

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON VI.

May 7, 1882.] [Mark 7: 24-37.]

SUFFERERS BROUGHT TO CHRIST.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 20-30.

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 young 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 to 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 is gone out of thy daughter.

30. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31. And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the Sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;

34. And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36. And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

37. And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works."—Ps 145: 9.

TOPIC.—Christ's Pity and Power.

LESSON PLAN.—1. A MOTHER'S PLEADING ANSWERED. 2. SPEECH AND HEARING RESTORED.

Time.—Summer, A.D. 29. Place.—The coasts of Tyre and Sidon; Decapolis.

HELPS TO STUDY.

INTRODUCTORY.—Our Lord did not go up to the Passover this year. His life was not safe at Jerusalem (John 7: 1), and his time to die had not yet come. Both he and his apostles needed rest. He therefore left Capernaum and went to the northern borders of Galilee to escape for a while the crowds that followed him.

I. A MOTHER'S PLEADING ANSWERED. (24-30.) V. 24. TYRE AND SIDON—cities of Phoenicia, on the Mediterranean. V. 25. A CERTAIN WOMAN—Matthew says she was a Canaanite. Matt. 15: 22. V. 26. A GREEK—In language. A SYROPHENICIAN—a Phoenician of the Syrian coast by race. Though a heathen, she came to our Lord for help. V. 27. NOT MEET—not fit. CHILDREN—the Jews were the children of the covenant made by God with Abraham. They called outside nations Gentile dogs. Jesus used this word to try her faith. V. 28. YES, LORD—she accepts the term of reproach, and with humble faith asks for the crumbs, the dogs' portion. V. 29. HE SAID UNTO HER—first he appeared to repulse her, but now her faith is rewarded. Jesus says to her, "O woman, great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Matt. 15: 28. V. 30. WHEN SHE WAS COME TO HER HOUSE—Matthew says that her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

II. SPEECH AND HEARING RESTORED.—(31-37.) V. 31. DECAPOLIS—"ten cities," lying south and east of the Sea of Galilee. V. 32. IMPEDIMENT—literally, "hardly speaking," though not altogether dumb. V. 33. TOOK HIM ASIDE—he could not hear, so our Lord lovingly and patiently takes him aside and encourages his faith by signs. He puts his fingers in his ears to indicate that he would restore his hearing; he touches his tongue to show that it should be loosed; he looks up to heaven to indicate that God did the work. The sign told of the sympathy of Jesus. V. 34. EPHPHATHA—"Be opened," a Syro-Chaldee word. What power there is in Christ's words! V. 37. DONE ALL THINGS WELL—he does everything exactly as it ought to be done.

TEACHINGS:

- 1. True faith is earnest, humble and persevering.
2. Faith always brings a blessing.
3. Jesus often tries our faith in order to strengthen it.
4. The trial of our faith should not discourage us.
5. We need Christ to open our ears and loosen our tongues.

REMEMBER that if we would please Jesus we must come to him, as this woman did with strong earnest faith. We must be tender and helpful, as Jesus was, to every kind of suffering, showing our sympathy by looks and signs if we cannot by words.

LESSON VII.

May 14, 1882.] [Mark 8: 1-21.]

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.

COMMIT TO MEMORY VS. 14-17.

1. In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them,

2. I have compassion on the multitude, be-

cause they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way; for divers of them came from far.

4. And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?

5. And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6. And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.

7. And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them.

8. So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets.

9. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

10. And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11. And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13. And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

14. Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

16. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.

17. And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18. Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

19. When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20. And when the seven among four thousand how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

21. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."—LUKE 12: 1.

TOPIC.—Sincerity and Faith in God's Service. LESSON PLAN.—1. A MIRACLE OF LOAVES. 2. THE CAPTIOUS PHARISEES. 3. SLOW-LEARNING DISCIPLES.

Time.—Summer, A.D. 29. Place.—Decapolis, the region south and east of the Sea of Galilee.

HELPS TO STUDY.

INTRODUCTORY.—The events of this lesson took place immediately after the healing of the deaf man of the last lesson. For three days the great concourse of people continued with our Lord, beholding his works and listening to his words. He had not visited Decapolis except for a few hours at the time when he healed the demoniacs (Mark 5: 1-20), and afterward when he fed the five thousand. Mark 6: 32-44. The most of the people now saw him for the first time.

I. A MIRACLE OF LOAVES.—(1-9.) V. 2. I HAVE COMPASSION ON THE MULTITUDE—they had now been with him three days, and their food was exhausted. Jesus pitied them, and once more spread a table in the wilderness. This miracle is so similar in its general features to that of Lesson III. that it does not need a particular exposition. The points of difference are, the number of persons fed, the quantity of food, the quantity of fragments and the time the multitude had been with Jesus. All those things prove that there were two distinct miracles.

II. THE CAPTIOUS PHARISEES.—(10-13.) V. 10. PARTS OF DALMANUTHA—Matthew says "the coast of Magdala." Dalmanutha is supposed to have been on the west coast of the lake, between Magdala and Tiberias. V. 11. CAME FORTH—they wished to find some ground of accusation against him. A SIGN FROM HEAVEN—some miraculous appearance in the sky in proof of his claims. V. 12. HE SIGHED DEEPLY—he was greatly grieved at their hatred and unbelief. NO SIGN—no such sign as they asked. Matthew adds, "but the sign of the prophet Jonas." Matt. 16: 4. But this was not such a sign as they asked. V. 13. HE LEFT THEM—gave them up to hopeless unbelief. (See Hos. 4: 17; 9: 12.) THE OTHER SIDE—of the Sea of Galilee, north-eastward to Bethsaida Julius.

