

Printer

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 23.]

JANUARY, 1889.

[No. 1

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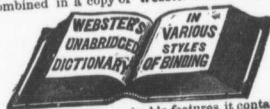
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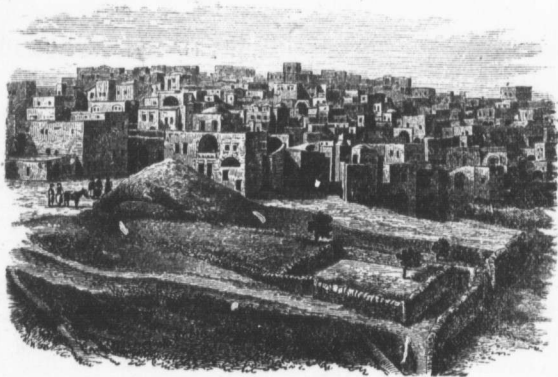
SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. XXIII.]

JANUARY, 1889

[No. 1.



BETHLEHEM.

Bethlehem.

Is one of the oldest towns in Palestine, already in existence at the time of Jacob's return to the country. Its earliest name was Ephrath or Ephratah. See Gen. 35. 16, 19; 48. 7. After the conquest Bethlehem appears under its own name, Bethlehem-Judah. Judges 17. 7; 1 Sam. 17. 12; Ruth J. 1, 2. The book of Ruth is a page from the domestic history of Bethlehem. It was the home of Ruth, Ruth 1: 19, and of David. 1 Sam. 17. 12. It was fortified by Rehoboam. 2 Chron. 11. 6. It was here that our Lord was born, Matt. 2. 1, and here that he was visited by the shepherds, Luke 2. 15-17, and the Magi. Matt. 2. The

modern town of Beit-lahm lies to the east of the main road from Jerusalem to Hebron, six miles from the former. It covers the east and north-east parts of the ridge of a long gray hill of Jura limestone, which stands nearly due east and west, and is about a mile in length. The hill has a deep valley on the north and another on the south. On the top lies the village in a kind of irregular triangle. The population is about 3,000 souls, entirely Christians. The Church of the Nativity, built by the empress Helena A.D. 330, is the oldest Christian church in existence. It is built over the grotto where Christ is supposed to have been born.

The above cut is an example of over 100 engravings of Bible Lands to be given in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1889.

Letting in the New Year.

BY SUSAN ARCHER WEISS.

WHAT wonder that, as here I sit alone,
Counting the steps of the departing year,
Waiting the slow and solemn chime to hear,
That tolls the requiem of the Old Year gone,
A solemn air should o'er my spirit spread,
A strange, still sense of mystery and dread?

What wonder—when I know that at my door,
Unseen, unknown, the waiting New Year
stands,

Grasping a sealed scroll within his hands—
With strange, dim characters inscribed o'er—
Wherein lies hid in awful mystery
All that this coming year shall bring to me?

Perchance, that sealed scroll may hold withal
Some sad death-warrant for the friends I
prize;

Or my own name amongst them haply lies;
Or sorrows worse than death yet to befall;
Or there be writ in characters of gold
Some joy to crown my life with bliss untold.

I watch the old moon in its slow decline;
So pass, Old Year, beyond life's stormy sea!
Whate'er the waiting New Year bring to me
I know 'tis ordered by a hand divine,
So, fearless, 'mid the wild bells' mingled din,
I ope the door, and let the New Year in!

WE speak of the snow as an image of death.
It may be this, but it hides the everlasting life
under its robes—the life to be revealed in the
due time, when all cold shadows shall melt
away before the ascending Sun, and shall be
not unclad, but clothed upon, and mortality
shall be swallowed up of life.—*Robert Collyer.*

THE next century's church life the children
who are now in the Sabbath-schools will make.
What shall it be? We are very proud of our past
century's life; our fathers have done nobly, and
have lived well. Shall we dishonour their work
of the past by undoing it in the future? Shall
we not be inspired to make the new century a
fitting development from the old one? Shall
we not seek to maintain and defend in practice
the principles which have made the past so
glorious? Shall we not be loyal to the church,
to truth, to Christ? Shall we not seek to write
the name of our blessed Lord on all the in-
stitutions of our country? Shall we not struggle
manfully for the Bible, the Sabbath, the home?

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Sunday School Banner, monthly	0 60
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Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1889.

New Year's Greeting.

FELLOW Sunday-school workers, we stand on
the threshold of another year. Before we lift
the latch and enter in, let us seek guidance and
grace, that through its weeks and months we
may walk before God in all well-pleasing. And
should it be God's will that we shall not see its
close, let us spend what is left to us wisely and
well. We are swiftly passing to that heavenly
world where time is not measured by days and
years; but where eternity is one long now of
ceaseless praise. Let us, therefore, more than
ever, redeem the time, and whatsoever our
hands find to do, do with our might. So shall
this New Year be the best and happiest that
ever we have known.

Preparation for Teaching the
Sunday-school Lesson.

BY THOMAS SIMPSON.

OUR purpose is to present a few brief sugges-
tions or methods of preparation for teaching a
lesson from the Bible to a Sunday-school class,
which may be used by teachers in the different
departments of a Sunday-school. It is assumed
that the International Series of Sunday-school

lessons is used, wherein the lessons are known at least one week before the time of teaching. An axiom in giving secular instruction should be borne in mind by the Sunday-school teacher, namely: That we never know a truth perfectly until we are able to teach that truth to others, so that others will understand it as we do. If we know a thing, we can tell it to others in some way so that they will know it as we do. Confused, misty, nebulous teaching is the outcome of confused, misty, nebulous, imperfect knowledge.

A word preliminary as to time and helps in preparing to teach.

First. As far as practicable, carefully arrange the time to be given to the study of the lesson during the week—some portion each day during the week if possible. Some of the most successful Sunday-school instructors begin the study of the Sunday-school lesson the afternoon of the Sunday of the week previous to the Sunday it is to be taught.

Second. Make such provision as means will allow to be supplied with a good reference Bible, commentaries, Bible dictionary, encyclopedias, lesson helps, and other books and papers, aids in the study of the sacred writings. If not able to purchase and own all these needed, try to get access to them if possible. Having arranged time and helps, the following is suggested as a method of preparation:

1. Read slowly and thoughtfully the lesson, verse by verse, several times over if necessary, to get its full meaning and scope; if possible, commit the lesson to memory. If it is the first of a series taken from any book of the Bible, study carefully the personal history of the author, the circumstances under which he wrote, the purpose and style of his writing.

2. Study carefully the context of the lesson, those portions of Scripture with which the lesson is connected, and examine carefully the parallel Scriptures from references in the lesson. Every teacher should have a good reference Bible. Interpreting Scripture by Scripture was the method of Jesus and his apostles.

3. From the study of the lesson, context, and parallel Scriptures, make a thorough analysis of it, substantially, in writing, as follows:

a. The topics of the lesson, if more than one; the various teachers' periodicals and lesson commentaries will aid in this, but make your own.

b. Central or leading thought or thoughts.

c. Persons mentioned, their characteristics, etc.

d. Places, geography, history, etc.

e. Events, important, natural, supernatural.

f. Illustrations, symbols, types.

g. Archeology, ancient manners, modes of thought, life, habits, customs.

Preparation should be made, if possible, with pen or pencil in hand, noting every thing to be taught. This is very helpful. After preparing such an analysis, the teacher should consult all helps, commentaries, encyclopedias, histories, travels, maps, ancient and modern, to learn every thing which can be known concerning the lesson; not forgetting the teachers' meeting, if there is one within reach.

4. Prayerfully consider the application of the lesson and its teachings to the class and its individual members. No one more than the Sunday-school teacher needs divine help and the enlightenment of God's Spirit.

The forgoing methods of preparing to teach in the Sunday-school can be carried out, not only by persons of scholarly attainments and leisure, but by thousands who are engaged as Sunday-school teachers whose scholarship is meagre, and who have but little spare time from the exacting duties of life. It is the impressive paradox of this great work that the busiest men and women in secular and other duties make the most careful and elaborate preparation to teach each week, and are the most successful Sunday-school teachers every-where.

—S. S. Journal.

Book Notices.

Sermons on the International Lessons for 1889.

By the MONDAY CLUB. Fourteenth Series. Pages, 402. Congregational Publishing Society, Boston and Chicago. Price, \$1.25.

The Sermons by the "Monday Club" are widely known among ministers and Sunday-school teachers. It is the only series of the kind that has proved successful. At the very first, the Monday Club hit the right ideal, and familiarity with the work for so many years has enabled the writers who compose it to render increasingly acceptable service. The ability as sermonizers of such men as Drs. Dunning, Gregg, Boynton, Griffin, Clark, Leavitt, etc., is well known. They could hardly treat any topic connected with the lessons without making it worth the while for Sunday-school people to look at what they say. After a teacher has studied his lessons thoroughly, making use of his customary lesson helps, it will help him to a broader outlook if he have by him the Monday Club Sermons for final hints.

Pen's Venture. By ELVISTEN WRIGHT. 12mo. Pp. 278. Congregational Publishing Society, Boston and Chicago. Price, \$1.25.

Penelope Randolph was always having adventure. She had a genius for coming upon the unusual, and for telling about it. One day something unusual did happen to her. Something saw in the condition of the cash girls in a certain store gave her a thought; the thought became a plan; the plan became a venture—Pen's Venture. It was nothing more nor less than to equip a reading-room for cash girls, and do something to keep them off from the street when not on duty. The venture was tried, and it was successful and led to other good things. It is amusing, touching and instructive to read about it.

The Jolly Ten, and Their Year of Stories. By AGNES CARR SAGE. Pp. 299. Congregational Publishing Society, Boston and Chicago. Price, \$1.25.

The Jolly Ten is the title assumed by a band

of cousins who were accustomed to meet monthly at the "Pinery," with "Aunt Roxy," one of those dear, delightful Aunties whose heart is large enough and warm enough to make quite an array of nephews and nieces happy. At her fireside the Jolly Ten play merry games, have suppers flavored with innocent fun, and listen to stories—twelve stories during the year—each with its lesson calculated to make the ten not less jolly but quickly responsive to the calls of duty and to the needs of others. This volume will make a capital Christmas or New Year's present to the young.

Life-History of our Planet. By WILLIAM D. GUNNING. Cr. 8vo, pp. 368. New York: Worthington Co.

In this busy age the man who popularizes the teachings of recent science and presents them in succinct and intelligible style confers no small benefit upon his kind. This work Mr. Gunning has done with very great skill and success. He is master of his subject and of its literature, the results of which he presents in a fascinating manner. He discusses the genesis of the earth, its geological history, the evolution of the different species, genera and orders, the problems of the ice age, the antiquity and migrations of man, his origin, and the process and causes of the differentiation of races, and kindred topics. The book is copiously illustrated. An ingenious diagram gives the record of the ellipticity of the earth's orbit for the last million years, and predicts that for the succeeding million years. This indicates its periods of greatest refrigeration and throws much light on the successions of frigid and torrid climates. The book has more than the fascination of romance, is a fine specimen of scientific argument and is written in a vein of lofty eloquence.

THE *Atlantic Monthly* we deem in literary merit the best periodical which comes to our table. The announcement for 1889 is a very strong one. Miss Murfree's last story, "The Despot of Broomsedge Cove," the strongest, we think, she ever wrote, and one of the noblest products of recent literature is brought to a close. The publishers are to furnish in the January number a new steel engraving of John G. Whittier, who wrote one of the articles which appeared in the initial *Atlantic* for November, 1857, and who has been a frequent contributor from that time to the present. This is, therefore, a peculiarly appropriate compliment to the dean of living American poets, and one which *Atlantic* readers must fully appreciate. A new serial by Henry James, entitled "The Tragic Muse," will begin in the January number. Published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. Clubbed with the *Methodist Magazine* for \$5.20; full price \$6.00.

ELIZABETH ROBINS PENNELL, wife of Joseph Pennell, of Philadelphia, and his companion through Europe on a tricycle, has a paper on "Wells and its Cathedrals," in the December number of the *Magazine of Art*.

Opening and Closing Service.

I. Silence.

II. The Doxology.

III. Responsive Sentences.

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

School. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

Supt. For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised.

School. He is to be feared above all gods.

Supt. Honor and majesty are before him.

School. Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Supt. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

School. Fear before him, all the earth.

IV. Singing.

V. Prayer.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of Title, Golden Text, Outline, and Doctrinal Suggestion, by the school in concert.

IV. Review and Application of the Lesson, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. The Supplemental Lesson.

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service, and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. Singing.

II. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;

School. The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee;

Supt. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

III. Dismissal.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to Judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN MARK.

A. D. 26.]

LESSON I. THE MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

[Jan. 6.]

Authorized Version.

Mark I. 1-11.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;
2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
5 And there went out unto him all the land of Ju-de-a, and they of Je-ru-sa-lem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jor-dan, confessing their sins.
6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;
7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.
8 I indeed have baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.
9 And it came to pass in those days, that Je-sus came from Naz-a-reth of Gal-i-lee, and was baptized of John in Jor-dan.
10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him;
11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

FORE-SHADOWED.



Revised Version.

- 1 The beginning of the gospel of Je-sus Christ, the Son of God.
2 Even as it is written in Isalah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, Who shall prepare thy way;
3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight;
4 John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the country of Ju-dae'a, and all they of Je-ru-sa-lem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jor'dan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and he did eat locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.
5 And it came to pass in those days, that Je-sus came from Naz-a-reth of Gal-i-lee, and was baptized of John in the Jor'dan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him; and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

INDUCTIVE NOTES.

By Prof. Marcus D. Buell, Boston University.

I. Study of General Features.

[REMARKS.—1. Lesson notes are of value to those who use them only in proportion as they provoke independent study and personal reflection. The effort will therefore be made, especially in this section of the comments, to give direction and stimulus in study rather than to furnish information. 2. A strict following of directions in every particular is earnestly asked for, as the method of study suggested, with that condition met, will be found to be economical in time, and very fruitful in results. Not less than an average of two hours of the closest application should be given to each of these lessons. 3. The student will derive peculiar profit from wise use of the pen, as suggested below. 4. The Revised Version of the New Testament is quoted in the Notes. 5. Let the student provide himself with one or more copies of the five-cent edition of the Revised New Testament, which may be freely marked and cut.]

SEC. 1. What is a 'gospel?' (1) Reflect, and try to frame an answer. (2) Search for the elements of a definition, covering (a) subject-matter (Acts 1, 1); (b) authorship (John 21, 24; Luke 1, 2, 31; John 20, 31; Luke 1, 4). (3) Write out the definition. It should have a form like the following (Do not copy).

A gospel is an account of the deeds and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth written by an eye-witness or the contemporary of an eye-witness, having for its design the production of belief in Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour of the world.

[N. B. Do not accept this definition except so far as it agrees with your own conclusions from meditation and from a study of the references given.] (4) Keeping the definition in mind, read what we may call two brief oral gospels, one by Peter in Acts 10, 36-43 and one by Paul in Acts 13, 23-33. (5) Apply and test your definition as to (a) and (c) by a rapid glance through the entire gospel of Mark.

SEC. 2. Recalling (a) subject-matter and (b) the design of a gospel, determine why this section (chap. 1, 1-11) on the mission of John the Baptist could not well

have been omitted from Mark's gospel. Do you find a section like this in the other gospels?

SEC. 3. Who is the chief person in the lesson? Ver. 4. Underscore (or write down) the words which describe (a) what he did: thus, ver. 4, "John came," "baptized," "preached repentance;" ver. 6, "was clothed," etc.; ver. 7, 8, "preached: There cometh . . . One . . . mightier . . . and . . . worthier;" (b) what others did: ver. 5, "All Judaea went out unto him;" ver. 9, "Jesus came," "was baptized of John;" ver. 10, "Spirit descended;" ver. 11, "voice came out of the heavens." Give the substance of the answer (a) in your own language, somewhat as follows: John came baptizing and preaching repentance; he dressed like a prophet and foretold Christ's coming. State (b) thus: The authority of John's preaching was recognized by all classes of people and by Jesus, and the truth of his prophecy was confirmed by the miraculous descent of the Spirit and the voice of God declaring the divine Sonship of Jesus.

SEC. 4. Study the prophecy, vers. 2, 3. What does it say (c) is going to happen? Underscore the words which describe the main fact, thus: "It is written . . . send messenger before thy face." Translate into your own words, "Prophecy promises that Christ shall have a forerunner. Underscore words describing subordinate facts, thus: "Shall prepare," "crying in wilderness," "make ye ready." Complete the statement thus: Who shall prepare his way, preaching preparation in the wilderness.

SEC. 5. Observe points of agreement between (a) and (b), that is, what did happen with (c) what prophecy said would happen. Notice punctuation of Rev. Ver., vers. 2-4, and see how it binds (c) to (a) and (b).

SEC. 6. Study verse 1. Mark leading words, (a) "beginning of gospel." Put into other words; thus, Here is set down the first item of gospel truth. What has (d) to do with (a), (b), and (c)? Is it not this; The first item of gospel truth is that John was Christ's divinely appointed forerunner?

SEC. 7. Fuse the four great thoughts of the lesson into one brief sentence, in Mark's order: ((d), (c), (a), (b)) thus:

The first truth which the Gospel presents is that John in fulfillment of prophecy prepared Christ's way by

preaching repentance and baptizing, and that his authority was acknowledged by the people and by Jesus himself, and his prophetic character confirmed by miraculous events.

II. Study of Details.

[Read parallel passages, Matt. 3: 1-11; Luke 3: 2-16; John 1: 6-8, carefully noting (a) additions, (b) omissions, (c) variations.]

1. The beginning of the Gospel (ver. 1). **Verse 1.** This verse forms a kind of chapter-title to verses 2-13, as though Mark had written, "CHAPTER I. BEGINNING OF THE STORY OF REDEMPTION." Beginning. In the mind of the evangelist no word or deed of Jesus can be narrated until the story of Jesus' forerunner is told. A noted French writer says he begins and ends all his books with "tremblingly eager fingers." What facts do Matthew (1: 1-17) and Luke (1: 5-25) feel obliged to tell before Jesus is introduced? Gospel. The English word is from God (not from "good") and "spell," that is, a story about God; the Greek word, from a term meaning "good tidings," and referring not (as in English) to the book itself, but to the narrative in the book. **OF JESUS.** Not the Gospel that Jesus preached, as in ver. 4, but that which he preached about his Christ. A Greek translation of the Hebrew word Messiah (John 4: 25), meaning "anointed," that is, set apart and qualified by God for the work of redemption, as kings and priests were anointed and so commissioned for their work of rulership as the Christ, **Son of God.** Would this be understood as a term descriptive of his nature? (See John 5: 18; 10: 30, 33.)

