, the power to heal in Jesus' name, the knowledge of salvation and eternal life, the power to show the way of peace and joy, and the loving kindness of the heavenly Father. The great works of the gospel cannot be done by silver and gold. They cannot give peace, or comfort, healing of body or soul, forgiveness of sins, the love of God, salvation, character, or any of the best things. The men who have done the most for the world have not been known for their riches. Jesus was poor, and Paul, and Luther, and the Wesleys, and Milton, Homer, Socrates, Dante. Peter had greater gifts to bestow than if he had possessed 'the wealth of Ormus or of Ind,' or had 'Affluent Fortune emptied all her horn' into his cup. In the name. The name expresses the whole being,—his character, powers, and heart. Of Jesus Christ. As the efficient cause, as the real living giver. Christ healed in his own name, the apostles in Christ's name. Because this expressed the real facts of the case. And because if the apostles worked miracles in their own name, it would have drawn attention to themselves, and not to the Saviour; while now, both Jesus and the apostles pointed men to the Messiah, and thus to God. Of Nazareth. This is added to make perfectly clear to whom he referred. This one, so despised by the Jews, proves himself to be the Messiah, and to be now living, by doing now the same works he had done when in the flesh. Rise up and walk. The R. V., as in the best MSS., has simply 'walk.' 'This, at the first view, might have seemed an absurd command. For the cripple might have readily objected, Why hast thou not first given me legs and feet? For this is a plain mock, when as thou biddest a man without feet to go.'—Calvin. 'But the man understood the words aright; for they were interpreted to him by the tingling life that, as they were uttered, rushed triumphantly into his dead limbs.'—Kitto.

His feet and ankle bones received strength. 'The language denotes with medical precision the nature of the restoration; the tread gained muscular firmness; the ankle joints new strength and play.'—Rendall.

Practical Suggestions.—Only such as a person has can he give to others. 'Peter could work the miracle, because in himself had the miracle been wrought' by the Holy Spirit. We cannot kindle others unless we ourselves are on fire. Warm words without

a warm heart leave us but 'a mountain of ice in a sea of fire.' If one has courage, hope, love, goodness, he can infuse them into other souls. If he himself is full of doubts, hate, ill-temper, bad passions, it is these he will impart to those around him, and by no means can such an one impart to others the good he has not himself. Hence it is that the most important element in teaching and in preaching is the man behind them. 'In engineering,' said Dr. Gregg, 'it is a rule that a cannon should be one hundred times heavier than its shot. A man's character should be a hundred times heavier than what he says.' What would the teaching of Jesus have accomplished without his knowledge and power as the Son of God, and his perfect example of his own teaching. What a double motive is here for being good, and acquiring all spirituality and virtue, and, above all, for possessing the living Christ, that we may help others to know and love him.

This opportunity came to the apostles by the wayside, while they were on the way to another duty. Some of our best privileges and most useful hours come to us in this way.

We are never shut out from the means of great usefulness because we have not much money. But the greater gifts cost the giver more than money, as it is harder to be than to do. Yet money may be used as an instrument through which the higher spirit works.

The Source of the Healing (vs. 12-15). Peter declares the power does not lie in the apostles, as John the Baptist denied that he was the Christ. It would, indeed, be a marvel if by their (12) own power or holiness they had made this man to walk. The power came from Jesus, the Prince of life, whom they had rejected and killed, destroying their only hope of personal or national salvation. But their God, the God of their fathers and of their nation, raised him up from the dead, triumphing over their evil, and proving that he was the Messiah of their hopes, and again presenting him to them for their acceptance.

The Means of Salvation was Faith (vs. 16-17). 16. Through faith in his name. . . the faith which is by him. Salvation came to the lame man, and will come to you if you will believe and receive him. And there is hope, because through ignorance ye did it. 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'

Jesus is the Promised Messiah (v. 18). You think he cannot be your Messiah because he was slain. But that is one proof that he is the Messiah, for your own prophets foretold it of him.

Therefore Repent and Turn Again (vs. 19-21). In view of this truth and because thus your sins may be blotted out. And 'so there may come seasons of refreshing' to you, of new spiritual life, not only in the future, but in the present, such as had just been witnessed, a foretaste of the visible and glorious presence when the Lord shall return in glory. Therefore, repent, for there is coming a restoration of all things, the glorious Messianic times foretold by all the prophets who have spoken God's words from the beginning.

C. E. Topic.

Sun., Jan. 26.—Topic.—Missions: the missionary awakening. In my heart, my church, Christ's church everywhere.—Rom. xiii., 10-14.

Junior C. E. Topic.

MAKE THE BEST OF THINGS.

Mon., Jan. 20.—In pleasant places.—Ps. xvi., 6.

Tues., Jan. 21.—A good medicine.—Prov. xvii., 22.

Wed., Jan. 22.—Content with our lot.—1 Tim. vi., 6-8.

Thu., Jan. 23.—Rest in God.—Ps. xxxvii., 7.

Fri., Jan. 24.—A feast.—Prov. xv., 15-16.

Sat., Jan. 25.—God's promise.—Heb. xiii., 5

Sun., Jan. 26.—Topic.—Make the best of things.—Phil. iv., 4-7, 11-12.

The infidel sneeringly remarks: 'Two-thirds of the church members of this country are women.' Very true. It is also true that out of 45,000 convicts in our State prisons, more than 43,000 are men.—'American Paper.'