Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Adapted from Peloubet's Select Notes.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson IV. April 28. Mark 14: 12-26.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"This do in remembrance of me."—LUKE 22: 19.

THE SECTION includes the whole story of the institution of the Lord's Supper, chiefly in Mark 14: 12-31; and John chapters 13-17.

EXPLANATORY.

PREPARATIONS.—Vs. 12-16. 12. "And the first day of unleavened bread," that is, of the Passover celebration, which began on the 14th of Nisan at evening, and continued to the 21st, Exodus 12: 18-20. "Of unleavened bread." So called because at this feast only unleavened bread was allowed. It symbolized three things. "When they killed the passover": that is, the lamb for the Passover feast. This was always done on the 14th of Nisan. "Where wilt thou that we go and prepare," etc. That which was required consisted of a room furnished with a table and couches; and for food, unleavened bread, bitter herbs, wine, and a paschal lamb, which must be slain in the temple between three and five o'clock (Josephus' Wars, VI., 9: 3), and cooked in a private house.

13. "And he sendeth forth two of his disciples": Peter and John, according to Luke 22: 8. Jesus himself remained in Bethany. "And said unto them": there can be no question that this direction was given them in superhuman foresight. "There shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water." The unleavened bread for the Passover is made most carefully by the male members only of the company who are to eat together (Rev. Ezra Isaac), and for the purpose of kneading the unleavened bread pure water was solemnly drawn by each family. While drawing it, the man was to utter the words, "This is the water of the unleavened bread." This is the reason why, though water was usually drawn by women, here it was a man who drew it. "Follow him," and he would lead to the right house and its owner.

THE CONCEIT of this direction was probably to prevent Judas from knowing the place in time to betray our Lord at the Passover meal.

14. "And . . . say ye to the goodman of the house": or, "master of the house," not the man they followed. "Goodman" is often incorrectly read, as if it were the noun "man" with an epithet of praise before it (good man), whereas it is an old English word for "master," as applied to a householder, husband, or the father of a family. The master of the house was probably a disciple, but secretly, like many others, "for fear of the Jews" (John 12: 42). "The Master." Literally, "the Teacher." "Where is the guest-chamber" [illegible], "my guest chamber": the one designed for my use. This seems to imply that Jesus had already had some understanding with the master of the house respecting the matter in hand. He may have been a disciple, and glad to welcome Jesus. Others think that the whole, not merely the sign, lay in the supernatural knowledge of Jesus. "Where I shall eat the passover?" This message seems stranger to us than it would to the man, even if he had little knowledge of Jesus. During the Passover week hospitality was recognized as a universal duty in Jerusalem; pilgrims and strangers were received, and rooms were allotted to them for the celebration of the feast.

15. "And he will shew you a large upper room." It is still common in Oriental houses to have the principal rooms in the second story. "Furnished": i. e., with tables, the necessary dishes, and couches or mattresses spread around the "low table and covered with damask or tapestry-work (as we see in the best Moslem houses in Damascus at the present day), on which the company reclined while eating." "Prepared": already swept, and clean, and in order for the feast. Even at the present day, the very humblest Jewish family generally has at the Passover time "the walls of the house whitewashed, the floors scrubbed, the furniture cleaned, and all things made to put on a new appearance."

16. "And they made ready the passover." (See on v. 13.) The two disciples would probably wait for their Master's arrival with the other ten, superintending the preparations.

PRACTICAL (1) Christ can still give minute guidance which in the least details of life will lead us safely. He still exercises the minute providence by which, from most casual conjunctures of events, he can produce the most important issues. (2) Each of our hearts should be a guest-chamber for the Lord. (3) It is a great privilege to have Jesus dwell in our homes, and to make use of our property, our time, our talents.

II. IN THE UPPER ROOM.—Luke 22: 14-16. V. 17. "In the evening." Jesus must have started late in the afternoon, and reached the upper room "about sunset, which would be at that season at a little after six. With this sunset began, according to the Jewish reckoning, the day of his death."