2. **Even as** Ver. 4-8 John directly to ver. 3, 3 to remind the reader that what John did agreed with that prophecy said "Christ's forerunner should do. **The prophet.** The Rev. Ver. follows the best MSS., but suggests the difficulty that while ver. 3 is in Isaiah ver. 2 is not, but in Malachi. Possibly ver. 2, though expressed in Old Testament language, was not meant as a quotation, but only as an introduction to ver. 3, which certainly names the more striking external traits of the coming forerunner. **It is written.** John's father had already applied this passage to him at his circumcision (Luke 1: 70), as did he himself (John 1: 23), and as did Jesus years afterward (Matt. 11: 10). It is not improbable that Mark had often heard Peter make the same application. **Messenger.** The figure is that of a king's outsider. **Thy face.** The Hebrew of Malachi has it "my face" and "before me." The words may have been understood in familiar Christian usage as addressed to Christ rather than to man. **Prepare thy way.** The "way" means the people in the way, who are notified of the king's advent that they may stand and do obedience as he passes. The same "preparation" is made for royalty to-day in the streets of Rome, Vienna, Berlin, and London (see Luke 1: 17): "To make ready a people." The preparation which John makes is the people's repentance for sin. **3. Wilderness.** The people to whom the prophecy was originally addressed were in captivity east of the desert of Arabia, through which Jehovah was thought of as coming for their deliverance. **Make ye ready.** Do whatever is needed to fit you for the immediate appearing of a holy God.

III. John the Baptist, the Promised Forerunner (vers. 4-8). **Verse 4. John came, who baptized.** Was baptism a novelty? No one now can positively say. Compare Exod. 29: 4; Lev. 8: 6; 14: 8; and ask yourself whether baptism was already prefigured. Could the rite have been suggested by Isa. 1: 16. Ezek. 26: 25; Zech. 13: 1? The Jews baptized proselytes in the second century A. D. Would you infer that they did so in the first-century also? **In the wilderness.** "Of Judea" (Matt. 3: 1). This was the barren, rugged, uninhabited "bad lands" west of the Dead Sea and the lower Jordan valley. This desolate region had been his dwelling place how long (Luke 1: 80)? **Preached baptism.** Declared its necessity as a preparation for Messiah's coming. **Of repentance.** The outward sign was a token of an inward state. The Greek word implies a change of view, a new way of looking at a subject; hence repentance includes not only sorrow for, but the resolution to forsake sin. **Unto remission.** The visible human act of the preacher typified the invisible divine act of forgiveness for which the penitent prayed. **5. They of Jerusalem.** The ruling and influential class. **Baptized in the river.** While historical probabilities indicate that immersion was, in the first century, the usual mode of baptism, no one has ever proved it to have been the exclusive one. The sup-

position that a specific amount of water is necessary to make baptism valid is, in the absence of a definite command, more like a Plinianism than a Christian notion. The recognition of all uses of the usual modes of administering the rite seems natural and rational. **Confessing.** All confessed, but some did not forsake their sins. (John 5: 35.) **6. Camel's hair.** A prophet's "rough garment" (Zech. 13: 17) woven from the coarsest hairs shed by the camel. **Leathern.** Among Oriental the girdle, rather than the neck-tie with us, gives a convenient index to the man's taste in dress. John's leather belt contrasted with the silken and embroidered girdles of the Jewish gentry. **7. Eat locusts and wild honey.** The scant fare of the untilled desert, the diet of a prophet, contrasted with the sumptuous living of the prosperous officers and tradesmen from Jerusalem. The phrase, like that of Matt. 11: 18, "John came neither eating nor drinking," points to his Nazarene abstemiousness. **7. Preached.** To the crowds of ver. 5. The Greek, "heralded," as in ver. 4, keeps up the figure of a king and his forerunner. Compare Joseph's forerunners (Gen. 41: 42). In ver. 6 the sumptuousness Christ's coming. **After me.** Immediately after; he will be here presently. **He that is mightier.** Not the too indefinite "one that is." **Latchet.** That is, strap or string. **Stoop down.** Peculiar to Mark, who, like Peter, perhaps, thought of himself as "unloose," "worthy to be stooped to." **Who is mightier.** The same essential fact is in all: the performance of the lowliest personal service. **8. I. . . he.** Ver. 8 gives reason for assertion in ver. 7. You give heed to me, how much greater reason you will have for attending to him! **Baptize ye with the Holy Ghost.** As John brought the material element, water, in contact with the body, so Jesus, the mightier and worthier One, would bring the divine Spirit in vital contact with the soul. Note Jesus' resurrection of John's words (Acts 1: 5). When did this promise begin to be fulfilled (Acts 2: 4)? Peter remembers this promise (Acts 11: 15, 16).

IV. John Acknowledged as Forerunner by Christ (vers. 9-11). **Verse 9. These days.** The days of ver. 4, when his forerunner was preparing his way. Several months probably after the opening of John's ministry. **Of Galilee.** Why tell where 3: was? **Came.** As before ver. 4. **Is that the baptism of Matt. 28: 19?** For answer study Acts 19: 1-6. The seeming impropriety of baptizing "the mightier and worthier One" was felt by John, and (Matt. 3: 14) he "forbade" it him. The seeming impropriety of baptizing "the mightier and worthier One" was likewise felt by Peter, who (Matt. 8: 32) "rebuked" him. For partial explanation consider Matt. 3: 15; Phil. 2: 7; and Rom. 8: 3. Notice the absence of the "confessing" of ver. 5. (See John 8: 46.) A glimpse at Jesus' mental attitude at his baptism (Luke 3: 21). **10. Straightway.** Binds Christ's self-humiliation (ver. 9) and his glorification (ver. 10, 11) together as antecedent and consequent. Same divine logic in "wherefore" (Phil. 2: 9). **Out of.** Not "from" as Matt. 3: 16. **He saw.** In Greek, an act of the mind. He discerned more than that which was the Holy Spirit. **Bent.** Potent thought. Greek follows the process in its progress. **Spirit descending.** "This was his true baptism."—*Morison.* Dare we ask the end of this baptism? Peter (Acts 10: 38) speaks of it as an "anointing" for his public work; Dave John (3: 34) and Luke (4: 1) the same thought? **As a dove.** Why this "bodily form" (Luke 3: 22)? To symbolize his disposition, "harmlessness" (Matt. 10: 16) and "meekness," especially as a sacrifice for sin (1 Pet. 2: 21-24)? **11. Came.** To him; he heard. "Thou art." Our reverent curiosity about this mystery of the incarnation cannot be gratified. **In the.** In the act of humbling himself to the likeness of "sinful flesh." Note that three divine persons appear here: The Son comes forth, the Spirit descends, the Father speaks. A revelation of the holy Trinity.

III. Application.

1. **Theory.** Application is determined chiefly by two mental laws, those of similarity and contrast. (a) **Similarity.** Events, circumstances, character, spiritual truth in New Testament times are to be

compared with the same in these times. Then and now Christ came, and on certain conditions; then people repented of sin—have I? John humbled himself before Christ—do I? Pointed others to Christ—do I? Mark begins a chapter of a book; I begin with 1889 a new chapter of life. (b) Contrast, Mark's reverence for and interest in the Old Testament; my lack of these. Christ's humility; my pride. John's preaching; modern preaching. John's testimony to Christ; the world's. John 8. 48. The descent of the Spirit; the departure of the Spirit. Comp. Gal. 4. 30 and Gen. 6. 3. 2. *Method.* (1) What is the writer's main thought? Is it not, How John prepared the way for the Christ?

(2) What was the writer's chief purpose in expressing this thought? Was it not to teach Christians the truths of the spiritual life, and to lead unbelievers into that life? (3) Do you see in the main thought any phase of the spiritual life important (a) to yourself. (b) to A, B, C, and D, your pupils? Think of them one by one. (4) On the understanding and answering of questions like the three preceding hang all true success in biblical study and teaching. The printed page may help make plain the truth, but only meditation and prayer, with the help of the Spirit, can reveal one's own and others' spiritual needs. Have you prayed over this lesson? Have you studied it seriously?

HOME READINGS.

- M. The mission of John the Baptist. Mark 1. 1-11.
 Tu. John's mission foretold. Luke 1. 5-17.
 W. Prophecy of Zacharias. Luke 1. 67-80.
 Th. John's testimony to Jesus. John 1. 6-18.
 F. John describes his office. John 1. 19-28.
 S. John preaching repentance. Matt. 3. 1-12.
 8. Isaiah's prophecy. Isa. 40. 1-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Mark 1. 3.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 47, Dominion Hymnal.
 Come, O come with thy broken heart,
 Weary and worn with care.
 No. 48, Dominion Hymnal.
 Child of sin and sorrow!
 Filled with dismay
 No. 58, Dominion Hymnal
 Come, every soul by sin oppressed,
 There's mercy with the Lord.

TIME.—26 A. D. The opening of the year preliminary to Christ's public work, called the year of preparation or obscurity.

PLACES.—The wilderness of Judea. The banks of the Jordan River, not far north of the Dead Sea. Nazareth.

RULERS.—Tiberius, emperor of Rome. Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea. Herod Antipas, tetrarch in Galilee.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Repentance.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Voice in the Wilderness.**
 What is the first claim that Mark makes concerning Jesus of Nazareth?
 On what historic basis does he place his gospel at its outset?
 What is the Scripture from which he quotes in proof of his claim? Mal. 3. 1; Isa. 40. 3.
 Who was this messenger, so long foretold?
 What was his character? Matt. 11. 7-14.
 What was the character of his preaching? Luke 3. 7-14.
 What position did he claim in reference to the One whom he was sent to announce? John 1. 19-27.
 What was the probable effect of his preaching upon the Pharisees?
 Why is he called in our outline, "The voice in the wilderness?"
 2. **The Voice from Heaven.**
 What testimony given at the baptism of Jesus harmonizes with Mark's first claim concerning Jesus?
 Who heard this voice from heaven?
 If the disciples did not hear it, what did they nevertheless believe? 2 Pet. 1. 17.
 Why did Jesus come to be baptized? Matt. 3. 15.
 Did any one see the dove-like form except Jesus himself? John 1. 32.
 Why was this sight permitted to John? John 1. 33.
 If this record is true, what does it surely prove concerning (a) the supernatural world? (b) the character of Jesus?

Practical Teachings.

The foundation of the Gospel is that Jesus is divine. That is the first thing we must believe.
 Baptism by water is the ordinance of the wilderness. It cannot save.

Baptism by the Holy Ghost is the ordinance from heaven. It is our evidence of salvation.

Confession of sins is a great step toward the Christ. But confession cannot come without conviction, and conviction must end in repentance.

Hints for Home Study.

1. Read the story of John's life from the first chapter and the third chapter of Luke and the fourteenth chapter of Matthew.
2. Find an evidence that the Pharisees were not permanently affected by John's life. Matt. 21. 23-27.
3. Make for yourself in imagination a picture of John the Baptist: complexion, stature, dress, figure, etc. If you have not, hitherto, read now the description of him in *Ben-Hur*.
4. Fix upon five respects in which you could well imitate John the Baptist.
 He was not injured by p. . . . y. ver. 5.
 He utterly r. . . . d the world, ver. 6.
 He forgot h. . . . f in pointing to Jesus, ver. 7.
 He was content to be simply ver. 3.
 He was simply a m. . . . r. ver. 2, etc.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **The Voice in the Wilderness, vs. 1-8.**
 Whose voice was this?
 What did he declare? (Golden Text.)
 For whom did he prepare the way?
 How did John dress and live?
 What did he call upon the people to do?
 What is it to repent? Isa. 55. 7.
 What did John do to those who repented?
 What did John say of Jesus?
 What did he say that Jesus would do?
 When was this fulfilled? Acts 2. 1-4.
 2. **The Voice from Heaven, vs. 9-11.**
 Who came to be baptized by John?
 From what place did he come?
 How old was Jesus at this time? Luke 3. 23.
 What took place when he was baptized?
 What words were spoken?
 Who spoke these words?

Teachings of the Lesson.

- How do we learn in these verses—
 1. That we should turn from our sins?
 2. That we should be baptized?
 3. That we should honor Christ as God's Son?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find what Old Testament prophet John the Baptist was like, and wherein he was like him.
 Why did John say of Jesus in the gospel of John.
 Was this the same John who wrote the gospel?
 Find at another time a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son."

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- What is the Gospel? **Good news.**
 What good news does the Gospel bring? **That Jesus Christ has come.** **The Son of God.**
 Who is Jesus Christ?
 Who did the prophets say would go before his face?
A messenger to prepare the way.
 Who was this messenger? **John the Baptist.**
 What did he do? **He preached and baptized.**
 What did he preach? **The coming of Jesus.**
 How did he tell people to get ready for him? **By putting away sin.**
 How did he say Jesus would baptize? **With the Holy Ghost.**
 How did John baptize? **With water.**
 Can water make the heart clean? **No; but Jesus can.**
 Who came to John to be baptized? **Jesus himself.**

What came and rested upon Jesus? **The Spirit, like a dove.**

What was heard from heaven? **The voice of God.**
What did the voice say? **"This is my beloved Son."**

Why did God do this? **To honor his Son.**

Words with Little People.

Our King is here!

Have you made a way for him in your heart?

When you overcome self you make a way for him.

When you conquer evil temper you make a way for him.

When you resist Satan in any form you make a way for him.

Let Jesus in, and he will be the overcomer of evil for you.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. About what does Mark the evangelist write? **The gospel of the Son of God.** 2. How did it begin? **In the preaching of John.** 3. What did he preach? **The baptism of repentance.** 4. What prophecy did his preaching fulfill? **"Prepare ye the way," etc.** 5. In what did his work culminate? **In the baptism of Jesus.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

1. What do you mean by religion?
Our whole duty to God our Creator.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Preacher in the Wilderness.

I. A DIVINELY CALLED PREACHER.

I send my messenger. v. 2.

"How.... preach... except... sent." Rom. 10. 15.
"Whom shall I send?" Isa. 6. 8.

II. AN EARNEST PREACHER.

The voice of one crying. v. 3.

"Instant in season, out of season." 2 Tim. 4. 2.

"My meat.... his work." John 4. 34.

III. A PRACTICAL PREACHER.

Preach the baptism of repentance. v. 4.

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort." 2 Tim. 4. 2.

"Except ye repent.... perish." Luke 13. 8.

IV. A SELF-DENYING PREACHER.

Clothed with camel's hair. v. 6.

"As poor, yet making many rich." 2 Cor. 6. 10.

"Provide neither gold nor silver." Matt. 10. 9, 10.

V. A PREACHER OF CHRIST.

There cometh one mightier than I. v. 7.

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ." 2 Cor. 4. 5.

"Preaching peace by Jesus Christ." Acts 10. 36.

VI. A SPIRITUAL PREACHER.

He shall baptize.... Holy Ghost. v. 8.

"Filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts 2. 4.

"I will pour out my Spirit." Joel 2. 28.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Demands of the Gospel.

1. The Gospel demands that we recognize Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, possessing the highest authority. Jesus was either a deceiver, or an insane man, or else he was the world's Redeemer. v. 1.

2. The Gospel calls upon men to repent of their sins; that is, to show their sorrow for sin by turning from sin. No repentance is real that leaves a man in his sins. v. 4.

3. The Gospel requires a public renunciation of sin and a public putting on of God's service by baptism. No person can be a true Christian who is ashamed to own his master. v. 5.

4. The Gospel requires a spirit of self-denial. We are not called upon to such an outward life as John

lived, but we are required to have the same self-sacrificing, unworldly character. v. 6.

5. The Gospel requires personal reverence for Christ and obedience to him. We are to take Christ for our Master and do his will. v. 7.

6. The Gospel requires that we shall seek, not for worldly rewards, but for those spiritual blessings which Jesus only can bestow, even the baptism of the Holy Ghost. v. 8.

7. The Gospel requires us to take Christ as our example, and, like him, to be submissive, humble, and "fulfilling all righteousness." vs. 9, 10.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

THERE is no sound which more readily arrests attention than the human voice. As I sit here alone in the quiet garden, the birds twitter round me, the leaves rustle, the insects hum, but I take no particular note of it all. Should I suddenly hear a human voice addressing me it would be quite different. I should even involuntarily pause and listen to what the voice had to say. And therefore, when we refer to silent or inanimate things as powerfully arresting the attention and conveying some thought to the mind, we speak of them having a "voice." Thus Wordsworth writes:

"Two voices are there: one is of the sea,
The other of the mountains;"

the latter a silent voice, and yet as arresting in its utterance as the sounding organ. And in the Scripture we read of the shining orbs that light the firmament that "there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

The "voice" of which our Golden Text speaks was an arresting utterance. It does not refer merely to the speech of the lips. At first sight we might suppose it to mean the actual voice of John the Baptist. But by turning to John 1. 3, we find that he does not say in answer to those who questioned him, I am the person whose voice was mentioned by the prophet Esaias; but, I am the voice predicted by him—"the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

The passage for our lesson tells us three things about this voice.

It tells us from whence it came. A "voice" is not an independent thing. Its utterance is determined by the will of the individual to whom it belongs; it speaks when he wills and as he wills. John the Baptist was such a voice from God. "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee." It was not as the son of Zacharias, born to the dignity of the priest's office, that John stood among the multitudes in the wilderness, but simply as God's messenger, a "voice" from God.

It tells us the manner of the utterance. There was the baptizing, there was the preaching, there was the life. It was not merely by the one or by the other that the message was given, but by all three. Had John the Baptist been, as our Lord de-

scribed afterward, a "reed shaken by the wind," or a "man clothed in soft raiment" (Matt. 11, 7, 8), his burning eloquence and the significant rite which he performed might have spoken in vain. But the utterance came from the whole man. His style of dress and living, model of the prophets of old, and his fearless, uncompromising attitude toward all that was wrong (comp. chap. 6, 18; Matt. 3: 7) spoke as loudly.

It tells us the occasion of the utterance. John was sent to "prepare the way of the Lord." All he did, all he said—the whole man—converged to this point: "There cometh One after me," etc. The object of the "voice" was to announce and clear the way for Christ.

There will be many, doubtless, resolving this new year to devote themselves to the service of God. Now what does God want for his service? He wants voices to "prepare the way of the Lord"—not great powers of mind, not great powers of speech, not clever plans, not ingenious expedients. The humblest, who seems to have no voice, may be a voice. The daily life, the whole life if put at God's disposal, like that of John the Baptist, will speak for him.

I have more than once been asked to find a place at a seaside town for some intending visitors, and, after making inquiries at lodging and boarding houses have had the mortification of finding my correspondents were not coming after all, so that my announcement of their approach seemed a sham and a deception. It was not so with the announcement with which John was intrusted. "There cometh One after me," he said; and we read, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John." The announcement that Jesus is coming can never deceive. He will come whenever a heart will receive him. And he will come again as Lord over all the earth. The message God sends by his "voice" shall be proved true before all.

The Lesson Council.

Question 1. What was the significance of John's baptism?

