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# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. XXXI.]

APRIL, 1897.

[No. 4.

## Jesus is Risen.

BY H. E. QUINN.

"Why seek ye the living among the dead?  
He is not here, but is risen."—*Luke xxiv. 5, 6.*

Jesus is risen, the glad news proclaim,  
Joy to the world, through Immanuel's name;  
Herald the tidings of pardon and peace,  
Speak to the captive of blessed release.

Jesus is risen, the day-dawn is here,  
The shadows disperse and the clouds disappear;  
The night-mists and darkness are passing away  
In the radiant light of a glorious day.

Jesus is risen, behold Him appear,  
The mourners to comfort, the sad hearts to cheer;  
Hallelujah, He's risen! triumphant refrain,  
Joyfully join in the rapturous strain.

Jesus is risen, the Light of the world;  
Hosanna, He comes! with love's banner unfurled,  
Out of the gloom of death and the grave,  
Jesus is risen, the lost ones to save.

Redemption from sin, God's wonderful plan,  
His gracious and glorious gift unto man;  
Christ laid by His glory's imperial crown,  
In love and compassion to earth to come down.

"The Man of Sorrows," in fancy we see,  
On Olivet's brow, or on blue Galilee;  
But now He is risen, adoring we sing,  
Crown Him, our Saviour, Redeemer and King.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and love,  
Give to the Saviour, who reigneth above;  
Catch up the anthem that rings from the skies,  
Jesus is risen—we, too, shall arise.

On faith's snowy pinions, exulting, we soar,  
The lilies of promise to claim from his store;  
Fair blossoms of Hope and Love's fragrant  
flowers,  
Brighten and gladden this dark world of ours.

And terror and darkness have fled from the  
tomb,  
For the light of His love has brightened its  
gloom;

And Jesus has conquered, the last of all foes  
Is vanquished forever—triumphant He rose.

Frontier, Que.

## Sunday-school Music.

PEOPLE assume that Sunday-school tunes must of course be light, if not thin. I am sure that this is an error. Young people, and even children, do appreciate, and often hunger for, something solid, deep, true in music. Young nerves will of course tingle, and young muscles will move in response, to the tripping and the dashy. That music is certainly not the best which "stings the heels more than the heart and the head." Too many tunes are not only simple, but silly; not childlike, but childish. Excessive prominence of rhythm is a bad symptom in a tune. Strong accent is not strong music. The music is not what it ought to be if it fails to awaken, in connection with the words, purer, nobler, more wholesome emotions than the words alone would arouse. Let us put the music on the same plane with the other work. Let us sing more good hymns, standard hymns, explained, illustrated, made attractive; "dig the old wells deeper." Let us use more of the solid and educative tunes, accommodated, especially in "tempo," to younger voices. Let us enlist all the available musical talent, but make all performers feel the sacredness of their work.—*Prof. W. B. Chamberlain, in Pittsburg Christian Advocate.*

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## Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1897.

### Mary in the Garden, Easter Morn.

To a person receiving a name in childhood, there is no personal significance at first. The name is like a book filled with blank leaves. How full the leaves become at last!

The name in childhood and the name in old age—how very different while the same! It has become a part of the person—embodies his defeats, preserves his successes. You turn over the leaves in the book, and how covered are these with the most interesting details of personal history!

Take that name which Jesus spoke in the garden Easter morning—Mary.

How significant had become the name of Mary of Magdala! When our Saviour utters it as she stands by the open tomb, Mary, so heavy-hearted, so tearful, what a turning back of the leaves of the book there seems to be!

"Mary!" says the Saviour.

How that voice thrills her, uttering her

name connected with such serious personal history!

As if His voice were also saying, "Canst thou not recall when I first met thee, held in the grasp of that awful demonic power, thy soul torn as if convulsed by an earthquake? What voice stilled thee and brought to thee the Galilee hush after the storm, throwing off the terrible burden crushing out thy life?"

"Mary!"

The crowded pages fall back again. The voice goes on:

"Canst thou not call those after days when patiently, lovingly, thou didst follow Me up and down the dusty roads of Judea, ministering to My wants, defending My interests, and when any in the crowd may have mocked and jeered, then Mary of Magdala came to Me, stood by Me, helped and comforted Me?"

"Mary!"

The book opens to still more interesting pages. There are red marks on them. The voice goes on:

"Ah! thou hast not forgotten Calvary. When all Jerusalem turned against Me, as I was hanging on My cross, then didst thou take a stand in that hard place by the cross. There thou didst comfort Me with thy devotion."

"Mary!"

There are pages now where the shadows deepen, and a voice of sad tenderness is speaking:

"When they took Me down from the cross thou wast there, thy hot tears falling on My cold face. Thou didst follow Me to the tomb, didst help swathe my body for its rest. Thou didst come this morning, ere the dawn flushed the east. Thou didst bring spices to the tomb. Someone may have said, 'Sad heart, thy Master was deceived. He was conquered by death. He has died, and thy hope and courage will die also. Thou wilt go alone through life, meet death in solitude, and for you will there ever be a rising again?' But I am alive! I have risen from the dead! Mary!"

Alive? Risen from the dead? Yes, Jesus is alive! His words were the truth. His claims were the truth.

What wonder that she falls down, crying not, "Master," simply, but, "My great Master!" Yes, Son of God, one with the Father!

Alive for Mary of Magdala!

Alive to make every worthy hope for another world live and bud and blossom and flourish!

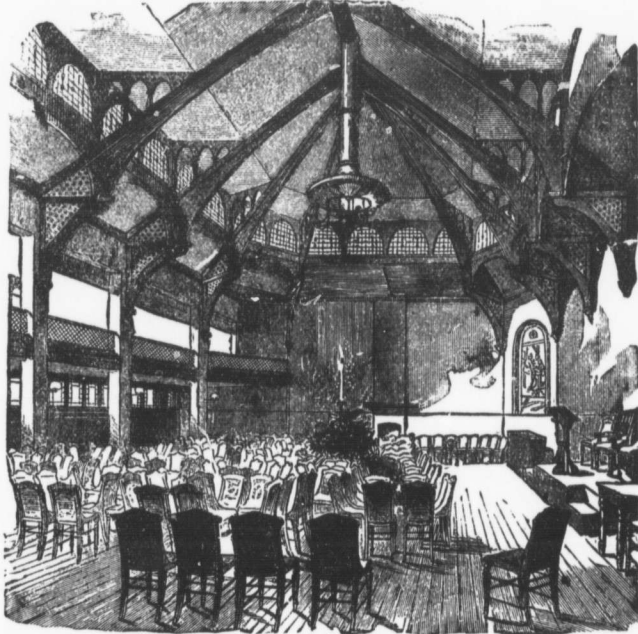
Alive to give cheer on dark days, strength in weakness, healing in sickness!

Alive to meet thee in the walk through Death's Valley! Death shall become life, the night will be the morning, for Jesus will utter that word in which there is a comforting, personal recognition and a testimony also to thine immortality—"Mary!"—*S. S. Journal*.

### A Model Sunday-school Room.

ONE sweltering hot night, last summer, we were returning from church in New York, and our route homeward led us through one of the most crowded and squalid parts of the city. Men and women were sitting at the doors of their houses, trying to catch a breath of air in the narrow streets, and the children were playing on the crowded foot-paths and cobblestones. The corner taverns were all ablaze, and sounds of carousing came through the

This church, which cost \$60,000, was built by Mr. and Mrs. Morris K. Jessup, "in memory of their beloved parents." There is preaching in English and German every Sunday, and several services during the week; prayer-meetings, Bible-classes, mothers' meetings, sewing and singing school—everything that will elevate and bless the people. Every day a sweet chime of bells rings out the call to prayer. Special attention is given to the Sunday-school, whose large and handsome room connects by sliding doors with the church. What a bright, beautiful, convenient, commo-



ever swinging doors. It seemed like a darker heathendom in the midst of Christianity—as if no man cared for the souls of these poor people.

Just then I caught sight of what seemed to be a star beaming brightly far ahead, and as I approached it took the form of a brightly illuminated cross. It was the cross on the spire of the DeWitt Memorial Church, whose Sunday-school room is shown in the above engraving. It seemed to me a promise and prophecy—that the cross of Christ should bring light and salvation to the weary multitudes who are the prey of vice and sin.

dious room it is! On the left, as the engraving shows, on the main floor are the Bible-class rooms and an intermediate department, all easily separated from the rest of the school by sliding doors. Above these rooms is the gallery for the primary department, which can be shut off by itself in the same manner. This gallery will easily accommodate three hundred little ones, while four hundred or five hundred others can be gathered on the main floor. The ceiling is blue, a fountain surrounded with growing plants plashes and tinkles, while a fireplace at the end of the room, during the winter days, will send out

warmth and radiance. The two large windows at the angles of the room are emblematical, the one representing Christ blessing little children, and the other the child Jesus in the carpenter's shop, subject to his parents. The room is seated with chairs, which can be grouped for the convenience of classes, or arranged to face the school platform or the church pulpit, as circumstances may demand.

## What the Home Department Can Do.

BY ETHEL WHITTEMORE.

RECENTLY while visiting in a small city in Ohio, I found that several of the churches had taken up the Home Department.

In one of these churches a large number of persons united with the department, among whom were two families who lived so far down in the scale of society that to kindle any religious interest in their hearts seemed, to many, an impossibility. But the persevering visitor soon succeeded in awakening an interest in her visits, and, later, in the study of the Word of God.

For some time this weekly work went on, causing a gradual awakening in the adult members of the two families, and, in time, conviction of sin.

The pledge was signed in both of these homes, and drink, which had been a great curse in both, was banished. The children became happy, and were clothed for Sunday-school, and both parents and children found their way to the house of God.

Ere long the time came when, after careful examination by the session, all of the adult members of one family, three in number, and the mother in the other home, were considered suitable persons for church membership. Another Home Department visitor, looking for persons to unite with it, found an aged woman, who said:

"There are two households of us who came here three years ago. We have been very homesick, because we could not find a church home. There is no church here of the same name as the one at our old home, so we do not know where to go to church."

The children were added to the regular Sunday-school at once, and, in a short time, three adult members of the two households were taken into the membership of the Congregational Church. Thus Christian fellowship was renewed, and a new start in the better way given. Shall we say this department of the Sunday-school is of small value?

Hearing of these instances reminded me of

the experience of a Christian woman whom I met several years ago. In her childhood she was surrounded by the love of a Christian home and many friends. When she was married she went to a home prepared for her reception, where all was love and happiness. But soon this charming little home was swept away from the happy pair by reverses. They sought a new location, and settled on the outskirts of a quiet town. There, surrounded by her little family, far from dear friends and relatives, sick and discouraged, the wife and mother passed eight lonely years. The pastor of a local church after some time found her, through her little girls at Sunday-school; but, save an occasional precious visit from him, she was unvisited by Christian people.

Why was it that she was so lost to the Church? First, because she was too sick to seek new friends in their usual meeting-places, and she was not so destitute as to need the ministrations of the benevolent committee. Second, because there was no department of church work into which she could enter at home.

If the Church of which she became a member when health was restored, and in which she found many friends, had had a Sunday-school Home Department, it could have thrown its arms around her and brought her into touch with itself, thus supplying the Christian fellowship for which her soul longed.

Seeing the good this department has done, and recognizing the unsatisfied hungering of many souls deprived of Christian fellowship, shall we not arise and speed on the movement?  
—S. S. Times.

## On the Border-Land.

THE telescope and the microscope have each extended wonderfully the realm of our knowledge; the one in the vast, the other in the minute. Yet the final limits of our apprehension are probably far from being attained, for with each improvement in the instruments the heavens become deeper in the vastnesses of space and richer with suns and stars, or the minute presents increasing marvels of infinitesimal forms of organism and life. So also in the sphere of sound our knowledge is bounded by the capacity of our organs of hearing. Here the audiphone makes revelations akin to those of the microscope in the field of vision, and sounds so tiny as the footfall of a fly, and others of equal delicacy, are distinctly heard. There can be no doubt that, as suggested by Professor Huxley, if our dull ears were sufficiently sharpened we should be able to "hear in the wonderful noonday silence of a tropical forest the murmur of tiny maelstroms as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of living

cells which constitute each tree, and our ears would be stunned as with the roar of a great city." We live in the midst of the unknown and the marvelous, our knowledge being constantly bounded by the limitations of our faculties. The wonderful revelations which science has opened to us suggest possibilities of whose nature and extent we can at present form no conception. We are in the border-land of the mysteries which, so far, are known only to Him who created and set in order all the wonderful machinery, but whose will it is that we open the doors and enter in. The flaming sword no longer hangs suspended over the gates of paradise to guard the way to the tree of life. With each succeeding discovery our conceptions are broadened in regard to Him who is the Maker of all; and so, also, our life is broadened, and we make a nearer approach toward Him who is infinite in knowledge and wisdom. But it is a joy to think that no expansion of our faculties, as the eternal ages move on, can ever enable us to fathom all the infinite resources of the Divine. We may continue to apprehend, but can never comprehend the unsearchable depths of his Being.—*Bible Teacher.*

### A Sunday-school of the Olden Time.

THE *Arminian Magazine*, of September, 1788, contains the following account of the Sunday-school at Bolton, England, which, in its day, was the largest and most flourishing school in the country:

"In the Methodist Sunday-school at Bolton there are about eight hundred scholars, forty masters, and nearly as many assistants of one kind or other. All that are employed in this school (whatever their offices are), offer their services willingly, without any pecuniary fee or reward. Every man stands close to his station, and enters into the spirit of his work with an intention to do all the good in his power to the children under his care. The masters love the children, and delight to instruct them; the children love their masters, and cheerfully receive instruction. It is about two years since they first began the school in one large convenient chapel; and the great good attending the undertaking appears more and more daily not only in Bolton, but in the adjacent places from whence children come constantly to the school, and others who live in the country several miles off.

"Many of the poor children about Bolton have been greatly neglected in their education and were almost a proverb for wickedness, especially Sabbath breaking, which crime is often the forerunner of the worst of evils.

"But we see at present the prospect of a glorious reformation. Among many who attend at one place, there is already a great change in their manners, morals, and learning. They are taught to read and write by persons who are very well qualified for the work. Many of the children can read well in the Bible, and write a tolerable hand; so that they are qualified for any common business. Their natural rusticity is also greatly worn off, and their behaviour is modest and decent. About one hundred are taught to sing the praises of God, in which they have made great proficiency, to the admiration of those who hear them.

"But what is better than all the rest, the principles of religion are instilled into their minds. The masters endeavour to impress them with the fear of God, and by that to make all vice and wickedness hateful to them; and urge them to obedience by the precepts spoken to separately every Sunday on this nature of religion, and are taught their duty to God, their neighbours, and themselves, when the instructions are enforced by serious counsels and solemn prayer."

Mr. Wesley, in his journal, also makes the following mention of this remarkable school:

"We went on to Bolton; about there I met between nine hundred and a thousand of the children belonging to our Sunday-schools. I never saw such a sight before. They were all exactly clean, as well as plain in their apparel. Many, both boys and girls, had as beautiful faces as, I believe, England or Europe can afford. When they all sung together, and none of them out of tune, the melody was beyond that of any theatre; and, what is best of all, many of them truly fear God, and some rejoice in His salvation. They are a pattern to the town. Their usual diversion is to visit the poor that are sick (sometimes six or eight or ten together), to exhort, comfort and pray with them. Frequently ten or more of them get together to sing and pray for themselves; sometimes thirty or forty; and are so earnestly engaged, alternately singing, praying, and crying, that they know not how to part."

### Easter.

I WONDER if in heaven on Easter Day

The angels add new sweetness to their songs.

I wonder if among seraphic throngs  
They deck themselves in lovelier array.

I wonder if their words now homage pay

To Him to whom the perfect grace belongs

Of leading us from all our earthly wrongs,  
And opening out of sin life's holy way.

I wonder—nay, I will not wonder so;

It may be on this day the angels come

With footsteps falling lighter than the snow,

To bring God's peace to every earthly home;  
And if we seek in quiet ways of prayer

We may behold the Saviour standing there.

## An Easter Hymn.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

"He was buried, . . . He rose again."

BIRDS of the morn awake and sing  
Your Saviour's glorious praise!  
Souls on the earth the news proclaim,  
Your joyful anthems raise!

Let those above strike all their harps,  
Let sweetest seraphs sing!  
Ye ransomed host beyond the flood,  
Loud let your psalms ring!

Let winds their mighty trumpets blow  
Adown the mountain ways!  
And waves, like organs by the shore,  
Sound forth their solemn praise!

Last night He slept within the tomb;  
While angels tribute bring,  
The door of stone at dawn falls back!  
He marches forth a King!

O death! thy dreaded dart He broke,  
Who triumphed o'er the grave!  
And He will break all chains of sin;  
He lives, He reigns to save!

And now let all creation rise!  
Bow down, salute your King!  
The great Redeemer takes His throne;  
Let earth, let heaven sing!

—S. S. Journal.

## Book Notices.

*The Apostles, Their Lives and Letters.* By DR. CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE. A. D. 55 to A. D. 64. With the Epistles to the Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, First and Second Timothy, and Titus. New York: James Pott & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$1.50.

This is another book which covers very fully the life and labours of St. Paul. It traces the development of early Christianity at Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and especially the closing scenes in the life of that great Apostle of the Gentiles at Rome. Dr. Cunningham's Geikie's lucid and luminous style, as exhibited in his "Life and Words of Christ" and "Hours with the Bible," is too well known to need comment from us. The book is handsomely printed, clear open page, and with its 628 pages is exceedingly cheap at \$1.50. Among the cuts of special interest is a most ancient representation of St. Peter and St. Paul, and one of Nero, the "lion" out of whose mouth God for a time delivered His servant.

*A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles.* By HORATIO B. HACKETT, D. D., Professor of Biblical Literature in Newton Theological Institution. A new edition. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society. Price, \$3.25.

The first edition of this book is one of the earliest and ablest commentaries issued of the Acts of the Apostles. The new edition, revised and greatly enlarged by those judicious editors, Dr. Alvah Hovey and Dr. Ezra Abbot, greatly enhances its value. It has received very high commendation from Biblical scholars for thoroughness of investigation, critical acumen, and spiritual insight. No one can be prepared to study the epistles of the New Testament with the greatest advantage till he is familiar with the external history of the Apostle Paul, and of his character and spirit as portrayed by Luke in this narrative. While Pedo-baptists will not be prepared to accept the conclusions of this commentary as to the subjects or modes of baptism, yet it will be found to throw very important light on the studies of the current year in all our Sunday-schools.

*The Acts of the Apostles Explained.* By JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Vol. I., pp. 485. Vol. II., pp. 498. Price, \$3.00.

From every source light is being focused upon the Book of Acts for the study of the International Lessons for the current year. One of the fullest and most thorough of English commentaries on this book is that by Dr. Alexander, of Princeton, covering nearly a thousand closely-printed pages. The most conspicuous figure in this book is the great Apostle of the Gentiles, whom we first meet as a persecutor, holding the robes of those who killed Stephen, and whom we follow through his glorious missionary career of unparalleled tribulations and heroism to his cruel martyrdom under the monster, Nero. With competent scholarship and admirable exegetical skill Professor Alexander expounds this first and greatest of all Church histories.

A specialty of this book is its comparison of the earlier English versions which, by their direct and simple force and quaint old English, strikingly set forth the mind and the spirit. This is a valuable addition to the apparatus for the study of the life of St. Paul. Though written before the issue of the Revised Version, it anticipates more than half its changes.

*An Illustrated Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles.* For family use and reference, and for the great body of Christian workers of all denominations. By REV. LYMAN ABBOTT. Volume IV. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Price \$1.50.

We have had occasion to review, with high commendation, previous volumes of this series. The high merit for fresh vigorous comment,



for clear insight and pictorial illustration of these books is fully maintained in the current volume. This possesses additional interest from the fact that it treats the Sunday-school lessons of the year and throws many side lights upon the life and missionary labors of the Apostle Paul. It is a distinct and important addition to the books for the study of the Acts.

*The Life and Epistles of St. Paul.* By the REV. W. J. CONYBEARE, M.A., late fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Very Rev. J. S. Howson, D.D., formerly Dean of Chester. New edition. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. Toronto: William Briggs.

Upon no portion of Holy Scripture except the life of our Blessed Lord are there so many and such high class commentaries and books of elucidation as on the life of the great Apostle of the Gentiles—the subject of the Sunday-school lessons for the current year. One of the most valuable of these, and at the same time one of the most inexpensive, is the new edition of Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul." This has long been a standard work, but it is now brought within the reach of even a very slender purse. It is an important addition to higher Christian literature, the result of wide learning, ample research and lucid exposition. A marked note of this book is the light which is mutually reflected upon each other by the Acts and the Apostles. It gives new meaning to both one and the other when their just relations are understood. Four excellent folding maps and numerous engravings and diagrams add to the value of the book, and make it a most valuable apparatus for the study of the lessons for the year.

*Remarks on the Mistakes of Moses.* By H. L. HASTINGS. Third hundred thousand. Boston: H. L. Hastings. Toronto: William Briggs.

Of few books ever published can the sale of the third hundred thousand be announced. Yet such has been the extraordinary popularity of this book as to reach that enormous aggregate issue. It furnishes a refutation of many of the sceptical objections to the Scriptures, and shows the shallowness and hypocrisy of the attacks upon the Word of God. A number of admirable illustrations are given.

A PRESIDING elder recently sent a letter, which contained the following advice, to each pastor on his district: "Rally your church for a genuine revival. Do your best to put a Church paper in every family. Look well after the Sunday-school children and young people. Collections—begin at once. Let us advance. Give the people facts." That is precisely what the most successful pastors are doing, and what the others had better begin to do at once.—*Exchange.*

## Opening and Closing Services.

### SECOND QUARTER.

#### OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.  
 II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. [John 1. 1-5, 9-12.]  
 SUPT. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
 SCHOOL. The same was in the beginning with God.  
 SUPT. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.  
 SCHOOL. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.  
 SUPT. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.  
 SCHOOL. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.  
 SUPT. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.  
 SCHOOL. He came unto his own and his own received him not.  
 SUPT. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

- III. SINGING.  
 IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.  
 V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.  
 VI. SINGING.

#### LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.  
 II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.  
 III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.  
 IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON, by Pastor or Superintendent.  
 V. SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON. [Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]  
 VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS [especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer-meetings.]

#### CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.  
 II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.  
 SUPT. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.  
 SCHOOL. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.  
 III. DISMISSAL.

# INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

## SECOND QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.— CONTINUED.

### LESSON I. PETER WORKING MIRACLES.

[April 4.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. Acts 9. 34.

## AUTHORIZED VERSION.

**Acts 9. 32-43.** [*Commit to memory verses 32-35.*]

32 And it came to pass, as Pe'ter passed through-out all *quarters*, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lyd'da.

33 And there he found a certain man named E-ne'as, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Pe'ter said unto him, E-ne'as, Je'sus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwelt at Lyd'da and Sa'ron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at Jop'pa a certain disciple named Tab'i-tha, which by interpretation is called Dor'cas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lyd'da was nigh to Jop'pa, and the disciples had heard that Pe'ter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that they sent not delay to come to them.

39 Then Pe'ter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dor'cas made, while she was with them.

40 But Pe'ter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tab'i-tha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Pe'ter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Jop'pa; and many believed in the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Jop'pa with one Si'mon a tanner.

## REVISED VERSION.

32 And it came to pass, as Pe'ter went through-out all parts, he came down also to the saints

33 which dwelt at Lyd'da. And there he found a certain man named E-ne'as, which had kept his bed eight years; for he was palsied.

34 And Pe'ter said unto him, E-ne'as, Je'sus Christ health thee: arise, and make thy bed.

35 And straightway he arose. And all that dwelt at Lyd'da and in Sha'ron saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at Jop'pa a certain disciple named Tab'i-tha, which by interpretation is called Dor'cas: this woman was full of good

37 works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they

38 laid her in an upper chamber. And as Lyd'da was nigh unto Jop'pa, the disciples, hearing that Pe'ter was there, sent two men unto him, intreating him, Delay not to come on unto us.

39 And Pe'ter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dor'cas made, while she was with them.

40 But Pe'ter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tab'i-tha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Pe'ter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented

42 her alive. And it became known throughout all Jop'pa: and many believed on the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he abode many days in Jop'pa with one Si'mon a tanner.

## Lesson Hymns.

No. 168, New Canadian Hymnal.

There is work to do for Jesus.

No. 166, New Canadian Hymnal.

Now, the sowing and the weeping.

No. 183, New Canadian Hymnal.

Cast thy bread upon the waters.

Time.—About A. D. 40. Places.—Lydda, Saron, and Joppa.

## Home Readings.

M. Peter Working Miracles. Acts 9. 32-43.

Th. Christ healing a palsied man. Mark 2. 1-12.

W. Care for the poor. Deut. 15. 7-11.

Th. A helper of the needy. Job 29. 1-13.

F. Rich in good works. 1 Tim. 6. 12-19.

S. Life in Christ. 1 John 5. 9-15.

S. The King's reward. Matt. 25. 31-40.

**QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.****1. Power, v. 32-35.**

Through whom was this power exercised ?

In what place was the power shown ?

Who received benefit therefrom ?

Of what nature, and of how long standing, was Eneas's trouble ?

What assurance did Peter give him? **GOLDEN TEXT.**

What words and act show a complete cure ?

Who were witnesses to this miracle ?

What effect had it on the people ?

**2. Love, v. 36-39.**

What good woman is named as living at Joppa ?

What proofs of her goodness are here given ?

What occurred that brought sorrow to the disciples ?

Where was an embassy, and for whom ?

What evidences of love were shown ?

What advice is given in 1 Tim. 6. 18 ?

**3. Life, v. 40-43.**

What did Peter do at once ?

Why did he wish to be alone in prayer ?

Cite any similar instance of excluding people ?

What command did Peter give ?

What followed ?

How well was this known in Joppa ?

What good result came of it ?

Where did Peter make his abode ?

**Teachings of the Lesson.**

1. "Saints" dwelt at Joppa. They dwell in city and town and hamlet over all the world to-day. "Saints" are "holy ones." God's holy ones are the salt of the earth—the light of the world.

2. "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." He gives physical vigor; his blessing makes remedial agencies effective; he alone makes whole the soul.

