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BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1874.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, August 23rd, 1874.

Power over Disease.—Mark v. 24-34.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And as many as touched him were made whole." Mark vi. 56.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 32-34.

SUMMARY.—Large faith has yet larger reward.

ANALYSIS.—I. The need. Vs. 24-27. II. The cure. Vs. 28-29. III. The call. Vs. 30-32. IV. The end. Vs. 33, 34.

EXPOSITION.—Introductory.—Our last lesson found Jesus on the southeast side of the Sea of Galilee. We saw the people urging him to leave their coasts. He did as they asked him, and came back into Capernaum, "his own city." Mark ix. 1. This, as we have learned, was on the northeast side of the sea or lake. It would appear from the ninth chapter of Matthew, that it was just after this return that Levi made him the feast, which a previous lesson brought to our notice, and that Jairus came to him, perhaps while still at Levi's house, to ask him to go with him and heal his daughter. Jesus consented, and our present lesson finds him on his way to do this merciful deed.

Verses 24.—And Jesus went with him. With Jairus, vs. 22. See above. Much people followed him, and thronged him. To see the expected miracle, and because of the excitement produced in Capernaum and vicinity by his words and works. The reason for the mention of the fact is its bearing on the miracle of healing now to be recorded. Jairus obviously lived near, perhaps in, Capernaum.

Verses 25, 26.—An issue [flux or flow] of blood twelve years. The time is mentioned to indicate the obstinate and incurable nature of the disease. It may help us to picture to ourselves her emaciated form and pallid features, her weak state and feeble step, as she ventures into the crowd, and works her way toward the object of her loving reverence, and of her confident hope. Suffered many things of many physicians.—It is suggested that the term "suffered" is here to be taken in its ordinary literal sense, that the varied kinds of treatment received were painful and hard to bear. Spent all that she had. This indicates that she had possessed a competency if not a large fortune. Luke says (viii. 43) that she "spent all her living," all the property on which she depended for the means of life, was reduced to poverty. Was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. The poor woman would gladly have parted with "her living," if so she could have recovered her health.

The condition of this woman has not unfitly been held, and was probably intended to present, in the way of figure, the condition of a sinner.

Verses 27, 28.—When she had heard of Jesus. Especially of his many miraculous cures, his wonderful works, and of the readiness with which he performed them. Came in the press behind.—The press is the thronging crowd which followed Christ. Vs. 24. She worked her way into their midst for concealment, and for the same reason came "behind," not before, or at the side of the Lord. Touched his garment. Matthew and Luke say "the hem [or 'border'] of his garment." The garment was the mantle, and around the borders of this the Mosaic law required that there should be fringes. Num. xv. 38. It was these fringes that she touched. As these fringes were the sign of the wearer's relation to God as peculiarly his (Num. xv. 39), a special sanctity was thought to belong to them; and hence this woman would expect the touch of the fringe to be effective in curing her. Matt. xxiii. 5. For she said, Matthew adds, "in herself." She did not speak this aloud, but thought it, and it was this thought that prompted her action. If I may touch but his clothes. A touch only, nothing more. His clothes only, not his person, which is yet more sacred and sanctifies his clothes. I shall be made whole. Shall be healed. Literally, "saved;" the same word in Greek as is currently used of the soul's salvation, suggesting thus most naturally the moral reference. Here was strong faith, not the strongest; strong because it was sure of the miracle from a bare touch simply of Christ's garment. Not the strongest, for the centurion said, "Speak the word only."

Verses 29.—And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up. All the narrators notice that the cure was immediate, instantaneous. This made it most clear to her and others that Jesus, and he only, was the Author of the cure; that her touch, and that only, was the mediating cause. Thus was her faith both rewarded and confirmed. She felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. The great change in her system caused by Christ's miracle of healing was, of course, felt suddenly and decidedly. There was the sensation of health restored, and new and fresh life granted, its thrill as the blood no longer oozed out and away, but flowed vigorously through arteries and veins with no hindrance. Her disease is called a "plague," or more exactly, a "scourge," because disease and death are in Scripture regarded as results of sin.

