

LESSON VIII—February 23rd, 1896.

Faith Encouraged. LUKE 8: 43-55.

(Commit to memory verses 48-50).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Luke 8: 48.

PROVE THAT—Jesus wishes us to trust him. Luke 8: 50.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 48. *What are we specially taught by these words, "before me," in the first commandment?* A. These words "before me," in the first commandment teach us, That God, who seeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*. Nos. 40, 38, 223, 188.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. Faith Encouraged. Luke 8: 41-56. *Tuesday*. Great faith. Matt. 15: 21-28. *Wednesday*. Examples of faith. Heb. 11: 1-10. *Thursday*. Faith failing. Matt. 14: 22-33. *Friday*. Weak faith helped. Mark 9: 17-29. *Saturday*. Trust in the Lord. Psalm 62: 1-5. *Sabbath*. Come boldly. Heb. 4: 11-16. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. Matthew, or Levi, the publican, when bidding farewell to his old occupation and companions¹ in order to follow Jesus, made a great feast in his own house, at which Jesus was present. While this was in progress a messenger came from Ja'ir-us, a ruler of the synagogue, requesting him to come and heal his only daughter, a girl about 12 years of age, who lay at the point of death. He at once arose and followed the messenger.² Parallel passages Matt. 9: 18-26; Mark 5: 22-43.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Timid Woman. vs. 43-48. II. The Anxious Father. vs. 49-55.

I. As they were passing along the street a poor woman, who had been afflicted with a terrible disease for twelve years, came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak that hung over his shoulder,³ for she thought, "Jesus is so able and willing to heal sick people that if I can only touch his garment it will be enough to cure me." Jesus knew what she was thinking and doing, and that it would not be good for her to let her steal a blessing in this way. She would be apt to think that his healing power was like some kind of magic that had no connection with his will on the one hand, or her faith on the other. So he healed her because she believed on him, but asked immediately, "Who touched me?"⁴ His disciples thought this a strange question where there was such a crowd, and so many touching him all the time. But he meant a different kind of touch from an accidental push. The poor woman saw that he knew what she had done, and so came and confessed why she had done it. Jesus was not angry with her, but confirmed to her the blessing she had received, at the same time telling her that he, and not the garment,⁵ had cured her, and that he did it because he saw her faith.⁶ If anyone receives a blessing for Jesus' sake they ought to tell others about it, so that Jesus may have the honor that is due him.

II. As they resumed their walk a messenger came and whispered to Jairus that his daughter had died, and that there was no need to trouble Jesus now, it was too late. But Jesus overheard him, and told Jairus that if he only believed⁷ in him he could cure his daughter even yet. When they came to the house they found everybody in the deepest grief, and the hired mourners making a great noise with their wailing and doleful music. But Jesus said to them, "Why do you make all this ado, the damsel is not dead, but sleeping."⁸ He meant that he was going to turn all their sorrow into joy by bringing her back to life again like a person awakened out of sleep. They all knew that she was dead, and even their respect for Jesus could not keep them from laughing at him for saying that she was only asleep. Passing into the room where the little girl lay (she was only twelve years old), Jesus would let no one come with him but Peter, James and John,⁹ and the father and mother of the child. Then he gently took her by the hand and said, "Maid, arise," and her spirit came back to her body, and she rose up alive and well.

Both these miracles shew us how gentle and compassionate Jesus was and is. If we come to him, although our faith is very ignorant and weak, he will accept us, heal us from sin and give us eternal life.

¹ Luke 5: 29; Matt. 9: 10. ² Mark 5: 24. ³ Num. 15: 38-40. ⁴ Gen. 3: 9; 4: 9; 2 Kings 5: 25; Luke 24: 19. ⁵ Acts 19: 11, 12. ⁶ Isa. 66: 2; Acts 16: 29. ⁷ John 11: 25, 26; Matt. 13: 58. ⁸ John 11: 11-14; 1 Cor. 15: 6, 51; 1 Thess. 4: 13. ⁹ Mark 9: 2; 14: 33.

LESSONS. 1. The only cure for the malady of sin is to touch Jesus with the hand of faith. 2. We should bear testimony for him before men. 3. Answers to prayer are often delayed in order that a richer blessing may come with the answer. 4. Death is but a sleep to the Christian. 5. Jesus is the resurrection and the life.