3. "Full of good works." Thus ought every disciple to be. "To do good...forget not." This is the law of spiritual life.

**QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.****1. Power, v. 32-35.**

To what city did Peter journey ?

What people did he there visit ?

What sick man did he find ?

How long had the man been ill ?

Of what trouble ?

What did Peter say to him ?

What did the man do at once ?

What effect had the cure on the people ?

What is meant by "turned to the Lord?" See **ISA. 55. 7.**

**2. Love, v. 36-39.**

Who was dead at Joppa ?

What did the disciples do after Dorcas died ?

Why did they send for Peter ?

What did Peter find when he came ?

Why was this woman mourned ?

**3. Life, v. 40-43.**

What did Peter do and say ?

What at once followed ?

Then what did Peter do ?

What similar miracle was wrought by a prophet ? **2 Kings 4. 32-36.**

What one by the Saviour? **Luke 8. 49-55.**

Where did Peter lodge in Joppa ?

**Practical Teachings.**

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. The power of Christ ?

2. The power of faith ?

3. The power of prayer ?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

Who besides Saul took journeys to preach the Gospel ?

Was the young Church still persecuted ?

To what village did Peter go ?

Where was Lydda ?

What sick man was there ?

How far away was Joppa ?

What sad thing had just taken place there ?

Why did the people mourn so much for Tabitha ?

What did they do when they heard of the cure of Eneas ?

Had Peter power to raise the dead? **No, but Christ had.**

What had he given to the disciples? **Power to do miracles in his name.**

How did Peter call Tabitha back to life ?

What did this miracle cause ?

Where did Peter stay for a while ?

With whom ?

**Lessons for Me.**

There is power to cure sick bodies and sick souls.

There is power to give life to those who are dead in sin.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

(For the entire school.)

1. Whom did Peter find at Lydda? **A man sick of the palsy.**

2. What did he say to him? **GOLDEN TEXT:**

**"Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."**

3. What followed Peter's words? **He became well at once.**

4. What Christian had died at Joppa? **A woman named Dorcas.**

5. What is said of her? **This woman was full of good works.**

6. How was she restored to life? **By the prayer of Peter.**

**OUR CHURCH CATECHISM.**

21. How is it proved that the Holy Spirit inspired the Old Testament Scriptures? **Chiefly by the words of our Lord and His Apostles.**

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HURLBUT.

## Pictures of Discipleship.

## I. UNITED DISCIPLES.

*Peter*....through all quarters. v. 32.  
 One body in Christ. Rom. 12. 5.  
 That they all may be one. John 17. 21.

## II. HOLY DISCIPLES.

*The saints*....at Lydda. v. 32.  
 Be ye holy. 1 Peter 1. 15.  
 Perfecting holiness. 2 Cor. 7. 1.

## III. WORKING DISCIPLES.

*Full of good works*. v. 36.  
 Fruits of righteousness. Phil. 1. 11.  
 Maintain good works. Titus 3. 8.

## IV. SORROWING DISCIPLES.

*Stood by him weeping*. v. 39.  
 Sorrow not...as others. 1 Thess. 4. 13.  
 Look not at...seen. 2 Cor. 4. 18.

## V. PRAYING DISCIPLES.

*Kneeled down and prayed*. v. 40.  
 Ask what ye will. John 15. 7.  
 Believing....shall receive. Matt. 21. 22.

## VI. REJOICING DISCIPLES.

*Presented her alive*. v. 41.  
 Sorrow....turned into joy. John 16. 20.  
 Wipe away all tears. Rev. 21. 4.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

BY ROBERT H. DOHERTY, PH.D.

Two weeks have gone since we had, in regular course, a lesson from the Book of Acts. The record of the conversion of Saul, Acts 9. 1-20, is followed by an account of the opposition to Saul's preaching in Damascus and his flight from that city. We are told of his introduction by Barnabas to the apostles, of the fear of him felt by the disciples at Jerusalem, of his bold testimony in the synagogues and how it endangered his life, so that he was hurried off by his newmade Christian friends to Caesarea and then across the water to Tarsus. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Immediately following this verse comes our lesson. Its first picture is attractive. While Saul abides at Tarsus, Peter, now as always vibrating with energy, goes from town to town "comforting the saints, perplexing his enemies, working miracles, praying, preaching, praising, resisting, suffering, rejoicing"—everywhere "building up" the churches. "While the storm is raging," says Dr. William M. Taylor, "the post of the ship's officer is on deck; but when the wind has gone down he can go below and minutely examine the cargo and the hull. So while persecution was hot at Jerusalem, Peter's place was at Jerusalem; but when an interval of relief was enjoyed, he took the opportunity of making an apostolic visitation of the different churches which had been founded in Palestine." Coming to Lydda, Peter finds, as Christians always find, in the simple doing of duty the greatest of opportunities. Like his Saviour he is attracted by human suffering; he cures the palsied Eneas; and this stroke of work, done in the name of Jesus Christ, and as a sign to all men, produces wonderful results: Lydda and Saron are born again in a day. The second picture of the lesson is even fuller of holy suggestion. We are shown how God loves humble goodness—and, if one care to put it so, loves feminine goodness; we see the unique power of womanly kindness when consecrated to the Lord's cause—a power far greater than that of wealth, renown, intellectual ability, or culture. But the lessons that Dorcas's life brings to us are for men as really as for women; for boys as really as for girls. Let none disparage or belittle the usefulness of work done by individuals for Jesus's sake—no matter how humble that work may be. Sometimes Dorcas is inclined to envy others who seem to have larger opportunities. But there are no larger opportunities. The resurrection of Dorcas is only a symbol of the more wonderful triumph of every believer over the grave.

**Verse 32. It came to pass.** Probably while Saul abode at Tarsus. **Peter passed throughout all quarters.** Better, "Peter went among all the saints." As leader of the Christian faith he took advantage of the prevailing peace to visit the churches which now flourished throughout Palestine. There is evidence that there were many of these. How they were planted we can only conjecture; some probably by

missionaries like Philip, some perhaps earlier by believers returning with the pentecostal blessing from Jerusalem. It was now only ten years after the death and resurrection of our Lord, and only three years after the persecution that arose about Stephen. It is of interest to note the literary art of this portion of the Acts of the Apostles. The author is intent on showing how the Gospel came to be preached to the Gentiles. He leaves the

little church in Jerusalem, trembling amid its troubles, to record the conversion of its chief persecutor Saul, who is afterward to become the great apostle to the Gentiles. But Paul is persecuted and has to fly from those with whom a few months earlier he had sought the destruction of Christianity. Now we are led back to Peter, and told of two singular facts which immediately preceded the opening of Peter's eyes to the knowledge that the Gospel of Christ was to be proclaimed as fully to the Gentiles as to the Jews. **He came down.**

(1) *Wherever a good man goes he carries a blessing for others. The saints are the chosen ones of God, in this case Christians. Lydda, to which Peter came down, lies on the mountain road from Jerusalem to Joppa, not far from the blue Mediterranean. It is called Lod in Neh. 7. 37, and Lud by the Syrians of to-day.*

**33. A certain man.** Whether he was a Christian or not is not stated. **Eneas.** A Greek name. **Had kept his bed eight years.** (2) *"How much we have to be thankful for in continued health and strength, and how little we think of these things until we lose them!"—W. M. Taylor. Was sick of the palsy.* Better, "for he was palsied." Paralysis in many aggravated forms is common in the East. (3) *We owe to the sick and the crippled our sympathy, not mere pity.*

**34. Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.** Better, "Jesus the Messiah healeth thee." The Messiahship of Jesus and the cure of the man are so intertwined in this statement that the second is proof of the first. The words imply the immediate fulfillment; and we may suppose that immediately renewed vitality thrilled and tingled through the wrinkled limbs of the patient. **Arise, and make thy bed.** Literally, "strew for thyself;" do at once, as a sign of cure, what others have had to do for thee as a sign of ill health. "Eneas was at home, and therefore was not told like the paralytic of the Gospels to take up his bed, but to make it."—Adam Clarke. (4) *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.*

**35. All that dwelt.** The news of the miracle quickly spread. **Saron.** The pastoral plain of Sharon, famous in all ages for its beauty, flowers, and fruitfulness. It stretches from Joppa to Caesarea, and even to-day its soil is rich enough to supply all Palestine with food; but most of it is now desolate; in Peter's day it was exceedingly populous. **Saw him.** Peter's "sign" had its effect. The people regarded the cure of Eneas as a proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, and **turned to the Lord.** This "turning" involved precisely the same moral change as conversion does now. The simple meaning of this verse is that the town and its neighborhood became fervently Christian. (5) *The conversion of sinners, the cure of the morally palsied, is the best testimony to the power of Christ as a Saviour.* (6) *Others, seeing our*

*good works, glorify our Father which is in heaven.*

**36. There was at Joppa.** The seaport of Jerusalem; it stands on a sandy promontory, directly south of the plain of Sharon. It was at first a Philistine city; but was Hebrew as early as the days of David and Solomon. It is now called Jaffa. **A certain disciple.** A Christian woman, whether maiden, wife, or widow we do not know. **Tabitha.** In Greek **Dorcas**, in English **Gazelle**. The name was given in implied compliment, as Lily and Rose are with us. Oriental love songs compare the loveliness of women to that of gazelles, which are the most beautiful and graceful of antelopes. **Full of good works.** A very suggestive phrase: the good works that her neighbors saw were only those that flowed over the brim of her heart; she was full of them. Notice, too, that it was for her good works she was esteemed, not for good words, which are well enough in their way, but which can never be used instead of clothing, or fuel, or food. "Kind words butter no parsnips," says Shakespeare. (7) *"A man of words, and not of deeds, is like a garden full of weeds."* (8) *Let us beware lest our sympathy evaporate in empty phrases.* **Almsdeeds.** The word "alms" was introduced into the English language by the English Church, like the words deacon, paschal, priest, bishop, and liturgy.

**37. In those days.** The days when Peter was in Lydda. **She was sick and died.** (9) *God often takes his children to heaven when to our eyes they seem most needed in the world; but he knows best. They laid her in an upper chamber.* A room upon the roof, which would be more retired than a room on the ground floor. Burial in the East is usually on the day of death, but the burial of this woman was delayed in order to send for the apostle.

**38. Forasmuch.** The meaning is plainer when this word is omitted. **Nigh to Joppa.** Only nine miles away. **The disciples.** It is evident that the "disciples" of Joppa were already "organized" to some degree as a local church. **They sent unto him.** They were all mourners; they needed Peter's sympathy. Whether or not they had any thought of the restoration of life we cannot say; probably not. (10) *All Christians should so live that others can turn easily to them for sympathy. Two men.* Travel had its hazards and dangers, and few cared to go alone from town to town. **That he would not delay to come.** This should be a direct address, "Delay not to come."

**39. Then.** "And." **Peter arose and went.** Just as a modern Christian does when he hears of others' sorrow. **Widows.** All of the widows for whose comfort Dorcas had labored. The wars of antiquity made many widows, and the early Church paid special attention to their com-

fort. **Showing the coats and garments.** "They exhibited on themselves the under and upper clothing" which Dorcas made; this was the simple and beautiful ostentation of sincere gratitude. "Made" here means "was accustomed to make," or, better, "used to weave." (11) *How far true Christian influence outlasts life! (12) Happy is he who after his death is most frequently remembered in love by those who lack the love of others.*

**40. Peter put them all forth.** Compare Matt. 9. 25; Mark 5. 40; Luke 8. 54. Every distracting influence must now be removed; the utmost concentration possible to human energy was needed that the apostle's prayer and faith might prove effective. **Kneeled down, and prayed.** Perhaps he was not sure, when the prayer began, that life was about to be restored. (13) *Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air. When she saw Peter she sat up.* He was probably a stranger, and she sat up in surprise at seeing him. Eight cases of resurrection from the dead (certainly seven), besides that of our Lord himself, are recorded in the Bible: the widow's son at Zarephath; the Shunammite's son; the dead man at Elisha's grave; the daughter of Jairus; the son of the widow of Nain; Lazarus of Bethany; Dorcas; and Eutychus, restored by Paul.

**41. He gave her his hand, and lifted her up.** God had restored her life, but Peter still showed helpful sympathy. (14) *So should we take young converts into our closest fellowship and regard. The saints and widows.* "The saints,

and especially the widows;" her companions in Christian work, and those to whom she had ministered. Doubtless all the Christians of Joppa called to meet Peter. **He presented her alive.** "But," exclaims Dr. Robinson with delicious irony, "she did not set up for a saint and go on exhibition! she simply went to work again and helped more widows."

**42. It was known.** It became known, with similar results to those which came from the healing of Eneas at Lydda. **Many believed in the Lord.** See John 20. 31. "The resurrection of Dorcas is an incredible wonder when we look at Peter the human instrument, but no wonder at all when we think of Jesus Christ the divine Agent." — *W. M. Taylor.*

**43. He tarried.** Doubtless to supervise the results of the "revival." **Many days.** See verse 23. An indefinite period, probably several months, passed. **Simon.** A very common name among the Jews; nine persons bearing it are mentioned in the New Testament. The trade of a tanner was in low esteem among the Jews, because it involved the handling of dead animals, many of which were "unclean." It is evident that Peter and his office of apostle were not regarded with much respect by the Jews of Joppa or he would not have had to resort to such a mean place of sojourn. (15) *True greatness is often unrecognized by contemporaries.* It is also evident that the process of modifying Peter's prejudices was already begun. A house said to be that of Simon the tanner is one of the stock shows in Joppa.

## CRITICAL NOTES.

**Verse 32. And it came to pass.** This is not the history of individuals, but of the Church. Hence the account turns from Peter to Paul and from Paul to Peter accordingly as events occur. Paul having been converted, the spirit of persecution is stayed for the time for want of a leader. The narrative now returns to the ministry of Peter, whom we read of last in connection with the revival in Samaria. **As Peter passed throughout all quarters.** Visiting the churches. The apostles would all seem to have been actively engaged since Paul came to Jerusalem, Gal. 1. 18, 19. Only two, Peter and James, were in the city. **Saints.** This word has come into disrepute somewhat as signifying, not saintly, but sanctimonious people. As used in the New Testament it applies to all Christians because God has chosen them for his own, in order that through the influence of the Holy Spirit they may be prepared for his kingdom. It is used frequently in the epistles, but in the gospels only once, Matt. 27. 52. **At Lydda.** Heb. *Lod.* Known at the present time under the name Ludd. An ancient town, nine miles east of Joppa,

on the road from Jerusalem to Caesarea. It was the birthplace of St. George, the patron saint of England, who suffered martyrdom during the reign of Diocletian.

**33 A certain man named Eneas.** A Hellenist by name, but characterless. He had never done anything to distinguish him from the multitude of unknown. He was "a certain man," no more, in striking contrast with the devoted Tabitha, who, with Eneas, forms the subject of our lesson. We do not even know with certainty that he was a believer. **Had kept his bed eight years.** Incidental evidence of the extraordinary character of the healing. **Sick of the palsy.** "Paralysis or palsy, the loss of the power of muscular action due to some interruption to the nervous mechanism by means of which such action is excited."—*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, art. "Paralysis." It is regarded not so much as a disease, as a symptom of disease, whether of the brain or of the spinal cord, or of the nerves distributed to the parts and organs. **Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.** Peter invariably ascribes the miracle to

Jesus. Jesus always wrought on his own authority. **Arise, and make thy bed.** Disciples must always do something to prove their faith, but must keep on doing in order to maintain their faith. "Faith without works is dead."

**35. Saron.** A beautiful plain extending from Joppa to Caesarea. Isaiah (35. 2) writes of the excellency of Carmel and Sharon. Solomon has made famous (Songs 2. 1) "the rose of Sharon."

**36. There was at Joppa.** Now Jaffa. The port of Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, and ever since. Originally a city of the Philistines. Here the materials for Solomon's temple were landed. Here Jonah took ship. The present population is about 8,000. **Tabitha, which is by interpretation called Dorcas.** The former was the Aramaic name, signifying gazelle; the latter, the Greek translation. The gazelle was the symbol of loveliness, because of its slender form, graceful movement, and soft but brilliant eyes. **Full of good works.** A favorite expression with Luke. Stephen, "full of faith and power," 6. 8; "full of leprosy," Luke 5. 12. The piety of the apostolic age was not of the seclusive sort. The disciples were to be in the world, though not of the world.

**37.** This brief account exhibits the tender and thoughtful care which was taken of the body. The absence of lamentation and semisavage wailings, such as characterize many funerals, is well worthy of consideration. Christian hope and resignation may find expression on such occasions, and are in marked contrast with the hideous, hopeless, despairing wails of those who never again expect to see their loved ones.

**38. Desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.** Revised Version more correctly and graphically reads, "intreating him, Delay not to come to us." While there is nothing to indicate that they anticipated anything so marvelous as that Peter should raise her to life, the eager haste for his coming seems to suggest that they anticipated more than simply his comforting presence. Since they had heard of him at Lydda, it is probable that they had heard of the miracle he had wrought there.

**39. Peter arose.** This does not mean that Peter was found sitting or reclining by the messengers. It is an idiomatic expression signifying that he proceeded to make ready for the thing desired, namely, that he should come to Joppa. **Went with them.** The story as told by the two would naturally awaken intense interest in Peter. We have good reason to believe that, at the very hour when the circumstance is told to him, the Holy Spirit led him to the belief that the woman should be restored to life. **The upper chamber.** The place where the body was laid because the burial was to be delayed. **Widows.** Dorcas may have been a widow, since no husband is mentioned as among the mourners. She may also have

been poor; but the poor, needing little for themselves, are among the largest helpers of others. From the beginning of the Church's activity widows came to be an object of special regard. See Acts 6. 1. **The coats and garments.** The former represented an inner garment, the latter an outer.

**40. Peter put them all forth.** In like manner Jesus, Mark 5. 40, when he restored to life the daughter of Jairus; as also Elisha, 2 Kings 4. 33, when he raised the Shunammite's son. Jesus allowed the father and mother and three disciples; Elisha did not admit even the mother. In all cases of such deep solemnity, such as birth and death, privacy is fitting. In the cases of Peter and Elisha it was necessary for the utmost concentration of mind in communion with God. **Kneeling down, and prayed.** So Elisha prayed unto the Lord. Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus without openly praying. Before he raised Lazarus, Jesus gave thanks openly for the sake of the people. John 11. 31.

**41. Saints.** It is of interest to note the several names by which the followers of Jesus are called in the early Church together with the chronological order of the names. They are as follows: disciples, John 1. 15; believers, 2. 44; saints, 9. 13; brethren, 9. 30; Christians, 11. 26. **He presented her alive.** No glory is ascribed to Peter. It was Jesus who raised her. The disciple whose prayers should be answered in so remarkable a manner, would most of all want to keep out of notice. No mention of the joy of the saints and widows is made. It was beyond expression.

**42. Many believed in the Lord.** Physical healing which does not result in deeper spiritual life, is a fraud. The healings of the Gospel are in marked contrast in this regard with many of recent date.

**43. He tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.** The trade of a tanner was regarded as unclean because occupied with dead animals. That Peter should sojourn with one, shows that his Judaism had begun to relax. We grow in knowledge little by little. The proximity of the tanner's home to the seaside is shown in Acts 10. 6. Jewish usage required graves, carcasses, and tanners' workshops to be fifty cubits distance from the walls of any town. The place of abode shows the lowly character of the people among whom the Gospel found its way.

### Thoughts for Young People. Qualities Inspired by the Gospel.

**1. The Gospel inspires a spirit of unity.** The brotherhood of believers is one of the most precious facts of Christian history. Saint John was even ready to accept genuine love of fellow-Christians as proof positive of saving faith and love of God. "If ye hate and devour one another, how

dweltheth the love of God in you?" As God loves us, so we are to love one another.

2. *It inspires holiness.* This is incidentally shown by the name "saints," applied to the members of the Christian Church. Verse 32. We who receive the Gospel are the chosen ones of God. If we are not "saints," he has none on earth to represent his cause. Conversion is the beginning of sainthood. The greatest of miracles is the transformation of character. Just in so far as the Spirit of the Gospel governs a man he becomes holy.

3. *It leads to physical strength and health.* The cure and resurrection mentioned in the lesson were miraculous, and therefore exceptional; but they only did by a quicker process what the Gospel is doing all the time. In spite of all persecutions and oppositions and backsets, Christian living tends directly to physical and social prosperity. Nine tenths of all the disease and poverty of the world is the result of sin. Godly living is the best curative and safeguard. Death came by sin, but life by the Gospel; and Dorcas' case is a type of our own, though our bodies may for a while rest in the grave as hers did not.

4. *It inspires love for others.* Deeds of helpfulness and charity are expected from Christians. It is to the "gate of the temple" that the world brings its sick and crippled and poor, and it is the Christian who to-day says, from the depths of his heart and with consistent action, "What I have give I thee."

5. *It makes others love us.* Where are to be found in all history those characters and lives which leave behind them fragrant memories? Among the disciples of Christ.

6. *It inspires a faith and power which are mightier than death and sin.* "Arise!" said Peter to Tabitha. "Arise!" is to-day the exhortation of the Church to a world dead in trespasses and sins.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

Verse 36. The name "Tabitha" and the name "Dorcas" were equivalents, the first being Syrian and the second Greek, which affords another illustration of the interchange of customs among the several peoples of the time; both names mean "gazelle" or "antelope," according to the prevailing custom of the times of giving names of beautiful and mild-natured animals to young women. The upper chamber in which the dead body of this young girl lay was the common one on the house-top, reached from the street or the court by stairways. It was used for religious meetings, and for the reception of friends; it was also the place where the dead were laid while awaiting burial. Wilson in his recent work on "Persian Life and Customs" describes the washings of the dead preparatory to burial, thus: "Moistened cotton was placed in

the mouth, the nose, and the ears; the body was bathed three times, the last time in camphor water; the eyes were bandaged, and the body was wrapped in the *kafan*, or shroud." The injunction of the Koran is that the body shall be washed in a covered place. There are families whose trade it is to attend to the last office for the dead.

The treatment of widows varied much among the several nations. The Jewish widow might in times of peril deposit her treasure in the temple treasury. Her garments were not to be taken in pawn, nor anything else necessary to her. She received a portion of the spoils of war. Any neglect or oppression of widows was specially reprobated. In the Apostolic Church they were sustained at the public expense.

The triumph the Gospel had made over Peter's Jewish prejudices in his staying at the house of a tanner shows that he was well on the way to understand that the kingdom of Christ was destined to ignore all caste prejudices. Dr. Townsend says, "The trade of a tanner was so contemptible, that all those who followed it were required to mention it before an engagement of marriage, or the nuptials were declared void." It is recorded in the Mishna that, after the death of a man who was a tanner, his brother was permitted to decline marriage with the deceased husband's widow. It was from the superstitious regard to the ceremonial laws which distinguished the clean from the unclean that this prejudice arose. The tanner had to do with death in the form of the dead animal's skin, and its preparation for use. Even the necessary garments, as shoes, which contained leather, were unclean. In India such is the extent of the Hindu prejudice against leather that books are objected to if bound in leather. The scavenger class only in the country would touch any carcass, and this class is required to keep aloof from the person of others and obliged to live outside the village or city, just as this Simon the tanner had his tannery outside the walls of Joppa by the seaside; on the "south side of the city," says Dr. Thomson, "where the tanneries are now located, and most likely were in Peter's day." On account of their offensiveness tanneries were generally removed to a distance from dwellings. There is no evidence that Simon's house was near his tannery.

### By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

"*The saints at Lydda.*" There were saints there even then. They got their canonization quickly. It was only a short time since Jesus had ascended, but men were already called saints. Rome has been lately digging up some distant and forgotten names, after hundreds of years, to put in her calendar of saints. The early Church set a halo often



on the heads of her followers early. There were several saints at Lydda—poor plain people perhaps, who had small store to give, but who pointed Peter to Aeneas.—*W. R. Campbell.*

*Peter gave practical help.* Father Taylor, the sailor preacher, describing Christians who say much and do little, used to add: "The good Samaritan didn't maul the wounded Jew with texts."

*Verse 36.* Notice the word "almsdeeds." There are a great many people who are willing to give alms who are never ready to do almsdeeds. Half the beauty and power of Christian charity is in the personality of its administration. To give money to feed the hungry and clothe the naked is good, but to carry the food with your own hand and manifest Christian fellowship is infinitely better. To give money to buy clothes is good, but for Christian women who have means and leisure to make and bestow garments with loving words is infinitely better. To give money to send the Gospel to the heathen is good, but to go to the heathen one's self, when it is possible, is better. We cannot always administer our own charity, but when we can let us do it. It is certain that we can do our alms much oftener than we do.—*Bible Studies.*

*A consecrated needle.* Dorcas built an enduring monument with her needle. It was a little thing to consecrate to Christian service, but it was blessedly effective. In our day a sewing girl resolved to reduce her living to the smallest expense, and give her surplus to build a church on the frontier. This she did, and the story of her work has inspired scores of men and women to give generously. Another sewing girl sent out a missionary, and herself supported him abroad, while she sewed in an attic room. The story of her work, like Dorcas's work, is immortal, outlasting all monuments of stone and marble.

*Verse 41.* What a happy time that must have been! What rejoicing! What praising of God! But are not scenes of equal and greater joy being enacted every day because of Jesus's power to make dead sinners live? I have seen mothers, sisters, brothers, husbands, and wives overwhelmed with unspeakable joy when I have taken a dear one by the hand whom Jesus had saved, and said to them, "See, thy brother liveth."—*Pentecost.*

*Verses 35 and 42.* The result of Peter's ministry was that God was known and glorified. The gift of healing was not given him for his own glory or fame. A medical missionary in a foreign land says: "I am not here to win a medical reputation. I am here because I can lead from physical healing up to the Great Physician. Because God is known and glorified through my work, I feel that this is a good place to be." If God has given you any gift or advantage, it is that through that gift he may be lifted up.

## Before the Class.

*Material.* Provide a map of the seacoast plain of Palestine and four small picture frames, or a blackboard on which have been drawn four small squares or four parallelograms to represent picture frames.

*Introduction.* Review briefly the life of Peter, and try to make the class understand that as he had been reared as a Jew it was very difficult for him to shake off the prejudices of his race. This will help in understanding the lessons that follow. Show by references to the Gospel how Jesus had given to his apostles the power to perform miracles, especially to cure the sick. See Luke 9, 1, 2.