John inaugurated a reform, based on repentance and preparation for the kingdom of heaven, declared to be at hand. His baptism, in harmony with the Jewish idea of ceremonial purifying, signified such repentance and preparation on the part of those baptized. It was doubtless also typical of the spiritual baptism to be administered in the approaching kingdom, as intimated in verse 8, also Matt. 3: 11.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson, Chicago, Ill.*

John's baptism was a sign of personal guilt and impurity, and signified that a cleansing was necessary before the subject could be admitted into the kingdom, which was near at hand. It was not an initiation into that kingdom, but a symbolic confession of the need of preparation.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D., Tilton, N. H.*

The persons who responded to John's exhortation and were baptized by him took a like step to the one a person takes in our Methodist meetings when he resolves to stop the wrong-doing of which he is accused by his conscience, and rises and goes forward for

prayers. It is an act under the law, a right-about-face from immorality to morality. It is what one revivalist calls "quitting your meanness." It is the work of making the house ready for the guest, rather than the ceremonies and courtesies of his reception.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven, Boston, Mass.*

John's baptism was strictly legal in its character. His preaching was an emphasis of the law at the close of the legal dispensation: Repent, obey, do works meet for repentance, etc. His baptism was a summing up of all the ablutious and ceremonial cleansings of the Old Testament. The whole of the ceremonial law glowed up in him before expiring.—*Rev. Olin B. Coit, Clinton, N. J.*

2. What was the significance of the baptism of Jesus? Jesus, in submitting to baptism identified himself with the movement commenced by John, thus approving it. He conformed to the not unreasonable requirement that one who was to become the leader in the reform should be regularly initiated into it. And he set the example in this instance, as in many others, of submitting to ordinances, not necessary in his case, but important in the case of others. The baptism of Jesus was neither a baptism unto repentance, nor Christian baptism, but unique.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

The baptism of Jesus could not have been a sign of personal guilt and a confession of need of preparation for the coming kingdom. John refused to baptize Christ with such a signification to his act. It would have been deceptive for Christ to have received it with such an interpretation. It was rather a public initiation into his Messiahship. Christian baptism symbolizes the fact that we have entered the kingdom. Hence the disciples rebaptized John's convert^s to symbolize this new relation.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

When a penitent soul, striving with all his strength to live a holy life, feeling a sense of discouragement and weakness, looks up and sees the loving, helpful nearness of God; when the glance of the eye of the Lord calms him, cheers him, and holds him; when he forgets his struggles and fears in the charm of the presence of his Friend, then with a gentle tremor he feels his weakness falling from him as a garment from his shoulders, falling he cares not where; then a glow is in his heart, and to his fellows he appears as a vase through which a candle has begun to shine; then he knows the meaning of the baptism of fire, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is the baptism of Jesus Christ.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

When Jesus heard the stern legal demands of John, and saw the people taking such vows as he knew they could not fulfill, he asked John to baptize him. He wished to sorrow with humanity and obey for humanity, thus accepting his humiliation by condescending to the sinner's position under the law. Immediately the whole spiritual world in its eternal character opened before him. The divine manifestation came upon him as the seal and confirmation from the Father.—*Rev. Olin B. Coit.*

Cambridge Notes.

BY REV. JAMES HOPE MOULTON, M.A.

[These notes are based on the Revised Version.]

Mark 1: 1-11 (vers. 2-4)—Matt. 3: 1-3; Luke 3: 3, 4; vers. 5, 6—Matt. 3: 4-6; vers. 7, 8—Matt. 3: 11, 12; Luke 3: 16; vers. 9-11—Matt. 3: 13, 16, 17; Luke 3: 21, 22).

Space forbids any general description of the Gospel we now enter on. A few details concerning the life of

its almost certain author may be gleaned from Acts 12: 12; Col. 4. 10; Mark 14. 51, 52 (9); 1 Pet. 5. 13; Acts 12: 25; 13. 5, 13; 15. 37. *sqq.*; Col. 4. 11; Philm. 24; 2 Tim. 4. 11. At Babylon and elsewhere he was closely connected with his spiritual father, Peter, whence sprang his gospel. Among the innumerable guesses as to the relations of the Synoptists, only one fact seems fairly certain, that they represent the crystallized selection of events and sayings in Christ's life which formed the basis of the apostles' teaching. Mark's gospel contains this as given by Peter, and the peculiar vividness of detail which makes this short memoir so charming is doubtless due in part to the great apostle. The intense clearness and objectivity of its narrative aims thus at making us, too, eye-witnesses of the glory of the incarnate God. Which gospel was written first is completely uncertain. "Criticism" is hopelessly undecided, pronouncing Mark sometimes a revision of the original document from which Matthew and Luke enlarged, sometimes only a late cento touched up. It only concerns us to know that traces of independence occur on every page, and that destructive critics have so many mutually exclusive ways of attacking its credibility that our only alternative is to believe it authentic and faithful. External and internal evidence alike confirm the old belief that it was written for Christians at Rome.

Fifty we open this year, as last, with the great man who prepared the way for Christ. (See our notes in *The Study*, Jan. 1888.) A careful study of the evangelical records of his works and words will soon show us why the Son of man assigned a first place among the sons of men to this stern missionary, foully murdered after a life-work of a few months. Mark sketches his mission here in order to bring in the baptism of Jesus, when God proclaimed his Sonship. VER. 1. Leaving out the last clause, as probably not genuine here, the verse runs, "Beginning of the good news of Jesus the Messiah." Comp. Hosea 1. 2 (LXX). In the gospels "Jesus Christ" is never a mere proper name, but a brief creed. Comp. Matt. 1. 1, 18; 16. 21; John 1. 17; 17. 3. The verse is either a general title or means that at the baptism of Jesus the glad news of the Messiah's coming was first proclaimed to men. VER. 2. *Isaiah*. But the first part is from Malachi 3. 1. Probably "Isaiah" was an inclusive title for the prophets, as "David" for the Psalms. The quotation is made by Jesus in Matt. 11. 10. VER. 3. These words inaugurate the great prophecy of Isaiah's restoration (Isa. 40-66). King Cyrus had unconsciously obeyed Jehovah's command, and the prophet bids the dangers and difficulties of the wilderness between Babylon and Palestine disappear, that Jehovah may lead his people through. Armies of pioneers were to go before and level the mountains, and fill up the valleys, which impeded the conquering march. Comp. Zech. 4. 7. And now Jehovah Saviour was about to pass in triumph through the wilderness of this world, leading his redeemed, and before him the mountains of pride should be cast down, and a highway made over the deep ravines of human depravity. A herald voice is sounding, which John claims to be, content that his own personality, a *vox et præterea nihil* (John 1. 23), should vanish as the echo if but he can rouse men to prepare for the coming of the King. VER. 4. Read, "There arose John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness a baptism." The sentence is the completion of the two preceding verses; John "came into being" (comp. John 1. 6) as the embodied fulfillment of prophecy. Only here and in 15. 28 does Mark quote Scripture in his narrative, which emphasizes the stately vigor of this application. The

rite of baptism, as John used it, was quite new. We cannot assert that the baptism of Jewish proselytes belonged certainly to this age, and the Jews regarded John as a startling innovator, connecting such acts instinctively with the Messiah's coming. It seems probable that John was directly translating into symbolic action promises like Ezek. 36. 25; comp. 36. 31; and Isa. 1. 16; Zech. 13; Exod. 39. 4; Lev. 14. 8. It was the outward sign of a change of heart ("repentance"), leading up to and including forgiveness. *Wilderness*. The sunken valley north of the Dead Sea, a torrid chasm swept by the sirocco. VER. 5. Luke's detailed account shows that the hyperbole was natural. *Confessing*. James 5. 16; 1 John 1. 9, etc. It was a new idea that correct Jews could have any thing to confess. VER. 6. John was an ascetic because he typified repentance, and true penitents are not in a frame of mind to indulge the body; comp. the appearance of Elijah (2 Kings 1. 8. R. V., marg). *Camel's hair*. A rough but very serviceable material for protection against all weathers. *Locusts*. Insects something like large grasshoppers, still eaten by the poorest classes in the East; not the fruit of the carob tree, as often supposed. *Wild honey*. Still gathered from rocks and trees in Palestine. Comp. Psa. 81. 16; Exod. 3. 8. VER. 7. Comp. John 1. 26, 27. *Leteliel*. The thong of the sandal. *Sloop*. A graphic touch preserved by Mark only; "I am not worthy to be his meanest slave." The slight difference in Matthew (3. 11) implies that phrases of this import were used more than once, as John 1. 27 also shows. VER. 8. A comparison between this and the case of John's disciples in Acts 19. 2 (R. V.) shows us how far John's mission went. His baptism implied forgiveness, but he could only teach them to wait for a higher gift. A thorough change of heart and life was theirs, but not the vivifying power which came when the ascended Lord baptized and transformed his Church with the Spirit of fire. *Holy Spirit*. Here contrast ver. 10, without the definite article, meaning not the personal Spirit but his influences. VER. 9. *Nazareth*. Where he had lived since his return from Egypt. He was now thirty years old. Matthew alone records the conversation of Jesus and the Baptist. VER. 10. *He saw*. While praying (Luke) John, however, also saw the Spirit descend (John 1. 32-34). He had previously known Jesus only "according to the flesh;" the heavenly vision is the attestation of convictions formed before. *Reading* (so read). A vivid word. So at his death the temple veil was "rent" for the same divine presence to pass forth. After this the heavens were "standing open" (John 1. 51; Acts 7. 55). *Dore*. The emblem of peace (Matt. 10. 16), contrasted with the eagle of judgment (Rev. 8. 13). Gen. 1. 2 speaks of the Spirit "brooding" upon the waters, whence Milton's sublime image (*P. L.*, 1. 30). Perhaps it was a dove-haired flame "abiding" upon his head (John 1. 32). A very early tradition speaks of this flame, which recalls Acts 2. 3. VER. 11. Voices came to him twice after, Matt. 17. 5 (a repetition of this; see our note in *The Stud.*, January, 1888, p. 9), and John 12. 28-30. Notice how this verse brings together the persons of the Trinity.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Before a military procession marches a company of pioneers, wearing furry hats and carrying axes; men to open the way before the army. Such a man was John the Baptist. . . . An account of John's birth and

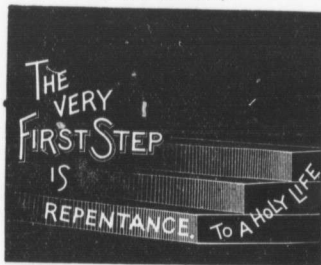
early history....His mission: 1) To reform. 2) To prepare for Christ. 3) To point to Christ....The place where he preached and baptized. Draw a rough map of Palestine, and show the wilderness of Judea, the Jordan valley, Nazareth, and Jerusalem....The preaching of John. (See the Analytical and Biblical Outline.)....The requirements of the gospel. (See Thoughts for Young People.)...Find in this lesson about Christ: 1) His origin. 2) His rank. 3) His mission. 4) His preparation....Some one has said of John that his preaching was like the headlight on an advancing locomotive, a narrow light, but strong, and warning of danger....Wherein should we, and wherein should we not, take John the Baptist for our example?

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 3: Preparing the way, 513. Ver. 6: Rough garments; locust food, 632. Ver. 7: The sandal, 832; the shoe-latchet, 791....FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Ver. 1: Poetical, 3041. Ver. 2: Prose, 3638, 11156. Ver. 3: rose, 9133, 10543. Ver. 4: Prose, 6685. Ver. 6: Prose, 9136; Poetical, 3632. Ver. 7: Prose, 9662, 9771, 9677. Ver. 8: Prose, 3988, 3001, 9355. Ver. 11: Prose, 5783.

Joy to the world! the Lord is come.
Come, Christian children.
The name of our salvation.
Grace! 'tis a charming sound.
Father, lead me.
Dare to do right.
Will Jesus find us watching?
My Father is rich.
One little hour for watching.
Soldiers who to Christ belong.
Give me some work to do.
Stand up, stand up for Jesus.

Blackboard.

BY J. E. PHIPPS, ESQ.



OBJECT OF THE ILLUSTRATION. To show the steps leading to a holy life, as set forth in John's preaching. These were, 1. Repentance; 2. Faith in the coming Messiah; 3. Forgiveness, and, lastly, Baptism, signifying the cleansing from the evil of the old life. Draw the steps with white chalk, and see that the lines forming the ends of the steps are made quite strong, while the lines on the edges of the steps, lengthwise, gradually diminish. In speaking of the different steps, write the words "Faith," etc., on the spaces.

Here are two other exercises that may be used in connection with the diagram:

THREE JOINED TOGETHER.
PROPHECY, } THE GOSPEL,
REPENANCE, } FAITH,
PARDON, } OBEDIENCE.

THREE IN ONE.
FATHER, } VOICE,
SON, } JESUS,
SPIRIT. } DOVE.

John's Mission { to tell about Jesus.
My Mission }

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," the beginning of a new year, and the beginning of faith in many a little heart, let us hope!

O, to know that the real beginning in every life is in preparing the way for the Lord! And who can prepare it for another heart, who has not first walked therein? Let us receive the Gospel, dear teachers, as we enter upon the work of another year, that we may in a true, deep sense, give it.

LESSON THOUGHT. "I am the way."

John the Preacher. Print "Messiah." Tell what the name means, and that the Jews were looking for such a one. Why? Because he had been promised. Read from the Bible the prophecy in our lesson. It was God's promise. The Jews were watching for the "messenger" who always went before the king when he traveled, to see that there was a straight path for him to go in. Print "John," "Messenger," in such a way that by printing in the connecting words you will make the sentence, "John was the messenger of Jesus, the Messiah." Make a word-picture of John; his strange dress; his ringing words; the great crowds that gathered about him, and the strange baptismal service in the waters of the Jordan. A picture of the scene will help to make it real to the children.



Jesus the Messiah. Tell how John prepared the way for the coming of Jesus: he called the people to be sorry for sin and to put it away. Jesus comes to the heart. His way must be prepared in the heart. Even while John spoke, Jesus came.

Did he come like a king? No; he came like any man, and was baptized as the others were. Then God spoke out of heaven and called him his beloved Son. This was to show all the people that Jesus was truly the Messiah. The Spirit of God in the form of a pure dove rested upon him, and the people saw it. So the King came to the Jews. Does he come to us?

The Way Is the Heart. Jesus the Messiah wants to enter every heart. He will enter every open door. How can we open our heart-door? Sorrow for sin and turning away from it opens the door. This is *repentance*. Sorrow alone is not repentance. There must be putting away sin—all naughty temper, self-will, wicked ways and words. There is only One strong enough to do this for us. Jesus said, "I am the Way."

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Who is this coming out of the wilderness? Such a strange man in his ways. A camel gave him its hair for his clothing. Around his waist is strapped a girdle of skin that some other creature gave him. His food? The locusts furnish that, and the bees give flavor to it. Where does he sleep? Ask the birds of the air and flocks of the field. Who saw this son of the wilderness first? Did he appear to a solitary toiler in the field?

Did he burst upon a group at a house-door? Did the jostling crowd of traffic see him striding into a village market-place? Wherever he appeared a peremptory voice came with this man from the wilderness, "Repent!" It was a cry that somehow went straight and quick to the consciences of men. And now see! He is leading them to the Jordan. O, river sweeping from the mountains down to the sea, stay awhile thy restless flow. The great preacher of repentance needs thee. Canst not take away the stain of sin? Then let thy waters suggest it, the deeper cleansing of the Spirit of God. There he stands, the great evangelist. How the crowd throngs about him! Why, on Bethel's slopes, over in Jerusalem, down in Hebron, on plain and hill, in lonely ways and crowded streets, men hear of him and are drawn to him. All over the land echoes the Jordan-cry, "Repent!" The farmer quits his field, the artisan his bench, the scribe his ink-horn. Who are these that hold up their heads in pride, coming with pretentious phylacteries and a supercilious air to Jordan and its wonderful preacher? Whoever you are, O Pharisee, John the Baptist will have a word like a sword-blade for you. And thou publican, hard-handed, money-grabbing, thou too hast come to Jordan to hear

some sharp-edged reproof. But who is this John the Baptist? "The Messiah?" people ask. "That Great Prophet?" "One mightier is coming," he tells them. Will the one mightier be Messiah? O how mighty! A great war-prince riding in a great golden chariot, a glorious army around him! When will he come to Jordan? O that the ground might quake with his chariot-wheels to-day! How many are astril with interest! How many long to know about this glorious coming One! But good people, don't be starting round for a prince and his-ning chariot-wheels. Make room for this plain man desiring baptism. Make way, make way! Don't crowd there! But why does John look so intently at this last comer? Under his simple garments, do you catch the flash of a royal robe, O Baptist? Why this shrinking? Why this reluctance to baptize? Ah, that countenance of the stranger lifted toward the sky as if to receive some crown swiftly coming down, those opening heavens, that descending Spirit, that Father's voice in blessing! The blessed Trinity there at the Jordan! What wonder if men saw a strange awe in the face of John, who bare record to this exaltation of Jesus! Messiah, the One mightier, had come.

A. D. 27.]

LESSON II. A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

[Jan. 13.]

Authorized Version.

Revised Version.

Mark I. 21-34.

[Commit to memory verses 21, 22.]

JESUS TEACHING



21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

24 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

25 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

26 And they were all amazed, inasmuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

27 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

28 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simeon and Andrew, with James and John.

29 But Simeon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

30 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

31 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

32 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

33 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.



21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching; for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes. 22 And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, inasmuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching? with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. And the report of him went out straightway every-where into all the region of Galilee round about.

23 And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simeon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simeon's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her; and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

24 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and he suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

INDUCTIVE NOTES.

I. Study of General Features.

"Sec. 1. Recall your definition of a gospel: An account of (a) the deeds and (b) teachings of Jesus, written by a contemporary for the purpose of (c) inducing or (d) confirming faith in him. Sec. 2. Note how necessary to this purpose were the facts of Lesson 1, which

show that Christ had such a forerunner as God's word promised. Sec. 3. Read Mark I. 1-20, observing that vers. 2-8 showed how Christ's way was prepared, vers. 9-13 how Christ himself was prepared for the work he was to do, and that vers. 14-20 begin the story of Christ's work—vers. 14-15 (a) his preaching; vers. 16-20 (b) his call of four fishermen to discipleship.

does not simply add, but contrasts the scene of ver. 32 to that of ver. 31. First, Jesus with the four who are full of silent wonder (John 21, 12), reclining together at a quiet, restful meal in stillness of the late afternoon of the Sabbath in some retired street, it may be: then, at dusk, with set of sun and the end of the Sabbath, the clatter of hurrying foot-steps and echoing voices and the turbulence of an eager crowd choking the narrow street before the outer door. **Sun did set.** Was it not enough to say "at even"? Why add this? When did the Jewish day end? Why wonder but the sick be brought before sun-down? What day was it (ver. 21)? Brought.... asked for miracles. They were like all men, too unaware of their deepest need. **33. All the city.** So aware of their deepest need. Some have brought one looking out from the house on the crowd would say. **Gathered.** They have brought afflicted friends, but the majority who had heard the excited accounts of the miracle-working could not sleep until they had endeavored to see with their own eyes. **34. Many.**

HOME READINGS.

- J. A Sabbath in the life of Jesus. Mark 1, 21-28.
 Th. A Sabbath in the life of Jesus. Mark 1, 29-34.
 W. Prophecy fulfilled. Luke 4, 14-21.
 Th. Doing good on the Sabbath. Luke 13, 10-17.
 F. Sabbath healings. Matt. 12, 10-21.
 S. Healing in the synagogue. Mark 3, 1-8.
 S. Blessings of Sabbath-keeping. Isa. 58, 6-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.

As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Luke 4, 16.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 151, Dominion Hymnal.
 The Lord of Sabbath let us praise,
 In concert with the blest.
 No. 152, Dominion Hymnal.
 O day of rest and gladness,
 O day of joy and light.
 No. 153, Dominion Hymnal.
 With joy we hail the sacred day,
 Which God has called his own.

