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THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1873.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, October 19th.

The Cross foretold.—Matt. xvi. 21-28.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matthew xvi. 24.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 24-28.

SUMMARY.—Jesus went to glory by the way of the cross, that we, by the way of his cross, may follow him to his glory.

ANALYSIS.—I. Unwelcome predictions: vs. 21. II. The rebuker rebuked: vs. 22, 23. III. The conditions of discipleship.

EXPOSITION.—Verse 21.—From that time forth. The time meant is that in which Peter's confession was made. That confession marked a stage of development in their understanding of Christ, which made proper a change in his instructions to them. Began to shew unto his disciples. The change here described, referred to his instruction to his disciples, rather than to his public discourses. How that he must go, etc. This word "must," deserves attention. A necessity was upon Christ to pass through the experiences here described, only by these experiences could he become the world's Saviour—our Saviour. He could say "must go;" (1) because God's Word had so foretold; (2) because such was God's eternal purpose, and (3) because the nature of God, and hence divine righteousness and law, must be satisfied by the atonement in order to the salvation of the guilty. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." The necessity of which Christ here speaks, leaves untouched the glorious, gracious freeness of the gift of a Saviour and his salvation. The points made prominent in the description are (1) the place of suffering—Jerusalem—the city of God, of his chosen people, of his temple, and of his worship. (2) The amount of suffering. Many things. To indicate the greatness of his coming woe, (3) The inflictors of his suffering. The elders and chief priests and scribes. The recognized authorities of the chosen nation, who had in their hands, and wielded all the worldly power of the Jews. (4) The limit of his suffering. And he killed. Put to death, so far from mounting the throns of David to wield his sceptre, and (5) the glorious deliverance from suffering. And he raised again [rise again] the third day. Showing that their hopes, as to him, were at fault, as being not too great, but too earthly. Christ had previously made scattered references to his end, but had not hitherto taught his disciples so fully and plainly on the topic.

Verse 22.—Then Peter took him. Laid hold of him as though he would hold him by compulsion, both from such language and such a course; would force him to give up the project. Began to rebuke him. "Began," but was not allowed to proceed with his rebuke. He was interrupted, as the next verse shows, very promptly, and silenced very effectually. What an officious intermeddling was this on Peter's part. Jesus, in the most solemn and deliberate manner, declares what "must" be, what is indispensable in order to the accomplishment of his work. There is special need in these days to guard against just this want of reverence for Christ, and submission to him. He is to be loved not as an equal, but as "Lord and Master." He honors no one, not even Peter, to become either a superior, or an equal. Whatever honor we have, we have under him, with him as our Head. Be it far from thee, Lord. A proverbial expression, i. e., may God show thee mercy by keeping thee from such an experience. We have in this a prayer or wish. Then follows a rash assertion. This shall not be unto thee. Peter had just had the promise of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He begins to act as though they were already his, not to open and shut, as our God and by his direction—for such is the meaning of Christ's language in verse 19—but to do it independently of God.

Verse 23.—But he turned. Probably toward Peter, to look him squarely in the face; though some think he turned away from him, turned his back upon him, so that the words, "Get thee behind," were already in a sense realized by the Saviour's own act. This seems less natural. Get thee behind me, Satan. Peter was urging upon Christ a worldly policy, and trying

to dissuade him from the way appointed by God's will. This is just the temptation to which, as we saw, Christ was subjected at the beginning of his ministry. Matt. iv. 10. It was now, as then, a temptation of Satan. The Devil, in or through Peter, was doing his own work. An offence unto me. Peter was not herein a foundation rock for the church, but rather "a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence." Compare this very apostle's language as to Christ. 1 Peter ii. 7, 8. For thou savorest not the things that be of God, etc. "Savorst" is an old English word, meaning to relish, or delight in; from the Latin word, meaning to taste. Peter was yet only partially sanctified and enlightened. Those that be of men. A very striking expression, showing that mankind, by nature, are enemies of God. So does Jesus assume the doctrine of the universal and total depravity of man, as apart from the grace of the gospel.

Verse 24.—Then said Jesus unto his disciples. Peter no doubt represented his fellow-disciples in both his noble confession and his ignoble rebuke of Christ. They all alike had mixed up with correct views and desires as to him and his work; and hence the Saviour now, turns to the whole body of them; and, using the occurrence as his text, makes to them and us one of his most affecting appeals. If any man. Of that or any other time. Will come after me. As disciples, to share in the honors of my kingdom as those disciples and multitudes at that time desired to. Let him deny himself. One is not to find in himself, in his own pleasure, advantage, will, the supreme law of his life, but that law must be found in Christ. One's language must be, "not my will, thine." And take up his cross. A proverbial expression, but peculiarly forcible here, as Christ was to die on the cross, which thus became the symbol of the Christian religion. Criminals led forth to the accursed death of crucifixion, were required to carry the cross to which they were to be nailed, as a badge of their shame. No worldly honor awaited Peter and his expectant companions. Honor and glory did, indeed, await them; but in this world, and from this world, shame. And follow me. Beautifully expressing the Christian's subjection to Christ, and constant obedience of him. We follow him into suffering and service, into the grave, and into the glory beyond.