On the map point out the location of Lydda, Joppa, and Sharon (the Plain). Have the class give the names of the principal persons mentioned in the lesson, and tell briefly what is known of each one.

*Lesson pictures.* With the picture frames in hand, or using the blackboard, tell the class that you would like them to fill in the picture in each frame.

1. A man lying on a bed unable to move. Ask: What is his name? Why does he not get up? How long has he lain here? Do you know anyone who has lain in bed for eight years. Tell the class about him. Let the teacher be prepared to give an illustration of long illness; for example, Bella Cook.

2. A man walking about, strong in body, giving evidences of health. Ask: Who is this man? How is it that he is now able to walk? Through whose power was he healed? How should he feel and act toward his healer?

3. An upper room, in one corner of which is a bed on which lies the dead body of a woman. Sitting and standing around the room are other women. Ask: In what city is this room? Whose body is on the bed? Who are the women in the room? How do they feel? How do you know this? What are they showing to one another? Why are they showing these coats and garments?

4. The same room and the same bed, but the bed empty this time. Ask: Where is the woman that before lay on the bed? What change has taken place in the feelings and actions of the women in the room? What is the cause of this change?

*Spiritual truths.* 1. In the name and by the power of Christ Peter cured the sick and raised the dead to life. To-day, in the same name and by the same power only can the spiritually sick be healed and the spiritually dead be quickened into life.

2. When the people of Joppa knew what had been done many of them believed on the Lord. The lesson here is twofold. Christians should testify as to what the Lord has done for them in order

to lead others to the Lord. On the other hand, the unconverted should be shown that they have seen and heard enough of the wonderful works of the Lord to leave them without excuse, if they refuse to believe.

3. Eneas and Dorcas both died again. The soul that is born again shall live forever. Ask: Have you been born anew? (It makes little difference what term is used, if the idea is understood.) If so, rejoice in the fact that you are to live forever. If not, to-day is the time to accept Jesus as your Saviour, and thus to enter into everlasting life.

4. The joy that was occasioned by the restoration of Eneas and Dorcas was nothing as compared with the joy that is produced when a soul is born again. See Luke 15. 7, 10, and 32.

### Teachers' Meeting.

Draw the map of Palestine, showing the Plain of Sharon, locating Jerusalem, Lydda, and Joppa, and showing the direction of Peter's journey.... Note in this lesson the characteristics of disciples in the early Church.... The inspiring power of the Gospel.... Peter's example: (1) Faithfulness in apostleship and ministry; (2) Interest in the Church; (3) Faith in Christ; (4) Lowliness of mind; (5) Breadth and freedom of views (verse 45).... The monument of Dorcas: (1) A monument of discipleship; (2) Of love; (3) Of unselfishness; (4) Of industry; (5) Of the love of others.... What does this lesson tell us to do?... Use as illustrations of apostolic miracles the cripple at the Beautiful Gate, Acts 3; the cripple at Lystra, Acts 14; the young man who slept in church, Acts 20; the father of Publius, Acts 28.... Two monuments stand side by side in a churchyard in Delaware. One is the marble tomb erected by the will of a politician (celebrated in his lifetime, but now almost forgotten), costing ten thousand dollars; the other is a Sunday school building, put up and furnished at the expense of one man, still living, costing about the same amount. Which of these two is the better monument?... Elements of Gospel power: 1. Organization and discipline; 2. Human sympathy; 3. Character—Dorcas are known and read of all men; 4. The presence of God; beyond all visible influences of Christianity is the invisible God. Conversion of soul just as miraculous as resurrection of dead body.... Effects of Gospel power: 1. Holiness—it makes "saints"; 2. Helpfulness—full of good works and almsdeeds; 3. Growth; 4. Victory over death.

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

From all that dwell below the skies,  
Awake, and sing.  
How good thou art to me.  
All hail the power of Jesus' name.  
Give me some work to do.

Awake, my soul, in joyful lays.  
Jesus, thou everlasting King.  
Forth in thy name, O Lord.  
Father, to thee my soul I lift.  
Salvation! O the joyful sound!

FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK. Ver. 36: Complimentary names, 328. Ver. 37: The "upper chamber," 353. Ver. 39: The tunic, 821.

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS J. H. KNOWLES.

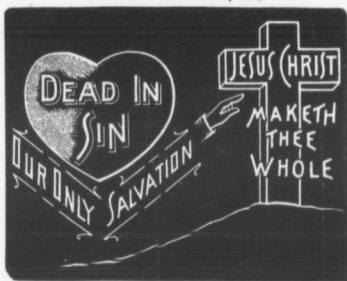
A beautiful thought which comes from our lesson to-day is this. When we are going about our daily business, whatever it may be, if we are intent upon serving Jesus in everything and in every place, unexpected opportunities open to us of wide influence such as we never dreamed of. When Peter was going through all quarters doing his Lord's work, he did not know when he came to Lydda that he would be the means of restoring to health a man who had been helpless for eight years, and that through the influence of that deed the whole population would be turned to the Lord. We cannot do such miracles as those of Peter, but we can accomplish other things which, for aught we know, count for as much value as these. It is a greater work to bring a soul to spiritual life than to raise one from death to natural life. A lady, who loved Jesus so truly that everywhere and always her first thought was to do something for him, spent several weeks at a large hotel one summer. No body thought of going to church on Sunday; nobody seemed to care for anything but idle gossip, walking, and driving, just as on other days. On Sunday morning she left her friends on the piazza and went to the little village church. The next Sunday she did the same, and one person joined her. The next week several went. Finally, on Sunday mornings the hotel was quite deserted, and the little church was full. One of those who had been moved by the silent testimony of this consistent Christian became a Christian herself, and a wide sphere of useful work for the Master soon opened before her. Perhaps the service of that true-hearted disciple in that summer hotel may be the means of turning to the Lord as many as came through Peter's miracles in Lydda and Saron. Just think of it! By being loving, obedient, and consistent, we may start influences for good that will be sweet surprises for us when the Lord shall "reward everyone according as his work shall be."

How beautifully true-hearted, unselfish service is illustrated in the study of Dorcas. She was the sort of woman for whom the world is better for her

having lived. Good, earnest, loving, useful, she was not distinguished as the president or secretary of a benevolent society about which she could talk eloquently, but she was distinguished and beloved for her good works and her almsdeeds which she did. Working and doing is really the best kind of talking; her work had its spring in love. The widows would not have stood weeping and showing the garments she had made if the making of the garments had been all they knew about her; those tears showed how well they had learned that Dorcas was their friend. They might get garments from somebody else, but never such love as Dorcas had conveyed woven in with her needle and thread. I think Dorcas was called back from the gates of death to show us of what value to the world is unpretentious loving service such as hers.

## Blackboard.

BY J. T. HARTNAGEL, ESQ.



## LESSON II. CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS.

[April 11.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts 10. 43.

## AUTHORIZED VERSION.

Acts 10. 30-44. [Commit to memory verses 36-38.]

[Read chapter 10.]

30 And Cor-ne-li-us said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 And said, Cor-ne-li-us, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Jop'pa, and call hither Si-mon, whose surname is Pe'ter; he is lodged in the house of one Si'mon a tanner by the seaside: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of God.

34 Then Pe'ter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons;

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Is'ra-el, preaching peace by Je'sus Christ: he is Lord of all:

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Ju-de'a, and began from Gal'lee, after the baptism which John preached;

38 How God anointed Je'sus of Naz'a-reth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Je-ru-sa-lem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

## REVISED VERSION.

30 And Cor-ne-li-us said, Four days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel, and saith, Cor-ne-li-us, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Jop'pa, and call unto thee Si'mon, who is surnamed Pe'ter; he lodgeth in the house of Si'mon a tanner, by the seaside. Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord. And Pe'ter opened his mouth, and said,

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him. The word which he sent unto the children of Is'ra-el, preaching good tidings of peace by Je'sus Christ (he is Lord of all)—that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Ju-de'a, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; even Je'sus of Naz'a-reth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Je-ru-sa-lem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Pe'ter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

**Time.**—About A. D. 40. **Place.**—Caesarea, on the Mediterranean coast.

#### Home Readings.

- M.* The devout centurion. Acts 10. 1-8.  
*Tu.* Peter's vision. Acts 10. 9-18.  
*W.* The call obeyed. Acts 10. 19-29.  
*Th.* Conversion of Cornelius. Acts 10. 30-45.  
*F.* Gifts to Gentiles. Acts 10. 44-48.  
*S.* A Light to the Gentiles. Isa. 49. 6-12.  
*S.* Life by believing. John 6. 37-47.

#### Lesson Hymns.

No. 138, New Canadian Hymnal.

My hope is built on nothing less.

No. 141, Canadian Hymnal.

My Shepherd will supply my need

No. 231, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, happy day that fixed my choice.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

##### 1. The Centurion, v. 30-33.

State the previous history of this centurion.

In what acts of devotion had he engaged four days before?

What visitor had he?

What comforting assurance did he receive?

What command was given him?

Why was his household together?

##### 2. The Apostle, v. 34-43.

What did Peter say about God's impartiality?

Whom does he accept?

To whom did God first send the Gospel?

What works of mercy did Jesus perform, and why?

Who testified to these facts?

What two further facts about Jesus did Peter state?

How were the apostles qualified to be witnesses?

What were they commanded to do?

What was promised through prophets and apostles? GOLDEN TEXT.

##### 3. The Holy Spirit, v. 44.

What occurred as Peter spoke?

What was demanded of those who would receive the Holy Ghost? Acts 2. 38.

42 And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he which is ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Pe'ter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

#### Teachings of the Lesson.

1. No true prayer ever goes astray. That God hears gives assurance of answer. See 1 John 5. 14, 15.

2. Good deeds are held in remembrance before God. Men may forget; he never does. See Heb. 6. 10.

3. Any earnest soul may find favor with God. He is just; he is true; he is love. His promises have never been broken. See 2 Cor. 1. 20.

4. Faith in Jesus brings salvation. He alone has the keys of eternal life. See Acts 4. 12.

5. Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?

#### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

##### 1. The Centurion, v. 30-33.

Who was this Gentile?

How was Cornelius engaged four days before?

Who came to him as he prayed?

What words of encouragement did he hear?

What command was given him?

What did Cornelius do?

Why had he called his family and friends?

##### 2. The Apostle, v. 34-43.

What apostle was this?

What great lesson had he learned?

Who is Lord of all?

Through whom was peace preached to the Jews?

How widely was this word preached?

What four things are said about Jesus?

Who were his witnesses?

How had God honored Jesus?

What proofs are given that Jesus rose from the dead?

What were the apostles commanded to preach?

What testimony did the prophets give? GOLDEN

TEXT.

What is the real spirit of prophecy? Rev. 19. 10.

##### 3. The Holy Spirit, v. 44.

On whom did the Holy Spirit come?

How may we secure the presence of the Holy Spirit? Acts 2. 38.

#### Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That God's mercy extends to all men?

2. That Jesus makes pardon possible to all men?

3. That the Holy Spirit may come upon all men?

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- What did the Jews think about Gentiles?  
 Who are Gentiles? **All who are not Jews.**  
 How did God teach Peter that he loved all alike?  
 To whom had he sent a vision just before?  
 Who was Cornelius?  
 What kind of a man was he?  
 What did he want to learn? **More about God.**  
 What does God do when he sees this desire in a heart? **Sends help and teaching.**  
 Where did Peter go?  
 Who went with him?  
 What shows that Cornelius was not selfish?  
 What great truth did Peter declare? **Verse 34.**  
 What joyful message did he bring? **GOLDEN TEXT.**  
 What fell upon the Gentiles then?  
 What did they do?  
 What was done to show that they belonged to God's family? **They were baptized.**

#### Good News for All.

- God loves everybody.  
 God wants sinners to come to him.  
 God wants us to tell the good news to all.

### THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

- Who was the first Christian among the Gentiles? **Cornelius, a Roman centurion.**
- Who preached the Gospel to him? **Peter, the apostle.**
- How did Peter say all men would receive remission of sins? **By believing in Jesus.**
- What came upon those who heard while Peter was speaking? **The Holy Ghost.**
- What is the **GOLDEN TEXT**? **"Whoever believeth,"** etc.

### OUR CHURCH CATECHISM.

22. How is it proved that the New Testament is inspired by the Holy Spirit?

The Saviour told His Apostles that they should be witnesses of Him, and promised that the Spirit should bring His words to their remembrance, and teach them things to come.

John xiv. 26. But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.

### THE LESSON OUTLINE.

#### God's Grace to the Seeker.

- |  |   |
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| <p>I. HIS PRAYER HEARD.<br/> <i>Thy prayer is heard.</i> v. 31.<br/>       He will draw nigh. James 4. 8.<br/>       Will have many. Isa. 55. 6, 7.</p> <p>II. HIS DEEDS HONORED.<br/> <i>Alas...in remembrance.</i> v. 31.<br/>       In no wise lose...reward. Matt. 10. 42.<br/>       Supply all your need. Phil. 4. 18, 19.</p> <p>III. HIS SEARCH DIRECTED.<br/> <i>Send...call hither Simon.</i> v. 32.<br/>       How shall they hear? Rom. 10. 14, 15.<br/>       He gave some...evangelists. Eph. 4. 11, 12.</p> | <p>IV. HIS REDEEMER PROVIDED.<br/> <i>Peace by Jesus Christ.</i> v. 36.<br/>       Reconciled...by Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 5. 13.<br/>       Through the blood. Col. 1. 20.</p> <p>V. HIS FAITH REWARDED.<br/> <i>Whoever believeth...remission.</i> v. 43.<br/>       By faith that is in me. Acts 26. 17, 18.<br/>       The promise by faith. Gal. 3. 22.</p> <p>VI. THE SPIRIT BESTOWED.<br/> <i>The Holy Ghost fell.</i> v. 44.<br/>       Might receive...the Spirit. Gal. 3. 14.<br/>       Spirit...beareth witness. Rom. 8. 16.</p> |
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### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian cohort (consisting altogether of possibly one thousand men), lived in Caesarea, the seat of Roman government in Palestine, where most of the Roman garrisons were made up of Syrians. "Regiments" in the Roman army were not only numbered, as with us, but had each an appropriate name, like this Italian cohort and the Augustan band (Acts 27. 1); and it is interesting to note that in the whole army there were thirty-two cohorts called, like this one, Italian. Cornelius, while worshiping the true God and conforming to the moral requirements of the Hebrew Scriptures in his daily life, was in no strict sense a proselyte to the Hebrew faith. To him came an angel, who spoke commendatory words, and commanded him to send for Simon Peter, telling him where he was to be found. Cornelius sent three messengers, one of them a soldier, to Joppa. As they drew near, about noon the next day, Peter, unaware of their approach, was about to engage in prayer in that quietest and most retired part of an Eastern house, the housetop. Noon was evidently not only his hour for prayer, but his hour for dinner also, and he became hungry, then fell into a "trance," a condition in which his external senses and will power were suspended, and all his power was derived from within.

Heaven opened before his entranced gaze, and down from it came a great sheet; its four corners were so drawn that it was turned into a bag; it was filled with all manner of animals and birds, and Peter was commanded to kill, prepare for food, and eat, according to the simple manner prevalent in the Orient. But most of these beasts and fowl were forbidden to be eaten by the Mosaic law, and reverently he protested, saying, "I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." The reply was, "What God has cleansed, that call not thou common." This was done three times, and then his vision was interrupted by the messengers from Cornelius. Peter heard their message, and obeyed the intimations of the vision by entertaining them just as hospitably as if they were not Gentiles, and the next day accompanying them to Joppa. It had taken them two days (that is, reckoning a part of a day for the whole, in oriental fashion) to come from Caesarea, and it took two days to go back, if, as is probable, they stopped all night at a midway station. When Peter met Cornelius he frankly expressed the prejudices of his nation, and how God had shown him their folly.

**Verse 30. Four days ago.** This accords with other parts of the narrative. See verses 9, 23, 24. Most of two days were spent in going each way between Caesarea and Joppa. **I was fasting.** This does not mean that he had fasted for four days either before or after God sent the vision; it means, rather, that at the time of his vision he had been fasting up to the same hour at which he was now speaking, which was probably midday, "the sixth hour;" for if Peter started from his midway stopping-place early in the morning he would reach Caesarea late in the forenoon. Our Bibles here are truer to the meaning of the text than is the Revised Version. **At the ninth hour.** Midway in the afternoon, not very far from three o'clock with us. So that the vision had come about three hours after Cornelius had stopped his fast. The lively of angels and saints. **I prayed.** (1) "Praying breath is never spent in vain." **In my house.** (2) "When thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

**31 Thy prayer is heard.** What the details of that prayer were we do not positively know, but the narrative strongly intimates that it was for more light and spiritual guidance. **Thine alms are had in remembrance.** There is no "saving merit" in good deeds. A man who is guilty of one sin cannot condone his guilt by doing any virtuous act. There is no such thing as earning the favor of God; but (3) *Alms and good deeds in general, if they are the outcome of a sincere heart, are in themselves prayer.* They are just as really the expression of the yearning of the human heart to please God as are the most eloquent petitions. It is an unspeakable comfort to remember that (4) *Every little thing we have ever done for the sake of God's great love for us, either in gratitude for what we have, or in longing for what we have not, has been done in the sight of God, and will never be forgotten by him.*

**32. Send therefore to Joppa.** "The angel had no commission to give instruction. He only directed Cornelius to the earthen vessel to which the treasure of heavenly truth had been committed. So our Lord did not himself teach Paul, but referred

him to Ananias."—*Bishop Jacobson.* Though angels' visits are not so distinctly recognized now as were one or two in New Testament times, precisely the same policy prevails now as then in the courts of heaven; doubtless many an angel has directed many an inquirer to you and me, as Cornelius was directed to Peter, and Saul to Ananias. (5) *The Christian should be always ready to help the inquirer. Lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner.* See our note in last week's lesson on what this fact implies. **Who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.** These words should be omitted.

**33. Immediately.** His holy zeal lost no time. **Thou hast well done.** A courteous expression of gratitude. **Thou art come.** From a human point of view Peter certainly deserved these thanks, for he was as prompt in responding as the Roman soldier had been in inviting. **All here present before God.** Early manuscripts differ as to the exact wording of this verse; some of the oldest and best make this read "present before thee," that is, Peter. But one statement is as true as the other, and the truth contained in the Authorized Version is especially solemn and delightful, and comes like a repeated musical refrain after the closing words of verse 31. It is pleasant to think of the converted heathen remembering in that hour of intense interest that not even the apostle himself was as close to him as was the great invisible God. **To hear all things that are commanded thee of God.** This should probably read, "of the Lord;" he already assumes the Messiahship of Jesus, and asks Peter to inform them of his teachings. (6) *The presence of God is a delight to all who love him.*

**34. Opened his mouth.** This peculiar phrase is employed in the New Testament to introduce subjects of unusual weight and importance, and in nearly every case "gives special solemnity to what follows."—*Alford.* See Acts 8:35; Matt. 5:2. **Of a truth.** This phrase has the same force as our Lord's "Verily, verily." **I perceive.** "An inference from God's having heard the prayers of a Gentile, having deemed him worthy of the light of the Gospel, and having sent an angel

to direct him to it. What the apostle was now witnessing was more distinctly satisfactory than the vision itself had been."—*Bishop Jacobson*. **God is no respecter of persons.** Peter is thinking of the respect paid to the Jews by a Jew. Most of the Pharisees would expect God to pay more attention to the alms and prayers of any Jew than to those of the holiest Gentile. The expression "no respecter" of persons occurs in Deut. 10. 17; 2 Chron. 19. 7; Job 34. 19, but with an entirely different meaning from that which it has here. It there means that God's administration of justice shall be absolutely fair; it here means that the distinction between Jews and Gentiles has been done away. (7) "If the things done are good in themselves, they are equally good whoever does them."—*Bishop Hervey*. To Peter's surprise all sorts of people are declared equally admissible to the privileges of the new dispensation.

**35. In every nation.** And in every denomination; in every religion, also; but this does not imply by any means that creeds and beliefs are of no consequence; rightly understood it emphasizes their importance. **He that feareth him.** He who does his duty toward God. **And worketh righteousness.** He who does his duty toward his neighbor. But the experience of nineteen centuries is that (8) *Duty toward God and toward neighbors is not done except as men believe in Jesus.* **Accepted with him.** Better, "acceptable to him." Very wisely indeed does an eminent English divine say this means "capable of becoming a Christian when the opportunity is granted, rather than capable of obtaining salvation without Christianity." It is not at all strange that for awhile the apostles misunderstood their Lord's words, and regarded circumcision and the full observance of the Mosaic ritual as an indispensable preliminary to Christianity; but it is strange—astonishing—that even after this clear statement by Peter he himself wavered concerning this doctrine.

**36. The word which God sent.** "The construction here," says *Canon Cook*, "is peculiar and somewhat obscure. At this great epoch in the history of the Church the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, in which so prominent part had been assigned to Peter, he, with the marvelous preparation for it which had been granted to him, must have been under the influence of a very deep and strong emotion. And it seems as if he made an earnest and perhaps hurried effort to give utterance to thoughts by which his mind was not only filled but overpowered. 'The word,' in verse 36, means the teaching or message which God sent; 'that word,' in verse 37, means the subject or basis of that teaching, the facts which took place throughout all Judea." **Preaching peace.** "Preaching good tidings of peace." See Isa. 52. 7. This has been explained by some to mean peace between Jews and Gentiles, an emphatic reiteration of the

teaching of verse 34; but it is probable that it means much more than this. "Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." **He is Lord of all.** Of Jews and Gentiles alike; much more than a rabbi, much more than a prophet.

**37. That word, I say, ye know.** See note on verse 36. The facts had been publicly discussed and generally recognized, and Cornelius doubtless had been in Caesarea while Philip resided there, perhaps even when Jesus himself taught in its neighborhood. **Was published.** Better, "which happened." **Throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee.** This is meant to include the whole area of our Lord's teaching and miracles.

**38. How God anointed.** The force of the text is not very distinctly brought out here. There are three things that Peter says Cornelius knows; the first is the teaching of God—Gospel doctrine, verse 36; the second is the facts which are the basis of that teaching—Gospel history, verse 37; the third is Jesus himself, verse 38. As to the sense in which God had "anointed" Jesus, theologians differ, some referring the phrase to our Lord's baptism and the descent of the Holy Spirit, some to the incarnation itself, some to the eternal choice of Jesus as the Messiah of the world. The rest of this verse contains the most beautiful condensed portrait of our Lord that has ever been made. **Oppressed of.** Better, "tyrannized over by." Peter was evidently talking to men whom he understood to be pretty well acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures.

**39. We.** The apostles. **Are witnesses.** Officially so. **The land of the Jews.** Better, "the country of the Jews;" that is, Judea. **Jerusalem.** Which was regarded almost as a province by itself. **Slew and hanged.** Slew by hanging.

**40. Showed him openly.** The Roman Catholic Bible here gives a better translation, "gave him to be made manifest."

**41. Not to all the people.** "This is an announcement which no impostor would ever have made."—*Paley*. "Accuracy of knowledge was of more importance than a multitude of testimonies."—*Cook*. **Witnesses chosen before of God.** Peter repeatedly refers to the office of the apostles as witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus. **Us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.** Luke 24. 30, 41-43; John 21. 12.

**42. He commanded us.** Better, "he charged us;" **Unto the people.** The Jews—"beginning at Jerusalem." **It is he which was ordained of God.** Better, "It is he which is ordained of God." **Quick.** Alive.

**43. To him gave all the prophets witnesses.** All, by the general drift of their teaching; some, by direct and very detailed prophecy.

**44. While Peter yet spake.** He was interrupted. **The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.** By some visible

manifestation the coming of the Holy Spirit was recognized. God did not even wait for baptism; there was no laying on of hands.

### CRITICAL NOTES.

**Verse 30. Cornelius.** The Bible student will be interested to note the favorable light in which, throughout the New Testament, the character of the Roman soldier is presented. They are among the respectful hearers and humble penitents who sought John's baptism and counsel, while priests and scribes haughtily rejected him. See Luke 3. 14. Jesus commended the centurion who came to him in behalf of his servant as having greater faith than he had found anywhere in Israel. See Matt. 8. 10. The centurion who had charge of the crucifixion of Jesus is represented as having testified, "Truly this was the Son of God." See Matt. 27. 54. Of Julius the centurion, who had charge of Paul on the voyage to Rome, it is said, "Julius courteously entertained Paul." See Acts 27. 3. Note also the high commendation of Cornelius, chap. 10. 2. As the head of the Roman forces in Caesarea, the seat of government for the province, as a man of exemplary moral and religious character, he was a splendid man to be used of the Lord in broadening the religious conceptions of those who had just emerged from Judaism and were full of zeal but narrow in their views. **Four days ago.** Reckoning back four days from this. **I was fasting until this hour.** His purpose is to show how he was engaged at the time of the vision. **At the ninth hour.** Three o'clock in the afternoon. **A man . . . in bright clothing.** The angel of verse 3.

**31. Thy prayer . . . thine alms.** The former represents a right relation to God, the latter to man; the former shows that we are subjects, the latter that we are brothers of the common Father. The prayers of such are always heard, the alms of such are always acceptable.

**32. In the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside.** If Cornelius had had pride in his heart he would have shown it in the form of a demur against sending to such an humble place for a teacher. But he who would learn must traverse the valley of humility.

**33. We are all here present before God.** The eagerness of Cornelius to receive the truth is expressed in the assembled company gathered to meet the apostle. The rehearsal of the event in chap. 11 shows the tendency, which later developed into an evil, of awarding honors to God's teachers and ministers which belong to him only. The Roman Christian Church at an early period degenerated rapidly into the worship of saints.

**34. Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.** Many when called on to requite or give judgment have respect to the

outward circumstances of men and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefer the more worthy, the one who is rich, the high-born, or the powerful. The same thought is expressed in Rom. 2. 11; Eph. 6. 9; Col. 3. 25; James 2. 1-9. Up to this time Peter had thought that God esteemed the people of one nation, his own of course, more than others. In our own day race prejudice, class prejudice, and color prejudice stand greatly in the way of the progress of the kingdom of Christ. Probably none who study these lessons go so far as to hold that those who belong to another political party than theirs cannot be Christians; but there are such.