Verses 30.—Jesus immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him. Mark seems to adapt his language to the view of the woman, and speaks of Christ somewhat as though the miracle had really been wrought by the outflow of an unconscious and unwillful power. But this is rather to make a natural transition from the preceding statement of her view to the following correction of it. Christ knew that virtue or power, healing power, had gone from him. This is the language of appearance. Turned him about in the press. So as fully to face the secret seeker behind him. He knew just where to look. Who touched my clothes? Asked not in ignorance, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the woman first of all, and also for the faith of spectators. He wishes to draw out from her an open confession of him, and of her faith in him, to correct her faith and rid it of its wrong elements.

Verses 31.—His disciples. The twelve are doubtless meant, but Peter was their spokesman. Luke viii. 45. Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and how sayest thou, etc. The question seemed to them perfectly absurd, and so on its face it was. When so many were jostling, even crowding Christ, why ask who touched, not him, but barely his clothes? What a lesson is this. No matter what is the noise and stir and crowd of professed followers of Christ, he distinguishes instantly between the "thronging" of mere profession and the touch of faith. To the former no healing virtue goes forth. The bond that binds souls to Christ is no mere outward bond, it is the bond of a spiritual affinity.

Verses 32. He looked round about, etc. To his previous question no one gave answer, "all denied" Luke viii. 45. The woman denied by her silence, if not expressly. It was then that he fastened on her his eyes in such a way as to mark her out, and in some sense compel her to make the confession which he wanted and she needed. His purpose was not to fail, and when one means failed to accomplish it fully, another was brought forward.

Verses 33.—Fearing and trembling. Because she was discovered, and anticipated a rebuke, perhaps even a miracle of judgment for her temerity in laying her polluted hand on the holy fringe. Came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. Not in order to let him know what was the truth, for she saw that he knew it; but just as we pour out our confessions into the ear of God who knows all before we tell him, and infinitely better than we. But just this confession, this opening and outpouring of the heart is the prompting of a right nature, and is the demand of our Lord. What relief comes to human hearts, to those who are trembling and fearful, but know in themselves that they have been healed, when openly before the crowd, before all men they come and confess what God has done for them, and how they came to seek the Lord. The act of baptism is public, has been thus blessed to multitudes beyond all power of language to describe.

Verses 34.—Daughter. A word of endearment and kindness. How unlike was the answer given to the answer feared. Thy faith hath made thee whole. The efficiency which healed came not at all from the faith, but wholly from Christ's gracious will. But the faith brought her into right relation with Christ to receive the efficiency. Christ was "the efficient cause" of the healing, the faith was "the conditional cause." Go in peace. More exactly, "go into peace." The future, the eternal future into which the forgiven soul moves is peace, the very peace of God's own nature. And be whole of thy plague. Enough if God says that to us sinners.

QUESTIONS.—Where did our lesson find Christ? Where does this one find him? Vs. 24. Where was Christ going? vs.

22, 23. Why should the fact of the great throng be here mentioned? vs. 31.

Vs. 25, 26. What was there said in the condition of the woman here spoken of? Wherein does she represent the sinner?

Vs. 27, 28. Why should she have come into the crowd for healing? Why have we stollen up behind Jesus? What was her thought?

Vs. 29. What was the result of her touch? What part of the garment did she touch? Matt. ix. 20. Why this part? Num. xv. 37-40. How does this touch, and its result represent the sinner's salvation by Christ? Why is disease called a "plague" or "scourge"?

Vs. 30. What is here meant by virtue? Did Christ cure the woman without any purpose to do so? Why did he ask, "Who touched my clothes?"

Vs. 31. What answer was at first given him? Luke viii. 45. Who then spoke for the disciples? Luke viii. 45. Was his answer natural?

Vs. 32. What did Christ next do? Why this?

Vs. 33. The effect of this look? What was her fear? What advantage in an open confession of Christ, and of what he has done for our souls?

Vs. 34. What did Christ say to her? Why did he use the term "daughter"? What is the peace of the Christian? How is it that faith saves?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 206, 207.

SUNDAY, August 30th, 1874.—Power over Death.—Mark v. 22, 23, 35-43.

Youths' Department.

CHRIST'S LOVE.

A little Italian apple-girl come into my office one day with a basket full of red apples, and asked me to take one. I told her I did not care for it; but she said—

"You must take it."  
"No I don't wish for it," said I.  
But she insisted, and I took it.  
She has come a great many times since, and she always gives me an apple; and if I say "No," it makes no difference. I must take it nevertheless.