Verse 25.—For whosoever shall save his life, etc. A double antithesis full of solid truth, as of rhetorical beauty. The word here translated "life," is the one usually translated "soul," and sometimes "self." The meaning of the verse is not that one who seeks to avoid death, will meet death, and the converse. It is rather that he who seeks his own good in preference to God's honor, who makes into a law of action his own pleasure, rather than Christ's will, and shrinks back as Peter had done from suffering and even death, from mere worldly considerations, who thus saves his life, or his soul and self, loses his true life, soul, self; for the good of man is to be found only in man's union with God.

Verse 26.—For what is a man profited? An argument to confirm and enforce the preceding words. The form of a question is here the most emphatic of all assertions. It challenges mankind to discover any profit in it, anything but loss, ruinous, fatal loss. If he gain the whole world. The case put in the most favorable light for the worldling. And lose (forfeit) his own soul. Omit "own." "Soul" here, is the same as "life" in the preceding verse. The soul "forfeited" when it has come finally and irrecoverably under the curse of God's holy wrath. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? A price has been paid for the soul once—once for all—the precious blood of Christ. That alone is its ransom. That neglected and rejected, for the sake of this world, what then? What else has a man that he can buy himself off from his punishment? Mark the solemn emphasis of this mighty warning.

Vers. 27.—This tells why there can be no recovery of the lost soul. The second and final coming of Christ is here meant. To every man according to his works. The rejecter of Christ will be rejected by Christ; the acceptor accepted. All character is rooted either in faith or unbelief.

Verse 28.—The promise here is referred by some to the transfiguration; by some to the resurrection of Christ; by some to the day of Pentecost; by some to the destruction of Jerusalem.

QUESTIONS.—Which apostle was prominent in our last lesson? Which is to be in this? What confession had he just made? vs. 16. What was Christ's commendation? vs. 17-19.

Vs. 21. What change in Christ's instruction to his disciples was made at this time? Why this change? What are the chief points in his predictions as here given? Why did Christ say he must suffer?

Vs. 22, 23. What did Peter say to such predictions? What was there wrong in this rebuke? Why did Peter feel and say this? Why did Christ call Peter "Satan"? What did he mean by the words, "Get thee behind me"? Matt. iv. 10. What is meant by "savorst"? Explain the phrase, "Those that be of men." Have we any of Peter's spirit?

Vs. 24-26. What is it to deny self? What to take up the cross? What to follow Christ? Why should this have been spoken just when it was? What is meant in verse 26, by "life"? What by "soul"? What is it to save the "life"? or "soul"? What to "lose" it? Why and how does one save his soul by losing it, and the converse? Why can one give nothing in exchange for his soul, when it has been forfeited?

Vs. 27, 28. When will the day of salvation end? What will follow it? Explain verse 28.

Scripture from the Baptist Teacher. Abrridged Catechism, 147.

SUNDAY, October 26th.—The Transfiguration.—Matt. xvii. 1-8.

Youths' Department.

TWO MAY-QUEENS.

Once, not very long ago, and in a place not very far off, a ragged little lame girl sat upon a stone in the doorway of a poor hut, saying softly to herself:

"April showers bring forth May flowers."
"They do, do they?" screamed a coarse voice from within. "I'll May flowers you, if you don't look out! What you settin' out there for, Lerviny, and them clothes a getting cold in the pail?"
"I'm a lettin' 'em soak," answered the lame child gently, without looking up.
"You be, be you? Well, just you take yerself off of that, and come here to yer works. There's them collars all got to be starched."

Laviny, taking her rough little crutch, rose as quickly as she could, and, entering the dingy room, worked her way among the tubs and broken chairs to where stood a table with a pan of hot starch upon it, and a number of dry collars tied in a ragged towel.

"Can't I take 'em out in the sun, aunt? I can't half see to do 'em in here."

Her aunt, who at the moment was bending over a tubful of steaming hot clothes, was rubbing the schoolmaster's shirts so hard upon the washboard that she couldn't hear Laviny's words. She saw the child's movement towards the door, however, and checked her with an impatient:
"No; stay where you be."