**35. In every nation.** The argument is that nationality does not exclude from the privileges of the Gospel. **He that feareth him,** as shown in prayer, **and worketh righteousness,** as shown in almsgiving, **is accepted with him.** The argument is not that those who do these things may be saved without Christ, but that all who do these things without regard to nationality or any other external distinction may come to Christ and be saved. It is not an argument for the equality of religions or of beliefs before God, but of nations before him.

In the following verses—36-43—Peter, after setting forth in a general statement what persons were eligible to the kingdom of heaven, proceeds to prepare those present for the actual acceptance of Jesus. In few but weighty words he shows the worthiness of Jesus by representing the death upon the cross vouchsafed for by sufficient witnesses, verses 36-39; that Jesus was raised from the dead, and that Peter and others were commissioned to preach to the people, verses 41, 42; that the **prophets** (whom all under Jewish influence revered in the highest degree) had testified that whosoever believed on him should be saved, verse 43.

**36-38.** The grammatical construction of the following sentence, running through three verses, is so confused in the original that only a free translation will give us a smooth rendering. The meaning, however, is not difficult to understand. An exact literal rendering, perhaps equal to the best, is given by Meyer as follows: "The message which he (God, verse 35) sent to the Israelites, when he made known salvation through Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all—ye know the word, which went forth through all Judea, having begun from Galilee after the baptism which John preached—Jesus of Nazareth, ye know how God anointed him, consecrated him to be the Messianic King, with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing," etc. Rotherham expresses the meaning



with great clearness as follows: "As to the word which he sent forth to the sons of Israel, delivering the joyful message of peace through Jesus Christ (the same is Lord of all), ye know what had already occurred along the whole coast of Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed, respecting Jesus, him from Nazareth; how God anointed with him the Holy Spirit and power; who went through doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the adversary; because God was with him."

**36. The word (*logos*).** The message of glad tidings first preached to the chosen people, the Jews. He is Lord of all. The expression is interjected here at the beginning of the discourse to guard Cornelius against the assumption that Jesus the preacher was a man only.

**37. That word (*rena*).** The events which had come to pass in the country where they lived. The former "word" refers to the whole message of salvation, the later "word" to the "glad tidings" which had been preached since the baptism of John.

**38. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost.** Three great facts Cornelius is assumed to have become acquainted with: 1. The general matter of the Gospel truth preached, verse 36; 2. The particular facts connected with the life of Jesus, verse 39; 3. The anointing of Jesus, verse 38. The English word "anointed" is a translation of the Greek "Christos," which in turn is a translation of the Hebrew "Messiah." It is applied to the ceremony of formally setting apart and consecrating to the office of prophet, priest, and king, in which a certain medicated oil was poured upon the head, or sometimes also on other parts of the body. Jesus united in himself all of these offices. He was, therefore, "Christed," "Messiahed," and "anointed." Jesus was anointed by the infilling of the Holy Ghost. **Healing all that were oppressed of the devil.** It is here assumed that there exists a devil; that the devil is an oppressor. To release from his oppression was the most important work brought to the attention of Cornelius.

**39. We are witnesses.** Peter, one of the "we," the apostles, places himself in proper subordination to Jesus when Cornelius is disposed to exalt him too greatly, and strengthens the centurion's faith at the approaching crisis of his conversion. **Slew and hanged.** Better "slew by hanging." The Romans hanged him, but the Jews slew him.

**40. Him God raised up the third day.** The resurrection, a fact made familiar to us from our childhood, but marvelous and indeed incredible to a Gentile, unless vouched for by thoroughly reliable witnesses, was the climax of apostolic testimony. Acts 2: 24; 17: 31; 26: 23.

**41. Not to all the people.** Not numbers, but accuracy, was the important element. **Unto**

**witnesses chosen before of God.** The most important testimony which the apostles were to give was to the fact that Christ died and came forth after burial unto life. The event, wonderful as it is, is exalted yet more by the appointment, before its occurrence, of men who should bear witness to the fact.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### God's Answer to the Seeker's Prayer.

1. God hears the prayer of every earnest soul which approaches him. Verse 31.
2. God honors the good works done in the spirit of love to man. Verse 31.
3. God sends his angels to give direction to those who are sincerely seeking for light. Verses 30-32.
4. God provides instruction for those who sincerely desire it. Verse 32.
5. God opens the way for the proclamation of Christ and salvation to those who are ready to receive it. Verses 36-42.
6. God extends the forgiveness of sins to those who sincerely seek mercy. Verse 43.
7. God bestows the influence of the Holy Spirit upon those who seek after it. Verse 44.

## Orientalisms of the Lesson.

When Peter "perceived that God was no respecter of persons" he got a revelation of religious equality that was not paralleled till then in all the history of the human race. There was at that very hour one fifth of the human family just east of Palestine, who held then, as they do still, that God created different classes, orders, and castes of men. Four of these were high castes: the Brahmans, born from the head of the divine One, were the holiest of all; next in order came those born from his arms, his thighs, and his feet. These were said to be different orders of beings. These class divisions greatly multiplied, but the Brahmans are still recognized as too holy to be accounted merely human persons. No low-caste man must enter their presence, and if so much as the shadow of a European were to fall on the cooked dinner of a Brahman, it would pollute it, and he would not eat a morsel of it. These several castes in India do not intermarry. The Hindus thus deny that "God has made of one blood" all the nations of the earth. The priests held millions in subjection to their doctrine at the time that Peter announced the great democratic principle of the Gospel, the equality of all men in the sight of God. There could be no ambition among Hindus to change their rank in the order of created beings. The thing is impossible. A donkey might as well expect to become a hummingbird or a frog to become a butterfly. The Hindu blood currents are kept wholly distinct. Peter announced a new theory of humanity. Bishop Wil-

liams well says, "We can hardly comprehend the feelings, amounting to consternation, with which Jewish converts must have received the intelligence that the Gentiles were to be admitted to membership and privileges in the Church."

### By Way of Illustration.

*Verse 31. God remembers.* A man accosted a philanthropist and thanked him for help given several years before. "I had forgotten all about it," answered the good man, whose life had been full of such service. "I haven't," answered the other, "and best of all, God hasn't forgotten it."

*Verse 33.* The prompt obedience of Cornelius is noteworthy. The theory of love and trust and righteousness is like an unclean loaf; it must be assimilated in experience to become power in the bone and blood of life. If you have received light, it is a moral safety-valve to do something. God's angels of revelation are like the index catalogues of our great libraries; they tell us where to find the truth we seek, and only as we are willing to put ourselves out to send to Joppa for Peter, do we get the truth that builds us up.—*H. W. Davis.*

*Verses 34-42. Cornelius hears the Gospel.* As the Spirit prepared the heart of the eunuch for the ministry of Philip, and sent Philip away from Samaria to the desert to instruct him, so now the Spirit had prepared the centurion for the Gospel, and also led the apostle Peter into his neighborhood. Who shall say that the same careful and minute Providence is not present in the case of every man and woman who is finally converted to God? We do not now perceive the hand of God actually directing nor discern the various links in the chain of his providence, but is not that providence as present in the human affairs as the mainspring and the wheels are present in the watch that move the hands over the dial, though we only see the hands and not the hidden works inclosed within the watch?—*Bible Studies.*

*Verse 34.* "God is no respecter of persons." On one occasion Peter Cartwright preached in a fashionable church in Nashville. In the middle of the sermon Andrew Jackson entered and walked up the main aisle. The President's presence overpowered the pastor, so that he bent over and said to Cartwright, in an audible whisper, "General Jackson has come in! General Jackson has come in!" "And who," thundered out Cartwright, "is General Jackson? If he don't get his soul converted God will damn him as quick as he would a Guinea Negro." General Jackson said afterward, "If I had an army of such true, fearless men, what might I not do?"

### Before the Class.

*Introduction.* 1. Show on the map the location of Joppa and Caesarea.

2. Remind the class of the Jewish prejudices to-

ward outsiders, and impress the fact that the apostles at first believed that salvation through Christ was to be offered to the Jews only or to those who became Jews.

*Material.* Model or picture of a flat-roofed oriental house; a napkin, in which is placed pictures of as many different kinds of animals as possible, or pieces of pasteboard or wood to represent the animals; a pad and a sharpened lead pencil for each member of the class.

### Steps in teaching.

1. Holding in the hand the model or picture of the flat-roofed house in order to gain attention, describe the vision of Cornelius, in which he saw an angel, who commended him for praying and almsgiving and directed him to send to Joppa for Simon (Peter).

2. Using the napkin and its contents to retain the attention of the class, explain how God, through the vision of clean and unclean beasts, taught Peter that all men are in the same condition in reference to the offer of salvation.

3. Describe how Cornelius sent two men, who found Peter at Joppa, and brought him to Caesarea to the house of Cornelius.

4. Emphasize the fact that Peter learned the truth that God accepts those who come to him without any regard whatever to their previous condition, and that he now declared that truth to Cornelius.

5. Ask the members of the class to take the pads and to write down the facts which Peter taught Cornelius concerning Jesus.

They are as follows:

1. He was anointed with the Holy Ghost.
2. He spent his life in doing good and in working miracles.
3. He was crucified.
4. He rose from the dead on the third day.
5. He appeared to witnesses after the resurrection.
6. He is the Judge of all men. See Rom. 14. 10.

7. Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

*Note.* As it is probable that he has in this Scripture only an outline of what Peter said to Cornelius the teacher should explain each point as he goes on, as these are the very foundation truths of our faith.

8. Have the class tell what they know about Cornelius, and as the facts are drawn out by question and answer have each one write them on his pad somewhat as follows:

Cornelius was:

1. A man of position. (Explain the meaning of the word "centurion.")
2. A devout man (openly religious).
3. A God-fearing man.
4. A very charitable man.
5. A praying man.

6. A just man.  
7. A man of good reputation among the Jews.  
(This meant much, for the Jews hated the Romans.)

Now ask: Was anything lacking in this good man? Yes. What? He was not a converted man. Why not?

1. Because he had not accepted Christ as his Saviour.

2. Because he had not entered into personal fellowship with God through the Holy Spirit.

Finally, Have the class write the following questions on their pads:

Am I converted?

If so, what am I doing for the conversion of others?

If not, how may I be converted?

When may I be converted?

These questions suggest the personal application of the lesson. Be sure that every member of the class understands what you mean by "conversion," or by whatever term you use in its place. If possible after the school session let the teacher retire to a corner of the school room with any of the class who will remain, and there make an especial effort to get such to accept Christ as Saviour.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw the map, showing the relative position of Jerusalem, Joppa, and Caesarea.... The character of Cornelius is here exhibited.... Circumstances which made the faith and zeal of Cornelius remarkable: (1) His heathen origin; (2) His godless surroundings; (3) His rank and station, etc.... The two visions and their significance.... Steps in God's plans leading up to this work of Gentile salvation: (1) Samaritans converted; (2) Ethiopian; (3) Antioch. Acts 11. 19, 20.... How to seek after God.... How God rewards those who seek after him.... How Christ is preached to the worker: (1) His anointing; (2) His power; (3) His character; (4) His works; (5) His death and resurrection; (6) His office as Judge; (7) His office as Saviour.... What does this lesson call upon us to do: (1) As sinners? (2) As seekers? (3) As Christians?

.... Or, turn the lesson into the study of *A Notable Sermon*. 1. The preacher was a man, not an angel, an imperfect man, a saved sinner, loyal to Christ, with a warm heart, clear intelligence, and communion with God. 2. The congregation was small, but it feared God, it was righteous in intent, obedient to God's commands, and willing to go as far as divine light led. 3. The theme was salvation through Christ—all men of every nation may be saved by him. 4. The appeal was twofold—to personal experience, and to Holy Scripture. The effect of the sermon was faith on the part of those who heard it, followed by the descent of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost was repeated. Make personal application.

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Thou art my shepherd.  
How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.  
Come with thy sins to the fountain.  
Who'll be the next to follow Jesus?  
Jesus, my Lord, to thee I cry.

The Saviour calls in accents clear.  
Seek, my soul, the narrow gate.  
Once for all the Saviour died.  
He has come.  
How sweetly sounds the call.

### References.

FREEMAN: The "ninth hour," 806; as an hour of prayer, 595.

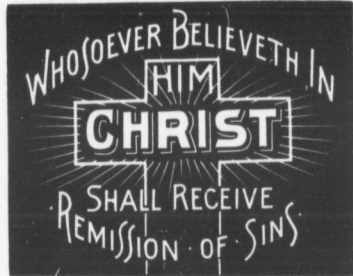
### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

We must read the whole of this chapter in order to get the full force of its spiritual teaching. Cornelius was a Roman; Peter was a Jew. To a Jew, by tradition and in feeling, Gentiles were "outside barbarians." The Jews had so long possessed the clearer revelation of the truth that they had come to think God cared for nobody but themselves. There is a singular danger in the possession of great privileges. It seems strange, but it is true, that Christians who have the most light, who know the most and enjoy the best of Gospel privileges, are often very selfish in their use of them. Peter had been zealous in preaching to the Jews the salvation in Jesus which made his own heart glad. But that a Gentile could need, or be entitled to the same blessings, had never occurred to him. God showed him in a vision that the time had come for him to lay aside his old prejudices and open his heart to a broader view of the love of God in Christ Jesus. What God had cleansed he was not to call common or unclean.

In the meantime Cornelius, the outside "heathen," had a revelation also. He was asking for light, and God showed him that it was to be given him through these people, who had been more highly favored than he. Cornelius sent for Peter, and Peter, obedient, put away his exclusive notions and went to Cornelius. The result was what it always is when hearts cry out for God and other hearts are ready to be God's messengers. Peter found out that God is no respecter of persons; that he counts every creature in every nation in his "Whosoever." And Cornelius, and all who were with him who heard the word, found that the Holy Ghost was the gift of God for Gentiles as well as Jews. Are any of us, Christians, like Peter before he had his eyes opened? Do we think we have exclusive rights to the Gospel with all its blessings? Do we say the heathen are well enough off as they

are; we have too much to do in our own church to share with them our spiritual riches? Exclusiveness is not altogether peculiar to the Jews. We are quite too apt to love our own so well that we see no good in other households of God's great family. The ideal man, as God intended him to be, has a dark skin as well as a light one. He lives in the Orient as well as in the United States. He is asking for the truth. We are highly favored in having it. Angels are not God's instruments for giving the Gospel to the waiting world. You and I are. The angel could not teach Cornelius; he bade him send for Peter. What a beautiful lesson this is for us to have a broad, sweet charity like that which fills the heart of God for humanity in every condition and in every clime!

Blackboard.



### LESSON III. GENTILES CONVERTED AT ANTIOCH. [April 18.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Acts 11. 18.

**AUTHORIZED VERSION.**

**Acts 11. 19-26.** [*Commit to memory verses 21-24.*]

[Read chapter 11.]

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

**REVISED VERSION.**

19 They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, 20 preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number 21 that believed turned unto the Lord. And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they 22 sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch: who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad: and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto 23 the Lord: for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people 24 was added unto the Lord. And he went forth 25 to Tarsus to seek for Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people: and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

**Time.**—A. D. 40-44. **Place.**—Antioch in Syria.

#### Home Readings.

*M.* Life for the Gentiles. Acts 11. 1-18.

*Tu.* Gentiles Converted at Antioch. Acts 11. 19-26.

*W.* Promise for the Gentiles. Isa. 60. 1-7.

*Th.* A minister to the Gentiles. Rom. 15. 13-21.

*F.* Joy of the Gospel. Luke 10. 17-24.

*S.* Fellow-citizens. Eph. 2. 11-22.

*S.* From all nations. Rev. 7. 9-17.

#### Lesson Hymns.

No. 27, New Canadian Hymnal.

The Church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord.

No. 110, New Canadian Hymnal.

I hear thy welcome voice,  
That calls me, Lord, to thee.

No. 131, New Canadian Hymnal.  
 Best be the tie that binds  
 Our hearts in Christian love;  
 The fellowship of kindred minds.

### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

#### 1. The Church Growing, v. 19-21.

Where did the persecuted believers go?  
 To whom did they preach the Gospel?  
 Where was an exception made and in whose favor?

What results followed this labor for the Gentiles?

What fact was thereby established? GOLDEN TEXT.

#### 2. The Church Organized, v. 22-26.

What people heard of this good work?  
 On what mission was Barnabas sent?  
 What encouragement did he offer?  
 What gave his words great weight?  
 Where did Barnabas go, and on what errand?  
 What led him to seek Saul? See Acts 9, 26, 27.  
 What was the result of his journey?  
 How did the apostles employ themselves?  
 What new name did the disciples there receive?  
 By what other names are they known in the New Testament?

#### Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Opposition often helps the truth. God can make the wrath of man to praise him.
2. Good people need encouragement. A word of cheer is ever in place. To be a son of consolation is to fulfill a noble mission.
3. We ought to be "fellow-helpers to the truth." No lonely worker does his best. Companionship is a stimulus to effective labor.

### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

#### 1. The Church Growing, v. 19-21.

Why did the disciples leave Judea?  
 How far did they go in their travels?  
 To whom only did they at first preach?  
 To whom did some afterward preach?  
 Who were these latter preachers?  
 What results followed their words? GOLDEN TEXT. Why?

#### 2. The Church Organized, v. 22-26.

Who heard of this good work in Antioch?  
 Who was sent to inspect the work?  
 How did Barnabas feel?  
 What did he urge them to do?  
 How is Barnabas described?  
 In character whom did he resemble? Chapter 6, 5.  
 From Antioch where did Barnabas go, and for whom?

Where had he known Saul? Chapter 9, 27.

How long did these two remain at Antioch?  
 What new name there came into use?  
 By what names had they been called before?

#### Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That God's enemies sometimes help the truth?
2. How we should feel when God's cause prospers?
3. How we can "fulfill the law of Christ?" Gal. 6, 2.

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who found fault with Peter when he went to Jerusalem?

What for?

Why did they think he had done wrong? **Because he had broken the law.**

What is higher than Jewish law? **God's law.**

What followed Stephen's death?

What did many believers do?

How did the persecution do good? **It was the means of spreading the good news.**

What was one of the cities visited?

Who was sent there to teach and preach?

Whom did he get to come and help him?

How long did they both stay in Antioch?

What was the result of their teachings?

What name was given to believers in Antioch?

#### Learn from the Lesson—

To obey God rather than man.

To look for good to come out of evil.

To work earnestly and faithfully for God.

### THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What was done by the believers who were scattered abroad in the persecutions after Stephen's death? **They went everywhere, preaching.**
2. To whom did they at first preach? **To the Jews only.**
3. Where was the first church planted among the Gentiles? **At Antioch in Syria.**
4. What name was first given to believers in Christ at Antioch? **The name Christians.**
5. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? **"Then hath God also,"** etc.

### OUR CHURCH CATECHISM.

23. What other proof is there that the Bible is inspired?  
**Its wonderful and heavenly power over the human heart.**

Hebrews iv, 12, 13. **The word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

## THE LESSON OUTLINE

## Traits of the Church at Antioch.

## I. ITS PATIENCE IN TRIAL.

*Scattered...preaching the word.* v. 19.

In the world...tribulation. John 16, 35.

I suffer trouble. 2 Tim. 2, 9.

## II. ITS BREADTH OF VIEW.

*Unto the Greeks also.* v. 20. (Revised Version.)

God of the Jews only! Rom. 3, 29.

Ye are all one. Gal. 3, 28.

## III. ITS DISCIPLINE.

*Church...sent forth Barnabas.* v. 22.

Walk by the same rule. Phil. 3, 16.

There is one body. Eph. 4, 4.

## IV. ITS LEADERS.

*Barnabas...Saul.* v. 25.

Certain prophets and teachers. Acts 13, 1.

Apostles...pastors and teachers. Eph. 4, 11, 12.

## V. ITS INFLUENCE.

*Were called Christians.* v. 26.

Light of the world. Matt. 5, 14.

Among whom ye shine. Phil. 2, 15, 16.

## VI. ITS SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

*Prophets...by the Spirit.* v. 27, 28.

Gifts differing. Rom. 12, 6-8.

The same Spirit. 1 Cor. 12, 4-11.

## VII. ITS GENEBOUSITY.

*To send relief.* v. 29, 30.

Do good...household. Gal. 6, 10.

Not grudgingly. 2 Cor. 9, 7.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

While Peter was yet speaking the words which are given in our last lesson the Holy Ghost fell on all present with the signs similar to those given on the day of Pentecost, and the crowds that came around the apostles on that first day were hardly more astonished than were the Jews who now accompanied Peter, for they had supposed that the gift of the Holy Ghost was reserved exclusively for converted Jews. So the converts were baptized. After a little the news reached Jerusalem, and when Peter returned there was much strife in the church there. The Jewish Christians blamed him for transgressing the law of Moses in intimately associating with Gentiles. Peter told the whole story, "expounded it by order unto them:" the vision on the housetop, the journey to Joppa, the vision of the angel to Cornelius, the gift of the Holy Ghost to the Gentiles, and closed with the startling words, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?" This silenced the opposers, and the next words of the holy text are selected for our study to-day.

**Verse 19. They which were scattered abroad.** Christian converts who were compelled to flee when Saul led in the persecution there. For "persecution" read "tribulation." **Phenice.** Phoenicia, the seacoast country about Tyre and Sidon. A region where there were many Jews. **Cyprus.** An island in the Mediterranean Sea in full view of the coast of Phoenicia in fair weather. The people there were largely Phoenicians, but there were many Jews. **Antioch.** One of the great cities of antiquity, with a population of half a million. It was the capital of the great kingdom of Syria, and is to be carefully distinguished from Antioch in Pisidia. It was about one hundred and eighty miles north of the northern boundary of Phoenicia, and was only exceeded in importance by Rome and Alexandria.

**20. The Grecians.** This should be "the Greeks." It does not mean Greek-speaking Jews, but Gentiles. It is evident that where there were so many Jews as resided in Antioch their worship would attract a great deal of public attention, and Gentiles would be more apt to attend Jewish services there than in some other places.

**21. The hand of the Lord.** His power.

**22. Tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem.** It is not improbable that some members of the church which was in Jerusalem lived in chronic apprehension of the effects of the zeal of some of their brethren. Statements in Acts concerning Stephen's aggressive behavior are meager, but they imply that the whole church did not agree with them. The prompt sending of two apostles to Samaria to supervise the work done on the outcast race, and the quick carrying of the news of the baptism of Cornelius and his household, seem to intimate that the church felt that there was real danger in the aggressive zeal of some of its members. On the other hand, the fact that **they sent forth** so aggressive a man as **Barnabas** shows that an excellent temper and discussion prevailed in their counsels. **Barnabas** was known to favor the preaching the Gospel to Gentiles, Acts 13, 1, 2. We have no definite knowledge of the relative dates of the incidents given in the last two or three chapters, but it is probable that Peter had already made his report

concerning the conversion of Cornelius, and that already his pious auditors had exclaimed, "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance and life."

**23. He was a good man.** A morally excellent man, a man of honorable and lovable character. **Full of the Holy Ghost and faith.** A description which suited Stephen also. Acts 6. 5. The Holy Ghost seems to have been frequently thought of by Luke and the writers of the epistles, as here, as a Spirit of power, making in this case, Barnabas's exhortation peculiarly effective. "Faith" carries both the ideas of dependence and of faithfulness. **Much people was added unto the Lord.** Mentally confessed and morally changed, people in crowds became sincere and active Christians. Why? Because an unusually good man, with unusual ability as an exhorter, was exercising such unusual faith as to receive an unusual measure of the support of the Holy Ghost.

**25. Then departed Barnabas.** Revision, "And he went forth." **For to seek Saul.** With whose intelligent power and thorough consecration Barnabas was familiar. His journey to Tarsus would be probably by water a twelve hours' sail, or he could go overland eighty miles.

**26. When he had found him.** Evidently after search. A phrase which may intimate that Paul was not at this time a conspicuous factor in the Jewish life of Tarsus. **He brought him unto Antioch.** Where doubtless many of those who had fled in terror from his persecution in Jerusalem were now eagerly awaiting his coming and earnestly praying for God's blessing upon his

endeavors. **That a whole year.** Revision, "That often for a whole year." **They assemble themselves.** Revision, "They were gathered together." **With the church.** Should be "in the church," and refers here to a place of meeting, as well as to the gathering of the disciples. **Taught much people.** Jews and Gentiles alike, who could be attracted to the meetingplace. **And the disciples.** This should be "and with the disciples," for it closely connects with the preceding sentences. These two things "came to pass," that for an entire year Paul and Barnabas labored as evangelists in Antioch, and the disciples received the name "Christians," which they and their followers were to bear for nineteen centuries afterward. **Were called.** Bore the name. They had been called by their enemies "Nazarenes," and by the people at large "Men of the Way." They themselves knew each other as "disciples" of Jesus, Acts 1. 15; as "brethren," Acts 9. 30; as "saints," Acts 9. 13; and as "believers," Acts 2. 44. The fact that this name was given in Antioch is of itself suggestive. It is a nickname that could not have been thrown at the disciples by the Jews, for if there is any element of derision in it it is not against Jesus but against the Christ, the Messiah, whom all the Jews revered. One of the early Christian liturgies says, "We give thee thanks that we are called by the name of thy Christ, and are thus reckoned as thine own." James (2. 7) speaks of "the world name by which ye are called." Polycarp died saying, "I am a Christian." There were many Greeks in Antioch, and the Romans were in power there, both civil and military. The form of this word is Latin, like "Pompeians," "Herodians," "Ciceronians," etc.