III. THE STRIFE TO BE FIRST.—Luke 22: 24. "While gathering at the table." This contention is recorded only in Luke, but is implied as the reason for some of the exhortations in John 13: 1-20, and for the washing of the disciple's feet. The strife probably began when the disciples were assembling in the upper room and were about to take their places at the table. Even in this most solemn hour, more solemn than they realized, there arose a contention among the disciples as to who should be the greatest, probably with reference to the place of honor at the table. It is quite possible that those sought the best places who had received unusual honors, as the three who had been selected for the Transfiguration, Peter, with the keys, Judas, the treasurer, James and John, who had asked to be nearest the King. But, except in Judas' case, we may be sure that the best of motives were mingled with the unworthy ones, and that they wanted to be near him whom they loved; possibly, also, because no one was willing to take upon himself the servile duty of washing the travel-soiled feet of the company.

THE SELF-SEEKING SPIRIT leads to Satan's kingdom, not to Christ's. It is the spirit of hell, not of heaven. It begets evils innumerable and sorrows unspeakable.

IV. JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET.—John 13: 1-20; Luke 22: 24-30. Just after all were seated. We gain a very erroneous idea of the meaning of this action if we imagine that it was performed for a mere example of humility, or even as an illustration. It was simply a humble, menial service that ought to have been done by the disciples, but which they refused or neglected to do. "As sandals were ineffectual against the dust and heat of an Eastern climate, washing the feet on entering a house was an act both of respect to the company and of refreshment to the traveller." The disciples sat down to the meal without washing their feet, after a hot and dusty walk. "The feet-washing should have been done by one of the disciples; the things necessary for it are at hand. The disciples are still disputing who shall undertake to do it. Jesus then rises himself to perform this duty of a servant."

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF HUMBLE SERVICE. We are to imitate not the form, but the spirit of Christ.

PRACTICAL. Love to God and love to men transfigure the commonest service, as a gray and dreary cloud is transfigured by the rays of the setting sun. Much that a mother does for her child, a doctor or nurse for his patient's, is very lowly service, that would be hard and repulsive but for love. It was such service that has made the names of Florence Nightingale, John Howard, and many others shine like stars in the sky.

V. THE PASSOVER.—After this the Passover Feast was celebrated in the usual Jewish manner.

ITS SIGNIFICANCE. (1) It was the anniversary of the birth of the Jewish Nation. (2) It marked the divine favor and protection in preserving their first-born from destruction. The destroying angel "passed over" the houses on which the blood was sprinkled, or, as some take it, the Jehovah angel "passed over" and stood over the door, and shut out the destroying angel. (3) It commemorated their salvation from the bondage of Egypt, and their separation to a holy life. (4) The sacrifice acknowledged their sin and need of atonement, (5) which they must apply to themselves by faith. (6) The absence of leaven denoted their putting away sin. (7) The bitter herbs were a token of their repentance. (8) The whole foreshadowed the coming of their Redeemer.

VI. THE WARNING TO JUDAS.—Vs. 18-21. John 13: 21-28. 18. "And as they sat and did eat," the Passover, not the Lord's Supper, "Jesus said": being troubled in spirit (John 13: 21). The Saviour's heart was touched with the ingratitude of one for whom he had done so much. "One of you which eateth with me": an intimate friend; one who was pledged by thus eating with him to be faithful and true. "Shall betray me": Judas had already agreed to betray him for thirty pieces of silver; but this announcement (1) gave Judas opportunity to repent. (2) "The words would seem to have been intentionally vague, as if to rouse some of those who heard them to self questioning," whether by their contention they were not in danger of falling. (3) The announcement showed the disciples that Jesus was not taken by surprise, but knew all that was before him. It was part of the great plan of redemption, foretold ages before (v. 21).

19. "And they began to be sorrowful": because Jesus should be betrayed; because one of their number should fall so low as to be a traitor, and because they were afraid they might be swept onward into doing what now their souls hated. "To say unto him": to Jesus, as well as to one another (Luke 22: 23). "One by one, Is it I?" Alas, here is a sad proof of nobility, all their failure in love, all the depth of their selfishness, all the weakness of their faith,—

"Every evil thought they ever thought,
Every evil word they ever said,
Every evil thing they ever did,"

all crowded upon their memories, and made their consciences afraid. "None" of them seemed safe from "anything." "And another said, Is it I?" Better that question than "Is it he?" Better self-condemning watchfulness than censorious pride. This was true self-examination, and showed the right spirit, and was a hopeful sign.