For awhile after that, the only sounds in the cheerless room were the soft skish, skish of the starch under Laviny's thin little palms, and her aunt's heavy rub, rub, upon the washboard.

Did the aunt hate little Laviny? Not she. Eliza Green was only rough, quick-tempered, and tired. Poor folks have queer ways with one another. If she thought about her conduct at all, she thought only that she was doing her duty in not letting the child "gad about outdoors," and in "puttin' a stop to the lazy ways she was a gettin' into." Laviny was the orphan child of this poor washer-woman's sister, and it evidently was a settled matter somewhere far in the depths of her dull, neglected heart, that "so long as there was a day's washing to be found, or a crust or a smitch left, the poor little creature shouldn't want for food nor shelter; no, nor for careful trainin'." Presently Laviny, squeezing a collar very hard, and letting the starch ooze slowly through her fingers, looked wistfully towards the open doorway. Some white clouds were floating by in the distance.

"What has got into yer, Lerviny? I'll give yer somethin' to stare at, if you don't take your eyes off that there sky."

(Only the day before, Eliza Green had told her friend, Mrs. Delany, who lived in the shanty beyond, that that queer look of Laviny's always gave her "a crawl—like as if she was goin' to be took away from me, you know." But she didn't say this to Laviny.)

"Why, aunt," answered the little girl in her sweet, patient voice. "I was only wondering about Miss Duplaine's little girl's going to be a May-queen? They're going to have a great high pole, O, ever so high, all hung full of flowers, and Miss Lotty's going to have on her lovely white frock, and loads of flowers around her head!"

"How do you know?"
"Why, I heard 'em talking about it

when Jake Delaney and me went last night to take home Miss Duplaine's clean clothes."

"Great! you took home Miss Duplaine's clothes."

"Well, I went with Jake, anyhow, an I love him, he's so good about carryin' me when I'm tired. You ought t' heard him laughin' about my not lettin' my crutch hit his nose, and all the while he holdin' the heavy basket o' clothes with his other hand!"

"Lerviny!—Now, see you looking so again! Let that there sky be! If you don't stop that way of lookin' up smilin' and solemn at the clouds, I'll be after you, so I will."

"I was only thinkin' how good Jake is! And O, aunt, you ought to see the throne!" The aunt gave a jump. "What throne, you on'arthly child, you?"

"Why, the one that's for dear little Miss Lotty. It's all made up pretty and green, and to-day she's going to sit on it for Queen of May, and have a whole bushel o' flowers all throwed over her!"

"Sakes! what goin's on them rich folks do have! I don't see no sense into it."
"O aunt! I do!"

Just then they heard a sound of mingled shouts and laughter, and the tramping of little feet.

"Jake! Jake! Jake Delaney!" screamed the chorus.

"What's a wantin'?" shouted back a gruff voice from the Delany shanty.

"Oh! we want you to come and help us get some apple blossoms. Come quick! we can't reach. There's lots of them yonder."

Laviny ran to the door, and the aunt followed briskly. It was just noon. Jake Delany, Mrs. Delany's great, good-natured son, was shuffling his way towards Eliza Green's hut, and right outside, close to the very doorstep, pressed a troop of happy, dirty, ragged, laughing children—and all carried flowers! The girls had them in their aprons; the boys, bareheaded, held them in their hats and caps. One girl had a pailful of grass and dandelions, and a chubby little fellow, with red hair, held in his arms an old boot full of blossoms and sprays of willow.

"Hollo, Laviny!" shouted half a dozen;
"we're going to be a-wantin' you soon."

"Wantin' me?" almost screamed Laviny, her face sparkling with delight and astonishment. "Why, what are you going to do?"

"We're going to keep May," answered the biggest girl, speaking for the rest, "and we're going to have you for queen."

"Oh! oh! oh!" said Laviny, clasping her hands. "And have flowers throwed all over me?"

"Yes," said the big girl; "and we're goin' to crown you beautiful, and we're goin' to fix a wand for you like Miss Lotty's. We've all been up to look through the bushes at her. My! it's splendid!"

"She looks like an angel," put in one of the little girls, "with the bute-fullest shoes and all!"

"Ho!" interrupted another scornfully.
"They don't have no shoes on angels."

"How do you know?"
"Cause I seed a pietyer of 'em. A'n't yer smart!"

"She had the elegantest ribbons onto her back, too, Laviny," spoke the big girl again. "But they took her right indoors. 'Fraid of her bein' so thin-dressed, I guess. Ready, Laviny? We want you, come right off."

"Where we going?" asked Laviny, all in a glow.

"Why, where we've been fixin' the things. Jake and Charley and Pete'll have the blossoms all tied to the pole long 'fore we get there."

"Do let me go—please do," said Laviny, turning suddenly to her aunt; "can't I?"