### CRITICAL NOTES.

**Verse 19. Now.** Revised Version, "therefore," that is, because of the persecution "that arose about Stephen." The consequence of that persecution was that the disciples at Jerusalem, but not the apostles, "were scattered abroad." The writer, Luke, after Acts 8. 4, gave an account of the results as related to the establishment of Christianity in Samaria, Joppa, and Caesarea. He now returns to the same point of departure and narrates the circumstance under which the new faith was planted in Antioch. **They which were scattered abroad.** The terrible persecution lasting, it is estimated, six months, ransacking every house, sparing neither men nor women, with the exception of the apostles, instead of destroying the new religion was like the scattering of firebrands by the winds, kindling the flame anew in every quarter. Humanity itself, revolting against the heartless cruelty of Saul and his allies, was drawn into sympathy with the new doctrine. The foreign Jew

lent a willing ear to the story of the exile. **Traveled as far as Phenice.** The beautiful plain along the seacoast was the land of the Philistines. To the north lay the land of the Canaanites, known to the Greeks and Romans under the name of Phœnicia, or palm land, from the abundant growth of that tree. Its principal cities were Tyre and Sidon, famous for inventions, manufactures, and commerce. Their religion was cruel and sensual. No record is left of any successful planting of Christianity in that country. **Cyprus.** An island west of Palestine, in the Mediterranean Sea, on the general highway of commerce between the East and the West. It was the birthplace of Barnabas, and one of the important fields of Paul's labors. **And Antioch.** About three hundred miles northwest of Jerusalem and thirty miles from its seaport, Seleucia. Next to Rome and Alexandria, it was the largest city of the Roman empire at this time, having a population of nearly five hundred thousand people. Trade

with the West by way of the sea, and with the East by means of caravans, made the city one of great importance.

Its chief interest to us consists in its relation to the advancing movement of a world-embracing Christianity. The spread of the Gospel was from a few great centers. First, Jerusalem; later, Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, and Rome. Now it is Antioch. Jerusalem could not be a center of missionary power. It was wrapped up too much with the consciousness of its own importance. The new doctrine must have centers of activity unembarrassed by their own traditions. God as a wise master-builder uses the best means at hand for the accomplishment of results. The free spirit of the United States makes it the best center of evangelistic power in the modern world. The location of Antioch, not too far east nor west, made it more than Jerusalem the headquarters of the apostle of the Gentile world. **Unto the Jews only.** To contrast with the preaching spoken of in the next verse, which was to the pagans.

**20. And.** Revised Version, "but," to contrast with those just mentioned. **Men of Cyprus and Cyrene.** The Jews, according to Josephus, numbered one fourth of the population of Cyrene. About this time it was united in one province with Cyprus. Jews from "about Cyrene" were in Jerusalem at Pentecost. See chap. 2, 10. **Spake unto the Grecians.** Revised Version, "Greeks." The former would mean Grecian Jews; the latter, straightout Gentiles. The latter reading is preferred by most commentators, although the manuscripts are quite evenly balanced.

**21. And the hand of the Lord was with them.** An oriental expression, signifying that God was manifest in power, similar to the phrase found in the Old Testament, "with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."

**22. Tidings.** Revival news spreads among localities connected by social, political, and commercial relations. **Came unto the ears.** Indicating that no official report was sent, that the words went as ordinary news of general interest to the church. **The church which was in Jerusalem.** The local society. The term was also used to mean the whole body of believers. See Col. 1, 18. The word as applied to the building in which believers dedicate to God, and in which they worship, derived from the Greek, *Kuriakon*, signifies "belonging to the Lord," but could not come into use while the believers had no public houses of worship. They met at first in the homes of the disciples. **They sent forth Barnabas.** See Acts 4, 36; 9, 27. A wise choice. Barnabas was a Cyprian. He was a Hellenistic Jew, and probably for that reason of broader views and larger sympathies. Gradually the apostles, having accomplished the special mission to which they had been called, of testifying to the works

and teachings of Jesus, above all to his resurrection, are withdrawn from view, and men better adapted to the work of spreading the Gospel in new lands and among other civilizations are coming to the front. Among these, next to Paul, none is so worthy of mention as Barnabas.

**23. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad.** What a man sees when he goes abroad depends largely on what he is looking for. Here is a man who goes out to inspect a mission, and is glad. Doubtless he could have found faults and have been displeased. He looked on the side which represented his own heart. **Exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.** He did not sit back near the door, and at the close of the meeting slip away to find fault, but went up to the front benches, took part in the meeting, and gave it all the encouragement of a man in whom the Spirit of the Lord was.

**24. For he was a good man.** A bad man cannot rejoice in the prosperity of God's work among sinners; neither can a thoroughly good man very easily sit back and scowl. **Full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.** These qualities made him a good messenger and a good helper in the revival. Result—**much people was added to the Lord**, because of his presence and help.

**25. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul.** Help is needed. A great work has begun. The "Way" has found a footing in a city greater than Jerusalem in influence and power. Tarsus is distant from Seleucia, the seaport, about twelve hours' sail, by land; it is eighty miles from Antioch to Tarsus. What Saul was doing is not known. Such men are busy when hidden from view. For Antioch to send to Tarsus and not to Jerusalem, to Saul and not to Peter, means the beginning of a new era.

**26. He brought him to Antioch.** For a time the lesser light shines the brightest. The weaker man is in the lead. But times are coming to the full. Barnabas, who introduced Saul to the disciples at Jerusalem, chap. 9, 27, now opens the way for a close connection between him and the city which shall soon become the metropolis of Gentile Christianity. **A whole year.** Worship and instruction at Damascus and Jerusalem had been interrupted by persecution. Here "the chosen vessel" found an opportunity to work without molestation, and to lay the foundations which were so important for the future center of operations. **And taught much people.** They had opportunity to reach, not only the religiously inclined of a great metropolis, but also the people passing to and from, going east and west. In addition to these, at a distance of only five miles from the city, was Daphne, one of the most elegant places of devotion in the pagan world.—*Gibbon's Rome*, vol. ii, p. 103. Here was a magnificent temple of Apollo,



the god of light, and the favorite divinity of the Orient. Here, under patronage of religion, were celebrated the famous Olympic games. "The perpetual resort of pilgrims and spectators insensibly formed, in the neighborhood of the temple, the stately and populous village of Daphne, which emulated the splendor, without acquiring the title of a provincial city."—*Gibbon*. For these reasons Antioch constituted the strategic point for the establishment and spread of Christianity in the then "Western world." **And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.** In view of the stress which is sometimes laid upon the name "Christian" as applied to the Church, it is well to note how the name first came to be applied. In the first place Jesus himself gave no directions, nor did any of the apostles, so far as we know, how his followers should be called. They styled themselves "brethren," "disciples," "believers," "saints." Nor is it probable that the name was given to the disciples by the Jews. They, as we know, were accustomed to apply a term significant of hatred and contempt, and hence called them "the sect of the Nazarenes." "There is little doubt that the name originated with the Gentiles, who began to see that the sect were so far distinct from the Jews that they might naturally receive a new designation."—*Conybeare and Howson*. "The term came from without, and from the pagans."—*Schoff*. "For this Greek appellation... we must doubtless thank the genius of the lively Greek pagans of Antioch."—*Whedon*. "They received the name of Christians, as followers of Christ, from the outside world."—*The Popit Commentary*. "Their name proceeded from the pagans."—*Lange*. "Probably the heathens called them Christians."—*Hackett*. "A name coined by the pagans of Antioch."—*The Bible Commentary*. The name, first given in derision by the pleasure-loving pagans of Antioch, "notorious for inventing names of derision, and turning their wit into channels of ridicule," as was the name "Methodists," as applied to the followers of John Wesley, came to be the title by which the followers of Jesus were called throughout the world. Yet the Christians were at first a sect, since they were a "cut-off" from Judaism, as those who gave the name supposed.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### The Model Christian Church.

1. It was a Church established by men who had not only held the truth, and preached it, but had suffered for it. Verse 19.
2. It was a Church of composite elements, rich and poor, Jews and Gentiles, all made one in Christ Jesus. Verses 20, 29.
3. It was a Church of broad views, not limiting the Gospel to one race, but ready to extend it to all. Verses 20, 21.

4. It was a Church of rapid growth, through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Verses 21, 26.

5. It was a Church which showed the manifest tokens of the Spirit's presence and a living Christian experience. Verse 23.

6. It was a Church of power in the community, attracting notice and gaining a name. Verse 26.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

When the persecution of the Christian Jews occurred, after the death of Stephen, the Christians were driven out of the Jewish center and scattered widely over the Roman empire. Naturally they went where there were other Jewish communities less antagonistic to their new doctrines. The Jewish colonies outside of Judea, especially in the Mediterranean region, were broadened by their association with other ideas of men, and as they themselves were rather suffered than patronized they were less likely to discriminate against Jewish sects, and it must be remembered that till now Christians were merely known as a new "Way," or "Sect of Hebrews." All Jews were despised throughout the Roman communities of the West, and to be spoken of as a Jew meant even more of contempt than among us to-day. Wherever these Christian Jews went they entered the synagogue and taught their new views of the Old Testament prophecies and their fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. It would occur that sometimes a great number of the resident Jews would listen to their word and join their sect. Whenever a "revival" of this kind occurred the central church at Jerusalem would, as a body, send a deputation of their number to go to the aid of their brethren. Thus Peter and John were sent down to Samaria. But in all this work they still preached "to the Jews only."

The number of Jews settled in Antioch has been emphasized, as well as those in the adjacent islands of the Mediterranean Sea. Why were so many in Antioch? has been asked. It will be remembered that the founder of this city allowed unusually large religious freedom to the Jews, and the Christians, being Jews, shared this freedom, and had license to worship unmolested. Cyrene was a Greek colony in North Africa, where the Greek language was spoken by most or all of the people, and it was inhabited by a great many Jews. Many Jews had settled on the island of Cyprus, and they had numerous synagogues. The Greek language was quite generally acquired by Jews residing in these commercial centers. The common designation of these among the Jews was, "those who speak Greek," and was opposed to the "home-born Jew," or those who dwelt in Palestine. But many Greeks by race also became Christians, and it is not always easy to distinguish to whom the term "Grecian" was applied by the Jews. It seems clear,

however, here that it was the Greek-speaking Jews, who had been converted during the Pentecost revival, who now preached to the Greek-speaking Jews resident at Antioch, though it would seem they preached also to the heathen Greeks resident there, since it is not said, as in the preceding verse, that they preached to "Jews only."

It was at Antioch that the name "Christian" was first applied to the disciples of Jesus, and it is thought that this shows the prevalence of the Greek influence. The Greek usage was to call followers of a distinguished teacher after his name, as "Platonist" after Plato, and "Pythagoreans" after Pythagoras; hence they would naturally say the followers of Jesus were Christ-ians. The Jews could scarcely wish to call the disciples by this title, since that were to allow that they were disciples of the Messiah, and that were to acknowledge that Christ was the anointed of the Lord. The Greeks of Antioch were well known to be adepts at calling nicknames. They did not hesitate at calling emperors by nicknames in ridicule or disgust, and Apollonius of Tyana was said to have been driven from the city by their insults.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Antioch.* Some one has called the story of the early Church "a tale of three cities"—Jerusalem, where it was born; Antioch, where it was named; and Rome, where it found its capital and center for so many years.

*Persecution.* The Christian faith was made known and grew through persecution. To attempt to kill God's people by persecution is like trying to put out a fire by blowing it. When Wesley and his followers were turned out of the churches they took to the fields and thus reached great companies, the masses who would never have gone to the churches.

*Preaching the word.* They were simple disciples, what we would call laymen, telling to others what they themselves have heard and believed concerning Jesus. It does not matter who scatters the seed; the life is in the seed, and not in the hand of him that sows it. It is of little consequence who preaches, but it is of vast consequence what is preached.

The early Church understood that every saved man was to be a soul-winner, for we read in Acts 8:4, "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Some years ago in the Northwest I was trying to persuade a young lawyer that he ought to be a soul-winner. He turned upon me with the remark, "I am not called to the ministry." And I opened my Bible and read from Acts 8: "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." "Ah, yes," he said, "those were the apostles." I said, "Will you read the first verse of that chapter?"

And he read, "And they were all scattered abroad except the apostles."

*Verse 23.* The genuine grace of God is a thing that can be seen. Discout every work of grace that does not have visible results. If people professing it are not cleaner and kinder and better-behaved, then it is not a work of God's grace at all. Said Rowland Hill: "If you are a Christian your very dog and cat will know it."

The term "Christian" came slowly into general use. Paul never uses it, nor does John nor James. It only occurs three times in the whole New Testament: once in this passage, once in the mouth of Agrippa, and once in the First Epistle of Peter.

### Before the Class.

*Introduction.* Last week we considered how the Lord showed Peter that salvation was not to be offered to the Jews alone, but to all men, and how Peter was the means of converting Cornelius. Today we study how the work of converting the Gentiles progressed.

As this lesson covers many important points it will be well to treat each part by itself in the class and make the application as you go along. The wise teacher will select the few truths particularly applicable to the members of her class, and place especial stress upon those truths.

1. Review the facts connected with the martyrdom of Stephen. See Lesson 8, first quarter of this year. Starting with Jerusalem point out on the map Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch, explaining how the persecution following the death of Stephen resulted in the Gospel being preached through a territory hundreds of miles in extent. Verse 19.

*Lesson.* From those things which seem to retard the progress of his kingdom God frequently brings forth great blessings. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." In Christian work let us not be discouraged by difficulties and obstacles.

2. At Antioch Jesus was preached to the Greeks; that is, to the Gentiles. The Lord blessed this preaching, and many were saved.

*Lesson.* We should not let our feelings or prejudices keep us from offering the Gospel to any class of mankind. The word, faithfully presented, will result in many turning to the Lord.

3. When the Church at Jerusalem heard of what had been done it sent helpers to the new converts at Antioch.

*Lesson.* Those who have received the truth should not be selfish, but should share it with others. Some say, "I do not believe in foreign missions." Others say, "I am not interested in home missions." Many such persons excuse themselves by saying, "We have enough to do in our own church." He who has the spirit of Christ will encourage and, as far as possible, help all efforts put forth in his name.

4. Barnabas (see Lesson for February 7, 1897) was glad when he saw what God had done, and did what he could to encourage the new converts.

*Lesson.* Christians should rejoice when they see evidences of God's work in the lives of others, and should embrace every opportunity to encourage new converts. As I write there lies before me a letter from a man seeking the truth. He says that the coldness and indifference of the Christians of a certain church helped to keep him from making a profession of faith in Christ. A woman whose husband had been a drunkard, instead of encouraging him when he told her that he had been converted, said to him, bitterly: "Converted? You ought to be in Penitentiary." I once heard a boy who professed to be a Christian order another boy a little younger than himself to keep away from the church. Why? Because he had a contagious disease, you reply. No, no; but because his jacket was ragged. Are there any such in this class? If so, they have not the spirit of Christ as manifested by Barnabas.

5. Look at the character of Barnabas, and you will understand why he acted as he did toward the new converts. He was,

1. A good man.
2. Full of the Holy Spirit.
3. Full of faith.

If you desire to be truly good and to have genuine faith seek for the filling of the Holy Spirit. You will not be the Christian that you should be until you open your heart to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

6. As we shall have much to do with Saul in two weeks we need only refer to the fact that he now leaves his retirement and helps in the revival at Antioch.

7. And they were called Christians. Christians! What does this mean? A term to distinguish believers in Christ from Jews and Gentiles. Yes; correct in part. It really meant that these persons belonged to Christ. Now take your pads and pencils. Write "Christian." Now write the word thus: "Christ-ian." What do these words mean? "Christ" is the name of our Saviour, "ian" is a suffix used to signify "belonging to." Now we have the meaning of the word. A Christian is one who belongs to Christ, one who has accepted Christ as his Saviour, Lord, and Master, and has given himself to him. Ask the following questions, the answer to each of which is: "Not necessarily."

Is a baptized person a Christian?

Is a church member a Christian?

Is one who intellectually believes about Christ a Christian?

When these questions are answered have each pupil write on his pad:

Am I a Christian?

If not, why not?

### The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw a rough map of the eastern end of the Mediterranean, including Palestine, Syria, Cyprus, Jerusalem, Damascus, Antioch, Tarsus, etc., and show the extent of the Christianity of the period. Show the difference between "Grecians" and "Greeks." . . . The facts of the lesson . . . The persons of the lesson, and traits displayed by each: (1) "They which were scattered;" (2) Barnabas; (3) Saul; (4) Agabus. . . The spirit of the early Christianity. . . The church at Antioch; its traits, and lessons from it. . . The name "Christian:" (1) Its history; (2) Its meaning. . . What kind of people does this lesson suggest that we should be?

### OPTIONAL HYMNS.

More love to thee, O Christ.  
He leadeth me! O blessed thought.  
I love to tell the story.  
We've listed in a holy war.  
Work, for the night is coming.

Come, every soul by sin oppressed.  
Jesus Christ is passing by.  
Christians, lo! the fields are whit'ning.  
Soon may the last glad song arise.  
In from the highways.

### References.

FREEMAN. (EASTER LESSON.) Ver. 25: Enemies put under the feet, 869.

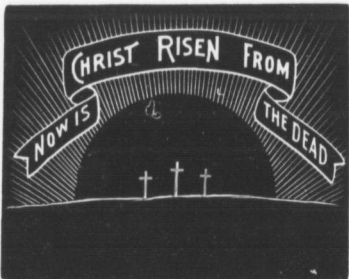
### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Again the lesson is repeated which we had last week, that the Gospel is for all the world, for "every one that believeth." It shows us, too, that the grace of God can overcome prejudice and make us ready to rejoice in the work of the Lord everywhere, whether it is done according to our way of thinking or not. At first these brethren in Jerusalem were inclined to find fault with Peter for being so friendly with Gentiles and taking them into the fellowship of the saints. But when he told them how he had been taught in that strange vision of the sheet let down from heaven, and when he said with all the eloquence of conviction, "What was I that I could withstand God?" they showed that they were not so zealous for their own opinion as they were for the advancement of Christ's kingdom. That is always a proof of genuine love and faith. If we find ourselves so set in our own way of thinking that we cannot listen to anyone who differs from us, or if we cannot concede that anyone can be a Christian who has not been brought up just as we have been, or does not express his belief just as we express ours, it is a good thing to stop and consider whether it is really the kingdom of Christ

we are zealous for, or our own ideas of what that kingdom is. These disciples truly had received the Holy Ghost, and one of the fruits of the Spirit is love, not intolerance or narrowness. Barnabas was a good man and "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," and when he saw "the grace of God" in Antioch he was glad. How much better it is to see the grace of God in good people who do not think exactly as we do than to see only the things in which we differ! Barnabas was a wise man as well as good. He knew these people needed in-

struction, and he knew that Saul, with his keen and educated mind, was better able than himself to impart this, so he went to Tarsus and brought him to Antioch. It was Barnabas who introduced Saul to the disciples after his conversion, when they were doubtful about receiving him. Some of the best work done in this world is done by the mothers, teachers, and preachers, who bring out into the service of God those who can carry it on better than they could themselves. What an inspiration is this for the teacher of a Sunday school class!

#### Blackboards.



The second of these illustrations is given on account of Easter Sunday, and may be used if thought best in addition to the first.

#### LESSON IV. PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON. [April 25.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Psalm 34. 7.

##### AUTHORIZED VERSION.

**Acts 12. 5-17.** [*Commit to memory verses 7-9.*]  
[Read the whole chapter.]

5 Pe'ter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Her'od would have brought him forth, the same night Pe'ter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Pe'ter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him: and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11 And when Pe'ter was come to himself, he said,

##### REVISED VERSION.

5 Pe'ter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him. And when Her'od was about to bring him forth, the same night Pe'ter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: 7 and guards before the door kept the prison. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell: and he smote Pe'ter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. 8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed; and he wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. 10 And when they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the 11 angel departed from him. And when Pe'ter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a truth.

Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Her'od, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Ma'ry the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

13 And as Pe'ter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rho'da.

14 And when she knew Pe'ter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Pe'ter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

16 But Pe'ter continued knocking: and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go show these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

that the Lord hath sent forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Her'od, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Ma'ry the mother of John whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered

13 together and were praying. And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a maid came to

14 answer, named Rho'da. And when she knew Pe'ter's voice, she opened not the gate for joy,

15 but ran in, and told that Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad.

16 But she confidently affirmed that it was even so. And they said, It is his angel. But Pe'ter

17 continued knocking: and when they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed. But he, beckoning

unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of the prison. And he said, Tell these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went to another place.

**Time.**—In the spring of A. D. 44. **Place.**—Jerusalem.

#### Home Readings.

*M.* Peter Delivered from Prison. Acts 12. 1-10.

*Tu.* Peter Delivered from Prison. Acts 12. 11-19.

*W.* God's power to save. Psalm 33. 10-22.

*Th.* The Lord's angel. Psalm 34. 1-10.

*F.* Refuge of the godly. Psalm 91.

*S.* Able to deliver. Dan. 6. 15-23.

*S.* Helping by prayer. 2 Cor. 1. 1-11.

#### Lesson Hymns.

No. 52, New Canadian Hymnal.

The Lord's our Rock, in Him we hide.

No. 51, New Canadian Hymnal.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord.

No. 58, New Canadian Hymnal.

Thou my everlasting portion.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. **The Prisoner**, v. 5, 6.

Why was Peter imprisoned?

What appeal was made on his behalf?

What encouragement to prayer had the church? Matt. 18. 19.

What strict measures were taken to secure the prisoner?

2. **The Angel**, v. 7-9.

What answer to prayer did God send?

What three commands did Peter receive?

Why were not the soldiers aroused?

What was Peter's first thought about his deliverance?

How did they get out of the prison?

What was Peter's later conclusion?

How does God care for his people? GOLDEN TEXT.

3. **The Disciples**, v. 12-17.

Where were the disciples, and how engaged?

How was Peter's knock at first answered?

What did the disciples say of Rhoda's report?

Why were they surprised at Peter's appearance?

What promise was fulfilled in his release? Isa. 65. 24.

What did Peter tell the company?

What command did he give?

#### Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Duty often leads to danger. The disciple may find peril where his Lord found death.

2. Prayer is a power that the Christian can always employ.

3. Faith sees God's hand in every providence which befalls us.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **The Prisoner**, v. 5, 6.

What encouragement had the church to pray? Matt. 18. 19.

How was Peter guarded while the church prayed?

2. **The Angel**, v. 7-11.

What visitor came to Peter?

What did he do and say?

What further did he tell Peter to do?

What did Peter think of all this?

How did they get out of prison?

Where did the angel leave Peter?

To what conclusion did Peter then come?

What truth concerning God's care does this illustrate? **GOLDEN TEXT.**

**3. The Disciples, v. 12-17.**

- To whose house did Peter go?  
 Who came to the door when he knocked?  
 What did she do? Why?  
 What did the disciples think?  
 When they saw Peter how did they feel?  
 What did he tell them?  
 What did he bid them?  
 What "James" was this? Matt. 10. 3.

**Practical Teachings.**

- Where in this lesson are we shown—  
 1. The strength of prejudice?  
 2. The value of united prayer?  
 3. The power of God?

**QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.**

- Who was appointed to rule over Judea?  
 Was this the Herod who killed the babies? **No;**  
**it was his grandson.**  
 Whom did he put to death?  
 Whose brother was this?  
 Why did this please the Jews?  
 What did Herod think he would do next?  
 Why did he feel sure that Peter could not escape from prison?  
 What did he forget? **GOLDEN TEXT.**  
 What were Peter's friends doing?  
 At whose house did they meet?  
 How did Peter sleep in his prison?  
 What happened in the night?

- Where did Peter go?  
 What did his friends think when they saw him?  
 Who did he say delivered him?

**Remember—**

- God did not love Peter more than James.  
 God cares as much for a child as for an apostle.  
 God hears every true prayer offered to him.

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

(For the entire school.)

- I. Whom did King Herod intend to slay? **The apostle Peter.**
2. What did the church do for Peter in prison?  
**They prayed without ceasing.**
3. How did God answer their prayers? **By sending an angel.**
4. What did the angel do for Peter? **He set him free from prison.**
5. What does the angel of the Lord? **GOLDEN TEXT: "The angel," etc.**

**OUR CHURCH CATECHISM.**

24. How must we then esteem the Scriptures? **As the true word of God, the sure and sufficient rule of faith and practice.**
25. If after prayerful and patient study and in inquiry we still find difficulties in the Bible, how must we deal with them? **We cannot expect to know all things while we live in this world, nor fully to understand all that has been made known.**

**THE LESSON OUTLINE.**

**Two Contrasted Characters.**

**I. THE HERODIAN CHARACTER.**

1. **Hated toward Christ.** *To vex certain of the church.* v. 1.  
 Herod will seek....young child. Matt. 2. 13-16.  
 The kings of the earth. Psalm 2. 2.
2. **Cruelty.** *Killed James....with the sword.* v. 2.  
 King sent....beheaded him. Mark 6. 25-27.  
 Shall drink....of my cup. Matt. 20. 23.
3. **Desire for Popularity.** *Saw it pleased the Jews.* v. 3.  
 Do I....please men? Gal. 1. 10.  
 Friendship of the world. James 4. 4.
4. **Formal Religion.** *Intending after Easter.* v. 4.  
 With their lips honor. Isa. 29. 13, 14.  
 To obey is....better. 1 Sam. 15. 22.

**II. CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.**

1. **Patience.** *Peter....kept in prison.* v. 5.  
 Trial of your faith. 1 Peter 1. 7.  
 Think it not strange. 1 Peter 4. 12, 13.
2. **Prayer.** *Was made without ceasing.* v. 5.  
 In the day of trouble. Psalm 50. 15.  
 Remember....in bonds. Heb. 13. 3.
3. **Peace.** *Peter was sleeping.* v. 6.  
 Keep him in perfect peace. Isa. 26. 3.  
 Peace I leave with you. John 14. 27.
4. **Faith.** *Now I know....that the Lord.* v. 11.  
 The eye of the Lord. Psalm 33. 18, 19.  
 In six troubles. Job 5. 19.
5. **Fellowship.** *The house of Mary.* v. 12.  
 Spake often one to another. Mal. 3. 16, 17.  
 Fellowship one with another. 1 John 1. 7.

**EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.**

While Paul and Barnabas and the godly men from Jerusalem continued in their labors among the mixed congregation from Antioch visitors came from Jerusalem, men inspired by the Spirit of God, one of whom made a prophecy which produced a profound impression upon the Christians, and seems to have led to a policy which was adopted at least by Paul through the rest of his public life. The

prophecy was that there should be a great famine "throughout all the world," and the détermination of the disciples was to make up a fund for the relief of the poorer Christians who lived in Jerusalem. The famine came in the days of Claudius Caesar, and the relief was sent by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. It was customary for Hebrews in all parts of the earth to make offerings annually for the poor Hebrews of Jerusalem. They were supposed to earn certain credit at the hands of God by so doing, and this national habit doubtless influenced many. In later years Paul collected largely from Gentile churches for the benefit of the Jerusalem church. Sometimes he did so even when he was not sure how the gifts would be received. Rom. 15. 30, 31. Agabus who made the prophecy, afterward (Acts 21. 10) foretold Paul's arrest in Jerusalem. We have several instances recorded which occurred "about that time," in those days, and we cannot tell which came first, nor is it of importance, but between our last lesson and this comes the record of the arrest and execution of James the son of Zebedee by Herod Agrippa I, who was an intense narrow-minded Jew in his feelings. It is a singular suggestion of how little we know concerning the early Church that so little is known of James. He is not a person that we, with our limited knowledge of the Church, would suppose to stand foremost or to be arrested. Herod's next movement was to arrest Peter also. This was done at the passover time, and Peter's arrest must have reminded him forcibly of the crucifixion of his Lord. He was put in prison and committed to the care of four quaternions, "four bands of four soldiers each, who were on guard in succession through the night, one quaternion [that is, four soldiers] for each watch."—*Axford*. Herod's purpose was after the passover, or, as our Authorized Version has it, "Easter," to execute him.

**Verse 5. Peter therefore was kept in prison.** When Pilate superintended the trial and execution of Jesus, the Jewish authorities were forced to appeal to him lest the holy character of the passover day should be lessened by his public death; but Herod Agrippa, with his full sympathy with the Jewish feelings about the Mosaic law, took care that the trial and execution of Peter should be postponed till after the feast. **Prayer was made without ceasing.** The first chapters of Acts show with singular emphasis how valuable to the Church was the life of Peter.

**6. When Herod would have brought him forth.** Better, "was about to bring him forth." Simultaneously there were several scenes of singular interest. All about was the great city which confidently expected the execution of the apostle the next morning, asleep till then; in the house of Mary, the mother of Mark, was the little band of Christians praying with an intensity and perseverance that took no denial, through all the silent night; in his palace lay the king at ease in mind, for his conscience was hardened; in a cell lay the servant of Jesus Christ, bound with chains to two soldiers, and shut in by iron gates, which were watched by the other two members of the quaternion; but he, too, was at his ease in his sleep, for he was watched over by God himself, and conscience was at ease, though death might knock at his door before daylight.

**7. The angel . . . a light.** They flashed together upon his vision as he was awakened by the stroke on his side. **His chains fell off from his hands.** See note on verse 6. How this was done without awakening the soldiers we cannot say.

**8. Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals.** Fasten tightly the girdle about thy tunic or inner clothing, and buckle the sandals on your

feet. Socks were not then used. **Cast thy garment about thee.** Thy outer garment.

**9. He wist not.** An old word for "knew not."

**10. The first and the second ward.** The first and second guard, which may mean either the two remaining soldiers of the quaternion, standing each in his place, or the place where each stood. **One street.** The Greek indicates a narrow street, what we would call a lane. **Forthwith.** Straightway, immediately. There would seem to have been a sort of infectious rapidity of movement in every action wherein Peter was concerned. The gospel of Mark, which is supposed to have been dictated by Peter, is full to the brim of such words as "straightway," "immediately," "forthwith." Here Peter rises up quickly and the angel departs forthwith.

**11. Of a surety.** Better, "Of a truth." **The Lord hath sent his angel.** He had had various angelic manifestations before now and knew them "of a truth." In the words of the Anglican Prayer Book, "Grant that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succor and defend us on earth."

**12. When he had considered.** Better, "When he perceived." That is, when he recognized the truth of the deliverance and knew it "of a surety." **Mary, the mother of John,** was an aunt of Barnabas. Col. 4. 10. Paul and Barnabas may now have been in her house for all we know; indeed, one would expect them to be there. They took Mark with them to Antioch. **Many were gathered together praying.** The early meetings of the Church were as a rule held at night, and this for many reasons of safety and convenience.

**13. The door of the gate** was probably such a door as we find now often in connection with

stable yards. A door for a man to enter, cut into and hinged upon a larger door or one side of a gateway.

**A damsel came to hearken.** A maid came to listen. The knock at the door at that hour of the night undoubtedly carried terror with it, and a girl ran, as it may have been her special duty to do, to find out who and how many were there, and what they wanted.

**14. She knew Peter's voice.** The eye carries more things to the memory than the ear, but it is doubtful whether the things remembered by sight will remain as long as those remembered by hearing. It is the foot-step, the cough, the voice, the very rustle of the clothing of the friend beloved that we first recall, before his form is in view, or, if in view, is recognized. **She opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in and told.** This is a delicious bit of nature. The worst and silliest possible thing to do, but the thing almost anyone would have done under such circumstances.

**15. Thou art mad.** They were as consistent as many Christians now are. They asked God with faith, as they believed, certainly with earnestness, for they stayed up all night to ask him, to liberate Peter; but when a woman came and told them that God had answered their prayer, they shouted, "You are crazy." But the girl was confident, and her dogged persistence led them to believe that Peter's voice was outside the gate; but they couldn't believe that it was Peter; so they rushed to another alternative and said, **It is his angel.** Just what they meant by this we cannot positively say; probably his guardian angel, for the Jews had very strong belief in the guardianship of angels; but as we cannot even know certainly what that

belief was we must allow this to pass without further explanation. In its effects on the imagination of those gathered at night it would be about the same as saying now, "It is his ghost."

**16. But Peter continued knocking.** He at all events had no doubt that he was Peter. **When they had opened the door.** We can easily imagine how they opened it, a "crack," an inch; slowly the gap widened a foot, and then **they saw him, and in utter amazement they flung the door wide and welcomed him.**

**17. Beckoning unto them with the hand.** Making a motion which calls for silence. **Go show these things unto James, and to the brethren.** This James was unquestionably the Lord's brother, who had charge of the church in Jerusalem. Gal. 1. 19; 2. 9, 12; Acts 15. 13; 21. 18. What "the Lord's brother" means, however, no one certainly knows. It seems certain that he was not one of the apostles, and if not then he was not, as some have believed, the son of Alphaeus, and our Lord's cousin, and called his brother by a common Hebrew idiom. It is probable that the "Lord's brethren" were either sons of Joseph and Mary, and therefore full brothers of our Lord, or else (and this theory seems the more acceptable) sons of Joseph by an earlier marriage, possibly by a levirate marriage. **Went into another place.** Nobody knows where; Roman Catholics say "to Rome," and teach that he now began his episcopate there. Probably he went to Antioch.

We cannot well leave this story before it ends. In the morning "there was no small stir among the soldiers; what had become of Peter?" The four guardsmen lost their lives because of his escape.

### CRITICAL NOTES.

**Verse 5. Peter therefore was kept in prison.** The persecution by Herod was contemporaneous with the sending of help by the church at Antioch to the poor of the church in Judea. See chap. 11. 29. Herod Agrippa, who imprisoned Peter, is the nephew of Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist, and grand-son of Herod the Great, who murdered the innocents at Bethlehem. He courted the favor of the Jews and outwardly respected their religious usages. According to the Talmud it was deemed unlawful to defile their solemn feasts with executions; hence Peter was now kept in prison. Herod reckoned on offering him as a victim as soon as the passover feast was ended, and thereby added to the fame achieved by the murder of James. **But prayer was made.** The little church, sufficiently numerous to have required several places for meetings, the principal of which was at the home of Mary, antagonized Herod. They had but one weapon to use—prayer; he, the Roman army. Behind him was the Roman empire, but behind them was God.

It was to be a "pitched battle" for the life of the most important living man, excepting Saul. **Without ceasing.** Continuously, of course. Work by day was suspended; so also sleep at night. Brother Peter was in a Roman prison, and soon to be beheaded, as Brother James had been. There could be no rest until the issue was decided. But the prayer was more earnest than protracted. The same word (*ekteines*) is used of the prayer of Jesus in the garden. The limit of human power, linked to God in prayer, has never yet been reached. It never can be. The nonbelief in prayer is the impotence of the Church. **For him.** The famine foretold by Agabus (chap. 11, 28) may have been severe, the gifts brought by Saul and Barnabas may have been a Godsend, but the prayers of the church were for Peter—continuous, fervent, earnest, definite.

**6. The same night.** Before the day on which Peter was to be executed. Peter was sleeping, bound with chains, in a dungeon, the iron gate securely fastened and doubly guarded, the hostile



Jews anticipating the spectacle of his death, the schemer in the palace planning for the gratification of the people and gaining their favor; "and then the servant of Jesus Christ sleeping calmly under the shadow of God's wings; and, a little way off, the church keeping her solemn watch and pouring forth her intensest prayers through the silence of the night."—*The Pulpit Commentary*. **Two soldiers . . . two chains . . . the keepers.** If there were a human side only to the event, surely he was well enough guarded.

**7-9.** "The minuteness of the details are ample answer to the irrational drivell of the so-called rationalists, who endeavor to explain the transaction by natural means."—*Whedon*.

**10. When they were past the first and second ward.** "Ward" and "guard" are terms meaning the same thing. Peter passed first the two men to whom he had been bound, then the two who guarded the door of the prison. **His.** The possessive of the Anglo-Saxon and early English neuter personal pronoun. The form "its" is found in the Bible only once. Lev. 25. 5. **The angel departed.** As soon as he was able to take care of himself. Angels help only in so far as help is needed.

**11. When Peter had come to himself.** The events which had just passed were too much for him. Chains falling off, gates opening, an angel guiding—all this caused him to lose himself. It must have all ended and time be given for him, being alone, to be able to answer to himself, "Where am I?" His new self is a man delivered from his enemies by the hand of the Almighty.

**12. When he had considered.** "Considering a little."—*Rotherham*. He put this and that together. He need not run from danger. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." He had never been in a safer place in all his life. He decides to do what more people would do if there were more Herods to whet their appetite—he goes to prayer meeting. **Mary the mother of John.** She was the sister of Barnabas. See Col. 4. 10. This Mark was the author of the second gospel. Compare verse 25; also chap. 13. 5, whom Peter calls his spiritual son. 1 Peter 5. 13. As we nowhere read of Mary's husband, it is probable that she was a widow whose means were sufficient to enable her to offer her house as a place for prayer.

**13. A damsel . . . named Rhoda.** The gate porter was usually a maiden. Her prompt and joyful recognition signifies that she too was a disciple and permitted to participate, on a plane of social equality, in the joy of the occasion. "Rhoda" is the Greek name for rose. The Jews frequently gave to their female children the names of flowers, as Susannah, lily; Esther, myrtle. The mention of her name marks the minuteness of the story, the particulars of which Luke may have derived

from Mark himself. He may have been at home at this time.

**14. When she knew Peter's voice.** On a previous occasion, Matt. 26. 73, as humiliating as this was glorious, he had been recognized by his speech. Peter's voice was doubtless well known to all the prayer-meeting goers of Jerusalem. **She opened not the gate for gladness.** How perfectly natural the conduct of the maid, and how equally true to nature the picture of the scene by the Gospel narrator. Rhoda's intense delight at Peter's release causes her to forget that, as he stands outside knocking, her neglect to open puts him in extreme jeopardy.

**15. Thou art mad.** The intense strain under which the disciples had been, anxious for the safety of Peter, but knowing not how soon the same fate might befall any of them, would be sufficient to unbalance some minds, but we are not to suppose that the praying company thought of this. "You are crazy" is a natural exclamation when one laboring under a greater or less degree of excitement tells us what is too hard for us to realize. **It is his angel.** Rhoda's rational insistence that it was Peter changes their minds concerning the lucidity of her mind, and they now say as much as, "You are mistaken, Rhoda." They weaken. But they as yet have no conception that it is Peter. If they had they would have spent no time parleying. In accordance with the common Jewish belief that each individual had his ministering angel the company by this time may really have thought at least that a messenger of some sort was at hand to announce his death.

**16. Peter continued knocking.** There was no time to waste. Although fresh from the marvelous escape Peter would not presume unnecessarily upon the providence of God. Besides, he doubtless was as desirous of seeing them as they were that he might escape the schemer. **They were astonished.** Shall we say that they were astonished that their prayers should have been answered? Not that. They were rather astonished at the manner of the answer and the suddenness with which they came to know about it. The details of sudden deliverances must always be a surprise. We are unable to comprehend the possibilities wrapped up in the answers to prayer. We are unable to conceive the power of souls through whom God can work, and with whom he can act. "Tell me what God is, and I will tell you the possibilities of a man with his arm in the arm of Christ and his face toward the face of God."—*Dr. J. P. D. John*.

"O, what are heroes, prophets, men,  
But pipes through which the breath of God doth  
blow  
A momentary music."

**17. Beckoning.** Literally, having shaken.

downward." A sign that they should be still, not only that he might speak to them, but that they should not betray his presence to the enemy. **Go show these things unto James.** This was the brother of Jesus, and at the time pastor of the church at Jerusalem. Peter could not venture to take time to communicate with more than one company of the disciples. He must hence. He departed and went into another place. Whether Luke knew to what place, whether in the city or elsewhere, is unknown. A few years later, on the occasion of an ecclesiastical conference, we find him at Jerusalem, but never do we meet him any more in the history of the Church. Some think that he went later in life to Rome and there met his death, but this is only a matter of surmise. Peter and Paul vanish from sight. They are glorified, not in the hour of their death, but in the marvel of their lives.

### Thoughts for Young People. God's People in Trial.

1. *God uses the hostility of wicked men for the good of his chosen ones.* To all evil forces he says, "Thus far, and no farther;" and the apparent temporary triumph of evil always hastens the ultimate triumph of the right. Some of God's children are led through trial in order to manifest the support of his grace. Some are delivered from trial by a speedy call home to heaven. All are led by trial to more earnest and unceasing prayer to him.

2. *God never forgets his servants in their tribulation.* He gives victory over trial in the peace of soul Christian sufferers enjoy. He sends angels to minister to his tried people. He opens a path for his people through trial by his almighty power. He answers prayer in trial, sometimes to the surprise of those who have offered it.

3. *"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."* We may well believe that Herod's sword had hardly finished beheading James before Jesus crowned his martyred apostle in glory. The persecutions Peter suffered add to his everlasting delight. Not one of those unnamed "certain of the church" who were scourged—not one of the little band that met at Mary's and agonized in prayer—but was so benefited and spiritually unbuilded by these physical and mental trials of faith as to achieve larger usefulness in time and richer rewards in eternity. Trial, humbly and faithfully undergone, always enriches a Christian.

### Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The occurrence of the word "Easter" in the Authorized Version has given rise to much comment. Dr. Clarke says, "Easter was not celebrated by early Christians, neither did it transpire exactly

at the date of the passover." "Eostre" is the name of an old goddess of ancient Britain. The feast in her honor was celebrated about the same time as our Easter, and the Christian festival in time displaced the old idolatrous one, as often occurred in other instances with heathen festivals of innocent nature.

According to Roman custom Peter as a prisoner would be bound with one chain to the keeper, the right hand of the criminal chained to the left hand of the guard; but in extreme cases, where the person arrested was likely to be violent, or it was specially necessary to prevent his escape, it was usual to bind him with two chains, each hand being chained to a keeper, right and left. Peter was thus guarded against escape by the fullest provision known to the law, and placed in the prison with the added precaution of soldiers on guard, two at the door of the prison, and two inside the prison, making four on duty at a time, and these relieved by four others, these by four others, and these by still four others, till the whole four quarternions—sixteen—had served, when they took turns again, so that there were always four fresh unwearied guardsmen on duty at a time to make certain his confinement. Besides, Jerusalem was surrounded with three walls, and this prison is supposed to have been in one of the towers of the innermost wall and the gate spoken of to be the iron gate at the entrance to this tower.

### By Way of Illustration.

*Prayer and deliverance.* Israel in exile comes into the peril of utter destruction by the plots and schemes of wicked men. The privilege of this murder was purchased by more than ten million dollars paid into the king's treasury, to be recompensed to the murderers by all the gold and silver of the murdered. An army could be of no use to save the people. There were one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, which could not be conquered. But Esther had access to the secret places of greater power. She prayed, and all her people. Not only was the nation saved, but brought out of degradation and peril into great honor and power.  
—Bishop Warren.

"The angel departed from him." It is needful that we should, sooner or later, be left to "work out our own salvation." The child would scarce learn to walk if the mother never withdrew her hand and left it to walk alone, and yet not entirely alone, for she is always near to reach out her strong hand if there is danger of falling. Thus, also, God deals with us, that we may know and learn to quit ourselves like men.—*Bible Studies.*

*Deliverance.* The history of God's people is one oft-repeated story of deliverance. There was a day years ago when the Sultan of Turkey declared that every Christian missionary would be banished on a certain day. The Christians met in earnest prayer,

and one said, "The great Sultan of the universe can change all this." He did. The Sultan of Turkey died the very day he had named for the expulsion of the missionaries, and they were allowed to remain.

God has not always seen fit to release his children from prison. He allowed his well-beloved Son to be imprisoned and crucified. Paul passed his last days in prison. Bunyan wrote his immortal work when confined in a cell. The holy Rutherford, a prisoner, rose to such spiritual heights that "his thought of Jesus made every stone in his cell glow." What a man is and does in prison is of far more consequence than the way he happens to get out, or whether indeed he gets out at all.—H. A. Bridgman.

### Before the Class.

*Material.* Have pads and pencils distributed at the beginning of the study time.

*Introduction.* To-day's lesson may be remembered by keeping in mind the alliterative words: Persecution, Prison, Prayer, Power, Praise, Proclamation. Have each pupil put a large P on his pad, and as the different points of the lesson are brought out let him write the appropriate word, so that his pad at the close of the lesson will look somewhat like this

**P**ERSECUTION  
PRISON  
PRAYER  
POWER  
PRAISE  
PROCLAMATION

*Persecution.* Explain briefly why Peter was put into prison. Herod Agrippa I persecuted the Church because he wished to gain the good will of the Jews, as his income of two million dollars a year depended on his having their favor. So, after he had murdered James, he put Peter into prison. Impress and illustrate the fact that persecution from the world is no proof that God has forgotten or forsaken his followers.

*Prison.* Have the pupils draw on their pads a diagram of the prison, in the inner room of which Peter was sleeping between two guards. Show from the lesson text how securely Peter was guarded, and explain that the probable reason for the extra precautions was the fact that Peter had escaped from prison about fourteen years before this. See Acts 5, 18, 19. Show why Peter was able to sleep in prison. Illustrate by Acts 16, 25.

*Prayer.* The members of the Church probably gathered in different places, the central one of which was the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Keep this point as the one from which shall be drawn the application of the lesson.

*Note.* The teacher should have in mind a well-defined mental picture—clear, and not confused with

too many details—of what was occurring outside while the Christians were praying. From the Scripture narrative write down the different points; then see how you can repeat those points. As you do so try to see the events as they took place. When teaching try to reproduce your mental picture in the minds of your pupils. Then let two members of the class, in their own language, tell you what they see.

*Praise.* Here we must draw a little on our imagination. As Peter tells his story the looks of astonishment give place to expressions of joy, which become so loud that Peter is obliged to beckon to his friends to be quiet.

*Proclamation.* Peter must be off. The Lord has delivered him from prison, but now he must use means for his safety, so he commands his rejoicing friends to go and make known the good news to others.

*Lesson.* Take every difficulty to the Lord in prayer. Instead of trying to teach a number of lessons from the remarkable occurrence, impress one. If the subject of prayer is the one chosen, it may be treated under two heads:

1. Prayer for ourselves. There is nothing connected with our lives about which we cannot and ought not to pray.

"Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged,  
Take it to the Lord in prayer."

2. Prayer for others. You have friends in the prison house of sin, or doubt, or despair, bound by chains of habit and guarded byimps of darkness. Do not give them up. Remember that Jesus is mighty to save. Take your friends to him in prayer. The Lord that delivered Peter is the Lord to-day. He will hear and help.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

Distinguish between: (1) Herod the Great; (2) Herod the tetrarch; (3) Herod the king (this Herod)... Distinguish between: (1) James, the brother of John, verse 2; (2) James, "the Lord's brother," verse 17... Contrast in this lesson—I. The spirit of Herod: (1) Hating the Gospel; (2) Seeking for popularity; (3) Self-confident... II. The spirit of Peter: (1) Submissive; (2) Peaceful; (3) Trustful; (4) Following divine direction; (5) Recognizing the divine hand... III. The spirit of the Church; (1) Helpless before worldly power; (2) Mighty in prayer; (3) Sympathizing, united, verse 12; (4) Surprised at the success of its own prayers... IV. The aspects of God in this lesson: (1) He notices the wrath of men; (2) He knows where his disciples are; (3) He hears prayer; (4) He has almighty agencies in behalf of his cause; (5) He can protect his people... The iron gate is an emblem of obstacles which are invisibly removed from the path of God's servants.

## OPTIONAL HYMNS.

How firm a foundation.  
Saviour, let me still abide.  
My Jesus, as thou wilt.  
All the way my Saviour leads me.  
From every stormy wind that blows.

Christians, lift your voices.  
Fear not, O troubled soul.  
Come, let us use the grace divine.  
I am trusting thee.  
All the way the Saviour leads me.

## References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 6: The military night watch.  
830; prisoners chained, 831. Ver. 8: Sandal,  
832. Ver. 13: Knocker; street door, 833. Ver.  
17: Beckoning, 854.

## Heart Talks on the Lesson.

This is a wonderful lesson for the establishment of faith. Herod was strong; the hand stretched forth to vex the church looked as if it might crush everything in its iron grip. It had beheaded one of the chief disciples. It had seized Peter and shut him up in prison with four quarternions of soldiers to make sure that he could not escape. Circumstances looked very dark for the little church and its imprisoned leader.

How Peter had grown in faith and trust since the day he tried to walk on the waves to Jesus, and the day when he denied that he knew him!

Do not be discouraged over your failures. You may "begin to sink" to-day, but faith will grow until you, too, if the test should come, will be able to lie down bound with chains between two soldiers, and sleep just as calmly as if you did not expect to die at Herod's hands the next morning.

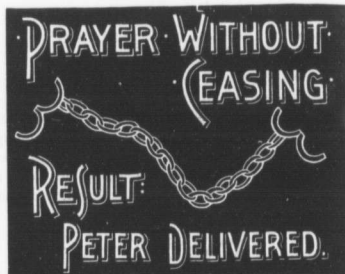
How it helps us to look into that prison and see Peter quietly sleeping! He had no idea that the Lord's angel was coming to deliver him, but he was sure everything would come right because he was doing God's work, and was in God's hands, not Herod's, even though Herod might take off his head.

We do not see the angel who loosens our chains, nor hear the voice which says "Follow me," but the deliverance is just as real and very often just as remarkable for the Lord's people now.

It helps us, too, to look in upon that company who were praying for him, Mary, John, Mark, Rhoda, and others whose names we do not know, one after another speaking in low, earnest tones to God, making a special request—we know how precious such little prayer meetings are, where the people do not "make prayers," but truly ask for things they so long to receive. When two or three

ask in this way God hears. The angel was answering their prayers while they were speaking. But, just like us sometimes, they were so astonished when the answer came they thought there must be a mistake. How must the impertinence of our unbelief appear to God! He tells us to pray; he assures us that he hears; he says if we wait for him we shall never be disappointed. We do not show him the same confidence we show to our human friends, for we do believe what they tell us, but we doubt God. Herod, not God's people, was the disappointed and discomfited one. The word of God grew mightily, but the enemy of God died a miserable death. Greater is he that is for us than all that can be against us.

## Blackboard.



## Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

- A tomb in every garden, and a stone rolled to its door and Jesus laid therein, And we without sit desolate and lone, And cannot find a Saviour for our sin. But everywhere an Easter! see the day Fills the bright east with all its radiant hours, And from the tomb the stone is rolled away, And we with Jesus walk amid the flowers. —Phillips Brooks.
- The giving of alms does not impoverish; it empties the hand but fills the heart.—Starke.
- The angels bear with them, when they appear, the signs and livery of their purity and sincerity. —Quessel.
- All human righteousness disappears as in a deep sea, but that sea is the infinite love of God.—Harless.
- To believe is the secret act of the soul; to turn to the Lord is the visible course of a disciple's life. —Arnot.
- There are no quarternions of soldiers can keep the passage shut that is toward heaven.—Pool.

# PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

## Sunshine and Smiles.

WHAT the sunshine is to plant life, smiles from a truly loving heart are to child life. When a child troubles you very much, smile tenderly, and then, possibly with a little shake of the head, look reprovingly.

"Was she beautiful?" I said,  
"That so many hearts were led  
To her feet?"

"No, not beautiful, not wise,  
More than thousands whom we prize;  
But her smile  
Was like sunshine in a room,  
That before was filled with gloom  
All the while."

## Flowers of the Kingdom.

BY MABEL E. HOTCHKISS.

DEAR little rows of faces that look up into ours Sunday after Sunday! Did you ever stop to think of their influence upon you? Are you quite sure that you are as ready to be patient with the possessor of that small, elfish face, every feature of which betokens mischief, as you are with her classmate, a dainty little creature with, perhaps, a delicate color or a pretty manner that you acknowledge almost unwillingly to yourself is really a source of pleasure to you?

O the little influences that creep into our lives unawares and determine our thoughts and actions! How weakly we yield to them!

We speak the hasty word, or give the sharp rebuke, and little imagine the personal feeling that enters in. We learn to associate the little face that is not pleasing to us with mischief or stupidity, and forget that we are making a matter of taste of what ought to be a matter of love and sympathy.

Have you ever noticed in summer the flowers that grow very near the roadside. What soiled, dusty, dejected heads they hold up to the passer-by! You take a few of them away, perhaps, and carry them home to refresh them. How they revive and brighten! They almost speak their gratitude. You feel more than repaid.

Poor little wayside flowers of the kingdom of God, unprepossessing in appearance, sin-stained even as buds, it may be, by dust from the world's great roadway. May God teach us how to refresh them with the pure drops of Christ's love for his little ones!

## Plans for Easter.

BY MRS. WILBUR F. CRAFTS.

LET there be a sequence of song, exercises, and occupations to prepare the children for a realization of Easter. This may be done in supplemental lessons for at least a month before Easter Sunday.

*First lesson.* Make a beginning by planting in a box of earth in the presence of the children a handful of peas which have been soaked to insure their speedy germination. When the peas have been planted, cover them up, using a toy rake. As a part of the ceremony, teach the children to sing, or repeat, with appropriate motions, the following stanzas from *Finger Plays*, by Emilie Poulson:

"In my little garden bed, raked so nicely over,  
First the tiny seeds I sow, then with soft earth  
cover;  
Shining down, the great round sun shines upon it  
often;  
Little raindrops, pattering down, help the seeds to  
soften.