TIME.—37 A. D.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

RULERS.—Same as in Lesson 1.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The authority of Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- In the Synagogue.**
 - What change in the life of Jesus is recorded in the first sentence of the lesson?
 - How did his work in Capernaum begin?
 - Had synagogue attendance been his custom in the past? Luke 4, 16.
 - What specimen of his method of teaching does Matthew furnish?
 - What singular experience did he have on this Sabbath?
 - What did the cry of the unclean spirit and the act of Jesus together prove?
 - What two things did the miracle prove concerning Christ's?
 - His power over.....
 - His compassion on the.....
 - What was its effect on his local fame?
 - What was the purpose of all his miracles?
 - In the House.**
 - At the close of the synagogue service where did Jesus go?
 - What light does the circumstance throw on Peter's life and circumstances?
 - What peculiar want was here made known to him?
 - Why did they tell him of her?
 - What does it show they expected of him?
 - What was the effect upon the populace of these two miracles?
 - How did Jesus meet this display of desire and belief?
- Practical Teachings.**
- Jesus was a regular keeper. Are you?
 Jesus was a regular church-goer. Are you?

Have you reflected how few of Jesus's mighty works are recorded (John 20, 30; 21, 25)? **Suffered not to speak.** Do you know what they wanted to say (ver. 25 and Luke 4, 41). Notice the word *speak*; that is, he would not let them open their mouths as soon as it was apparent what they wanted to say. Comp. Acts 16, 18. **They knew.** Did the four yet fully know? Compare John 1, 29 with Mark 8, 29-33. Did Jesus begin his work by preaching that he was the Messiah? See ver. 15. How did he produce the conviction that he was the Messiah (ver. 27; John 3, 2.)

III. Application.

[See principles of "Application," Lesson 1.]
 Compare the main facts of the lesson with facts of present. Does Christ teach now? By whom and how? And with authority? Is the teaching that was originally supported by a miracle any less significant now? Almost every verse is rich in suggestive parallels or contrasts. Search for them.

Jesus was full of sympathy for every needy one. Are you?
 He gave what God had given to him to give, freely. Do you?

See how faith goes with its wants to Jesus.—"They tell him of her." "Do you thus tell him your want?"

Hints for Home Study.

- Find why Christ Jesus left Nazareth.
- Were his father and mother born deaf?
- Find all you can about Capernaum.
- See if there is evidence that he had more than four disciples at this time.
- What was the manner of Sabbath observance among the Jews?
- Find what you can about the belief in demons among the people.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- In the Synagogue, v. 21-28.**
 - What was a synagogue?
 - On what day did Jesus enter it?
 - What did he do there?
 - What did the people think of his teaching?
 - Why did he teach with authority? Heb. 1, 1, 2.
 - Whom did Jesus meet in the synagogue?
 - What did the evil spirit say?
 - What did Jesus command the spirit to do?
 - What then took place?
 - What did the people think when they saw the miracle?
 - Can you name a miracle like this which still takes place? 2 Cor. 5, 17.
- In the House, v. 29-34.**
 - Into whose house did Jesus go?
 - Who went with him?
 - What were these men? Matt. 10, 1, 2.
 - What good work was done by Jesus?
 - Would you like to have him come to your house?
 - What does Jesus say in Rev. 3, 20?

Teachings of the Lessons.

- Where in this lesson do we find—
- An example in attending the public worship?
 - An example in teaching others God's word?
 - An example in bringing our friends to Jesus?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

- Find the first instance when the wisdom of Jesus astonished people who heard him.
 Another miracle of Jesus wrought on the Sabbath day in the synagogue.
 An instance when Jesus cast out an evil spirit from a little boy.
 What is said in Heb. 10 about attendance on public worship?
 Find when and how the disciples named in this lesson first met Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- What did Jesus do after his baptism? **He preached and worked miracles.**
 To what city had he now come? **To Capernaum.**
 Where did he go on the Sabbath? **Into the synagogue.**
 What did he do there? **He taught the people.**
 Why were the people astonished? **Because he spoke as one who had the right.**

What was his word to them? "**I say unto you.**"
How did he show that he had power also? **By working miracles.**

What poor man was in the synagogue? **A man with an evil spirit.**

What did the evil spirit make him do? **Strange and wicked things.**

What did Jesus command? **That the evil spirit depart.**

Did it obey? **Yes; for Jesus has all power.**

To whose house did Jesus then go? **To Peter's house.**

Who was very ill there? **Peter's wife's mother.**

What did Jesus do? **He lifted her up.**

What came back to her? **Health and strength.**

What did these miracles show? **That Jesus was the Son of God.**

Words with Little People.

What Jesus can do to-day.

He can speak the words of life to us.

He can cast out evil spirits with his word.

He can cure sick souls and bodies.

Because he is

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

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What great change now occurs in the life of Jesus? **He moved from Nazareth to Capernaum.**
2. How did he begin his life in Capernaum? **As his custom was, etc.**
3. Who recognized him as the Son of God? **An evil spirit.**
4. How did he show his power as the Son of God? **He cast out the demon.**
5. What was the effect upon the populace? **They spread his fame through Galilee.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. How may you divide that duty?
Into two parts: What we have to believe; and what we have to do.
3. Who is the great Teacher of religion?
Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Redeemer.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Aspects of the Saviour.

I. HIS WORSHIP.

He entered into the synagogue, v. 21.

"To fulfill all righteousness." Matt. 3. 15.

"Not forsaking the assembling." Heb. 10. 25.

II. HIS TEACHING.

Astonished at his doctrine, v. 22.

"Never man spakelike this." John 7. 46.

"The word of God is quick." Heb. 4. 12.

III. HIS HOLINESS.

The Holy One of God, v. 24.

"That holy thing . . . Son of God." Luke 1. 35.

"The Holy One and the Ju t." Acts 3. 14.

IV. HIS POWER.

Came out of him . . . he came out, vs. 25, 26.

"All power is given unto me" Matt. 28. 18.

"Every knee should bow." Phil. 2. 9-11.

V. HIS MERCY.

Took her by the hand, v. 31.

"Himself bare our sicknesses." Matt. 8. 17.

"Touched with . . . our infirmities." Heb. 4. 15.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

How We Should Treat Jesus.

1. We should listen to the teachings of Christ with reverence, and regard them as an authority. In the gospels we may read what he taught; and we should look upon his words as spoken to us, vs. 21, 22.
2. If even the devils recognized Jesus as the Holy One of God, how much more should we regard him, and

obey his words? He speaks to the world, not as an ordinary teacher, but as the Son of God, vs. 23, 24.

3. There are evil spirits in men now—spirits of drink, of unbelief, of wickedness. Let us look to Christ to cast them out, and for this purpose let us bring men under the Saviour's influence, vs. 25, 26.

4. We should do all in our power to spread the name of Jesus abroad, and to make all men know of his power, vs. 27, 28.

5. Like the disciples, let us welcome Christ to our homes, and treat him there as an honored guest, v. 29.

6. Let us bring our needs and our troubles to Jesus, assured that he will give us aid in them, vs. 30-34.

English Teacher's Notes.

LET us take the first words of our Golden Text as the key by which we may open up the teaching of the passage to-day: "It came to pass, as his custom was." We may take this "Sabbath in the life of Jesus" as an example of his ordinary life, and further still, of his character as manifested on earth, and therefore of what he, the unchangeable, is, and does, now.

The outside public always appreciates a peep into the daily life of kings and potentates, or otherwise distinguished persons. I remember reading, in a book describing the homes of well known characters, a sketch of Sunday morning at the country-seat of the Prince of Wales. The home and habits of Carlyle have been almost too minutely described, and many are the authors whose ordinary fashion of living has been made more or less familiar to the reading public. But, after all, these things, though they possess for most people a certain degree of interest, do not actually concern us. They do not affect our own lives, our hopes, or our prospects. It may be very pleasant to read of the acts of kindness performed by celebrated persons, but it makes no practical difference to us. It is with a very different feeling that we listen to what is told of those with whom we are likely to be in any way connected. "Will she love me?" asked a young girl to whom a situation was proposed as companion to an invalid lady. The lady's character and habits were of keen personal interest to her because they would affect her own life.

The picture drawn in the passage to-day is of interest as giving us a glimpse into the most remarkable life the world has ever seen. It is one of the few complete days described in the four biographies of our Lord, and Mark alone gives it in its distinctness. Notice the five different points in it:

First, there is our Lord's attendance at the synagogue, which the Golden Text informs us was according to his "custom," and his teaching there. Second, there is the manifestation of his power in casting out the evil spirit from the demoniac. Third, there is his loving care for his friends; they have only to tell Him of the sickness of Peter's wife's mother, and with his own touch he heals her. Fourth, there is his acceptance of human service, for the healed one immediately arose, and "ministered" to him and his disciples. Fifth, there is his

gracious compassion for all, shown in his treatment of the multitude of sufferers who thronged around his door after sunset.

Does this revelation of the character and habits of Jesus affect ourselves and our classes? Since he is the One "with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4. 13), it aff us very closely.

For such as he then was he is now—"the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." He is the great Teacher from whom we can learn just those things we most need to know, and just those things which none else can teach us (comp. ver. 22). He has almighty power, a power which may be either exercised for us or against which we shall struggle in vain. He is close at hand for all his friends; they have but to tell him their needs and he cares for them. He is still to be "ministered to"—as to earthly needs (such as Peter's mother-in-law cared for on that Sabbath) in the persons of the sufferers and the poor—as to spiritual needs in the persons of the ignorant and the erring. And he is still at home to all who are willing to bring their needs to him, like the suffering ones who gathered round that door in Capernaum.

With which of these habits, if I may so call them, of our Lord have we made practical acquaintance? In the garden where I have been sitting to-day that spot is brightest and gayest on which the sun shines most uninteruptedly. That life will be the brightest and most fruitful which is affected and influenced by all that shines out of this "Sabbath in the life of Jesus."

The Lesson Council.

Question 3. What is meant by the possession of unclean spirits?

It is impossible to explain the many statements of the New Testament, or the words and acts of our Lord with reference to this class of cases, except by the theory that evil spirits or demons actually gained control of certain persons, and tormented them in various ways. The theory of insanity or disease from natural causes, although it might account, in many of the cases, for the form of bodily or mental disorder manifested, will not explain the fact that Christ distinctly recognized the presence and agency of evil spirits, spoke to them, commanded them to "Come out," and discoursed somewhat at length with his disciples on the nature and habits of these "unclean spirits." Our Lord was neither deceived nor a deceiver, hence there must have been actual possession by wicked and malicious spirits.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

That evil spirits from without did take possession of persons in Christ's time is not unreasonable. Each bad man is possessed by his own bad spirit, which engenders disease and insanity in his body. Why is it incredible that other evil spirits should take hold of our bodily organs and work similar mischief? Do we know enough of spirit life to affirm that they cannot? Our ignorance of the unseen world ought to make us cautious how we dogmatize in the face of Jesus.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

More than twenty times in the New Testament reference is made to this fact of demoniacal possession. It is hard to understand the phenomenon from present observation of human conditions. It seems as if the

servants of Satan were then permitted to control the brains and nervous systems of persons either sinful or weak and make havoc with their whole life, playing upon their delicate structure as a maniac upon an organ. This strange inroad of evil may be in contrast to the entrance of the Spirit of God into human life in the incarnation of the Son of God, and may belong almost solely to this striking period in the history of the contact of the world of spirit with the world of man.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

The conversations of Christ with the unclean spirits, and his references to them, clearly indicate a possession of individuals by an evil power foreign to them, and having a distinct personality; a part of the forces of the "prince of the power of the air." It is not necessary to infer that the persons thus dominated were vicious, but rather are they classed in the New Testament among the afflicted.—*Rev. Olin B. Coit.*

4. Why did Christ work miracles?

His object was three-fold: 1. To do good; to relieve the suffering and comfort the afflicted. 2. To give proof of his divine character and mission—fulfilling the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and doing such works as no man can do except God be with him. 3. To foreshadow the results that follow the establishment of his kingdom on earth; and to typify the analogous work of spiritual healing and restoration of lost powers to the sin-diseased souls of men, accomplished through his Gospel.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

Jesus Christ wrought miracles to prove his origin and mission. They were his credentials that he was the Son of God. They manifested forth his glory as such. Such claims as he made required such works.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

Because he had to. It was in him, as it was in Grant to crush the rebellion. He saw the sick and was moved with compassion. He knew he could heal them and he did. This will explain the reason of most of his miracles. His soul was stirred at human need, and he did what he could to help; and he could do with the forces which we can only feebly use whatsoever he willed, and so he worked what we call miracles. In some instances he seems to have premeditated his wonder-working, and to have wrought his miracles to convince those about him of his mission from God, that they might trust him and have confidence in the good tidings of love which he brought from the Father.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

Jesus saw men, his brothers, blind, and lame, and suffering. His sympathy led him to make use of the power that was his to heal and restore. Men felt the presence of a higher power, and many who were drawn to him by his marvelous works remained to believe on the truth that he taught.—*Rev. Olin B. Coit.*

Cambridge Notes.

Mark 1. 21-34 (vers. 21-28)—Luke 4. 31-37; vers. 29-34—Matt. 8. 14-17; Luke 4. 38-41).

This lesson raises the profoundly difficult question of "demoniacal possession." Seven cases are recorded in the gospels, and in all there is definite physical or mental disease. Of the latter there are no other examples given. The symptoms, minutely described, suit unknown maladies perfectly, and the color of contemporary Jewish superstition would easily evoke a recognition of satanic agency. Nor would the evangelists conceive it their mission to controvert popular errors in psychology any more than in other science. The names of C. A. Row and Professor Bruce are enough to show that no skeptical bias inspires this attractive

theory (see Bruce's *Miraculous in Gospels*, pp 172, 173, 174). We cannot admit, however, that the very able argument just cited weakens the decisive evidence of such declarations as Matt. 12, 43-45. Could Jesus by such words have deliberately sanctioned a popular error in the realm of spiritual (surely not mere scientific) truth? The theory, in fact, inevitably lowers on some side our conception of him, and this result is directly opposed to the growing tendency of modern thought. We believe there is no real difficulty in the following statement: Possession was a real tyranny of evil spirits over the physical and mental powers of men, fixing not necessarily on the morally reprobate, but on highly wrought nervous temperaments. A special outburst of such demoniac powers was natural in the age which prepared and witnessed the coming of Christ. But they may perhaps be recognized even now in fields of missionary enterprise, and at home in such varying phenomena as those of "religious mania," or even delirium tremens. This is not denying the agency of definite psychological laws; such laws, which are the instruments of God's own working, may become the weapons of Satan.

VER. 21. Jesus and his four disciples are now entering the thriving town on the lake, which was henceforth to be called "his own city," since Nazareth had rejected him (Luke 4, 20, 31). *Highway*. St. Mark's favorite expression, setting forth the decisiveness and vigor with which he loves to invest the Saviour's actions. For the manner of it in teaching compare Luke 4, 16-21; the substance of it in verses 14, 15. VER. 22, Comp. Matt. 7, 28. It was no longer "Rabbi X, ben Y, said, ..." but the majestic "I say unto you" of One whose whole life yet showed a humility utterly alien to the rabbins. VER. 23. It seems implied that the demoniac was drawn thither by the knowledge of the Lord's presence, a strange fascination conquering the demon's opposition. VER. 24. The cry is from the demon through the demoniac's voice. We, "The demons have a common cause."—*Bengel Nazareth*. Bengel observes that the enemy may well have watched with eager anxiety the life which that name recalled. *Destroy*. A clear example of the use of this word without implying the termination of existence. *I know*. Though men did not, Comp. James 2, 19. *Holy One*. Comp. Luke 4, 34; John 6, 69; Acts 3, 14; 4, 27, 30; Rev. 3, 7; 6, 10. The "unclean" demon fixes on that attribute of Jesus which expresses his innate repulsion. VER. 25. *Rebuked*. "Such rebuke belongs to God alone."—*Bengel, Ho'd*. Literally, "be muzzled," the command addressed to the angry sea (chap. 4, 39). Jesus refuses such testimony as being probably intended to encourage blasphemy like Matt. 9, 31; comp. Acts 16, 18. VER. 26. The convulsion and the departing demon's shriek recur in chap. 9, 26. VER. 27. Mark is always careful to depict the effect of the Lord's words and works on the spectators. Here their amazement is silently contrasted with the noisy and ineffectual incantations of Jewish exorcists. VER. 28. Clearly this does not denote the miracle as the first one wrought in Galilee, but only as the first of its kind. The opposition between this verse and John 2, 11 is about as probable as the rest of Strauss's discoveries. VER. 29. This section is for obvious reasons unpopular at Rome. Peter's wife was living (1 Cor. 9, 5); moreover, he still had a house, whereas to be a proper ascetic he ought to have given it up long before their wandering life made it necessary. *Fever*. Luke, the physician, gives it the technical name, "a high fever;" Matthew says Jesus "saw" her; Mark, "they told him;" Luke, "they besought him." The last two actions were thus super-

fluous. Notice Luke's vivid additions. VER. 31. *Left*. Entirely and at once, so that she was strong enough to attend to her guests. Matthew's "ministered unto him" gives a glimpse of the loving eagerness with which she would try to show her gratitude. VER. 32. Religious scruples forbade their bringing them during the Sabbath, that is, before sunset. VER. 33. A similar vivid hyperbole is in Matt. 3, 5. The "door" is Simon's. VER. 34. He would not allow the fleeing demons one word, for he would not be proclaimed Messiah by such lips, nor proclaimed at all just now.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Give a general view of Christ's ministry in Galilee: 1) Its place in his life, the second year of his public work, the first having been in Judea. 2) Its duration, about a year. 3) Its character, teaching, and miracles. 4) Its results, popularity, many disciples, and the choice of the twelve. ... Locate Capernaum, drawing map of Sea of Galilee, and showing the towns around it, Tiberias, Magdala, Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gerezsa. Name with each an event in Christ's life. ... Wherein, in this lesson, is Jesus our example? 1) Sabbath-keeping. 2) Church-worship. 3) Teaching others. 4) Opposing Satan. 5) Doing good to men. ... Notice special lines of thought, adapted for teaching, in the Analytical and Biblical Outline, and the Thoughts for Young People. ... Do not delay long on "possession of evil spirits;" state views, but avoid debate. ... Note the word "straightway," a special trait in Mark's gospel, expressive of Christ's energy, activity, and promptness. ... Alexander, when asked how he conquered the world, answered, "By not delaying." ... William Burns, when he volunteered to go as a missionary to China, was asked, "When will you be ready to go?" He answered, "To-morrow morning."

References. FREEMAN. VER. 22: The scribes, 648. FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. VER. 21: Poetical, 2821. VER. 23: Prose, 7959, 7960; Poetical, 3'27. VER. 24: Prose, 9513, 11801. VER. 21: Poetical, 3881; Prose, 9355.

Come and worship.
Lord, this day thy children meet.
Blessed hour of prayer,
Once more 'tis eventide.
My Sabbath song.
This is the day of light.
O let us be glad.
Thy word, almighty Lord.
Come, said Jesus' sacred voice.
A wonderful joy.
Take the name of Jesus with you.
What a Friend we have in Jesus!

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. Jesus the strong One.

INTRODUCTORY. Tell that after Jesus was baptized he went away into the wilderness for forty days, where God showed him many things. Then he came back to Galilee and began preaching. A map will be of much service here. Tell how he called his first disciples, and then went into Capernaum and taught in the synagogue.