20. "It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish." All the disciples dipped their bread with their fingers in the common dish, knives, and forks, and plates being unknown; but the enormity of the traitor's crime was shown by the fact that, "with the false smile of hypocrisy on his face, but with rage, shame, greed, and treachery in his heart," he could perform the rites of sacred hospitality by eating from the same dish with him whom he was pledged to betray.

21. "The Son of man indeed goeth (to his death), as it is written": in such passages as Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53. He must die if he would save the world. His death was not the result of accident, nor controlled by demons, but "he was delivered up to die by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2: 23). "But woe to that man." Not a threatening, not an utterance of passion, but a sad statement of a terrible fact, thus giving Judas another opportunity and warning to repent. The appointment of God did not make men less free agents, nor diminish the guilt of treachery or injustice. "Good were it for that man if he had never been born." Such a life was not worth the living. Observe the incidental confirmation of the doctrine elsewhere taught, that for the finally lost soul there is no redemption. For Judas there was no hope of restoration. At this point Satan took possession of Judas, and he went out from the company of disciples to betray Jesus to the chief priests.

VII. THE WARNING TO PETER (Mark 14: 27-31) probably took place during the Passover meal. Judas had gone out, but all needing warning, lest they fall. Peter declared that he would never deny his master, but Jesus warned him that he would thrice deny him before morning.

VIII. THE LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED. Vs. 22-25. 22. "And as they did eat." Sometime during the feast. "Jesus took bread." "Took the loaf" or thin cake of unleavened bread, which was before him. The bread points to Jesus as the food of the soul. "Blessed." Invoked God's blessing upon it, as was the wise and pious custom. "And brake it." Signifying Christ's body broken for us. "Take, eat; this is my body." Luke adds, "which is given for you" (22: 19); Paul, "which is broken for you" (1 Cor. 11: 24); and both add, "this do in remembrance of me": signifying not only that Jesus is himself the spiritual bread to them, but also that they in receiving and eating it accept of him and his atonement by faith. "This is my body": represents, expresses my body: We interpret it as we do his other sayings: The seed is the word, the harvest is the end of the world, I am the door, I am the vine. He said almost the same words a year before he died (John 6: 48-58). The literal eating of Christ's body would be of no value whatever. We are not changed into what he eat. We are not made holier by the best of food, even angels' food, or ambrosia and nectar. And a literal eating would degrade to a mere form a glorious and powerful spiritual truth.

23. "And he took the cup." Nowhere in the accounts of the Lord's Supper is the word "wine" used, but "cup," "fruit of the vine," so that fresh, unfermented grape juice fulfils all the conditions of this observance, and is even a more perfect symbol than fermented wine. "Given thanks." From the Greek word thus translated comes "The Eucharist; i. e., The Thanksgiving," as a phrase for taking the bread and wine.

24. "This is my blood." A type or emblem of his blood, his life (Lev. 17: 14), which he laid down as the atonement for sin. The grapes must be crushed and destroyed before the juice or "blood" could be used for the strengthening of the sick. "Which is shed for many." Multitudes, not merely a few, are to be saved by Christ.

25. "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine." He would have no more social meals with them. This was his last. His death would come before there would be an opportunity for another. "Until that day that I drink it new": not new, recently made, wine, but "a new kind of wine, as a new supper," with a new meaning. "In the kingdom of God": completed and perfected, when all should assemble to commemorate the triumph of Christ and his kingdom, and partake of that which the fruit of the vine foretold and symbolis d. It is a prophecy of his final triumph.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. This supper is a memorial of a departed Friend, a prophecy of a returning Friend, and a parable, and vision, and revelation of a perpetually present and ever-living and life-giving Friend. The celebration of this supper brings to remembrance the leading truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. It held up to our view the infinite love of God, who gave his only begotten Son.

2. It reminds us that salvation, like the bread and fruit of the vine, is the gift of God.

3. It brings to remembrance the life of Christ, all he was, and did, and said. It makes him a living reality to us. It is an irrefragable proof that he lived and died for us.

4. As the Passover to the Jews, so this supper helps us to realize the grievous bondage of sin from which Christ has redeemed us.

5. It holds up before our eyes the atonement, the sacrifice for sin, the body of Christ broken and his blood shed for us.