"Then the little plant awakes, down the roots go  
creeping.  
Up it lifts its little head, through the brown mold  
peeping;  
High and higher still it grows, thro' the summer  
hours,  
Till some happy day the buds open into flowers."

*Second lesson.* Children are taught to repeat, after observing the tiny green sprouts in the little garden planted the week before:

"God sends his bright spring sun  
To melt the ice and snow,  
To start the green leaf buds,  
And make the flowers grow."

Also they are told to repeat the song learned last Sabbath, "In my little garden bed," etc.

Let them then be shown how to hold their hands side by side, palms uppermost, to represent an open Bible, while they are taught: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit." Gen. 1. 11.

Children are given small squares of green paper, 4x4 inches, to fold leaves according to the direction of the teacher. [Fold the squares diagonally twice. Paper may be obtained through any dealer in kindergarten supplies at a cost of twenty cents per one hundred sheets.]

*Third lesson.*

"To the great brown house where the flowers dwell,

Came the rain, with its tap, tap, tap,  
And whispered, 'Violet, Snowdrop, Rose,  
Your pretty eyes you must now unclose  
From your long, long wintry nap,'  
Said the rain, with its tap, tap, tap.

"From the doors they peeped with a timid grace,  
Just to answer this tap, tap, tap;  
Miss Snowdrop courtesied a sweet good-day,  
They all came nodding their heads so gay.  
And they said, 'We've had our nap;  
Thank you, rain, for your tap, tap, tap.'"

When the children say, "tap, tap, tap," they should imitate the sound of the rain by tapping with their finger-tips very gently. With hands placed to represent the open Bible, they are taught the following Scripture texts: "Hath the rain a father?" Job 38. 28. "He [God] saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain." Job 37. 6.

The following song might now appropriately be taught:

"Raindrops, raindrops, gently falling from the sky,  
Tell me, tell me why you leave your home on high.  
'We come to make the grasses grow,  
We come to make the flowers blow,  
We come because He wills it so,  
Our Father in the heavens.  
We love to do his blessed will;  
We'll try to fail him never,  
We love his wishes to fulfill,  
Forever and forever.'"

(In *Little Pilgrim Songs*, p. 50.)

*Fourth lesson.* Cut pea blossoms, or artificial ones, have been fastened in the little garden, and it is explained to the children that it has been done to show what work the little plants will do if we only give them time. Children repeat after the teacher:

"I asked the little lovely flower  
Who gave her perfume sweet,  
And dressed her in her velvet coat  
So beautiful and neat.  
And she told me it was God  
Who clothed her with such care,  
And told her how to sweetly breathe  
Upon the evening air."

Bible verse:

"Lo, the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time of the singing of birds is come."

—Cant. 2. 11, 12.

Let the children be given squares of differently colored papers to fold as flowers. [Pack-

ages of assorted colors may be had of kindergarten dealers, or ordered through THE JOURNAL; 100 sheets, 4x4 inches, twenty-five cents.] Teachers must exercise their ingenuity in folding flower forms to represent tulips, daffodils, forget-me-nots, or get some kindergartner to show how it can be done. Let these flowers all be gathered. It may be prettily done by placing a large basket on the table in which the children can come and lay their flowers. During the week preceding Easter let the teachers meet and decorate the room with the green leaves and the flowers made by the children.

*Fifth lesson.* EASTER. Let a bunch of real lilies, or even one, be shown to the children. Let the teacher tell the story of a brown lily bulb placed in the earth, and how it was made to grow by God sending his sunshine and rain upon it. Tell the children how it is to-day a beautiful picture of those who in heaven wear white robes who were once laid away in the grave. Children are taught to repeat with hands placed to represent an open Bible: "It is sown a natural body," a sick body; "it is raised a spiritual body," a heavenly body, more beautiful than the lily. How do we know this? Has anyone ever seen one of these heavenly bodies? When Jesus died upon the cross his body was laid in the grave by loving friends, but on the third day he rose from the dead, and all glorious and beautiful he went back to his heavenly home. We call the day when he rose from the dead "Easter." It was the Sabbath day, and so every Sabbath day is a little Easter, but the great Easter comes once a year. It ought to make us very glad, for Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." John 14. 9. Our Easter is sure to come, because Jesus had his Easter. Teach the children to sing:

"Lilies, lilies, Easter calls,  
Rise to meet the dawning  
Of the blessed light that falls  
On the Easter morning.  
Ring your bells and tell the story,  
How he rose, the Lord of Glory."

(In *Little Pilgrim Songs*, p. 84.)

"Because I live, ye shall live also." Children repeat the verse with hands placed to represent the open Bible.

### The Primary Normal Class.

BY JULIA E. PECK.

WE primary teachers are growing strong in number, stronger still in the organized work of our primary unions (or normal classes), but the

source of our greatest strength lies in the fact that the importance of our calling is now generally recognized, and ways and means for promoting the best interests of the little ones and their teachers are continually sought by parents and Sunday school leaders.

Yet the more we primary teachers have, the more we want. These advantages given us by study and by the recognition of our claims (the substantial recognition which furnishes us both money and tools for our work) serve to open up still wider fields of action and show us possibilities yet untried.

We have individual needs which all the organized normal classes in the country will not supply, and it is to discuss a few of these that this paper is written. The experiences set forth have been gathered from more than one normal class, in more than one Province.

As a general thing, a primary normal class has hard work to live in a conservative old town, where for generations people have held to the idea that anybody can teach a primary class, that all good teachers must be reserved for older children, and are ignorant of the fact that the mischief done in a mismanaged primary class cannot be undone in a lifetime, and certainly cannot be undone by the teacher of the next higher grade.

Let a primary normal class once get a start in a place like this, however, and note how the primary teachers (poor, starved mortals) flock there; and herein lies their danger. They are carried away by every new doctrine. Here, possibly, some local Sunday school leader "sets them going," and then leaves them to work out their own salvation. To be sure they can study the lesson for each Sunday in their normal class—can they? Some one is appointed to lead the first meeting and "teach the lesson." This leader, perhaps a good deal in advance of the class, finds upon investigation that these teachers, now armed with notebooks and pencils, have been too busy to study the lesson before coming, but they propose to listen closely and get what they can write in their notebooks; this they consider will do away with the necessity of their regular Saturday night study, in which case they can go skating—or what not. We will suppose that this leader sees at a glance this state of things, and also that her hearers know nothing about methods or ways of working, and so, instead of the regular lesson for the next Sunday, gives them a talk on methods of primary instruction. Do they like it? Not a bit of it; they are keenly disappointed, and are

vexed at such a loss (?) of time, when they had expected to be told exactly what to say and how to say it.

In a class of this kind a misguided leader is liable to make this mistake: "My teachers are not ready yet for methods," so she thinks; "let them see what others are doing." On the second occasion of the meeting she will teach the "regular lesson," using a good deal of object material.

Now her hearers are quite carried away by these things. "We will have every one of them," they say, and proceed to buy all within reach. Most of them have never seen the inside of a kindergarten, and know nothing of any necessity or reason for the use of such material, but "it is pretty," they say, and then begin to use it indiscriminately.

If their supply could be limited by their purses less harm would be done; but, unfortunately, cheap, homemade material is all too easily obtained, and the result—from the extreme of second-rate, old-fashioned primary teaching (following in the ruts of their ancestors) they shift to the opposite extreme of "eye-teaching," as though the poor babies entrusted to their care had no other faculty than that of vision. There is not space here to speak of the eye-strain which must surely follow such instruction, or of much-needed Bible study set aside by the teacher for the manufacture of lesson material, which ought to be handled only by an expert, and handled even by her sparingly and with discretion.

To avoid this shifting to extremes in new methods the leader must first get her teachers to form habits of study and independent thinking, or they will make the serious mistake of borrowing verbatim every primary lesson they hear, and will catch at every bit of new material afloat, using both without discrimination.

In connection with a normal class of this kind it is the greatest possible help to have a Bible class for primary teachers, supplementing their regular normal class. This Bible class should include a circulating library of theological literature and literature bearing on the subjects of primary education and child study. It is a good plan to have our supplementary Bible class led frequently by one who is not a primary teacher. This gives us wholesome variety in our study, for we hear many lessons adapted to the child mind, and the danger is that we may ourselves forget that to be able successfully to adapt a lesson to little children's minds we must acquire something to adapt.

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. SECOND QUARTER.

### LESSON I. (April 4.)

#### PETER WORKING MIRACLES. Acts 9. 32-43.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."  
Acts 9. 34.

#### Primary Notes.

BY MARTHA VAN MARGER.



[Make a hand on the board and print "Take." Ask children to show their hands, to open them, to shut them, to clasp them, etc. Speak of the different ways of using them, and tell an illustrative story.] Janet had a present one day of a basket of beautiful peaches. When they were offered to her she took them and said, "Thank you!" then she began to give them away. Why did she do this? She loved peaches dearly, but she had learned that little hands must not only take but give, and it made her happier to give away her peaches than it would to have eaten them all.

This is a lesson about giving and taking, and we shall learn that this is what God loves to see his children do—first take, then give.

*A nature lesson.* Once a little seed fell into the ground, and mother Earth opened her kind arms, took it in, and kept it safe and warm all winter. Very early in the spring the farmer walked in his field one day. He saw a big, flat stone, and turned it over with his foot. It fell right over the little seed, and was like a great prison door! But no prison door can shut in life, and by and by the life in the little seed reached out and up, and the stone had to move and let the plant come out into the glad sunshine. Now let us see if you can answer some questions:

What was in the seed which made it grow? *Life.* From whom did it come? *From God.* Can we see the life in a plant? *No; we can only see what life does.* Of what is the life a part? *Of God.* What did life give to this little plant? *Power.*

This world is a big field, and the people in it are God's plants. Some are large and strong; some are little and weak. Where do they all get their life? *Yes, from God.* Every bit of life in your body, the life that moves your hands, that shines in your eyes, that speaks in your voice, all comes from God. [Sing, or have the class repeat softly in concert, "Little Gentle Breath," page 241, *Songs for Little Folks.*]

But the Bible teaches us about another kind of life which comes from God, too. It is the *life of the*

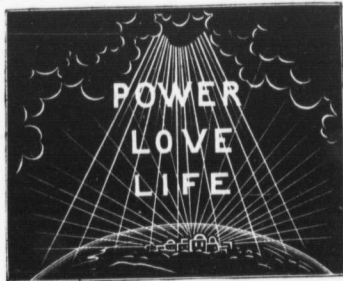
*Spirit.* [Recall the promise Jesus gave the disciples before he went away, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.] Which one of the apostles preached on the day of Pentecost? *Yes, Peter.* The new life of the Spirit filled his heart with love, and gave him such power that three thousand took Jesus for their master that day.

It was this same life and love which made Peter and the others who knew Jesus go about talking of his mighty power. This life and love sent Peter to Lydda one day to work for Jesus there. [Point out Lydda on the map, and tell, with detail enough to make it vivid, the story of Eneas.]

Did the cure of Eneas make the people believe in Peter? *It made them believe in Jesus and turn to him.* Why? See what the Golden Text says.

But while there was rejoicing at Lydda there was mourning at Joppa, a town about twelve miles from Lydda. [Show the blackboard and tell that in a little house there lived Dorcas, a good woman who had let the life of the Spirit come to live in her. She had life in her body, as we have, but she wanted the life in her spirit; so she asked God to send it down to her, and he did. Show the rays coming down, and tell that God gave Dorcas the life she wanted, and then he filled her heart with love, and then he gave her power to work for him. Show how the rays went out from her now, and tell that it was God's life, God's love, God's power, going out from Dorcas, just as they went out from Peter; only, instead of preaching and working miracles as Peter did, Dorcas made garments for the poor, and tell that God gives each one some kind of work to do for him. Tell why so many were mourning in Joppa now—because this loving woman had died. Explain how people came to her house, and tell how some one said, "Let us send for Peter. He has cured Eneas by the power of Jesus, and perhaps he can bring Dorcas back to life."]

Do you think Peter would go when they sent for him? *Yes, the love in his heart made him go quickly.* And then the power of Jesus helped him



bring Dorcas back to life again! How sad it would have been if Peter had not opened his heart



at Pentecost to let the life and love and power of God come into him!

May children have this life in the Spirit? O, yes. [Read from the Bible Acts 2. 39.] "The promise is unto you and to your children." and teach that the little heart, which has received the life of the Spirit, will be kind, loving, and ready to work for Jesus.

### Kindergarten Hints.

BY MARY J. CHISHOLM FOSTER.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. How Peter Helped. Luke 4. 38, 39; Acts 9. 32-36; Matt. 28. 18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." Acts 9. 34.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Acts 9; *Church in the House* (Arnott), chapter 47; *Peter the Apostle* (Taylor), chapter 18.

"Power into strengthless souls he speaks,  
And life into the dead."

### ATTENTION STORY.

Sometimes we have talked of Peter the fisherman, and it may be that the larger children here remember where he lived.

It was in a city commencing with a large C on the shore of a pretty blue sea, and the name of the sea begins with a large G. I wonder if any boy or girl can point to it on the map? We remember that it was Peter to whom Jesus had said, "Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs;" and so, after Jesus had gone to heaven, Peter was busy trying to obey his words, and like all those other men who loved Jesus, he, too, was helpful to everyone. He knew that Jesus always cared for people's bodies and tried to have them well and strong, and when he went about visiting the people and talking with them he tried to have them understand that Jesus loved them and helped them *yet*, even if he was not where they could see him with their eyes and feel the touch of his hand. One day Peter went away from home to a city named Lydda. It was a long way from his home, and not far from that city of Jerusalem and the beautiful temple we have talked about. I must be that while Peter was walking the long journey, or riding on a camel, perhaps, that he was thinking about those whom he loved, as fathers do now when away from home. There was a mother in the house and some little children, I think, because once, after Jesus had been away with Peter and James and John to a high mountain (transfiguration), they went to Peter's house, and Jesus drew a little child to him when he was telling a story about heaven to the men. Well, I am sure that Peter remembered some one else in his little home by the sea, and it was the grandma, because once she had been very sick with a fever, and Jesus had made her well, so she could rise up and help care for the family. This book tells us about it. [Read Luke 4. 38, 39.] By and by Peter reached Lydda, and there he found a sick man who had not walked for eight years, and had been in bed all that time. Peter called him by name, and told him that Jesus could make him well, and he would be able to get up. He believed it, and did rise up well.

Once Jesus said that all power is his. We will

read the verses here. [Read Acts 9. 32-36; Matt. 28. 18.]

Explain unusual words: "Throughout," "quarters," "saints," "palsy," "immediately."

### OUTLINE.

*Sunday.* Attention Story, Bible lesson, Golden Text, and conversation.

*Monday.* Tell the children of family life and love, and let them talk of the grandmas in the homes. Inspire them with reverence and love for their immediate ancestors, and dwell upon the beauty of smiling faces and gentle words in the homes.

*Tuesday.* Peter was sorry for the sick man, and talked to him as a friend. He wanted him to know that it is God who makes people well. The doctor may feel the pulse and may tell the mamma what medicine to give to any of the family who is sick; but God cares for us always, and he it is who makes us well and strong.

*Wednesday.* Once King David said, "He healeth all thy diseases." Psalm 103. 3. Kings and queens, and people who serve others and who make their own beds, all depend on God for care and for strength. The people at that time had beds that were like long, narrow mats, and they carried them under the arm. When this man was quite well again he could make his bed as Peter told him to do; that means he rolled it up, and walked away with it.

*Friday.* Talk of the beautiful Golden Text, and of some of the illustrations of power which Jesus had over everything and every person. It is so now, and his love and his power are for our good. Jesus not only told people to be good and to do good, but he showed them how to be and do good. He showed flowers to them, and talked of the flowers and seeds and fruits, and he gave food to the hungry as well as strength to the sick people.

**NATURE WORK.** Talk of the showers of this month—the gentle rain, and its uses. It is like the snow of the winter, the steam, and the vapor. All these are forms of water. Speak of the uses of water, and tell a nature story of the power of Jesus to quiet a storm when he was in a ship on the water. Matt. 8. 23-28.

**ART WORK.** Find some picture of rough water, a sea view, and show it to the children in comparison with a picture of calm water, with cattle standing in it, perhaps, and let the children talk of the contrasts.

**HAND WORK.** A picture of the city of Capernaum may be built in the sand table, and the shore of the Sea of Galilee may be outlined. Talk of fishermen and of fishing. The children can name different species, and tell some facts about them.

The TRANSITION CLASS may write the words of the Golden Text upon an oblong piece of paper, and bring it next Sunday.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** How dear is the grandmother in the home! Many beautiful and kind deeds her loving heart causes her to do for us. She rocks the baby, and shows pictures to the little children who can run about. She sits, and knits, and sings, and often tells stories which are beautiful to listening ears. What a long distance grandma has traveled on the heavenly pathway! If you ask her about it, she will tell you that all the way the One who has all power in heaven and on earth has watched her path and cared for her, giving her food and friends, and making her well when she was sick, and all the time of this journey she has been studying her guidebook—the wonderbook, which is God's word. Ask her about it.

**LESSON II. (April 11.)**  
**CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS. Acts**  
**10. 30-44.**

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10. 43.

**Primary Notes.**



Walter was very happy to hear that he might go fishing in the boat with his father and Uncle Will. Everything was new and wonderful to him. When they came, after trying several places, to the spot where they believed they could catch fish, they put out the anchor. "What is that for?" Walter asked. "That is to hold us steady," said his father. Boys and girls need something to hold them steady, as well as fishermen. What can they have for an anchor? Just what this lesson teaches that every one may have—the love of Jesus.

[This lesson story is one of intense interest, and we must avail ourselves of the interest and attention to press home upon every little heart the great truth that *God loves everybody*. To make the children understand why the Jews thought themselves the only people the Lord cared for, use the blackboard. A simple story may introduce the blackboard teaching.]

A farmer had a very large field. It was poor land, and only weeds and briars grew upon it. He wanted to cultivate it, and he thought he would begin with a small part of it. So he put a fence around that part and worked it carefully, mending by and by to take the wall down and take in more ground. This was what God did. He chose one family and nation, separated them from other people for a while, and then took the fence down between the Jews and Gentiles, as we find in this lesson. [This illustration, found in *Illustrative*

*Notes*, may be so developed as to give children a clear understanding of the division of the race into Jews and Gentiles.]

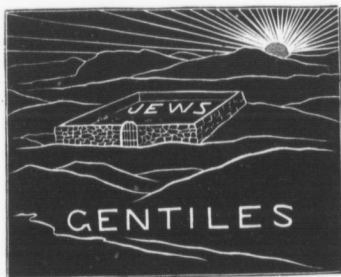
*Inside the fence.* The time has come now when God had taken down his fence. But the people inside did not know it. Who were inside? Yes, the Jews, and you know the apostles were Jews. The fence was taken down by the death of Christ. He gave his life a ransom for *all*, but the Jews did not yet understand how this could be. They were proud of being inside the fence. They believed themselves better than other people, and looked down upon all who were outside the fence. There are people now who think they are better than others. They think their family, their church, their friends, are different from others, and look down upon all who are not inside their little fence! God is not pleased to see this spirit in anyone.

*A picture lesson.* God taught Peter first that this fence was broken down. He showed him a picture in his sleep to teach him. [Show a picture of a flat-roofed house, and tell how Peter went on a roof like this in Joppa to pray, and while there God made him fall into a kind of sleep, and sent him the picture lesson. Tell of the great sheet and the living creatures in it, and explain why Peter thought he must not eat these creatures. Then tell what the voice from heaven said three times, and how Peter woke and wondered what it meant. Then the voice told him that some men were waiting for him, and he went down and found the messengers from Cornelius. Tell that when Peter knew that Gentiles, whom he had called common and unclean, were calling him to come and preach Jesus to them, he saw at once what his dream meant. God did not call these men common or unclean.]

*Outside the fence.* Why did Cornelius send for Peter? An angel sent by God told him to do so. Cornelius had not heard of Jesus, perhaps; but he was trying to please God, and God always sends help to those who do this. Cornelius was a Roman, one of the Gentiles outside the Jewish fence, and before Peter had this dream he would not have gone to his house. [Tell the story of his going, and trace the journey on the map to Caesarea, a beautiful city on the seacoast thirty miles from Joppa. Tell how Peter found a large room full of the friends of Cornelius, all Gentiles. Tell how he told them his dream, and how he preached Jesus to them, ending his sermon with the words of the Golden Text. Then tell how God sent the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles, just as he had sent the Spirit upon the Jews at Pentecost, and now Peter knew that God loved everybody alike.]

*The lesson for me.* How big is the fold of Jesus? Just as big as the whole world! He wants everybody to come into it, and O, how much he does want all the little children. It is the only place in the whole world that is always happy and all

ways safe. Because it is such a good place we should come into it ourselves, and then try to get all the other children to come in too. [Tell of ways in which children may work—loving Jesus and minding him, loving the naughty children and trying to tell them of Jesus, and giving their pennies to help send the story of Jesus to those who have never heard it.]



### Kindergarten Hints.

**KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT.** Peter and the Soldier. Acts 10. 1-9, 17-24, 28, 29, 34, 35.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Peace by Jesus Christ." Acts 10. 38.

**AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER.** Holy Bible, Matt. 2; *Christianity and the Social Problems* (Abbott), pages 287-293; *The Land and the Book* (Thomson), vol. ii, pages 229-251; *Peter the Apostle* (Taylor), page 284; *Oratorio, Woman of Samaria* (The song of conversion, "I will love Thee").

### ATTENTION STORY.

In a very beautiful city, on the shore of a great sea, there lived a soldier named Cornelius. He was born in another country, called Italy, where the skies are very blue and the air is soft and pleasant. After Cornelius moved from Italy to Caesarea, he was made captain of one hundred men, who also had come from Italy to this city. Here Philip lived, and once Paul with other friends visited him here. Acts 21. 8. Cornelius loved God, and so did all his family, and they gave gifts to other people who had not as much as they had.

One afternoon at about three o'clock this good man was thinking and resting, when an angel came and spoke to him. At first he was a little afraid, but the angel told him God remembered all his prayers, and whatever kind and good deeds he had done for others. He said, too, that Cornelius was to send men to another city by the same sea, and get Peter to come and visit him, and the angel told just where they would find Peter, for he was with his friend Simon in a house at the side of the sea. He had some things to say to Cornelius.

Then the angel went away. Cornelius was obedient to good voices, just as Philip was when the voice told him to go to that carriage, you remember, and just as Saul obeyed the voice, so he called two servants and a soldier, and told them

to go to Joppa, the other city, and get Peter. They started off the next morning.

Some day this week we will talk of Peter and what happened when he prayed that day; but now we will go with the men. By and by they came to Simon's house, and asked if Peter was there. Now it is strange, but before any person called Peter, God's Spirit whispered to him that three men had come to see him, but he need not be afraid, for God had sent them; so Peter went down stairs and introduced himself to them. They told him their errand, and he invited them to stay all night, and the next day they all four went to Caesarea to the house of Cornelius. They found that he had his brothers and cousins and friends there, and they all were waiting for Peter.

Then Peter talked to them and said that God had taught him that he should visit good people whether they were born where he was or not, and that everyone who loves God and does right is pleasing to God; then he preached to them about Jesus, just as all the disciples did everywhere, because they were busy every day trying to do just what Jesus had told them to do, "teach all nations," and he preached "peace."

Let us read about it. [Read Acts 10. 1-9, 17-24, 28, 29, 34, 35.]

Explain unusual words.

### OUTLINE.

**Sunday.** Attention Story, Bible lesson, Golden Text, and conversation about the lesson.

**Monday.** Angels again! These angel stories are better than those about fairies, because the still small voice of God's Spirit within us is true, and the Bible stories are the best and the truest. Tell a little story of Gideon, Judg. 7. 11, 12, and of Elijah, 1 Kings 19. 5-8.

**Tuesday.** These men all had some business—Peter was a fisherman; Cornelius, a soldier; and Simon, a tanner. What does a tanner do? Talk of industrious people. Good people are never lazy. The Bible says we are not to be "slothful in business." Read Rom. 12. 11.

**Wednesday.** Tell the story of Peter going upon the housetop to pray. It was about noon, but Peter was hungry and he fell asleep. He dreamed about different animals and birds. In this dream God taught Peter what he told to Cornelius and his friends, that whoever loves God and does right is pleasing to him.

**Thursday.** Talk of verses 34 and 35, and explain that all are God's children wherever they live or what their color. Talk of the different races and their habits.

**Friday.** Let the lesson teach of peace, and refer to the angels' song of "Peace on earth." It is not right to have war. Explain how nations may talk things over and settle their troubles (arbitration) just as boys can.

**NATURE WORK.** Talk of the seaside, and what is found there. What did you ever find there? Those who have not seen the sea will be glad to hear what is there, and all who have will be ready

to talk of sand, sea-weeds, crabs, and shells. A wide topic is suggested by this lesson in taking any one of these things.

**ART WORK.** Show a picture of the sea, and it will be easy to find a picture of Caesarea and of Joppa.

**HAND WORK.** The children may make a picture of a gate (verse 17) with interlacing slats. They may play the shoemaker's game, and talk of leather and its uses, and draw pictures of shoes and other things made from leather.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may write or print upon cardboard the names of the persons and the places mentioned in the Bible lesson and bring it next Sunday.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** Talk of peace and gentleness in the home life, and let some child read aloud of the "fruits," as the Bible calls some things which make home pleasant. Gal. 5. 22, 23.

"The dearest spot on earth to me  
Is home, sweet home;  
The fairy land I've longed to see  
Is home, sweet home."

### LESSON III. (April 18.)

#### GENTILES CONVERTED AT ANTIOCH.

Acts 11. 19-26.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Acts 11. 18.

#### Primary Notes.



Dorothy was a little girl who loved to have her own way. Her mamma could not bear to hear her cry, and so would give her what she wanted, even when it was not good for her. When she went to the kindergarten and joined in the circle plays she thought it very nice at first, but by and by she began to get cross if the play was not one she had chosen, and then she would break the circle. She soon found it did no good, for they would close right up again and she would be left standing alone outside the happy band. In the kindergarten the children make the circle of love and good-will, and the dear teacher is often in the center to help and direct. So in the Church of Christ all the people form one chain of love, and the Lord Jesus himself is the center, always ready to help and bless.