Jesus teaching. Who speaks in the church, in these days? Yes, the minister. Jesus stood up before all the people, and spoke to them. Ask how children think he would look and speak. A child has a sure instinct concerning the divine Saviour. What did he tell

them about? Ah! they were in the dark. They needed Jesus, and did not know he was there! Tell how they listened to him with wonder. He talked like one who knew all the truth. He could do this, for he was the Truth itself!

Jesus subduing. There in the synagogue, that Sabbath day, was a man with an evil spirit. An evil spirit makes a person act very badly. Sometimes it talks very loud and angrily; sometimes it strikes and kicks and beats about. Sometimes it is quiet and mocking, but it is always wicked. Evil spirits come from below. Satan loves to send them into hearts.

When this one saw Jesus he began to cry out. He wanted Jesus to go away. He knew that Jesus was God's holy Son, and he was afraid of him. What will Jesus do? Good is stronger than evil. Jesus can subdue Satan. Are you not glad? He told the evil spirit to come out of the man, and it had to obey. Now, when an evil spirit comes into our hearts, we can ask Jesus to send it away, for we know he can do it.



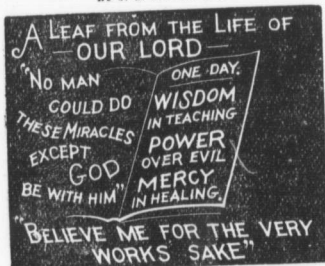
Jesus healing. The work of the Sabbath was not yet done. Jesus was never tired of doing good. When they came out of the synagogue they went to Peter's house. Peter lived in Capernaum. His wife's mother was sick with a fever. Jesus had just sent away sin; now he would send away sickness.

He took hold of her hand, and sickness went away. Health came back to her, and she rose up, and began to wait upon Jesus and his disciples. Then sick people came, and people who had evil spirits, and Jesus healed them all.

"Jesus the same." Print on the board. It was love that made Jesus use his power to help. He can do it to-day. He will, for those who trust him. Believe that he is stronger than Satan, and he will save you from the power of the evil one.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



The life of Jesus would make a book of many leaves, on each of which would be written nothing but acts of love, wisdom, and power, all divine. This diagram represents but one leaf—the record of a Sabbath day.

APPLICATION. Every day I write, by word, thought, and deed, something on the leaf that makes up my life's record.

Lesson Word Pictures.

A Sabbath with Jesus! O, blessed privilege, this day with the Saviour! To be with our Lord, to see his very

face—the king in his beauty—to hear his own compassionate voice, to witness his marvelous works—what an exalted honor! But look, he is going into the synagogue. We follow, and what a curious, pressing crowd we find filling all the seats, blocking the aisle! And there is Christ, the magnet who has attracted this eager throng. You can see his serious, gentle face, so loving and strong, so honest and true, so unselfish and pure. You hear his discourse, so direct, wise, powerful. But what face is that over there in the synagogue at our left; so unlike Christ's, the very opposite of the Saviour's in its expression, so malicious and revengeful, passionate and deceitful? It is like a dark thundercloud torn by lightning strokes. It seems as if some hateful one within the soul were looking out of those dark, hopeless eyes. But hark! That sudden outcry, and in the synagogue! It is that dark spirit, behind those gloomy eyes, shrieking as he sees Jesus. It is the spirit of evil confronted by the Master and crying out in alarm before him. How the people all turn, rise in their seats, and press upon one another in their eager straining to see and hear! And Jesus, how calm and self-controlled in this hour of a supreme test! His eyes burn and flash. His voice commands and reproves.

"Hold thy peace and come out of him!"

What! bidding that spirit leave the soul that has been an unclean den for his hiding? Does Jesus know how strong he is, how he can convulse and tear and throw his victim? And that spirit tears him now, throws him, and leaves him white and hushed and prostrate on the floor of the synagogue. But these are the convulsions of departure. The spirit has forsaken the man and fled in defeat from the synagogue. O, how awed and wondering are all the people who are out to-day in attendance upon the services of the synagogue! What a tumult of admiration, awe, and praise! The services are over, Jesus has left, and now let us follow him. Let us keep as near to him as possible; see all that we can, hear all that we can, this day with Jesus. How the people throng after him as he leaves the synagogue! How they hang around the door of that house which next the Saviour enters! Look within this room that is still and secluded. There is a poor woman, the old mother of Simon's wife, burning up with fever on that bed. But O, they have bent down to her, farnucco-couch and whispered that Jesus has come! How her eyes light up with hope! Will he not help her? Yes, he has come into that very room. His sympathy goes straight to that bed. His strength stoops down to her, gently lays hold upon her, raises her, and lo! healed through and through, made strong, she serves him and his companions in loving hospitality. But the sun is going down. Its glory turns the clouds into a chariot of Jehovah. The long shadows fall across hill and plain. But whence that stir at the door! Why, come this way and look down out of this window. What a crowd! O, how many are the crippled, blind, wasted, demon-haunted ones that friends have brought here! And all eyes are turned toward the door so anxiously, eager to catch some loving glance and hear some healing word. He comes! There he is in the doorway. Cooling are the shadows of the evening that permits this gathering, but more blessed the shadow of Jesus that falls across the weary and wasted! And what healing, what comforting, what saving! We turn to go away. We leave him in this house of Simon and Andrew. Our day with Jesus is over. Ah, soul of mine! how much better is to-day than that day, for the King abideth ever in thine heart. All hours are passed with him, and greatest miracle dost thou see: thine own self subdued to a place at his feet.

A. D. 27.]

LESSON III. HEALING OF THE LEPER.

Authorized Version.

Revised Version.

[Jan. 20.

Mark 1. 35-45.

[Commit to memory verses 40, 41.]



35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go forth into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and said unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away:

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

35 And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him: and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee, and he saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for to this end came I forth. And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils.

40 And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And being moved with compassion, he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will: be thou made clean. And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean.

43 charged him, and straightway sent him out, and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to spread abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

INDUCTIVE NOTES.

I. Study of General Features.

Sec. 1. Recall definition of Geo-pol, (a) and (b), Lesson II, Section 1. Sec. 2. Read the lesson and ascertain, (a) chief person, (b) his acts. Sec. 3. Underscore the words in each division which describe the acts of the chief person thus: (1) "Departed," ver. 35, and "preached throughout all Galilee," ver. 39; (2) "Saith, Be thou clean," ver. 41; (3) "Was without in desert places," ver. 45. Sec. 4. Study the connections between divisions (1), (2) and (3). In (1) where is Jesus preaching? ver. 39. In (3) where is he? ver. 45. What led him to forsake towns and synagogues? Was it not what the man in ver. 45 did? Do you see then how necessary (2) is to explain (3)? Sec. 5. Now join to (1) the ten or more subordinate circumstances of time, occasion, result, which belong to it, thus: Before daylight Jesus arose, left Simon's house and "departed" from Capernaum into a place where there were no houses, and engaged in prayer. When Simon and others found him there he explained that he wished to preach in other towns; "And he preached throughout all Galilee." Connect in the same way with (2) and (3) the subordinate circumstances that belong to them. Combine (1), (2), and (3) with all their circumstances in one sentence, and write it down. Sec. 6. Study the connection of this lesson with the two preceding ones. Note in vers. 22, 27, 28, 31, 37 a gradual increase of popular interest in Jesus. Observe in ver. 45 a climax of interest, people not merely attending synagogue preaching in towns and cities, as in ver. 39, but tramping in great crowds far into the open country to hear him. Sec. 7. If you detect the natural sequence from Lessons I to II and of II to III you will enjoy combining the facts of the three lessons in a single statement, somewhat as follows:

After the forerunner had prepared the people for the Messiah's advent, Jesus came, and when he had been fitted for his work, by baptism, the descent of the Spirit, and temptation, he began to preach in Galilee. In the presence of four chosen disciples at Capernaum he taught, and wrought miracles which so astonished the people

that they spread his fame throughout the country. Leaving Capernaum he made a preaching tour through the towns of Galilee, but a leper whom he had cured, such excitement that he was at length obliged for a season to stay outside the towns and cities of Galilee.

II. Study of Details.

[Read parallel passages, Luke 4. 43-44; 5. 12-14; Matt. 4. 23, 24; 8. 3-4.]

I. Jesus Begins a Tour of Preaching and Healing (vers. 35-39). **35. Before day.** In Greek, "while it was still night." **Rose.** From the exertions of the preceding day he may have been too weary to sleep. Why this detail of time? (Luke 4. 42). Of Simon said (ver. 37) explain? **Went out.** From Simon's house, all the rest being asleep. **Departed.** From the town, carefully threading the dark and silent streets. He would have to climb a considerable hill immediately on quitting the town. The hills are rocky there. **And there.** Mark thinks of this place as contrasted with the one he had left. He would be secure from interruption. **Prayed.** In Greek, "began to pray," or "continued in prayer." He had much in his heart, doubtless, to pour out before his Father (Luke 6. 12). Did you ever notice Luke tells us of more instances of Jesus's praying than the other evangelists? **36. Simon.** Why especially named? Is it because he was the host, from whose house Jesus had abruptly retired? **They that were with him.** That is, in the house. Three at least. Any others? (Luke 4. 42). **Followed after.** When they awoke and discovered that he was missing they probably searched the town, and then scoured the open country. **37. And say.** The Greek is vivid; Mark hears Peter speaking the words again. **All are seeking thee.** The whole town is awake; people came very early to the house, and now are out in all directions looking for thee. Doubtless some who had witnessed the cures the evening before had lain awake musing over the strange things (Luke 5. 26) they had seen. What better opportunity for teaching could he desire? Ought he to leave the eager multitudes? Note Luke's additional detail (4. 42). "The multitudes sought after him and would have stayed him that he should not go from them." **38. Saith unto them.** In reply, **Let us go.** Let me go. Why? (Ver. 17.) What did he say to the multitudes? (Luke 4. 43.) Capernaum now is all agog with excitement about the miracles. Not till some time has elapsed will they listen to the teaching which the miracles confirm. See chap. 2. 1, 2. **That I may preach.** Luke, "good tidings of the kingdom of God." Later (chap. 6. 12) they too should

preach. Preaching first, miracles afterward to confirm the preaching. **Came I forth** may mean (a) from Simon's house, (b) from Nazareth (ver. 9), or (c) from the Father. The latter (c) would certainly be John's way of speaking, but not Mark's, perhaps (John 8: 42). The first (a) would be most likely to be understood by Simon and the rest as his meaning. What they tell him is no surprise. He deliberately left Capernaum before dawn, that he might preach elsewhere **39. Went into . . . synagogues.** On the Sabbath, when he could teach (ver. 21). Perhaps they would not be expecting cures on that day (chap. 3: 3), and so would pay the more heed to his teaching. **All Galilee.** When he said "the next towns" he did not reveal his full purpose. He could not at once admit them to the full breadth of his plan. Josephus says that there were two hundred and forty towns and villages in Galilee in his time, but some scholars hesitate about believing him.

II. Jesus Heals a Leper (vers. 40-44). Cometh to him. Notice the word "full." Luke 5: 12. How dared he approach? (Lev. 13: 45, 46.) Read Lev. 13: 17. Do you see from this reference that the disease was made to teach not merely a sanitary but a religious lesson? **40. A leper.** It is well-nigh impossible for the average reader to conceive the physical torture, the utter eclipse of comfort and hope implied by this term. The leprosy was an hereditary disease of the blood and skin, rheumatic, more or less, and incurable. The victim's nose, painful, chronic, and lacerated. The victim was required to dress in mourning, to notify others even of his approach in a loud voice, and to live alone or with other lepers. This dreadful physical scourge was recognized and used by religious teachers as a most impressive picture of the curse of sin and its consequences. Consider such cases as that of Miriam (Num. 12: 10), Gehazi (2 Kings 5: 27), Uzziah (2 Chron. 26: 20). The best account of the Jewish feeling about leprosy is in Lev. chap. 13, 14. It is uncertain whether the leprosy of Scripture exists in modern times or not, though the disease is technically known as elephantiasis and is often identified with it. The writer remembers a hideous figure in the Orient running along by the carriage asking for alms, with vocal organs that had been partially eaten away, and holding up an enormously swollen hand from which some of the finger joints had already dropped. A malady called leprosy prevails in the Sandwich Islands. Within six or seven years one thousand one hundred and fifty lepers were banished to the island of Molokai. Miss Bird describes the parting scene at the taking of the dismal wallings in those who were left, and the agonized parting with friends and relatives clung to the swollen limbs and kissed the glistening, bloated faces of those who were exiled from them forever. I shall never forget." **Him.** How many "hims" in **1 Peter 4: 7**? How many in **Matt. 8: 2**? Do you see a liver-lier, more circumstantial style in these four little separate clauses? **Knelt.** What did the posture mean? (**Matt. 8: 2**) The attitude spoke before words could be pronounced. **Beseeching him.** With his lips close to the ground he uttered his muffled, half-articulate request in his guttural Aramaic. **If thou wilt.** Like our familiar phrase: "If you have a mind to." It is not, if you had a mind to. The man has not given up Jesus's willingness as out of the question. The Greek "if" implies that the sequel will show whether Jesus is willing. He is not to be blamed by whether Jesus is willing to help. His experience, if he doubts Jesus's willingness to help. His perhaps had shown that ninety-nine out of a hundred would religiously shun him. Even the women, though motherly and sisterly tears would sometimes glisten behind their veils, would take good care not to get too near. The only real token of sympathy from the non-leprosy world came from the outcast, unclean dogs (Luke 16: 21). Would not this Rabbi, like the rest, hold his nose, turn his face away, and go off without a word? He would see. **Thou canst.** How much had the man heard of Jesus's miracles? How much had his faith encouraged him to believe the difficulty of cleansing leprosy would not be more hopeless than the expulsion of demons. He may have been convinced from the sermon on the mount (**Matt. 8: 1**) that Jesus from the Jordan and miraculously cleanse him. Doubtless he could do for a nameless beggar as much as for a great military commander. Would he? There was the rub. **Make me clean.** The priest can pronounce me so, but not make me so. **41. Compassion.** He put me so, but not make me so. **41. Compassion.** He thought himself in the leper's place (Heb. 4: 15). He thought

what it would be for him to carry that aching, festering body through an unyielding world. It will be well to seek other instances of Christ's sympathy. Combine in your thought this new trait with that other which the Capernaumites (vers. 22, 27) discovered, and reflect. **Comp. Matt. 8: 3, and Luke 5: 13** with this verse, and answer the question, **Why three gospels? Strengthened forth his hand.** He has not yet spoken. Quintilian says we speak with our hands. What do the extended palm and fingers say? What but a swift reply to the leper's doubt. **I love you!** **Touched him.** The result was inconceivable, as it made Jesus ceremonially unclean (Lev. 13: 45). In the case of Mary (John 12: 3), love does not stop to count the cost. **41. How prompt the response!** Can you imagine the intonation and the look? **Try.** "He gives twice who gives quickly." No resentment at the poor man's implied but unintentional reflection. He accepts the leper's gift, it must be by Jesus's will. Observe how much Jesus, in these two quiet words, claims for himself. **He then made clean.** That is, "Thou art this moment made clean. The imperative was not a command, but a declaration." **42. Straightway.** Mark notices the instantaneousness of the response to the appeal to Jesus (or sympathy. **Made clean.** The impossible had happened, a profound physical change had occurred in the twinkling of an eye. **43. Strictly charged him.** A very strong expression in Greek. It means that Jesus was as earnest in his manner as one is when he angrily threatens another. Same word in chap. 14: 5. The leper cannot make a mistake as to what Jesus expects him to do, and could see in the Master's manner that he meant every word he said. **Sent him out.** Out of his presence. The same word in Acts-16: 13 is translated "thrust out" and may have reference to the gestures, tones, and manner of Jesus as expressing urgency. In his excitement the man would be apt to forget his duty (Lev. 14: 10, 21, 22). **Say nothing.** Accept your wonder and joy to yourself and to God. Jesus knew his man as one that talked too much. So on the demoniac (chap. 5: 19, Rev. Ver.) the duty of reticence is laid. **To Jerusalem,** where the temple was. **44. Show thyself.** The self is to be prominent in the original. The self is to be prominent to present himself to the proper authorities for official scrutiny. **Offer.** Make the prescribed offering. **For thy cleansing.** So Jesus, whose token had driven away leprosy, surely had no need of ceremonial purification, but men, who had no such virtue of authority, did. **He that is clean.** What things? Turn again to Lev. 14: 10, etc. **Unto them.** Whom? Not the priests, but the people. The priests should thus give unintentional but sincere testimony to the work of Christ. The man was intruded with an errand whose dignity he little suspected. **45. But.** Contrasts what he wanted with what he might be expected to do. **Began.** His disobedience was as prompt as Christ's pity had been. **Published much, and to spread abroad.** **Versus.** "Say nothing to any man." Where is the docile and reverent figure of ver. 40? Average human nature. Nine other lepers; so sooner are they cleansed than they go their way and ignore their benefactor (Luke 17: 18). Sincere, no doubt, the fellow was, and full of zeal—the zeal of Rom. 10: 2. He preached in his own way, of course, without the call of chap. 6: 13. He made no official and political application of his cure, doubtless, and put his congregations in such a frame of mind as we read of in John 6: 15. He would make up for obedience by an industry only second to that of ver. 39. **Could no more.** Without producing a popular excitement which frustrated all attempt at teaching. **Quitting.** Comp. 7. He would have to steal in after dark to lodge, and leave before light, as in ver. 35. He could send his disciples into town after food, as in John 4: 8. **Without.** In the suburbs of towns. **Desert places.** Regions of open country where there were no houses. The plural indicates that he still moved about. Word would be passed around (chap. 2: 1) in the populous towns that the prophet was in the fields—east, north, west, or south, and the crowds would swarm out as they did from Gerasa (5: 15, 16) and Samaria (John 4: 30). The crowds could be better managed in the fields than in the cramped and winding streets of a city. What gracious words, how many "sermons on the mount" the surging crowds were privileged to hear! **Come to him.** In spite of the distance and uncertainty of his abiding-place. **From every quarter.** This is the first climax reached in the story of the rapidly rising popularity of Jesus in Galilee, which began with ver. 16.

III. Application.

This lesson is especially abundant in important analogies. Now that you know its contents, inquire: What is my particular spiritual need? To whom am I to apply the facts which Mark presents, and what is the spiritual state of each one? Do you know your pupil's devotional habits? Do you not find thrilling suggestions in thoughts like the following: (a) Finding time for

HOME READINGS.

- M. Healing the leper. Mark 1, 35-45.
 Th. Nainian healed. 2 Kings 5, 8-14.
 W. The ten lepers. Luke 17, 11-19.
 Th. The law of cleansing. Lev. 14, 21-32.
 P. The testimony of miracles. Matt. 11, 1-6.
 S. Cleansing from sin. 1 John 1, 5-10.
 S. Prayer for soul-cleansing. Psa. 51, 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.

As soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. Mark 1, 42.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 69, Dominion Hymnal.
 Come to the Saviour, make no delay,
 Here is his word he has shown us the way.
 No. 71, Dominion Hymnal.
 Why should I wait when Jesus is calling?
 Why should I wait when mercy is free?
 No. 79, Dominion Hymnal.
 Just as I am, without one plea
 But that thy blood was shed for me.

TIME.—27 A. D.