IX. PARTING WORDS.—John 14. "At the table," and 15, 16, "after they had risen from the table, and were about to depart." These words are full of promises, of comfort, and of instruction; and will ever be read with more interest and helpfulness when we remember the circumstances in which they were spoken.

X. FAREWELL PRAYER.—John 17. "In the upper room toward midnight."

XI. THE CLOSING HYMN, V. 26 "And when they had sung a hymn." Probably the usual Psalms (115-118) with which the Passover closed, and which were very fitting to this occasion. "There is no reason to doubt that Jesus and his company followed the custom; and Jesus, as the celebrant, would not only sing, but lead in the singing. (See a striking eloquent and sympathetic portrayal of the scene in "Philochristus," Chap. XXVIII.). "They went out into the mount of Olives," for the solitude of the garden of Gethsemane.

No small objection which young folks had to the old-time spring-medicines was their nauseousness. In our day, this objection is removed and Ayer's Sarsaparilla, the most powerful and popular of blood-purifiers, is as pleasant to the palate as a cordial.

The great thing which a young man needs in a crisis of temptation is to declare for the right quickly. Leave no time for temptation to accumulate. . . It often requires a great deal of character to do that; not only a religious principle, but a strong character back of that.—Asa in Phelps.

God makes crosses of great variety. He makes some of iron and lead, that look as if they must crush; some of straw, that seem so light, and yet are no less difficult to carry; some He makes of gold and precious stones, that dazzle the eye, and excite the envy of spectators, but in reality are as well able to crucify as those which are so much needed.—Fenelon.

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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 April 21.

Christian Endeavor Topic — "On Guard—Over What? How?" Neh. 4: 6-23.

(A TEMPERANCE TOPIC).

Seed Thoughts—from "The Baptist Union"—"In the work of rescue always remember that God loves men, but hates their sins."

"Every drunkard who sleeps in a dishonored grave was a moderate drinker at one time in his life."

"For two things work and pray: Total abstinance on the part of the individual and total abstinance on the part of the nature.

"The liquor power frequently defies and defeats law, corrupts legislature, number more victims than pestilence, and is the chief agency for the propagation of vice, crime and pauperism."

B.Y.P.U. Topic—"Fishers of Men." (Through the Sunday school) Luke 5: 1-10.

CALENDER OF READINGS.

By permission of Baptist Union.

Monday April 15th—"We are a spectacle unto the world," (verse 9). 1 Cor. 4. Read Heb. 10, 32-34; 1 Cor. 3, 2.

Tuesday April 16—"Avoid evil persons." 1 Cor. 5. Read 2 Thes. III., 14; III., 6.

Wednesday April 17—"Things lawful and things expedient." (verse 12), 1 Cor. 4. Read 1 Cor. 10. 23; 28-30.

Thursday April 18—"Directions concerning marriage," 1 Cor. 7. Read Gen. 2, 23-24; Matt. 19, 3-6.

Friday April 19—"Weaken no man's conscience," (verses 10, 11). 1 Cor. 8. Read Rom. 14, 13; 1 Cor. 10, 32.

Saturday April 20—"Adaptation to wise men," (verses 20-22), 1 Cor. 9. Read 1 Cor. 10. 33; Rom. 15, 1-2.

Sunday April 21—"Fishers of men."

"Throw out the life line to danger-fraught men
Sinking in anguish where you've never been:
Winds of temptation and billows of woe
Will soon hurl them out where the dark waters flow."

"Lord Jesus, open our eyes to know our enemy and his wiles. Cause us to see him and his realm, that we may dread all that is of him. And open our eyes to see how thou hast overcome him, and how in Thee we are invincible. O teach us what it is to be in Thee, to mortify all that is of the mere ego and the will of the flesh, and to be strong in weakness and lowliness. And teach us to bring into prayer the conflict of faith against every stronghold of Satan, because we know Thou wilt bruise him under our feet. Amen."
—*From the New Life.*

We have just been thinking of the advantages the young people have now, in the one thing of *Prayer Meeting Topics*. When some of us—who are not yet old by any means—went to prayer meetings as boys and girls, we were in total ignorance what would be the topic for the evening. Hence there could not be an intelligent preparation for that meeting, and as a result the meeting could not mean as much to us as it must mean to those now, who knowing the subject of the evening a week in advance are able to make special preparation therefor.