I well understand the reason. Several years ago I was sitting at the table in my private office one cold winter day, when I heard a tumult and a sudden cry in the repository; and rushing out of my room I saw the little apple-girl frantic with fear and terror. She had been standing near the red-hot stove, her clothes had taken fire, and the flames were streaming and climbing up her side and above her head. The clerks were confused and frightened, and could do nothing for her. I told her to lie down; but she was wild with fear, and so I flung her quickly down upon the floor, wrapped a blanket around her, extinguished the flames, and saved her life. Some of the ladies in the repository went to the mission barrels, replaced her burnt-up garment with others, and sent her home in peace.

An apple is not worth much; but when she returned a few days after, and told, in her broken English, the thanks of her father and mother, and when, day after day, she came with the apple, the biggest, and best one she could find in her basket, I could not have the heart to refuse the gift. That apple was not the price of her life. It was not to repay me for saving her from a fearful death, but it was simply to tell of the gratitude of her heart to one who had done for her something which she might never have an opportunity to repay.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ does not require great things of us. He does not ask us to repay him for the love he has lavished on us. He does not demand of us to meet the debt which he has cancelled by his own blood; but he does give us the privilege of showing that we have not forgotten his love, and that we appreciate the sacrifice he has made. He does give us the privilege of showing that we have not forgotten the hand that was nailed to the cross, nor the love that throbbeth within the great heart of Immanuel.—Young Reaper.

RAINING GOLD.

Little Harry was looking out of the window, watching the rain as it pattered down on the green grass, beating the flower beds, dancing away over the gravel, and making little pools wherever there was the least pretence of a basin. It is a pleasant thing to sit snug in your comfortable room and watch the rain, but Harry's brain was busy with another speculation.

"Oh, Aunt Susan," he said, his bright eyes sparkling, "how I wish it would rain gold dollars instead of rain drops. Wouldn't we be rich?"  
"What if it should rain gold instead of water drops all Summer?"

"Why, we could have everything in the world we wished for then. I would buy a little carriage and harness for Carlo, and Ann should have the paint box she wants so badly, and mother need not work a bit, and I would get her a nice sewing machine. Oh, how nice it would be, Auntie."

"But what would you get to eat? nothing can grow without water."

"Oh, we would buy our food; we should have money enough."

"Yes, but if it rained gold all over the world, no one would have any to sell. All the fields would be parched and baked. The grass would shrink and tumble to dust. The grain would not grow under golden rain. These beautiful shady trees would parch and wither up, and die. There would be no fruit, nor vegetable in any one's garden. The little streams, and many of the wells that afford refreshment to thousands would all be dried up, and men and animals would perish with thirst as well as hunger. Robinson Crusoe thought little of the gold he found in the ten chest washed ashore on his island, for he could buy nothing with it. Besides, if gold were as plenty as pebbles, we should value it no higher. Money is of no use except for what it will bring us of the comforts of life. Some one has estimated that every good Summer shower is really worth in money about three millions of dollars. It produces what will bring that amount. We shall always find, dear Harry, the more we reflect on it, that our Creator has ordered everything a great deal more wisely and benevolently than we could."

A HIVE OF BEES—AND WHAT THEY TEACH.

Bees teach! Yes, my little friend, we can learn a lesson from the busy bees. There is something to be learned from every one of God's creatures, whether small or great. First, the bees teach a lesson of industry. Did you ever watch them? How busy they are! Not one minute is wasted. They fly from flower to flower gathering up a store of sweetness. They improve every moment of time. "Summer is short," they seem to say, "we must work while we can."

Did you ever hear a text, "Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work?" Here is the second lesson the bees teach us. We should be busy about our Master's work, before the long night of old age and death comes, when "no man can work."

Then the bees teach us to be provident. Do you know what that word means? It means we should provide for future need. The bees know when winter comes they have food to keep them alive until bright summer returns with its sweet flowers. This is your summer, children. Now is the time for you to store those little hives, your minds, with the fragrant sweets and rich stores of learning; with gospel lessons and rich stores of learning; with gospel lessons.

Be provident. Learn all you can, because you never know in what circumstances you may be placed, nor how useful knowledge may become that now seems useless. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven," as the bee lays up honey for winter use. Death will come to you, as winter comes to bees; then how sad if you have no store nor place in those heavenly mansions!

