

# The Quiet Hour

For Dominion Presbyterian.

## \*Jesus Healing at Capernaum.

BY WAYLAND HOYT, D.D.

They (v. 21). Peter, Andrew, James, John, whom Jesus had just now called to special discipleship (see Mark 1: 16-19), and Jesus.

Capernaum (v. 21) was the chief centre of our Lord's Galilean ministry. It was a city on the northwest shore of the Lake of Galilee. Many great words and works were said and done by our Lord in Capernaum.

Not as the scribes (v. 22). It was the scribes' duty to "copy, read, study, explain, and 'fence round' the law with the 'traditions of the elders.'" Their teaching was routine, second-hand, wearisome and endless hair-splittings, contending about little matters, counting the letters of the Scriptures, and all that. Their teaching had little relation with the daily life, righteousness, the real hunger of the soul. They kept on with their "Rabbi-So-and-so said," and "Rabbi So-and-so," one so on endlessly. But our Lord's teaching was "as having authority." It was full of a grand "Verily I say unto you." It fed and filled the soul's hunger. There were about it no poor guessings and perhaps. And through it all there sounded the tones of a wonderful and strong sincerity. And such is still the quality of our Lord's teaching, as the record of it has come down to us. It is tremorless, assertive, and at the same time infinitely gracious and winning teaching. Let Him be your teacher then. Make this the rule for your thinking and doing: What Christ says shall be authoritative with me.

There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit (v. 23). Literally, "in an unclean spirit"; as if under the empire of the bad spirit, the poor thrall of it, his personality seized and ruled by a bad and other and dominating personality. As another says, concerning this matter of possession by demons, the reality of it, "the only alternative belief to that of the reality of possession is that Jesus allowed the popular belief in the reality of possession to pass uncontradicted, and acted as if it were true, because He knew that the people were not prepared for any other way of dealing with subject." But, as this writer says, such theory of accommodation appears to cast doubt on the moral sincerity of our Saviour. I wholly reject such theory of accommodation. Christ constantly spoke and acted as if possession by demons was both a possible and a real thing. That is enough for me. I utterly believe that there was, in our Lord's time, the actual possession of men by evil spirits by demons. I am not so sure that there

may not be actual possession by demons now.

Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God (v. 24). Mark the repulsion of the unclean spirit from the Holy One of God. There must be such repulsion of sin from holiness. This is the explanation of future retribution. Heaven, the place of God's special and manifested presence, could not be heaven to a soul given over to evil. Such a soul would necessarily fly from God as darkness does from light. And such repulsion from God, such moral and awful chasm between God and the soul, is destruction, the spiritual death of which the Scriptures tell. This is the utmost doom, though the soul exists, the separation of the soul from God.

The unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him (v. 26). Mark the cruelty of evil; convulsing the poor man and violently protesting, the evil spirit takes his flight. And this is the great, deep lesson we ought to lay to heart, that our refuge from sin's possession is Jesus Christ.

They questioned among themselves (v. 27). Jesur stirs up questions; He did then; He does now. But do not simply question about Christ; let your questioning lead on to personal acceptance of heaven.

They came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John (v. 29). "Mark alone indicates, by one of his quick and unstudied references, that the brothers Simon and Andrew lived together and that James and John went home with them from the worship in the synagogue as friendly guests—a pleasant glimpse of social and family life, with Jesus in the midst."

Lay sick of a fever (v. 30). "Was burning with it," literally. Tristram says, "Country fever is to this day very prevalent in this seething plain and on its borders."

Took her by the hand (v. 31). Here is a beautiful parable of the way in which Jesus treats us. There was a great deal of this sweet, close hand-work with Jesus; if we would help people, let us follow Jesus, let us follow the gospel of the hand-grasp.

She ministered unto them (v. 31). Learn the true use of blessing to ourselves; it is ministry to others. Another has suggested these practical lessons, from this household incident, well worth our heeding: "1. Let us, like Simon, welcome Christ into our houses, our homes. 2. Let us, like this household, tell the Saviour of those members of the family who have special need of Him. 3. Let us place all confidence in Christ's power and willingness to bless. 4. Let us, healed and pardoned by Christ's grace take every opportunity of showing our gratitude, by engaging in His service; and, by ministering to His people, let us minister to Him."

At even (v. 32). Because the Sabbath was past.

He suffered not the devils to speak (v. 34). Our Lord would have nothing to do with evil; He would not let evil bear testimony to His Messiahship. Let us keep ourselves from sin's contamination; let us refuse collusion with wrong.

For the Dominion Presbyterian.

## Psalms IV.

A NEW VERSION BY W. M. M.

When I call, answer me, O Lord,  
God of my righteousness,  
Who hast delivered me of old,  
When I was in distress,  
How long, ye mortals, will ye turn  
My glory into shame?  
How long will ye in vain rebel,  
And urge your lying claim;  
Know that the Lord hath set apart  
The godly for His friend;  
The Lord will hear me when I call,  
And in His strength confide,  
Oh, who will show us any good?  
Inspire the wavering crowd,  
Lord, let Thy countenance's light  
Shine on us through the cloud,  
Thou hast but gladness in my heart  
Far greater than their cheer  
When corn and wine most largely crown  
The labors of their year,  
In peace and confidence I will  
Both lay me down and sleep;  
For it is Thou, O Lord, alone,  
Who dost me safely keep.

## The Only Hope or India.

When Julian Hawthorne delivered his famous lecture on India at Syracuse University, he produced a profound impression as he described, as an eye witness, the social and religious condition. He had travelled extensively through India, and, as an intelligent and unprejudiced observer, he gave us many sad pictures of the terrible plague and famine that had ravaged the country, and in three years had carried off more than 20,000,000 of the inhabitants.

The noted lecturer gave ample proof of the moral degeneracy of India, and the absolute lack of the spirit of humanity. He declared that the only pleasant feature that he saw in India was the work and influence of the Christian missionaries. He repeated the statement that the native Christians of India were a surprise to him, for they were the loveliest Christians that he had ever seen.

He paid the highest tribute to the character and influence of the missionaries, and twice declared that the Christian missionaries are the only hope of India, for the only way to save India is to Christianize her, and that Christianity is the only local influence that can overthrow the system of castes in India, for there is no hope in Hinduism. That was high and reliable testimony to the absolute needs of India, and the effective work of our faithful missionaries, and should inspire the Church with greater confidence and devotion to the cause of Foreign Missions, for the gospel is still the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.—Lutheran Observers.

Once we can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd," we can say, "I shall not want."

\*S. S. Lesson for March 4th: Mark 1: 21-34.  
Golden Text—And He healed many that were sick.—Mark 1: 34.