PLACE.—Galilee and the towns about Capernaum.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The God-man.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- Praying.**
 What great lesson is taught to Christians in ver. 35? Was Jesus in the habit of going alone to pray? Find two instances where he went alone at night for this purpose? What was his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount concerning prayer? How was his solitude disturbed?
 - Teaching.**
 Why did Simon and the rest follow him? What was the lesson he taught them concerning his mission? Is there any evidence here that they understood his true character? What was the real reason of the throng seeking him? What was the character of the preaching which he did through their towns? Matt. 4, 17 and 23.
 - Healing.**
 When was it that this incident of healing happened? Matt. 8, 1-2
 What was the nature of this disease? If Christ could heal by a word, what would it prove? Was it a case well enough marked not to allow of doubt as to whether it was leprosy or not? Luke 5, 12.
 What was the effect of the cure?
 For what did Jesus feel the need after this miracle? Luke 5, 16.
 Why do you suppose he prayed so much in these days?
- Practical Teachings.**
 Jesus went early alone to pray. If he needed to pray, how we must need it!
 All men sought him, but not to believe.
 They sought to gaze and wonder. How men now crowd our churches to see or hear a great preacher!
 Here was a man who prayed for cure, believed, received, and then disobeyed.
 His desire moved Christ's great heart to heal, but Christ's desire did not move his heart to obey. He acted like many a man to-day. He sought, he took, he gave back nothing. How is it with you?

Hints for Home Study.

- Find all the instances you can that speak of Jesus as praying.

secret prayer; (b) "let us go"—Christ's call to the preacher; (c) the mistake of judging a man by his outward appearance; (d) the scarcity of sympathy in the world, and the Christian's duty in supplying it; (e) the Christian's reticence and obedience; (f) divine plans frustrated; (h) our missionary duty to the next towns and to the world.

- Find on a map of Palestine ten towns in Galilee to which Jesus may have gone in this preaching tour. B., C., S., M., T., N., S., I. M., J., A.
- Read the accounts given by Matthew and by Luke of these events.
- Where were the desert places to which he could go? Would boats at Capernaum help him any?
- Read the directions for cleansing leprosy in Lev. 14.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- Praying, v. 35.**
 When did Jesus pray?
 Where did he pray?
 Wherein was this prayer an example to us? Matt. 6, 6.
 What is said of Jesus praying in Heb. 5, 7?
 Why do we need to pray more than Jesus needed?
- Teaching, vs. 36-39.**
 Who came to Jesus while he was praying?
 Why did so many people seek Jesus?
 How may we seek him?
 What did Jesus say that he came to do?
 What did he preach? Luke 4, 18, 19.
- Healing, vs. 40-45.**
 Who came to Jesus?
 What is a leper?
 Who only could cure leprosy? 2 Kings 5, 7.
 In what respects is a leper like a sinner?
 How did this man come to Jesus?
 What did Jesus do to him?
 What followed? (Golden Text.)
 What did Jesus command him to do?
 Why did he not do as Christ told him?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

- How and when to pray?
- How to call upon Christ?
- How we should obey Christ?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find an example of Jesus praying all night.
 Of Jesus praying upon a mountain just after and just before a miracle.
 Of Jesus praying in a garden.
 Of a leper who was healed by a prophet.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- Where did Jesus go in the early morning? To a solitary place.
 Whom did he go to meet? God, his Father.
 Why did Jesus need to pray? Because he was man as well as God.
 Who followed him to the place of prayer? Simon Peter and others.
 What did they tell him? That all men were seeking him.
 What did Jesus say! That he must go to other towns.
 What did Jesus do throughout Galilee? He preached, and cast out devils.
 Who came to him for healing? A leper.
 What did the leper say to Jesus? "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."
 What did this show? Strong faith in Jesus.
 What did Jesus do? He healed the leper.
 How did he heal him? By his word of power.
 What did the man do? He went out, and told what Jesus had done.
 Of what is leprosy the type? Of sin.
 Who only can cure sin? God.
 When may a sinner be cured? When he goes to Jesus.

Words with Little People.

IF Thou wilt, Make me clean
 Thou canst, In body,
 In mind,
 In spirit.
 Jesus says, "I will."

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Where did Jesus go on the morning after the Sabbath? To a solitary place to pray.
2. Who found him in his solitude? Simon, Andrew, James, and John.
3. How did he answer their wish that he would return to Capernaum? Let us go into the next town.
4. What peculiar prayer did a leper make to him on this tour? If thou wilt thou canst make me clean.
5. When Jesus answered, "I will," what happened? "As soon as he had spoken," etc.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

4. What do you call his religion? Christianity.
5. Are there any other religions in the world? There is only one Divine Teacher, and only one true religion; but there have been many false teachers and there are many false religions.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Traits of Our Saviour.

I. A PRAYING SAVIOUR.

- Into a solitary place.... prayed.* v. 35.
 "Offered up prayers and supplications," Heb. 5. 7.
 "Praying always with all prayer." Eph. 6. 18.

II. AN ATTRACTIVE SAVIOUR.

- All men seek for thee.* v. 37.
 "Will draw all men unto me." John 12. 32.
 "Out of every kindred." Rev. 5. 9.

III. A LABORIOUS SAVIOUR.

- Let us go... all Galilee.* v. 38, 39.
 "Must work the works," John 9. 4.
 "About my Father's business." Luke 2. 49.

IV. A MIGHTY SAVIOUR.

- Cast out devils.* v. 39.
 "It shall bruise thy head," Gen. 3. 15.
 "Bind the strong man." Mark 3. 27.

V. A TENDER SAVIOUR.

- Moved with compassion.* v. 41.
 "Jesus wept." John 11. 35.
 "Compassion on the multitude." Matt. 15. 32.

VI. A HUMBLE SAVIOUR.

- Say nothing to any man.* v. 44.
 "He shall not strive nor cry." Matt. 12. 16-19.
 "Will magnify the law." Isa. 42. 21.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Christ as our Example.

1. Let us be like Jesus in the habit of prayer. He felt the need of communion with God, and we need it more, for we are conscious of sin in which he did not share. Prayer for the work of the day at the beginning of the day will make the day successful. v. 35.
2. Our prayers should be secret in order to have power. Let us, like Jesus, find a solitary place and a quiet hour for prayer. Our hearts may be alone even in a crowd; and "in the spirit's secret cell" we may have communion with God. v. 35.
3. Let us be like Jesus in a self-denying interest in God's work. Whatever may be our business we should preach the gospel by our words and our influence, and we should live to do good. v. 38.
4. Let us be like Jesus in compassion and sympathy with the afflicted. Our touch may help people in trouble, as his did. Let us not fail to give them our help. vs. 40-42.
5. Let us, like Jesus, seek to have our good deeds concealed rather than sounded abroad. God will see them, and the world will be the better for them; let us not desire to be praised for them. vs. 43, 44.

English Teacher's Notes.

On the shores of the Hawaiian Islands there is frequently a sad sight to be seen—a boat putting off from the shore, conveying unwilling passengers to the island of Molokai, which they are never again permitted to leave. And this not for any crime that they have committed, but simply because a horrible disease has taken hold of them; they are lepers. There may be no sign of it visible, yet, once attacked, they are sent away from home and friends and society to linger on hopelessly till death claims them. In this way the Hawaiian government hopes in time to stamp out the disease, which, among them, takes a highly infectious form. It is generally believed that the leprosy of which we read in the Bible was of a different character, loathsome, but not infectious. Yet the fate of the leper among the Jews was no less sad than that of the banished ones on the island of Molokai. He might associate with others similarly affected, but from the rest of society he had to stand "afar off." He might not approach his friends, he must make his dwelling away from the usual haunts of men; although a demoniac might be found in the synagogues, no leper might enter there. He was an outcast in his native land, and even in sight of his home, shunned of all, because any contact with him produced not actual sickness, but the much dreaded ceremonial defilement.

Not one afflicted with this disease was to be found among the crowd who gathered round that door in Capernaum where the Healer was to be found. Other sufferers were tenderly and eagerly brought by their friends and laid at Jesus's feet. None brought the leper. The man of whom our passage tells might have witnessed the scene "afar off," but he dared not take his place among the crowd. Probably he watched his opportunity, and when the great Healer left the crowded streets of Capernaum to preach the kingdom of God "in other cities also," he followed, and in strong and simple faith drew near to the only One in the land who would not shrink from him, and cast himself upon his mercy.

Here was the living picture of the sinner, lost, outcast, helpless, and hopeless—the emblem in Scripture of that condition spoken of by Paul in Eph. 2. 12: "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

It may be said lepers recognize and feel their sad condition, and sinners do not until awakened by the Spirit of God. True, but all will realize it some day: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out." And it may be said there are many who would gladly bring sinners to Jesus—who lay themselves out to do so. True, but not until Jesus fills their heart, and constrains them by his love. It is only in company with Jesus that his followers have any business to mingle with spiritual lepers. His presence only can preserve from contamination.

The likeness therefore is true throughout, and

the story in our passage is the God-given picture of how it fares with a sinner who casts himself on Jesus.

The law gave the leper no right to approach the Holy One. His approach and his petition were a venture of faith. One moment he knelt there an outcast, helpless, and, as far as human calculation could go, hopeless. The next moment he was a cleansed man, whose right and duty it was to go and pay his tribute of thanksgiving, and to take his place in the community reinstated in all the privileges he had lost, as it seemed, forever. For contempt he now had honor, for repulsion welcome, for misery and desolation health and home. And what effected this marvelous change? One touch, one word of Jesus. It takes no longer now than it did then for Jesus to lay his hand on the sin-bound and guilt-laden, and say, "I will, be thou clean."

The Lesson Council.

Question 5. Why was Christ unwilling to have his miracles mentioned?

He wished to avoid the appearance of ostentation and display, and the inconvenient throng of wonder-seekers that such notoriety would be sure to bring about him, impeding his movements and preventing the carrying out of his plans (ver. 45). In some instances he not only permitted but commanded the person healed to tell what the Lord had done for him, but the circumstances were not always favorable to this, nor were all who had been healed fit persons to represent the Healer and his work to the public.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

It was during his early ministry that Christ charged those whom he healed not to tell of it. The reason is made quite obvious by this fact: At that time his character and mission were not understood; consequently his wonderful works excited the inflammable visions of the people to make him king and break the Roman yoke. Christ had to guard against being involved in their seditious purposes; at a later date the danger would not be so great because he had so signally thwarted their hopes.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

Very early he saw that the mental state of wonder which his loving work brought about led the popular mind away from a readiness to perceive spiritual truth, as very fine rhetoric will sometimes so attract the attention that the thoughts of a sermon are not grasped by an audience. He wanted to reach the soul, and not the body. And so, though he could not refrain from helping the body, he endeavored to prevent the distraction which too much talk about his work for the body would cause. Later, when his seed was sown, he was not unwilling to have his miracles mentioned.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

Jesus did not wish to be sought of men for the sake of the wonders he performed and the cures he wrought. His mission was to their hearts. Their reverence for his marvelous works might arise simply from their superstitious. The many who would throng about him would prove a serious hindrance to the teaching of the truth.—*Rev. Olin B. Colt.*

6. What was the offering for a leper, and of what was it a testimony?

Leprosy was a type of sin. The offering for a leper was consequently not unlike the usual sin-offering. It

consisted of two birds or two lambs offered with elaborate and somewhat complicated ceremonies, which are fully described in Lev. 14. In this case the offering and the official examination of the healed leper would be a testimony or proof to the priests of the genuineness of the cure, and of the divine character of the healer.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

The offering to the priest consisted of two he-lambs without blemish, one ewe-lamb a year old, three tenths ephah of fine flour, mixed with oil, and a log of oil. He was to give this to the priest as a testimony that Christ the healer was not an enemy of the law of Moses, inasmuch as he required him to obey its directions.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D.D.*

"Two living, clean birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet and hyssop." Lev. 14. 4. "Two he-lambs without blemish, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish, three tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour for a meal-offering mingled with oil, and one log of oil." Lev. 14. 10. If the leper is poor the latter offering may be "one he-lamb for a guilt-offering to be waved, . . . and one-tenth part of an ephah of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal-offering, and a log of oil; and two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get." Lev. 14. 21, 22. It was a testimony of the offering of Christ by which our soul-leprosy is removed if "by faith we lay our hand on that dear head of his."—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

The offering for one cleansed of leprosy is minutely described in Lev. 14. 2-33. In this instance the offering was to be a testimony to the priests and people of the concession that Jesus ever made in all essentials to the ceremonial law. The command illustrates the delicate thoughtfulness of Jesus for the man in that his future position should be assured in the congregation.—*Rev. Olin B. Colt.*

Cambridge Notes.

Mark 1. 35-45 (vers. 35-50)—Matt. 4. 23-25; Luke 4. 42-44; vers. 40-45—Matt. 8. 2-4; Luke 5. 12-16).

The two sections of this narrative are separated by the event of Luke 5. 1-11, and also by preaching in Judea, which is only evidenced in the Synoptist gospels by the true reading of Luke 4. 44 (R. V. marg.), though perhaps suggested by Matt. 4. 25. The Judean ministry is of course the special subject of John's gospel. With regard to leprosy, it is important to remember the true meaning of the Levitical ordinances. The disease was not transmitted by mere casual contact with a sufferer, and the terrible regulations of Lev. 8 had a spiritual purpose mainly, for leprosy was the living presentation of its loathsome antitype sin. Two features made the parable terribly vivid. No medical skill has ever conquered leprosy, and only divine mercy produced the rare recoveries recognized in the law. And once doomed, the leper had to endure a living death perhaps for years before his release came. Luke notes that this leper was in the final stage, "full of leprosy," when the sufferer was no longer compelled to keep away from men, probably because his condition was too obvious to allow any risk of others accidentally incurring defilement. VER. 25. Luke says, "when it was day;" Mark noting the yet earlier hour when he started. The country was densely populated, but under cover of darkness he could find solitude among the hills not far off. VER. 36. Simon, already foremost. The verb (literally, "hunted down") is thoroughly

characteristic of Peter's impetuosity. He seems to have thought that Je-us did not realize the eagerness of the people's search for him: he little imagined the nature of the prayer he interrupted. VER. 37. The people were afraid he was about to remove from Capernaum, where his stay in Peter's house was clearly temporary. VER. 38. *Came I forth.* The word is identical with the "went out" in ver. 35, and a striking sense is obtained if we identify the evangelist's word and the second Christ's own. Luke's "I was sent" seems to decide for the deeper meaning. Comp. John 8. 42. Christ's refusal to remain in the neighborhood of Capernaum seems to indicate that the multitudes sought him as a wonder-worker only: his words remind them that to "preach" was his great work. VER. 39. The fuller description in Matthew probably is not confined to this missionary journey. Note the supremacy given to "casting out devils," the most symbolical and spiritual of his works of power. VER. 40. The separation of this miracle in Matthew is due to his employing a topical, not chronological, order: his narrative is arranged so as to set and illustrate the sermon. That the miracle immediately followed the sermon is nearly, but not absolutely, certain. *Kneeling.* Luke records his falling into an attitude of even more passionate eagerness. *If.* Spiritual applications of this are apt to make us take this if as a flaw in his faith. But it follows our Lord's own model (chap. 14. 36). Only the greatest of prophets had healed the leper, and Je-us had as yet wrought few miracles. Thus the faith involved was most conspicuous, and the exquisite trustfulness and reticence of the prayer are full of profoundest teaching. VER. 41. *Compassion.* Mark loves thus to bring out the motives of Jesus. We should study these revelations of that divine pity which caused the Incarnation. Comp. Luke 1. 78; Matt. 9. 36; 14. 14; 15. 32; 18. 27; 20. 34; Luke 7. 13; 10. 33; 15. 20. *Touched.* Thereby incurring Levitical defilement. He might have healed with a word, but he would show us that contagious purity which cleansed all it touched, incapable of defilement itself. His strict injunction of secrecy was perhaps partly designed to prevent the hinderance to his work which would have followed a sentence of ceremonial uncleanness. Note how promptly his answer comes, as the exact echo of the prayer—only two words, yet there is a whole gospel in them. VER. 42. *Straightway.* Except on one or two occasions (as chap. 8. 22-26), where special lessons were intended, the cures of Jesus were instantaneously complete, his fullness of power contrasting with the painful effort generally appearing in the prophets' miracles. VER. 43. *Charged.* Literally, "having sternly commanded him, he straightway cast him out." Nothing could have been more peremptory than the way he was hurried away before the crowd could come up. Such a miracle was enough to kindle a perfect conflagration amid a populace so inflammable, constantly eager for a national leader. Therefore Jesus sought to keep away mere marvel-seekers: he would draw those needing help by faith in his words rather than in his acts. Here there was also the danger that the priests might refuse to pronounce clean one known to be healed by Jesus. VER. 44. See Lev. 14. 1-32. *Testimony.* That is, that the Jews might satisfy themselves of the reality of the cure. VER. 45. Thus the faith which was so perfect in adversity failed in prosperity. Obedience was better than sacrifice, however gratitude might urge the neglect of what seemed only excess of humility in the Healer. His disobedience cut off all opportunity of quiet work in the towns, and Jesus was compelled to

remain in lonely districts, even there with difficulty finding the seclusion needed for prayer.

Brevary Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

There was an abundant fountain in Jerusalem which never failed when all other streams were dry. It was found to have underground connection with a vast system of reservoirs, "Solomon's Pools" at Bethlehem. So Christ on earth lived in communion with his Father in heaven, and so may we. . . Show Jesus in various relations in this lesson: 1.) With God the Father, ver. 35. 2.) With his followers. 3.) With a needy world. 4.) With the powers of evil. 5.) With suffering and trouble. 6.) With the organized Church, as a loyal member, ver. 44. . . Show the example of Christ in this lesson. (Thoughts for Young People.) . . . In this lesson leprosy may be taken as a type of sin: 1.) Hereditary. 2.) Loathsome. 3.) Defiling. 4.) Incurable. 5.) Dearly. . . Christ's healing of the leper a picture of salvation: 1.) Need. 2.) Prayer. 3.) Faith. 4.) "He touched him." 5.) Cleansing. . . Note the attractiveness of his godly and useful life—"all men seek thee." Go with any one who lives to do good. . . The healing of souls a greater miracle than healing of bodies. Jesus could not give all his time to cleanse lepers, for there were souls to cleanse from sin—a lesson for us.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 39: The synagogue. 636. FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Ver. 35: Pro-e. 860. 4568. Ver. 38: Pro-e. 6091. Ver. 39: Prose, 7173. Ver. 40: Poetical, 3212; Prose, 7173, 7178. Ver. 41: Prose, 7220. Ver. 45: Prose, 712, 4511, 1157, 11950.

O for a thousand tongues!
There's a wideness in God's mercy.
Jesus, the very thought of thee.
I sing of his mercy.
Deep are the wounds.
Wonderful words.
The cleansing wave.
I'm poor, and blind, and wretched.
Invitation accepted.
To Jesus I will go.
Even me.
Take me as I am.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus's Touch Cures Sin.*
This is a lesson which needs careful, prayerful preparation. The story of the leper's cure is tragic in its intensity, and may be made most vivid to the children. But it is the story within the story, the picture of the Saviour touching the sinner, which holds the real lesson, and this we need to bring to the children, believing that little hearts need and often feel the need of the Saviour's cleansing touch.