Again, the bees teach us to be orderly. What exquisite neatness within the hive! Everything in its place, nothing allowed to waste! Look through the glass of the hive, and you cannot but admire the order in which it is kept.

Obedience is the fifth lesson. They obey their queen promptly, exactly. All would be in confusion if the bees had no head. And, children, let me whisper a secret to you. Happiness is the twin sister of Obedience. The two go hand in hand. If you obey your father and mother and teachers, or whoever is in authority over you, I can promise you, you will be a happy child. This is a hard lesson to learn, I know. Little folks are so apt to think they know best. But it is a grand mistake, and you will find, looking back over life, that the old know more than the young, and wherever you have disobeyed, misery and unhappiness have followed.

God made the fifth commandment the only one with promise, because he well knew the importance of obedience. Without it, all is anarchy and confusion. Just suppose the angels should refuse to obey God! Dear children, remember the fifth lesson the bees teach, which is the same as the fifth commandment—"Obedience." Then we learn if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well. The bees build

beautiful cells and honey combs. They fill them with pure, clear honey. There is nothing slipshod about their work.

Remember these lessons, as you watch the busy bees humming around the flowers this summer. Don't call them "nasty things," and be afraid of their stings. Bees seldom sting unless in self-defence. We should respect them, as one of the most industrious, careful and wonderful of God's creation.

Let us sum up the lessons taught by the bee:

- 1. Be industrious.
- 2. Be active while you can.
- 3. Be provident.
- 4. Be orderly.
- 5. Be obedient.
- 6. Be careful to do your best.

—M. Theresa Hall, in Bible Banner.

COURTESIES TO PARENTS.

Parents lean upon their children, and especially their sons, much earlier than either of them imagine. Their love is a constant inspiration, a perennial fountain of delight, from which other lips may quaff, and be comforted thereby. It may be that the mother has been left a widow, depending on her only son for support. He gives her a comfortable home, sees that she is well clad, and allows no debt to accumulate, and that is all. It is considerable, more even than many sons do, but there is a lack. He seldom thinks it worth while to give her a caress; he has forgotten all those affectionate ways that kept the wrinkles from her face, and make her look so much younger than her years; he is ready to put his hand in his pocket to gratify her slightest request, but to give of the abundance of his heart is another thing entirely. "He loves his mother?" Of course he does! Are there not proofs enough of his filial regard? Is he not continually making sacrifices for her benefit? What more could any reasonable woman ask?

Ah, but it is the mother-heart that craves an occasional kiss, the support of your youthful arm, the little attentions and kindly courtesies of life, that smooth down so many of its asperities, and make the journey less wearisome. Material aid is good so far as it goes, but it has not that sustaining power which the loving, sympathetic heart bestows upon its object. You think she has out-grown these weaknesses and follies, and is content with the crust that is left; but you are mistaken. Every little offer of attention—your escort to church or concert, or for a quiet walk, brings back the youth of her heart; her cheeks glow, and her eyes sparkle with pleasure, and oh! how proud she is of her son!

Even the father, occupied and absorbed as he may be, is not wholly indifferent to these filial expressions of devoted love. He may pretend to care very little for them, but having faith in their sincerity, it would give him serious pain were they entirely withheld. Fathers need their sons quite as much as the sons need the fathers, but in how many deplorable instances do they fail to find in them a staff for their declining years!

My son, are you a sweetener of life? You may disappoint the ambition of your parents; may be unable to distinguish yourself as they fondly hoped; may find your intellectual strength inadequate to your own desires, but let none of these things move you from a determination to be a son of whose moral character they need never be ashamed. Begin early to cultivate a habit of thoughtfulness and consideration for other, especially for those whom you are commanded to honor. Can you begrudge a few extra steps for the mother who never stopped to number those you demanded during your helpless infancy? Have you the heart to slight her requests, or treat her remarks with indifference, when you cannot begin to measure the patient devotion with which she bore with your peculiarities? Anticipate her wants, invite her confidence, be prompt to offer assistance, express your affections as heartily as you did when a child, that the mother may never grieve in secret for the son she has lost.—S. S. Times.

That superintendent who chose a young lady to be the teacher of a large infant class because "she looked as though she could smile" understands human nature. We doubt not he has a cheerful, working school.

The fire of discord is more ruinous to the church of Christ than the fire of persecution.