But do our young christians in any degree avail themselves of this privilege? The writer of these lines has carefully watched for years the effect of the Topics prepared in advance and placed in the hands of the young people and is pleased to say that the most devoted and earnest young christians do avail themselves of the privilege and in the words spoken and the Bible passages recited most plainly show that the Topic for the meeting has been thought of and in many an instance made a subject of special study and prayer.

While the matter of "topics" is in mind we recommend all societies to have printed copies of the Prayer Meeting Topics you intend to use for the year and give to all your members. Be sure and have a sufficient quantity, that each one attending your meetings may have a copy, and then have more on hand for the stranger and for the member who has lost his copy. It is a good thing to call attention to the subject a week in advance and to request a special preparation. Leaders will find out more and more "line upon line—line upon line, here a little and there a little" is ever required.

Point de Bute.

From a card sent us we are pleased to learn that there is a flourishing B. Y. P. U. in this church. The devotional and intellectual meetings are well sustained. A splendid Symposium Social was held a few evenings since at which Dr. Steele of Amherst and others took part. *Founders Day* will be observed by this Union.

Germain St. society of C. Endeavor had about 30 new members added to its roll at its last meeting. This is as it should be. Let the young christians coming into the church immediately identify themselves with those whose motto is "For Christ and the Church."

We give place in this column to another of the papers read before a late meeting of Temple Union, Yarmouth. We hope all our young people will carefully read what our good brother P. D. K. has to say.

When the Evangelists Hunter and Crossley were in St. John, in special addresses thoughtfully and prayerfully delivered, they gave no uncertain advice in respect to games of chance. We earnestly hope all our young people will avoid in their amusements the "appearance of evil."

Card Playing.

In all occupations and amusements of doubtful moral character, the proper question for a christian to ask is not "What harm is there in it?" but rather, "What good?" The reverse of this is usually done. It is sometimes difficult to see harm at the beginning or in the thing itself, but it is comparatively easy for an honest enquirer to see what the general tendency is, and to settle the question accordingly. With regard to card playing, the only good claimed for it is the amusement it affords. If "the chief end of man" was to be amused, this claim would have weight, but put in the balance against the evil tendencies of the practice it is "altogether lighter than vanity." Some of the principal objections to it from this point of view are as follows:

1. It is a great waste of time. This objection may be urged with equal force against almost any mere amusement, otherwise harmless, but in card playing the tendency in this direction is much more general and harmful. This, however, is the very least of its many faults.

2. It introduces its votaries to objectionable society. Not all card players are immoral or unworthy, but in pursuit of this pastime many persons are met on terms of social equality with whom intimacies are formed which become a serious or fatal hindrance to spiritual growth.

3. It exposes young persons, especially young men, to the dangers of gambling. Gamblers may and do use any game or anything for gambling purposes, but it is not the tendency as is the inevitable case with cards. Very few become deeply interested in them without falling into the dishonest tricks of professional players, and without giving or accepting prizes.

4. It is accompanied in its advanced stages almost universally by drinking and other consuming vices. The unnatural strain of mind induced by gambling demands the stimulant of strong drink, and the twin evils head a whole train of unnamable immoralities.

5. It has led many thousand to irretrievable ruin, and its influence is greater today than ever. Monte Carlo witnesses with its average of two suicides a month, and from innumerable gambling hells and brothels comes an awful annual record of wreck, woe and death. These and many other charges may be easily proven against what so many—alas! so many professing christians too—call a harmless and pleasant pastime. From the happy home circle to gambling, embezzlement, profligacy, murder and suicide seems a long or impossible path, but so many have trodden it in consequence of learning the fascinations of card playing at their father's fireside that the mystery is how any thoughtful person, even without christian principle can give this custom their patronage. How is it possible for anyone to do it and yet be a follower of Christ?

P. D. KINNEY.

Temple Union, Yarmouth, N. S.

The kingdom of God is not going to religious meetings, and hearing strange religious experiences; the kingdom of God is doing what is right—living at peace with all men, being filled with joy in the Holy Ghost.—Drummond.

As a coal is revived by incense so prayer revives the hope of the heart.—Goethe.

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