III. THE SLOW LEARNING DISCIPLES.—(14-21.) V. 14. FORGOTTEN—this shows with what haste they had left. V. 15. LEAVEN—their doctrine. It was their hypocrisy that he meant. (See Luke 12: 1.) V. 17. WHY REASON YE—"Why do you so mistake or fail to understand my meaning? If you would but remember my miracles of feeding the multitudes, you would see that I could not have meant that you should trouble yourselves about bread, for with that I could supply you, if necessary, as I did them. Look deeper to find my meaning." They had not carefully heeded his teachings, and he sharply reproved them.

TEACHINGS:

- 1. Jesus will take care of his needy followers.
2. In times of necessity he will supply their wants.
3. We must guard against secret errors and evil influences.
4. Especially should we avoid all pretence in our religion.
5. Our service must be the service of sincere hearts.

REMEMBER that we need the Holy Spirit to teach us what the words of Christ mean, as we are so apt to misunderstand them. Remember also that the great things Christ has done for us already ought to keep us from ever losing faith again.

TREADING WATER.

BY MRS. E. J. PARTRIDGE.

"Come, children, let us go down to the river and wade until tea-time," said Mrs. Pike to the noisy, restless boy and girl, who had been trying to play softly, but had only succeeded in making such a racket that the quietly disposed boarders in the adjoining rooms seemed likely to lose their afternoon naps. But they soon congratulated themselves on having a few undisturbed hours, as Fred and Grace, so full of life and fun, and tired of staying in the house, rushed away, glad of the chance to do what they were not allowed to do, excepting when older persons were with them.

It did not take them long to get down the hill, take off shoes and stockings, and step into the water. And such fun as they had!

They had not been there long, when mamma and cousin Lillie came down, and the long hours passed quickly enough, while they were skipping pebbles so beautifully, some going quite to the other bank; sailing paper-boats and tiny rafts, and wading far into the deep water after them. Trying to cross on the slippery stepping-stones was the best fun, however, for just when balancing themselves most carefully, down they would go with a splash and a scream! But little they cared for the wetting, and soon they would be trying the feat again, amid shouts of laughter, while mamma's caution, "Do be careful, Fred!" was met with the prompt reply:

"Why, mamma, don't be afraid of this little bit of water! I'm sure a fellow couldn't drown here if he wanted to."

All summer these two children, whose home was in a far-off Southern city, had been living such a life out-of-doors as until then they had never dreamed of. On one side of the old-fashioned double house, away in the distance, were the Green Mountains, over whose sombre tops the sun rose so rapidly that the children used to say the shadows were so frightened they could see them run; on the other side loomed up, in the far blue, chain after chain of the great Adirondack range, with lofty peaks stretching heavenward, and resplendent with glory when crowned with the last rays of the setting sun.

At the foot of the hill on which the house was built, there was a lovely little river that was joined, just below, by a smooth stream from the back country, and where they met, the water, after a great deal of bubbling and splashing, fell over the steep rocks, some twenty feet down, forming a pretty cascade. The spray of this little water-fall arose like a white cloud and gently sprinkled the surrounding rocks, where the children loved to play, although it was not a very safe resort, as the river was both deep and rapid below the fall. There was a thickly wooded hill on the other side, where, when the river was low, and easy to be crossed, many hours were spent in long tramps after delicate ferns, and rare wild-flowers for Cousin Lillie's collection.

Just above the place on the river-bank where the children most liked to play, ran the main road, which crossed the river over a pretty stone-bridge. The rocks were high and steep under the bridge, and the river, dashing over them, fell into a deep basin on the lower side, which formed quite a large pond.

Now this pond was a splendid place to sail a raft, and on the day I have mentioned, Fred and Grace had a busy time loading and unloading the cargoes of stones and sticks. They were becoming somewhat tired and hungry, and withal a little impatient, when Grace, in giving the raft a good start, fell into the water, and when she was pulled out mamma had to take her up to the house, bidding Fred to follow soon. He was getting his last load of stones along to a good landing-place, when the raft grounded on a great rock, and after much exertion he pushed it off into the basin near the bridge. But in giving the last shove with his pole he slipped, and without a cry disappeared beneath the water.

With a scream of horror, Cousin Lillie, who had lingered behind to wait for Fred, sprang to the water's edge, but there was nothing to be seen, save a few bubbles, circling round and round, away out in the centre of the pond. She called loudly for help, meanwhile preparing to plunge in after her little cousin, quite forgetting that she could not swim.

It seemed ages to the horrified girl before

she saw Fred's head and face slowly rise to the surface. But then, to her great joy, he turned and, awkwardly enough, but surely, came toward her. She knew that he could not swim a stroke, but nevertheless he managed to keep his head above water, and soon came near enough for her to lay hold of his coat-collar. After much trouble, she finally pulled him out, and helped him over the slippery, treacherous stones to the grass, where he sank, exhausted.

Just then, Fred's mother came leisurely over the hill, to see what had detained the loiterers so long. One glance brought her hurriedly to the side of her dripping boy, to hear, with a terrified heart, of his narrow escape.

"Mamma," said Fred that afternoon, after he had been thoroughly rubbed and tucked up in bed, "I thought of you as I was going down, down so deep, and how sorry you would feel if I never came out of that awful hole, and then I thought of what it said in St. Nicholas about 'treading water,' and I tried to do exactly what it said to do, and I came right up to the top, and found that I could move along toward the shore without letting my head go down under water at all. But it seemed as if something was pulling at my feet all the time, and it was awfully hard to get over to Lillie. If she hadn't grabbed me, I think I'd have had to go down again, because I was so tired. I say, Lill, don't cry now! I'm all right—don't you see?—and you were just splendid!"

Fred was quite a hero for the remainder of the summer, and he never tired of telling his adventure.—St. Nicholas.

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