The Leper. Tell enough about the disease of leprosy to show how it shut one out from home and friends and all the joys of life. Draw a picture of this leper, a wanderer, feared and shunned by every one, hearing how Jesus cured the sick by a touch. He knows that no physician can cure him. He thinks Jesus can if he will. Perhaps he is afraid that Jesus will not touch so loathsome a creature. But he goes to him, and kneeling down, he begs him to cleanse this dreadful disease away. "If thou wilt," he says, "thou canst." This was the leper's faith. He believed in the power of Jesus. But he did not yet feel sure about his love.

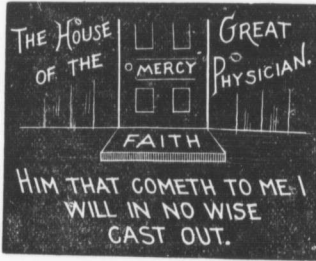
The Saviour. Je-us did not need to be urged. He saw the half faith in the leper's heart. He knew that it was not a whole faith, because the poor leper did not know him yet. Then Je-us pitied him so that he stretched out his hand and touched the poor scarred body, and said, "I will!" O, how glad the leper was for right away he was cured. The deadly sickness and the ugly sores went away, and he was well and strong.



Jesus and the Sinner. Teach that Jesus and the leper are a picture of Jesus and the sinner. Leprosy makes the body sick; sin makes the soul sick. Leprosy makes the body hideous in the sight of man; sin makes the soul hideous in the sight of God and the angels. Leprosy kills the body; sin kills the soul. What can the sinner do? Come to Je-us! Print in large letters "Thou wilt." Where is the "If?" Make a cross. Above it print "I will." Teach that Je-us's death on the cross blots out the "If" for every one who will come to him. Do little children need to come? Yes, for sin has touched every heart. O Je-us Je-us's touch can cure the sinful heart.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



OBJECT OF THE ILLUSTRATION. To show that our Lord is the great Physician. The door of his house is never locked. Step up on faith, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

HERE
THE POOR LEPER THE POOR SINNER
IS CLEANSED.

The Lord is always waiting to open the door; but sometimes, he waits to see if one will knock earnestly or carelessly. He wants you to come to him fully believing that he alone can cure. Come in humility, knock urgently, submit wholly.

THE LEPER WAS WILLING
THE LORD THEY AGREE D. IT WAS DONE.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

O weary day though a new day: a weary day for the leper as the dawn creeps into the damp cave or the rough hut that is his shelter. He crawls out into the light and looks about him. How isolated this spot of his exile from all human kind save any as leprosy as himself! Over there, in yonder city, is his old home where still live wife and children. If they should venture near him he must cry, "Unclean, unclean!" and

warn them away. When can he mingle with men, worship with men, eat, sleep, and live under the same roof with those he loves? The sun rises higher and higher, only to light up more distinctly his wretchedness, his awful hopelessness. Slowly the day crawls through the sky. But what is it he sees and hears out in yonder road? A crowd is coming, slowly advancing, following some great attraction. On the skirts of this crowd are cripples, blind people, palsied people on litters, and gloomy demons. Just on the skirts? The center of that column is full of them. Now and then the crowd halts. Room is made for one of these shadowed lives, a way opened to the Saviour. When the once cripple appears again he has thrown his crutches away and is leaping, the once palsied is on his feet and walking, the once demoniac has the peace of God in his heart.

"Why can't he heal a poor leper?" murmurs that gloomy soul in the door of his hut.

"I'll try him!" he whispers. "I'll go straight to him."

Soon. "Unclean! Unclean!" echoes along the margin of the crowd.

"Back, back!" they tell him.

They threaten him. Still he advances. "Unclean! Unclean!" he shrieks. To right, to left, falls back the crowd. The leper is aiming straight at Je-us. "Away, away!" pleads a woman, "Stop!" roars a Pharisee. The leper presses on, and now he is so near that he can see the face of Je-us. He can read the look of compassion there. He can almost hear some word of power pronounced. He drops on his knees. He clasps together his thin, wasted hands. He looks up and cries in faith, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Hush, every body! Je-us is about to speak. "O-O!" cries a timorous woman, "He is going to touch the leper." "What?" mutters a Pharisee. "Going to touch that old leper? He will catch the disease! He will be unclean!"

Never mind, poor leper. Je-us is extending his hand, reaching it out in all tenderness, in all power, and lays it on the leper's brow. O, how good! is that touch! It seems as if wife and child, neighbor and friend, Levite and priest, all the outside world, reached forward and with the hand of Je-us touched and welcomed him back to the old life. And then, deep and strong and melodious, sound the gracious words, "I will; be thou clean!" And the leper—how he drinks in every word, absorbs every look of sympathy, takes into his very soul, very body, all the healing influences that issue from the Saviour! And, wonderful change, he receives strength, healing, life! He leaps to his feet. He shouts. He sings. But stop! Je-us is speaking to him. He must go away. He must say nothing to any one, but go to the priest and make due offering for his cleansing. Say nothing? A despised old leper, an unclean outcast, a soul burdened with this awful disease, now healed, going to the priest to make an offering for his cleansing, going home to wife and children, and yet to say nothing? Must he remain dumb? Forgive him, great Saviour! He feels that he must break the silence and speak, like the brook in spring that must run, the bird in June that must sing, the wind from the north that must lift its great voice and praise God. And now you can track him by his happy confession of the power of Je-us's name. He tells all other poor lepers that they may hope. He has glorified his Master in the temple service. He rehearses the ever sweet story of salvation to those at home, to his neighbors, to his kindred. He must tell, and they must hear, the wonderful story of the saving of a poor leper.

man through. In Greek, dug it apart. No small disturbance to speaker and hearers below, the noise of digging, the sifting down of dust and larger fragments of earth, the increase of light as the aperture grew larger, the sight of perspiring figures above, and at last the pale and helpless invalid lowered and laid out on the floor. **Bed.** In Greek, a camp bed, a stretcher. No bedsteads in the Orient. **5. Their faith.** The faith of the sick man, who had doubtless asked to be carried, and that of the four, who believed it worth while to make great exertions for the aperture grew larger, the larger faith that the leper's; it said not only he can heal, but he will. It was a belief that reckoned the getting into Jesus's presence equivalent to recovery. **Saith.** He saw in their faith larger possibilities, and with the quick response of divine love he did for them abundantly above what they had asked or thought. Jesus saw more in the man than we can; he may have seen his sins as the cause of his disease and a grief for his sins deeper than his yearning for health. **Son.** The Greek is "child," betokening an address of encouragement. Matthew adds, "be of good cheer." **Thy sins.** Does not sickness sometimes so reveal the soul's condition that one desires spiritual peace more than recovery? **Are forgiven.** He forgives. It is too much like wish. Jesus speaks of what he knows. He has forgiven the man himself.

II. Jesus Reproves the Scribes (vers. 6-10). 6. Scribes. Their business was to copy the Scriptures. They were professional interpreters, walking commentators, whose learning was mixed with pride. Read what Jesus said about them as a class. Matt. 23. They have heard of the new teaching (1. 22) in Capernaum, and are glad they can listen for themselves. Where were they from? See Luke 11, 17. **Sitting.** In the best seats (Mt. 11, 23, & Rev. Ver.), in the attitude of listeners. **Reasoning.** Inquiring about the motives of Jesus. **7. This man, Greek,** "this," expressing scorn. **Thus speak.** He speaks either with recklessness or else with intentional falsity. **Blasphemes.** Belittles a divine, by speaking of it as a human prerogative. **Who can forgive.** The earnest question sustains the charge of blasphemy. If none but God can pardon, no human being should ever pretend that he can do so. **8. Straightway.** Jesus makes a swift reply to their faulty reasoning. **In his spirit.** Not in his heart, as ver. 6. We recall (1. 10) the descent of the Spirit and understand supernatural perception here (Acts 10, 38; 1 John 1, 32). **These things.** Or, in these ways. He meets their coming for him by a proof of the faultiness of their reasoning: You reason that the man is not forgiven, and hence that I am flippant and blasphemous in saying so. You think I say he is forgiven, because I can thus deceive the common people more easily. You think I would not dare say, "He healed," because that would require a miracle, and you reason that in pretending to do what only God can do, my pretense would be detected. I will now proceed to claim divine power in a realm where you can judge for yourselves whether I really possess such power, or only pretend that I do. I will command this man to do what God alone can enable him to do. You will be able then to see that your reasoning is at fault. (How startled must

they have been!) **9. Whether.** Which one of two courses. **10. May know.** By an infallible proof brought to your own senses. **Son of man.** A title applied by Jesus to himself, but never used by his disciples, except once by the dying Stephen (Acts 7, 50). The scribes would remember Dan. 7, 13, and understand Jesus's use of it as a claim to Messiahship. "It is the name by which the Lord ordinarily in one pregnant word designates himself as the Messiah, the Son of God manifested in the flesh of man—the second Adam; and to it belong all those conditions of humiliation, suffering, and exaltation which it behooved the Saviour of men to go through."—*Alford*. He confirms their reasoning that he is human. He will not simply say that he is God (John 1, 1). He is human as well as divine. Touched with a feeling of human infirmities, destined to die for human sins, he has a right to forgive men their sins (John 8, 11). **12. Arose.** How pleased the four men looking down through the roof must have been now! The forgiveness of the man's sins must have been as unexpected to them as to the scribes, and not quite satisfactory. **Take up thy bed.** Compare John 5, 1-18.

III. Jesus Heals the Paralytic (vers. 11, 12). 11. I say unto thee. I bid one lying before me paralyzed to do what he cannot in his own strength possibly do. He thus demonstrates the presence of some other power than that of the man addressed, or possessed by any man. **Go unto thine house.** Not "walk," as in ver. 9, but proceed home as naturally as any well man would. **Take up the bed.** Promptly performed a physical act which shows the completeness of his restoration. **Went forth.** He did not have to get out through the roof, there's room to pass through the press now. No place in their hearts for sympathy, but plenty for wonder. **Before them all.** Scribes included. Every body who heard Jesus ask, "Which is easier?" had full opportunity to see that a miracle was as easy to him as saying the man was forgiven.

III. Application.

Can you so use the facts of this lesson as to fulfill Mark's design in recording them? (See Definition, Lesson I, Sec. 1, (c) and (d). Who forgave sins? (ver. 9.) Did the one forgiven know it? Do you know that your sins are forgiven? Does each of your pupils know this for himself? How may he? (Rom. 8, 16; Gal. 4, 6.) ... Did Moses, Elijah, or Peter ever dare say, "I forgive thee"? Did not Jesus claim divinity? See John 5, 27, 28. Are any in your class doubtful on this fundamental question? ... The advantages of co-operation (ver. 3). What people can do when they work together.... When Christ is in a home it gets noised abroad (ver. 1)... Grumbling (vers. 6, 7) out of place in a Christian (Phil. 2, 14)... The Lord's co-operation with those who endeavor to bring others to him. Have you, have any of your pupils, proved this?... The salvation of a soul more important than the symmetry of a lesson or sermon... Salvation: "How is your health?" More important: "Are your sins forgiven?" 3-ohn 2. Are not other applications suggested to you? One's own are often best. 3 editate. Pray.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Forgiveness and healing. Mark 2, 1-12.
 Th. Forgiveness and healing. Mark 2, 13-17.
 W. Forgiveness with God. Psa. 130.
 Th. Prayer for pardon. Psa. 25, 1-11.
 F. Saving the lost. Luke 19, 1-10
 S. Forgive, as ye are forgiven. Luke 6, 27-37.
 N. Rejoicing in forgiveness. Psa. 103, 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases. Psa. 103, 3.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 85, Dominion Hymnal.
 I am coming to the cross;
 I am poor, and weak, and blind.
- No. 86, Dominion Hymnal.
 I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice,
 And it doth thy love to me.
- No. 73, Dominion Hymnal.
 All my doubts I give to Jesus,
 I've his gracious promise heard.

TIME.—27 A. D.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Forgiveness.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. Forgiving Iniquities.**
 What evidence of the great popularity of Jesus in this lesson?
 What at this time seems to have been his one purpose?
 For what purpose only did he perform miracles?
 What was it moved Jesus to say to the palsied man, "Son, thy sins," etc.?
 How had great faith been shown?
 Why should Jesus have made the response he did to their act?
 Did he do it to provoke controversy?
 What makes this-day specially important in the history of his life-work?
- 2. Healing Diseases.**
 What criticism was passed upon him by some present?
 What argument is contained in Jesus's question to the scribes?

How did he now prove his right to assume power over spiritual things?
 What power over human hearts did Jesus also display?
 With whom did Jesus claim equality by proving his power to forgive sins?
 What is forgiveness?
 How deep and lasting was the effect on the multitude?

Practical Teachings.

Christ in Capernaum could not be hid; Christ in the heart cannot be hid. A heart filled with Christ always is a center of holy influence.

Four brought one. They knew no discouragement. They had a definite purpose. They accomplished it. They were not responsible for their friend's cure. They left him with Jesus. What an example for us to follow! Christ gave more than they expected. He always does.

Hints for Home Study.

1. Learn what you can of a Jewish house, and how all this could have happened.
2. Find in the second chapter of John a reason that accounts for the statement in ver. 8.
3. Tell the story of this scene to some young child as vividly as you can.
4. Find other instances of the caviling attitude of the scribes.
5. Give three characteristics of the four friends.
6. Was this man both healed and forgiven? Prove it.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **Forgiving Iniquities, vs. 1-5.**
 Where was Jesus at this time?
 What did he do to the crowds of people?
 Who was brought, and how?
 How were they hindered?
 How did they reach Jesus?
 What did Jesus see in their act?
 What is it to have faith in Jesus?
 What did he say to the man?
 How may we have our sins forgiven? Acts 16. 31.
2. **Healing Diseases, vs. 6-12.**
 What did some of those think who heard Jesus?
 Had Jesus the power and right to forgive sins?
 How did he show that he had the power?
 What followed his words?
 What did the people then say?
 Had Jesus still the power to forgive sins?
 How does the lesson illustrate the Golden Text?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where does this lesson show us—

1. How we should seek Jesus?
2. That Jesus knows the thoughts of men?
3. That Jesus can and will forgive sins?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

See how many miracles were wrought by Jesus in Capernaum.

Learn what Paul tells us in Rom. 5 about the way we have forgiveness of sins.

Find another instance when Jesus knew the thoughts of men.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

To what city did Jesus come again? To Capernaum.

Who came to see and hear him? Great crowds of people.

What did Jesus preach to them? The word of God.

Who was brought to him? A man sick of palsy.

How did his friends bring him? They carried him lying on his bed, or mat.

Why could they not get to Jesus? Because of the great crowd.

What did they do? They carried the sick man to the roof.

What did they then do? They opened the roof, and let down the sick man.

Why was Jesus pleased with this? Because it showed strong faith.

What did Jesus first do for the sick man? He forgave his sins.

Why did this offend the priests? They did not think Jesus was the Son of God.

What did Jesus then do? He cured the man's body.

What did he command the sick man to do? To take up his bed and go home.
 What did this prove? That Jesus had the right to forgive sins.
 Why had he the right to do this? Because he was the Son of God.

Words with Little People.

Real faith makes us—
 Go to Jesus for ourselves.
 Take our friends to him.
 Refuse to be discouraged in trying to get to him.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. To what place did Jesus return? To Capernaum.
2. What happened as soon as his presence was known? A crowd surrounded his house.
3. What interrupted his preaching? A man let down through the roof.
4. What did Christ do for him? Forgave him and healed him.
5. In what character did Christ thus become known? As the forgiver of sins.
6. In what relation may each of us claim that Christ stands to his soul? As he "who forgiveth all," etc.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

6. How did Jesus Christ show that he was a teacher sent from God?
 By performing signs and wonders such as could be performed only by the power of God.
 Joh. iii. 2. Hahul, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

A Picture of Salvation.

I. THE SINNER.

1. **Helpless.** "Sick of the palsy," v. 3.
 "Whole head is sick... heart faint," Isa. 1. 5.
2. **Helped.** "Borne of four," v. 3.
 "Bear ye one another's burdens," Gal. 6. 2.

II. THE SEEKER.

1. **Earnest.** "Uncovered the roof," v. 4.
 "Strive to enter in," Luke 13. 24.
2. **Believing.** "Saw their faith," v. 5.
 "Be ye love on the Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 16. 31.

III. THE SAVED.

1. **Forgiven.** "Sins be forgiven," v. 5.
 "Blotteth out thy transgressions," Isa. 43. 25.
2. **Renewed.** "Arose... went forth," v. 12.
 "A new creature," 2 Cor. 5. 17.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Christ in the House.

1. The house where Christ dwells soon attracts attention. You cannot keep in seclusion the place where Jesus is, for men will soon find it out. v. 1.
2. Christ in the house finds an opportunity of doing good and of preaching the Gospel at the same time. He blesses men's bodies that through them he may reach men's souls. v. 2.
3. Christ in the house is sought out by man, in spite of obstacles. So will it be with Christ in the heart. Men will seek him for the blessing which he brings. vs. 3, 4.
4. Christ in the house is watched by jealous and unfriendly eyes. Our religion in the home is very sharply noticed. Men take knowledge of us, if we have been with Jesus. vs. 6, 7.
5. Christ in the house brings newness and joy and praise. How happy that home wherein Jesus dwells! vs. 10-12.

English Teacher's Notes.

A young girl once made an application to be received into a sanitarium. She was weak from an illness and felt the need of good care and nourishment that she might regain her strength and go back to work. But alas! The doctor discovered that in addition to her weakness she had a virulent and incurable disease, and the best that could be done for her was to send her under the charge of a nurse to her distant home, that she might at least die under her mother's roof. She had come hoping to obtain complete restoration from the lesser ill, not knowing that she was suffering from a far deeper one. The physician was able to detect it, but powerless to cure.

The sick man of whom we read in the passage today was also suffering from two evils. His friends probably only saw the lesser one of the two. They knew there was One who could heal that, for he had already cured numbers of afflicted ones. So anxious were they for their friend's recovery, so confident of his receiving the needed succor, that no difficulty could deter them from bringing him into the presence of Jesus. There were four to do it, and when the crowd seemed to form an impassable barrier they resorted to an ingenious and novel way of accomplishing their end, fearing not the possible displeasure they might incur from the Pharisees and doctors of the law, whose audience of the wonderful Teacher (Luke 5. 17) was thus strangely interrupted. Such a value do men set upon bodily health, and rightly so.

But the man for whom they were thus solicitous was afflicted by a far sorer evil than the one they had looked to have removed. There was upon his soul the ineradicable stain, the awful weight of sin, whose wages and sure end (Rom. 6. 23; James 1. 15) are death. Unlike the young girl who did not succumb to the terrible disease which had hold of her, from our Lord's words to him it seems probable that the paralytic did feel in some measure the burden of his guilt. But still the attention of all around was riveted on the bodily infirmity, and while they were wondering how Jesus would deal with this he startled them all by putting his finger on the deeper malady.

But, thought the bystanders, that is beyond his grasp to deal with; nay, it is blasphemy to attempt it; "who can forgive sins but God only?" The human physician could detect the mortal disease in the young girl, but had no power to cure it. Jesus, the almighty Physician, not only fathomed the deadly soul-disease of the paralytic, but with a word of tender love and divine authority dispelled it. The sinner conscious of his deep-seated need may say with confidence:

"I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in his blood most precious
Till not a spot remains."