**Review.** Who sent for Peter to come and teach him? Who told him to send? Was Cornelius a Jew or a Gentile? What was Peter? What did God teach Peter? How did he teach him? What name of Peter's visit to Cornelius? Whom did Jesus die to save?

[Place on the blackboard as beautiful a tree as you can make, and have a familiar little talk with

the children about trees, how they grow, what they come from, of what use they are, etc.]

One Sunday we had a lesson about a good man who was stoned to death by enemies of Jesus. What was his name? What followed his death? The enemies of Jesus wanted to drive away or kill all who loved Jesus and talked of him and his power. A great many went away from Jerusalem, and one little company went to a city called Antioch, on the blue Mediterranean. This was a very beautiful but a very wicked city. At first the believers in Jesus spoke of him in the Jewish synagogue, or church. But after a while they began to tell the story of the cross to the Gentiles. Some believed and gave their hearts to Jesus, and then others came, and so it was not long until there was a church formed. A good man was sent from Jerusalem named Barnabas. His name meant "Son of consolation," or comfort. How glad the believers in Antioch must have been to have this kind man come to stay with them and teach them about Jesus! But soon the church grew so large that Barnabas saw he must have some one to help him preach and teach. [Print "Growth" on one side of the tree.]

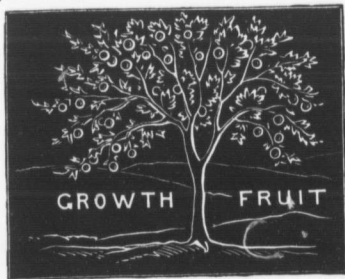
Who was the young man who was so pleased to see Stephen stoned? Yes, it was Saul. His heart had been changed since that time, and now he was at his old home, Tarsus, telling his friends and all who would listen about Jesus.

One day a man came there asking for him. It was Barnabas. He said he had come from a heathen city where many had turned to the Lord. He asked Saul to go with him and help teach these heathen converts, and Saul went with him gladly, and for a whole year Saul and Barnabas preached Jesus in the heathen city of Antioch to both Jews and Gentiles. God made the believers in Antioch feel in their hearts that God loved everybody about the same time that he showed this truth to Peter in a dream. We can never forget Antioch, for it was here that believers in Jesus were first called Christians, that beautiful name which we all love.

We have made a picture of a tree for you to look at because we want you to see how the life of a tree and the life of a church may be alike. What does the tree come from? Yes, from a seed. A child may plant a seed which grows into a great, beautiful tree. The church in Antioch came from seeds of love and faith dropped into hearts by the hands of men and women, yes, and children, who loved Jesus. [Read from the Bible Luke 8. 11.] What makes the seed you put in the ground spring up and grow? [Tell how the earth feeds the little seed and the sun warms it, and the dew and rain give it drink, and God sends all these good things so that a tree may grow and be a joy to us. Carry on the analogy of the dropping of God's truth into the soil of human hearts, and how truth feeds it, and love warms it, and grace waters it, until it grows into a blessing and a joy.]

But it must do something more than grow large and strong. What do we like to find on a tree? Yes, fruit. [Print "Fruit" on the board opposite the word "Growth."] Did the church at Antioch bear fruit? Yes, and love was among its first and best fruits. [Tell about sending contributions to the poor saints in Jerusalem, and about the beautiful missionary spirit this church showed.]

God wants to see little trees of love and faith springing up all around the world, and he gives the seed to his little ones to plant. [Tell of ways in which they may plant it, and teach that he will surely do his part to make it grow if we will do our part and drop it into the waste places.]



### Kindergarten Hints.

**KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT.** Another Helper Named Barnabas. Acts 11. 20-26.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "The disciples were called Christians." Acts 11. 26.

**AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER.** Holy Bible, Acts 11. 13; *St. Paul* (Canon Farrar), chapter 16; *The Life and Times of St. Paul* (Conybeare and Howson), chapter 4; *Old Greek Life* (Mahaffey), "History Primer."

#### ATTENTION STORY.

Our lesson for to-day is a part of the same story about these busy men who were trying to help other people as Jesus had told them to do. They were the first to obey his word, but ever since then and to-day, and every day, people have been trying to do, and are doing the same good, loving service for others. After Saul had frightened the people away that time before he heard the voice and obeyed it, some of the good, helpful men went to an island named Cyprus and preached to the people; others went to a city called Cyrene. By and by the people who heard the story wanted to tell their friends who lived in a large, beautiful city called Antioch, so they went there and many people believed their words and prayed to God and trusted him. The people in Jerusalem heard about it, and they sent a good helper up to Antioch—a man named Barnabas. He went to them and was very glad to see that they loved God and wanted to do right always. He thought some one else wanted to preach to them, and he went to the city where Paul lived and asked him to come up and help. They both went up to Antioch, and stayed a whole year preaching to the people. We may read the story here. [Read Acts 11. 20-26.]

Explain unusual words: "Tidings," "exhorted," "purpose," "cleave," "assembled."

#### OUTLINE.

**Sunday.** Attention Story, Bible lesson, Golden Text, and conversation about the lesson.

**Monday.** Tell the children of the habits and home life of the Greeks, who were people of Cyprus and Cyrene.

**Tuesday.** Away in the church at Jerusalem the people were interested in those in Antioch, and wanted to help them. When people are doing good at home they like to help those away from home too, and reach out loving hands to them.

**Wednesday.** The one who was sent was willing to go. How they all worked together! Show simply that all people may help each other, and thus work with God.

**Thursday.** When Barnabas saw all the many people, he found that more help was needed, so he went for one who was glad to hear and obey any call to work for others.

**Friday.** They were first called "Christians," as our Golden Text says. What is it to be a Christian? Let us talk about it. A Christian is one who loves our Father and Jesus best, and obeys the words given in this word, which says that we are to love God with all our hearts, and to love our neighbors, and do to them as we would like them to do to us.

A Christian asks God to help him to be kind and helpful to all.

**NATURE WORK.** Cyprus was a large island, and it had many precious stones, besides iron, lead, tin, and copper. Each of the week days one of the—may be described to the children, with some specimens shown, and let them enumerate the uses of each. These things were known to the people long ago, and used by them as we use them. This thought brings the children of to-day into a relationship with those people who were first called Christians. Barnabas was born in Cyprus, and perhaps he knew some of the people who had gone to the city of Antioch.

**ART WORK.** Show some pictures of the season, and let the children talk of the spring in our climate.

**HAND WORK.** Make a picture of an island, using colored crayons, either on a blackboard or on paper. There were mountains about Antioch and Tarsus—can you make pictures of mountains? What are the wide paths between them called? [Valleys.]

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may draw the best picture possible of a ship, or of something suggested by this lesson.

Put the date, April 13, 1897, in a corner of the card, and keep it with other lesson reminder cards until the end of the year.

[All the children who bring forty or more cards representing hard work upon the lessons might

have little pocket Testaments given to them. One with good print and paper, bound in brown cloth, with red edges, which can be bought for eight cents.]

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER.** The topic may be "helpfulness." In the home this is a daily delight, as each one helps the others, whether in caring for things or for people. Barnabas was glad to go to Antioch to help, and Saul was glad to go with Barnabas and help him and work for the people for a whole year.

In *Many Songs and Games* (Clara Beeson Hubbard) the little song, "Busy Children," is full of interest and suggestions. The helpful spirit may be in little children.

"Planting the corn and potatoes,  
Helping to scatter the seeds;  
Feeding the hens and the chickens,  
Freeing the garden from weeds;  
Driving the cows to the pasture,  
Feeding the horse in the stall,  
We little children are busy,  
Sure there is work for us all.

"Sweeping and washing the dishes,  
Bringing in wood from the shed,  
Ironing and sewing and knitting,  
Helping to make up a bed,  
Taking good care of the baby,  
Watching lest she should fall,  
We little children are busy,  
Sure there is work for us all."

#### LESSON IV. (April 25.)

#### PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

Acts 12. 5-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34. 7.

#### Primary Notes.



Charley was playing in the hall, while his mamma was sewing in her room. He saw the key in her door and began playing with it. By and by he turned it in the lock, and then ran away to play in the yard. When his mamma wanted to go down stairs she found she was a prisoner. She could not get out until some one came and gave her *deliverance*.

Our lesson to-day is about a prisoner, and the deliverance that came to him.

*In prison.* Do you remember Peter? We heard of him last at the house of Cornelius in Caesarea. [Ask why he was there and what took place there.] Peter stayed in Caesarea a good while. He had many things to teach the new disciples, and they were so glad and happy to have him stay with them that it was hard to get away. But by and by he had to go to Jerusalem again. At first the apostles were not pleased because he had been staying with

Gentiles, but when Peter told them how God had taught him that he loved everybody alike, and how good and earnest Cornelius and his friends were, they were glad, and praised God because he had taken the Gentiles into his great family.

But now trouble came. Peter was put into prison. King Herod had told his soldiers to kill the apostle James, and when he saw how much this pleased the wicked Jews he thought he would kill Peter too. So Peter went to prison, and sixteen soldiers were put there to watch him night and day. Herod set the day when Peter was to be killed, and the night before he was sleeping in his prison with a chain on each hand fastened to a soldier's hand. It did not look as though he could possibly get away, did it?

*Out of prison.* A great light shone in the dark prison that night. But it did not wake Peter. Then the angel, whose presence lighted up the place, touched him and said, "Arise up quickly." Peter rose, and the chains fell from his hands, but all this time the soldiers did not wake. The angel said, "Follow me," and Peter walked out of the door, which opened as if it had opened itself. The angel walked a little way with Peter, and then left him a free man, full of wonder and praise. [Tell how he went to the house of his friends, and what joy was felt there, and how they all loved and praised God more than ever.] What did the angel bring to Peter? Yes, *deliverance*. Who sent the angel to deliver him? The same good and loving Father who cares for us, and who wants to deliver us out of our prison houses.

*Our enemies.* Why was Peter put into prison? He was not a bad man. He had not broken any of the laws of the country. No, but he had enemies, —men who hated him because he loved Jesus. We all have a great enemy who hates us if we love Jesus and are trying to please him. What is his name? Satan. He is the enemy of our soul, and he has many kinds of prison houses in which to shut us up. Do you want to know what some of them are?

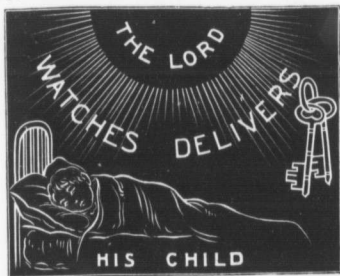
*Our prison houses.* Hark! hear that pretty little girl scream! She wants to go to walk. Mamma says she cannot go to-day, it is too cold, and she fears her little girl will get sick. She screams and kicks and makes her friends very unhappy. She is in one of Satan's prison houses. I will tell you the name of this prison. It is "self-will." Some call it "want your own way." Is there any deliverance for her?

What is the matter with that nice-looking boy? His face is all in a knot. He is talking very loud and fast, and the words he speaks are angry, unloving words. He is in his prison house of Temper. Satan put him in, and he likes to see him there. Is there deliverance for him?

*How to get out of prison.* How did Peter get out? He trusted in the Lord. Do you think that prison

in Jerusalem was harder to open than our prisons are! No, God can open any kind of a prison. He can send his angel and open the prison of Self-will, or of Temper, or any of our prisons of naughtiness, just as soon as we find out that we are there and ask to be taken out. But we must wake up as Peter did, and then obey the voice which says: "Follow me."

[Show the blackboard and call for the Golden Text.] If we love God, there is an angel right near us all the time ready to deliver us from harm. See this sleeping child. She does not know what dangers are near her. We do not know what dangers are near us. God thinks about us, and sends his angel to watch over us. How he wants to deliver us if we are angry, or self-willed, or naughty in any way! Will he do it? Yes, always, if we look right away from our naughtiness, and say, "Dear Jesus, send thine angel to deliver me."



### Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Peter Delivered from Prison. Acts 12. 5-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.** "For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91. 11.

**AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER.** Holy Bible, Psalm 91. 91; *Moral Evolution* (Harris), pages 275-410; *Monday Club Sermons*, 1876 (Professor Churchill); *Existence of Angels* (Bishop Bull), vol. 1, page 387; *Daily Bible Illustrations* (Kitto), vol. The Apostles, page 235; *New Testament History* (Smith), page 91.

### ATTENTION STORY.

Dear children, our lesson for to-day is a little story about Peter. He is one of our friends who was in prison with John, you remember, and the next morning they were found in the temple, preaching.

Do you remember how that was? We will read a verse here which tells us. [Read Acts 5. 19.] How much the Bible tells us of angels! Well, to-day there is an angel in the story. When we talked of Peter being in prison a few weeks ago we found that the minister (high priest) had ordered him put there; but this time the king, named Herod, thought that it was troublesome to have Peter preaching so much, so he said, "Put him in prison, and let sixteen

soldiers take turns in watching him, four at a time." The very first verse of our lesson says that the people of the church prayed for him, and though they felt very sorry to know he was there they knew that God could take care of him.

Peter believed that, too, and so he was not troubled. One night, when he was sleeping sweetly, an angel touched him on the side and awakened him, and the chains fell off his hands.

The angel told him to dress and put on his shoes and follow him. Two soldiers were beside him when he was sleeping, and others were at the gate, but the angel and Peter passed them all and went into the street. Peter was so surprised that he thought it a dream, but as soon as he had gone through one street the angel went away, for he saw that Peter was wide awake then and knew where he was. Peter thought a few minutes about what he should do ("considered the thing," verse 12), and decided to go to the house of his friend Mark, who was a disciple. It was at this very house that the people were praying for Peter, and when he knocked at the gate a young girl named Rhoda came to answer the knock, but she was so glad to see him that she forgot to open the gate. She left him standing there while she ran in to tell the people that it was Peter. Let us read about it, and see if they let him in. [Read Acts 12. 5-17.]

Explain unusual words: "Ceasing," "sandals," "accord," "expectation," "considered," "surname."

### OUTLINE.

*Sunday.* Attention Story, Bible lesson, Golden Text, and conversation about this wonder story.

*Monday.* Talk of prayer and of the interest God takes in his children. Jesus said that our Father cares when even a sparrow falls, Matt. 10. 29, and that we are worth more than many sparrows, Matt. 10. 31. To pray is to talk to our heavenly Father.

*Tuesday.* God's angel was stronger than the soldiers. Try to make clear to the children that the unseen, spiritual forces are stronger than anything our eyes look upon. They may be aided in this when talking of the wind and its power to turn mill wheels, blow the ships through the paths of the sea, and do many other things.

*Wednesday.* As soon as Peter could get along without the angel he was left alone, and then he stopped to think what he should do next. Verse 12, "Considered." God gives us minds to use, and we are to think strong, good thoughts, and to love him with all our mind.

*Thursday.* Talk of Peter's friends, the people of the church. How interested they were, and how glad to see him—too glad to open the door! God had answered their prayer, and they were surprised. His goodness and his love to you and to me is surprising. Do you have any nice surprises? Peter motioned to the people not to make such a noise, even if they were glad, and then he asked them to go and tell James, their minister, and the good brothers at the church all about it. This was not the same minister who was at the temple and wanted him put in prison the other time, but a minister at the church where they all believed the

story about Jesus which Peter was telling everywhere he went.

*Friday.* Talk of the Golden Text, dwelling upon "thee"—each little child. The angels are better than even good fairies, and God says they shall watch over thee, and thee, and thee!

**NATURE WORK.** The strongest things in all this world are out of sight. The teacher may talk of the forces of either light, life, air, wind, electricity; and that spiritual forces, prayer, love, and angels, are just as real forces.

**ART WORK.** Take a large school geography and show the children pictures of islands, talk about them being land wholly surrounded by water; islands may be large or small. The island of Cyprus, where Barnabas was born, was very large, and had whole cities upon it.

**HAND WORK.** The children may have colored paints or crayons, and make pictures of large and small islands.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may read one verse of the lesson each day of this week, and write all the nouns or names of places and people. They will find hand and heart mentioned. If we give the service of our hands to others, and the love of our hearts to God, we will be good and useful always, for if we really love God we love people also.

**SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER.** Children, do you ever think God cares for you, and shows his love by giving you home and those who care for you at home? It is beautiful to have friends who love us, and do all they can to make our bodies comfortable and strong, our minds free and active, and our spirits loving and brave! Let us do all we can for others, and please our best friend by serving others and loving both him and them. God gives us angels in our homes now. Who is your home angel? The dear mother! Listen to her sweet voice; obey it as quickly as Peter followed the angel when told to do so.

### Whisper Songs for April.

#### FIRST LESSON.

God make my life a little light,  
Within the world to glow;  
A little flame that burneth bright,  
Wherever I may go.

#### SECOND LESSON.

O teach us, Jesus, everyone,  
Thy blessed will to do;  
That we may love and please thee well,  
And love each other, too.

#### THIRD LESSON.

A little hand may sow the seed  
That grows into a tree,  
With branches fair and beautiful  
For all the world to see.

#### FOURTH LESSON.

The angel of the Lord encamps  
Around God's children still,  
And they are safe who trust his love,  
And seek to do his will.

### Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

#### Second Quarter.

*Singing.* Jesus loves me, this I know.

*Teacher.* What think ye of Christ?

*Class.* Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

*All.* Twenty-third Psalm.

*Hymn.* (To sing or repeat after teacher.)

"Great Shepherd of the sheep,  
Who all thy flock doth keep,  
Leading by waters calm  
Do thou my footsteps guide,  
To follow by thy side;  
Make me thy little lamb!

"O, from the soil of sin,  
Cleanse and make pure within,  
Blest Jesus, whose I am;  
Then bring me in thy love  
To thine own fold above,  
A little snow-white lamb."

*Teacher.* The Lord is in his holy temple.

*Class.* Let all the earth keep silence before him.

*All.* "Lord, help me when I try to pray,  
Not only mind the words I say,  
But help me try with watchful care  
To have my heart go with my prayer."

*Prayer,* closing with the Lord's Prayer.

*Singing.* (Lesson hymn.)

GOLDEN TEXT DRILL.

OFFERING.

*Recitation.*

"Lord, accept our freewill offerings,  
Seeds of blessing may they be;  
May they spread the Gospel story,  
Winning souls, dear Lord, to thee."

BIRTHDAY OFFERING, with service.

SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.

MOTION EXERCISE, "We will all rise up together."

THE LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

PARTING SONG.

*Parting Words.*

*Teacher.* Little children, love one another.

*Class.* If ye love me, keep my commandments.

*Teacher.* I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,  
from whence cometh my help.

*Parting Prayer.*

"Dear Saviour, ere we part,  
We lift our hearts to thee  
In gratitude and praise  
For blessings full and free.

"Go with us to our homes,  
Watch o'er and keep us there,  
And make us one and all  
The children of thy care."



## Know Your Class.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

A TEACHER who had heard of the delightful relation established between a teacher and her class by the writing of birthday letters, resolved to adopt the plan. But unfortunately she did not know her class of bright boys and girls, and did not appreciate the necessity of knowing them. She wrote the same letter (with very little variation) to each one. It was the same little sermonette to each, irrespective of sex or employment or previous condition of educational advantage.

Can you see how interested John would have been (since John is a famous foot-ball player) if this teacher had written that she hoped he would be as earnest in seeking the best gift of God as he was in his game. Every game thereafter would have suggested that message. And then if she had thought to congratulate him on his recent foot-ball victory, there would have been established a new sympathy between the teacher and John.

Supposing she had written to Nellie, who is clerk in a store, "I thought the other day when you waited on me so courteously, that I wished you would be as kind to my Master and as anxious to serve Him."

Supposing she had entered in like manner into the life of each, can you see what immense advantage that would have given the teacher?

It was said of one teacher who knew his class only as so much humanity that he suffered from colour-blindness. He could not distinguish at all the infinite variety of shades and temperaments and surroundings.

Some teaching is like the sermons of that army chaplain. He preached away faithfully without the slightest visible effect, at which he wondered greatly. He said, "It is strange the soldiers do not care for these sermons. My congregation at home liked them very much."

He did not see that an army of rough soldiers suffering hardships and facing death needed very different preaching from his cultured village congregation.

How may we know our scholars? Visitation will do very much. This reaches the irregular members who so much need ministry. Ralph Wells said, "My teachers agreed to make monthly visits. An experience of forty years of several schools has convinced me that almost all the conversions of scholars occurred in the lapses of teachers who faithfully shepherded their flocks."

Receiving your scholars into your home is another way to know them, and as an agency to give you influence over them it is unsurpassed.

Wells gives this incident: "What is your secret, my dear Mrs. T——?" I asked the teacher of a young men's Bible-class in a school near Spurgeon's tabernacle in London. There was a large lecture room filled, and most of them had there found the Saviour. 'Come and have supper with me to-morrow night, and I will tell you,' she said. Taking a cab, I went some six miles to find out the secret. At the table were three of the young men I had seen in the class, and Mrs. T—— told me it was her habit to ask that number in turn every evening. Thus she knew all their business associations, books, and trials, and every communion season found some of them for the first time at the Lord's table. 'One by one,' said Mrs. T——, 'we persuade them to Jesus.'—*Sunday-school Journal*.

## Literary Note.

THE Christian Literature Company have in press "A History of Methodism," in two volumes, by the Rev. J. M. Buckley, D.D., editor of *The Christian Advocate*. The work will be profusely illustrated, containing portraits of the founders and pioneers of Methodism, and the only complete series of bishops of the Church, living and dead. Great pains have been taken to secure of these the best and most authentic likenesses, and the publishers have received in this direction invaluable assistance from the Methodist Book Concerns of New York and Nashville, and from the Rev. Mr. Thomas, the Librarian of the Methodist Historical Society. The illustrations in this volume include reproductions in fac simile from Wesley's Journal, an account of Embury's conversion in his own handwriting, etc. The work will be sold by subscription only, and will be of interest to Methodists everywhere.

WE have received the following from Frederick Booth-Tucker, of the Salvation Army in the United States:

Dear Sir,—I shall be grateful if you will inform the readers of your valuable paper that the Salvation Army has a bureau for tracing lost and missing friends, thousands of whom are found every year. We are especially able to deal with these matters because we have agents throughout the world. No charge is made save for postage. Letters should be addressed, "Inquiry Department," 122 W. 14th Street, New York.

NOW READY.

# PAUL: A Herald of the Cross.

BY MRS. FLORENCE M. KINGSLEY.

*Author of "Titus" and "Stephen."*

PRICE, - - PAPER, 50 Cents; CLOTH, - - \$1.00.

The story represents the extension of Christianity among the Gentiles through the appointed herald of the "glad tidings." It is not a novel in the ordinary sense of the word, but in a series of dramatic scenes introduces the prominent characters with whom the Apostle had to do in the Acts, with ample and accurate historical accessories. The author's power of vivid and picturesque narrative makes us familiar with the varied life of the Empire in Rome, in Antioch, in Ephesus, in Athens, in Jerusalem. We gain a clear impression of the Cæsars, of Agrippa, of Antipas, of Felix; of the different fellow-labourers of Paul, Barnabas, Luke, Titus; of the Apostles Peter and James. The distinction between the Church at Jerusalem and the Christianity that was preached to the Gentiles is finely presented. The great darkness and need of the pagan world is powerfully contrasted with the light and fulness of the new faith. The most conspicuous events in the famous missionary journeys are thrillingly developed. We face death with Paul at Lystra and at Ephesus; sit with him at his tent-making in Corinth; stand beside him on Mars Hill; confront the mob with him at Jerusalem; go with him to shipwreck, imprisonment and death. The book follows closely the order of events in the inspired narrative, and invariably adds new light and interest to the record. It will appear quite opportunely in March, since the International Sunday-school Lessons take up the study of Paul at that time, covering his entire history within the year 1897.

A BOOK OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO STUDENTS OF THE  
SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS IN 1897.

# STEPHEN: A Soldier of the Cross.

BY FLORENCE M. KINGSLEY,

*Author of "Titus: A Comrade of the Cross."*

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In a review of this thrilling story, Dr. Withrow wrote: "Its hero is the first martyr of the Christian faith. It brings into contrast with the holy Stephen the persecuting Saul, who thought verily he ought to do many things against the Jesus of Nazareth. The due exercise of the historic imagination will often give a truer picture of the times than the cold page of history itself. This book will have special value to Sunday-school teachers and scholars, from the fact that the lessons for 1897 are upon that Church of the first century, whose period of persecution is here described.

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These are all fresh from our own presses, most of them from Canadian authors, and Canadian in scene and setting. They are books our boys and girls should have a chance to read, and we hope they will find their way to the shelves of all the Sunday-school Libraries.

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## Pistols and Pestles.

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The duelling pistol now occupies its proper place, in the museum of the collector of relics of barbarism. The pistol ought to have beside it the pestle that turned out pills like bullets, to be shot like bullets at the target of the liver. But the pestle is still in evidence, and will be, probably, until everybody has tested the virtue of Ayer's sugar coated pills. They treat the liver as a friend, not as an enemy. Instead of driving it, they coax it. They are compounded on the theory that the liver does its work thoroughly and faithfully under obstructing conditions, and if the obstructions are removed, the liver will do its daily duty. When your liver wants help, get "the pill that will,"

## Ayer's Cathartic Pills.

## The Best. The Rest. Test.

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There are two kinds of sarsaparilla: **The best—and the rest.** The trouble is they look alike. And when the rest dress like the best who's to tell them apart? Well, "the tree is known by its fruit." That's an old test and a safe one. And the taller the tree the deeper the root. That's another test. What's the root,—the record of these sarsaparillas? The one with the deepest root is Ayer's. The one with the richest fruit; that, too, is Ayer's. Ayer's Sarsaparilla has a record of half a century of cures; a record of many medals and awards—culminating in the medal of the Chicago World's Fair, which, admitting Ayer's Sarsaparilla as the best—shut its doors against the rest. That was greater honor than the medal, to be the only Sarsaparilla admitted as an exhibit at the World's Fair. If you want to get the best sarsaparilla of your druggist, here's an infallible rule: Ask for the best and you'll get Ayer's. Ask for Ayer's and you'll get the best.