"Why, what's got into yer, Lerviny?" said the aunt, sharply. "Anybody'd think I was a bear, to hear you go on. You hain't got a clean smitch on you, but never mind; go get your cape, it may blow up colder bimeby. Some o' you'll have to help her 'long a little," she added, turning to the children again, as Laviny went back into the shanty. "The poor child's too much of a cripple to be May what-you-call-it."

"Oh, no, she isn't," shouted two or three. "We'll take care of her."

"We picked her out for that," added a little girl quickly, "and because she is so pretty and good."

"She is that," said Eliza Green, with a queer shine in her eyes; then changing her tone, "Here, you, Lerviny, don't you know they're a waitin'? You ain't a makin' that air cape, be yer? I never see such a child."

Laviny came stumbling out with her

crutch only half under her arm. Her face was so flushed and happy looking that Mrs. Green gave her a little s'ap as she passed out.

"Oh! oh!" exclaimed one of the girls.
"That's nothing," laughed Laviny.—
"That's only her way 'o' kissen' me. Aunt's real good. Maybe she'll go with us."

One of the girls ran into the shanty, but came tight out again with: "She says what's the washing to do, she'd like to know?"

Nobody stopped to answer the question, and now Jake and Charlie and Pete came running toward them.

"Up for a ride, little Missy," grunted Jake, as suiting the action to the word he lifted Laviny up to a secure seat on his great square shoulder. "Here we go!"

It was a beautiful procession, after all, Jack ahead, with his sunburned cheek looking all the ruddier beside Laviny's sweet, pale face, Tommy Tice with his bootful, Kitty Carr with her pailful, and all the rest following with laden aprons and caps—it was a procession of flowers, led on by the lily girl shining up in Jake's arms.—At last they reached the May ground. It was only two fields off from Mrs. Duplaine's elegant place. They could see Lotty's beautiful May-pole distinctly, with its fluttering ribbons and long festoons of flowers. What if their May pole was only a rake planted in the ground, and wreathed with daisies and dandelions! What if the throne was made of an old tub, and a stool sprinkled over with cut grass! Didn't they trim Laviny's crutch with violets and apple-blossoms? Didn't they crown her with a beautiful wreath? Didn't they throw nearly a bushel of grass and flowers at her feet? And didn't the biggest girl walk up to her and with a funny little bob of a courtesy read these lines, written by Jake on a piece of wrapping paper:

"Laviny Green,
You are our May-queen."

And didn't the little creature almost cry with joy when they danced about the May-pole, while she, their queen, sat crowned in state?

That night two little sisters, nestling in their straw bed on the floor, put their arms around each other and talked it over.

"Wasn't Laviny sweet?" said one. "I do think she's the goodest girl, only she's lame. It's dreadful hard to have to walk crooked, a'n't it?"

"Bet it is! But I'm glad we made her Queen o' May," said the other.—*Hearth and Home.*

NEW VERSION OF THE "PRODIGAL SON."

A stranger officiated at one of the churches in Pelchertown on a recent Sabbath, in the absence of the regular clergyman. His afternoon discourse was a new version of the "Prodigal Son," unique and novel. The reverend speaker represented him when leaving home as arrayed in the height of Parisian fashion—"in silk hat, broadcloth coat, kerseymer's, kid gloves, and French calf boots," and, after a life of unparalleled extravagance, dissipation, and sin, conspicuous among the fruits of which were "the graves of two beautiful maidens, his victims, his property being spent and his servants deserting him, he was seen one morning 'cut in the middle of a lot, on a rock, his silk hat knocked in, broadcloth out at the elbow, French calf boots out at the toes, kid gloves gone, hogs all around him, and he chewing the pods!"—*Northampton Gazette.*

POSTAL CARDS AND PASTORALS.—A young man in the country is said to have repaired to the village post-master, and, throwing down a copper, bawled out: "I say, Mister, give me one of them cre pastoral cards." And yet these "pastoral" (otherwise "postal") cards seem not to answer all the demands of pastoral correspondence, if we may judge from the following:

A clergyman in England was recently fined \$50 for sending to a parishioner a postal card on which he had written some gentle admonitions upon the subject of non-payment of church dues, and upon the evils of a too great love of money.

An illustration of Irish simplicity is afforded by the reply of a young candidate for the office of teacher. The examiner was endeavoring to elicit the candidate's idea of the market value of labor with reference to demand and supply; but, being baffled, he put a question in this simple form: "If there are in your village two shoemakers, with just sufficient employment to enable them to live tolerably, and no more, what would follow if a third shoemaker set up in the same village?" "What would follow, sir?" echoed the candidate; "why, a fight, to be sure."