Was our Lord indifferent to the lesser evil for the removal of which the sufferer had been brought to him? No; he cared for that, too. Another word,

and the cripple rose from his pallet, not only forgiven, but renewed in bodily health. Only, what men had placed in the forefront Jesus put in its right place—the soul first, the body afterward. And this bodily healing, which so vividly illustrated the renewal of the soul, became the proof that the inward cure, of which the eye of man could take no cognizance, had been indeed effected.

The question for each one of the class is this:

Have I realized my spiritual as I realize my bodily need? Have I come to the divine healer? Is it manifest in my life that he has healed me?

The Lesson Council.

Question 7. How did the miracles of Christ show that he had power to forgive sins?

The power to work miracles was God's indorsement of Jesus Christ and his claims. Nothing short of divine power can either cure the palsy by a word or forgive sins. The doing of the former was visible proof of the possession of divine power, consequently of power to do the latter.—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

It shows Christ had the power to forgive sins, because God alone can work such works as the healing this paralytic by a word. Christ did heal this paralytic by a word. Therefore Christ is God; and being God he had the right to forgive sin.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D. D.*

Because they revealed the truth that he and his Father were one, that whatsoever the Father could do he could do also.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

The miracles of Jesus Christ were a proof of such power as alone could come from God. God-Jehovah was acknowledged by Jews of all sects who challenged Christ as the God of truth. Therefore when Jesus proved the divine power dwelling in him to perform miracles he also proved his truthfulness as a man. Hence his claim to possess power to forgive sins must be believed. The multitudes saw and "glorified God."—*Rev. Olin B. Coit.*

8. What is the meaning of the title "Son of man"?

Not the descendant but the representative of man—humanity. He is also the "Son of God"—God manifest in the flesh—but in the accomplishment of his mission of redemption he is pre-eminently the representative of humanity, and therefore he almost invariably calls himself the "Son of man."—*Rev. H. G. Jackson.*

Though the allusion may be to Dan. 7. 13, I think wherever Christ uses this name he refers to the long and eagerly expected seed of the woman, the Son of the race who was to be the deliverer of the race. He says in this name of his choosing. I am the One you have been looking for, the Child of humanity, the Redeemer. It is thus equivalent in its assumption by Christ to a claim to be the Messiah.—*Rev. William Ingraham Haven.*

By the phrase "Son of man" we understand that Christ confesses his human origin, and his participation in all the essentials of human nature. Being the ideal of humanity, he is in the largest sense the Son of the race. In him dwelt all the fullness of manhood as well as the Godhead.—*Rev. D. C. Knowles, D. D.*

As Jesus Christ was God, so he was man—the inheritor of the flesh, with its sorrows and its joys, its longings and its satisfactions. By human birthright, his was a human soul. Hence he was "the Son of

man." In him centered all the emotions and powers that form the heritage of every man.—*Rev. Olin B. Coll.*

Cambridge Notes.

(Mark 2:1-17—Matt. 9:1-13; Luke 5:17-32.)

This miracle, theologically most important, is resolved by the naturalistic school into a phenomenon of "faith-healing," the sufferer being a mere hypochondriac who could recover his powers when once convinced he had them. The narratives seem to anticipate this objection by touches which bring out the man's utter helplessness—both of mind and body (see on ver. 4); moreover, the scribes would not have missed such a cavil had it been even plausible.

Matthew's call preceded the sermon on the mount, which we can see he must have heard. His own gospel seems to reverse this order, but it has no definite statement of time to set against Luke's assertions in 6:13 *seq.* The unworldliness of Jesus is most conspicuous in the choice of a despised tax-gatherer for the apostolate—with a zealot as colleague, too! We do not know whether Matthew had been guilty of the extortions so common in his class—hated enough in any case as traitors to nationalism—but he seems to have amassed wealth. Personally he is a profoundly interesting character, distinguished most by his rare humility and self-suppression. He comes in the second tetrad of apostles, not so near our Lord as the first four, but yet very prominent in the history; unlike them, however, no single word of his is recorded. A silent, thoughtful man, he was preparing himself to write the gospel which has done most to make Christ's life known to men.

VER. 1. *The house.* Simon's "at home" (R. V. marg.) is exacter. VER. 2. *Many.* Including (Luke 5:17) Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem and the whole country. We may hope they only came from curiosity not, as later, to spy on him *So that.* Literally, "so that not even the parts toward the door could hold them." The crowd overflowed from the upper room, where he taught, down the vestibule and into the court. VER. 3. *Borne.* This detail is peculiar to Mark. VER. 4. *Roof.* To which they mounted by stairs outside the house (comp. Matt. 24:17). After taking off the tiles they may have made a way through a mud or plaster ceiling, perhaps only enlarging the trap-door already there. Such a proceeding is very ordinary in the East, and is even mentioned by Cicero. The skeptic's difficulties here are sadly trying to common sense. *Bed.* That is, a light mattress. VER. 5. *Their.* It seems probable that the man, if not exclusive, reference is to the bearers. Thus we see how one man may be blessed because of another's faith. Just as with intercessory prayer the mysterious magnetic force which one mind can exercise over another, even without applying the senses, can be used by God as an instrument of blessing. The paralytic was helpless, utterly depressed (we infer) by the consciousness that sin had caused his stroke, and therefore needing first the moral cure. *Son.* Better, "child," an address of tender pity. *Are forgiven.* Literally, "are being forgiven," as in Matthew; Luke says, "have been." This forgiveness, apart from an act of faith, is paralleled by Matt. 18:27 (see our note. *The Study*, January, 1888); it was only complete when man had accepted it into his heart and life. VER. 6. *Scribes.* See note, April 8, 1888. *Hearts.* They were too much awed by him, or too afraid of the enthusiastic multitude to say what they thought. VER. 7. The keen penetration of hatred seized the true meaning, but the

words did not necessarily imply more than that declaring and pronouncing of pardon which is given to all who have received it themselves (Matt. 16:19; John 20:23). VER. 8. *Spirit.* The part of our Lord's person in which the divine and the human co-existed; his "soul" and body were only human. VER. 9. *Emphasize say.* The one claim could be tested, the other could not; and here as always the miracle is the means of convincing beholders of his authority in the spiritual world. For us the order is reversed; we accept his works mainly as evidenced by his words, and value the miracles as being acted parables. VER. 10. *Son of man.* Who had "authority to execute judgment because he was a Son of man" (John 5:27), and had himself been tempted. The title is used eighty times by Christ of himself, only once besides in the New Testament, Acts 7:56 (Rev. 1:13 is without the definite article). It is probably not derived from Dan. 7:13 (see R. V.), but is nearer to the frequent appellation of Ezekiel. Jesus is the Representative of humanity. *Authority.* Delegated (John 5:27), but delegated to him alone. *On earth.* How much more in heaven! VER. 12. How infinitely majestic his words appear with such a comment—the vigorous strides of the healed man, and his ecstatic praises breaking the stillness of the awed assembly as he passes through the midst of them, a living embodiment of the revelation that the Carpenter of Nazareth had power on earth to forgive sin, our sin! It was a striking tribute to the grandeur of the work that the silent amazement gave place to praises of God. The man before them seemed too great for admiration. But they dimly felt that he was yet their brother and had won this unheard-of prerogative for men, and not for himself alone. VER. 13. *Went forth.* From Capernaum (comp. ver. 1). VER. 14. *Levi.* The great regard paid to the significance of Jewish names made it natural for Levi to take a new one for the new life. It was possibly identical with Mattathias (apparently meaning "gift of Jehovah"), the name of the father of the Maccabees. Some, on insufficient reasons, make him a brother of James (chap. 3:13). *Toll.* Apparently he collected customs from the incoming boats. He was in the service of Herod, which involved far less surrender of national hopes than serving Rome did. *Arose.* "Forsook all" (Luke), and still without a word. It was not a sudden resolve, for Matthew must have known of Jesus and yielded him his will. VER. 17. Note how the first evangelist slurs over the character of this feast, a lavish tribute of love to his new Master, and an attempt to bring his old comrades under his transforming influence. *Sat down.* Reclined. *Followed.* Literally, "were following," as though unwilling to lose sight of one whose transcendent holiness had yet kind words for them. VER. 16. *Of the Pharisees.* For scribes might belong to any party. *Disciples.* They still feared to rebuke him. VER. 17. *To call into the kingdom.* *Righteous.* By his quotation of Hosea 6:6 (Matt.), he indicates his judgment of their "righteousness," which excluded the one thing needful. Comp. Luke 15:7; John 9:41; Rev. 3:17.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw a diagram, or show a picture of an Oriental house, and explain the opening of the roof.... Show the various aspects of Christ in this lesson: 1.) As Teacher. 2.) As Healer. 3.) As Saviour. 4.) As Master.... What Christ's coming brings to men: 1.) Knowledge. 2.) Forgiveness. 3.) Strength. 4.) Mercy. 5.) Praise.... How to come to Christ: 1.) Come straightway.

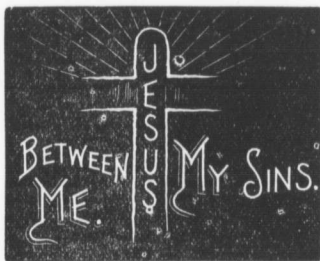
2.) Come earnestly. 3.) Come overcoming obstacles. 4.) Come with faith. 5.) Come to obey him. 6.) Come expecting mercy... The great Mogul of India on his birthday was weighed three times, with weights of silver, of gold, and of pearls, which were distributed among the people. How much greater the riches which Jesus Christ comes to bring?

References. P. EEWAN. Ver. 4: The roof broken up. 7:36. Ver. 11: The bed taken up. 6:19. . . . FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 4932, 8902, 8903, 8810. Ver. 1: Poetical. 3852. Ver. 9: P. prose, 2344, 2345. Ver. 10: Prose, 4497. Ver. 12: Prose, 291.

Praise the Rock of our salvation,
Majestic sweetness sits enthroned.
Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
Come, ye sinners,
Everlasting love,
Weary of earth and laden.
There is a Friend,
Come to the fountain,
Weeping will not save me,
I am trusting, Lord, in thee,
Jesus, my portion.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



The power of Jesus saves to the uttermost. He has the power to forgive sins. He stands between me and my sins, and can separate me from them; but I must bring myself right before him, just as the poor palsied man was brought and placed before the Saviour by his four friends.

I MUST

RE'ENT. Luke 13. 2-5.
OBEY WILLINGLY. John 7. 17;
2 Cor. 8. 12.
HAVE FAITH. Heb. 11. 6.
NOT WAIT. James 4. 13, 14; Heb.
3. 13.
BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS ABLE
AND WILLING. Heb. 7. 25.
TRUST HIM. 1 John 5. 1; John 6. 47.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Jesus's word cures sin.*

[The incident of this lesson may be made clear by the help of blocks. A miniature eastern house can be quickly built, square, one story high, flat roof, and court in the middle. A piece of cloth may serve to represent the awning, or roof, which was "broken up" to let the sick man down. By the help of these simple objects, the whole scene may be made much more real and effective.]

LESSON STORY. Jesus was in Capernaum again. So many knew of his wonderful works now that a great crowd gathered in and about the house. When some men came bringing a sick man, so sick that they had to carry him on a bed—a kind of mattress, they saw that they could not come near Jesus for the crowd.

Imagine them talking, planning, looking about for some way to reach Jesus. They say, "We can go through the next house, and get on the roof of this house where Jesus is. Then we can let our friend down into the court." Picture them carrying the sick man carefully upon the roof. But the day is very hot, and an awning—like this—has been spread over the court. Under this sits the wonderful Man who heals all diseases. How quickly they take away the awning, or roof, and let the man down before Jesus. This can be made very dramatic. The strange sight of a bed, coming from above, let down by strong cords—a palsied man lying upon it—the wonder of the people, the eagerness of the sick man and his friends—all make a wonderful picture.

What will Jesus do? Touch the quivering flesh, and hid it be still? No; he looks through the flesh to the spirit. He sees the heart that hates sin, and wants to be rid of it. And he just speaks the word, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Is there power in his word? Yes; see the helpless man rise up, take up his bed, and walk away, full of joy and praise!



PRACTICAL LESSON. Teach Golden Text; then, "Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever." Make large heart on the board, "Sin" in small letters in the center, light clouds, made with flat crayon, filling all the heart. Sin makes sickness, trouble,

death. What can be done with it? Hurry to Jesus! Insist upon finding him, no matter what is in the way. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged by any thing. Jesus will speak, and his word cures sin. Rub out the clouds and the word in the heart. Print "Jesus" in their place. Sing, "What can wash away my sin?"

Lesson Word-Pictures.

"There, that is always the way!" It is the voice of Heavy-of-Heart. He is one of the four bearers bringing through the streets of Capernaum that palsied man. As Heavy-of-Heart speaks, they all come to a halt, while that poor, palsied patient feebly asks, "What is the matter?"

"Matter?" growls Heavy-of-Heart. "Look at that door! What chance is there of getting past the crowd at the door?"

They all look intently. The prospect is any thing but encouraging.

"No chance?" wearily inquires the palsied sufferer. All the four bearers shake their heads. The doorway of the house before them is blocked with human beings, all struggling to get in. Nobody is anxious to get out. Behind that wedge of humanity in the doorway, somewhere, is the great Healer, and how can he know about the need of a poor, palsied man without? "Well," says Heavy-of-Heart, "we must turn round and go home."

"No," stoutly claims old Resolute, another of the bearers, "we will not go back. Let us try the roof."

"Roof-!" gasps Heavy-of-Heart, his breath going in astonishment. "Roof-ff-ff!"

"Yes. Jesus of Nazareth is probably in the court or an upper room. Try the roof."

"Yes-s," falteringly pleads the sick man. "Try—the-roof—"

He must, *must* get to Jesus.

"But how get him down?" asks Heavy-of-Heart.

"First get him up," says Resolute. And there he is at last, up on the roof, and his four bearers with him.

"How get him down, Heavy-of-Heart?" says Resolute. "Break away the roof and let him down!"

And down go bed and the bed-ridden, carefully stried by the four bearers.

"Hark! What is going on overhead?" say the people below. "What is the meaning of all that noise?"

They all turn, lift up their eyes, and there is a bed coming down! Four men are lowering it. Look out! Steady, Resolute, Heavy-of-Heart, every body! And down comes the bed in the very presence of Jesus! The great miracle-worker is looking at the sick man, and now that he has got here, what will he say? It was a bold thing to do, to come down this way before Jesus of Nazareth. He feels that the eyes of Jesus are on him. He is greatly abashed. He feels that the searching eyes of Jesus are going deep, deep down into his soul, seeing things at the bottom, and O what ugly details of the past sinful life are all disclosed! Jesus knows every thing: what a great sinner that man has been! He wishes he was back on the other side of that blocked doorway! No, no, he must stay.

"I could but come," he is murmuring; "I can but try, can but die."

But hark! The voice of Jesus is making such sweet music in the ears of a poor sinner: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee!"

So good to be forgiven! So delicious the consciousness of pardon! He lies back on his bed, his eyes contentedly closed, such depths of peace filling his bosom, the past covered, those ugly things at the bottom buried deep under the sea of God's forgiving mercy. But what is the matter with those scribes over there? They scowl. They mutter. They flash an indignant light out of their eyes. "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" they are reasoning. But why do they suddenly lower their eyes? Why does shame redden their faces? Jesus is reading their thoughts as if before him in an opened book. And now he is crying, rebukingly. "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, 'Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?'" And now does Jesus bid him do it? The man upon the bed hears. Does he hear aright? He opens his eyes. He stirs. He rises.

"See, see!" cry his bearers.

"He really thinks he can leave his bed?" wonders Heavy-of-Heart.

But he springs from his bed!

"Does he suppose he can carry his bed?" queries Heavy-of-Heart.

But he stoops, he lifts his bed, he throws it over his shoulder, he walks off!

O, what a shout of "Glory to God!" swells to heaven as the once palsied man walks off, his bed on his back!

LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY, 1889.

FEB. 3. The Parable of the Sower. Mark 4. 10-20.

FEB. 10. The Fierce Demoniac. Mark 5. 1-20.

FEB. 17. The Timid Woman's Touch. Mark 5. 25-34.

FEB. 24. The Great Teacher and the Twelve. Mark 6. 1-13.

Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

— We lose not time if it be spent in waiting upon God.—*Elersheim.*

— None of us "by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature." But how many, by taking in God's thoughts, feeding on them, and inwardly digesting them, have added vastly to their spiritual stature!—*Gordon.*

— Common actions become holy, and drudgery grows divine, when the motive is pure and high.—*Spurgeon.*

— The wheel of life whirls round, and we with it, expecting that the motion will some day slacken, and that then life may be ordered anew and omis-sions may be made good. But real wisdom consists in seizing the flying moment, and in pressing upon it the seal of the eternal and the enduring; that is the great course of moral endeavor under which life receives its due form, like the block of marble under the hand of the sculptor.—*Baron Bunsen.*

— To be weak is not so miserable, but to be weaker than our task.—*Carlyle.*

— What is less difficult to awaken than a self-love which has grown drowsy? What more difficult to lull to sleep again than a self-love once awakened?—*Joseph Roux.*

— It is not the high summer alone that is God's. The winter also is his. And into his winter he comes to visit us. And all man's winters are his—the winter of our poverty, the winter of our sorrow, the winter of our unhappiness—when the "winter of our discontent."—*George Macdonald.*

— Distinguish between doing right in order to help others—as when one lights a beacon in order to guide the sailor—and doing right in order to be praised by others,—as when one stands in full blaze of a chandelier in order to display his own jewelry.—*Boardman.*

— Be prayerful; ask and thou shalt have strength equal to thy day:

Prayer clasps the Hand that guides the world—O, make it then thy stay!

Ask largely, and thy God will be
A kingly giver unto thee.—*Anon.*

— All Christians must work. What would happen in battle if only the officers fought?—*James Robertson.*

— When we cannot do what we would in religion we must do as we can, and God will accept us.—*Henry.*

— The truest and best service we can render is that which lies before us in our way and next to hand. To love God with all the heart—this is the first commandment. To love and help and brighten those about us every day—this is the second commandment, and completes the service.—*M. G. Pease.*

— All one's life is a music if one touches the notes rightly and in time.—*John Ruskin.*

The more thou frequentest thy closet, the more thou wilt like it; the less thou comest thereto, the more thou wilt loathe it.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

— Do not attempt too much. Stake out your field, survey your resources, and then stake out only so much ground as you shall deem proportioned to your ability will till thoroughly, and spare no effort to have it produce the most abundant possible harvest.—*N. H. Schenck.*

— He who possesses Him to whom all things belong possesseth all things.—*Krummacher.*

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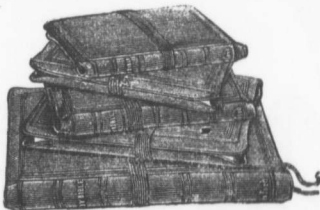


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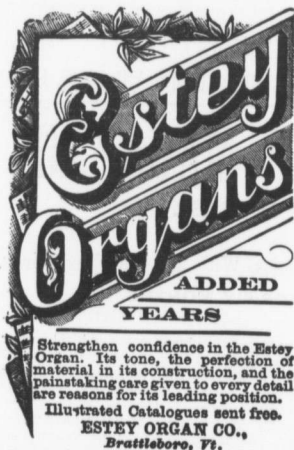
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