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The Sabbath School.

INTERNATIONAL GESSON.
Fourth Quarter Lesson 7 Nov. 13, 1900

THE TEN LEPERS CLEANS-ED.—Luke 17: 11-19.
Read for Connection John 11.
GOLDEN TEXT.—Be ye thankful.—Col. 3: 15.

HISTORICAL SETTING.
Time.—March, A. D. 30, shortly before the crucifixion.
Place.—On the border line between Samaria and Galilee, on the way from Ephraim across the Jordan, and down through Perea to Bethany.

LEPROSY A TYPE OF SIN AND ITS EFFECTS.—Vs. 11-12. As he went. As they were going. Through the midst of. In the middle way between Samaria and Galilee. Gang eastward, toward the Jordan, which he afterwards crossed, and went southward, through Perea, toward Jerusalem. The place where the lepers met Jesus was in the central region between Samaria and Galilee. In this district, to this day, the colonies of lepers are most numerous. Ten men that were lepers. Nine probably were Jews and one a Samaritan; but the community of dilemma broke down the barriers of nationality. Which stood afar off. "Being forbidden by the law to approach others; it was a sort of quarantine to prevent the spread of the disease. Picture "the group of the ten sufferers, full of leprosy, their clothes rent, their heads bare, their upper lips covered, and crying, 'Unclean! unclean!'"

Leprosy is a remarkable type of sin and its fruits, in certain aspects; as intemperance is a type of sin and the ruin it causes, from another point of view. The visible effect on the body illustrates the effect of sin upon the soul. Sin, like leprosy, is a most loathsome, pillaging, deforming, unclean thing. "Leprosy is God's language by which he describes sin as it appears in his sight." "In the worst cases the joints of the fingers and toes fall off one by one, and injuries to the other parts produce mutilation and deformity. So sin mutilates the soul. It disables the conscience and the judgment; it mars every best faculty, affecting every avenue of expression. Sin, like leprosy, is constitutional. The outward expressions and manifestations are but the effects of a disease which permeates the whole system. Sin, like leprosy, is deceitful in its workings. New born babes of leprosy parents are often as pretty and as healthy in appearance as any; but by and by its presence and workings become visible. In many cases leprosy, like sin, does not bring immediate pain and death. "It is not virulent, acute, or even painful, except in its later stages." Sin, like leprosy, is in a sense contagious by intimate contact, as when the sin of others is received into the soul, by yielding to temptations, or following bad examples. Leprosy is not contagious like scarlet fever or smallpox, but it can "be communicated by the inoculation of the blood with the morbid secretions of an affected person." Persons in a street car are very much more likely to contract tuberculosis from the expectoration of a consumptive than to get leprosy from the presence of a leper. It is a well established fact that when leprosy has once gained for itself a foothold in any locality, it is apt to remain there and spread. The case of the Sandwich Islands illustrates the danger. Forty years ago the disease did not exist there. Rev. Sereno E. Bishop, of Honolulu, states another fact, which makes it a more exact type of sin. "The disease is substantially confined to the natives. Our experience here shows that there is little or no danger of infection from leprosy to person of cleanly habits." So there is little danger to those in a sinful world, who are pure in heart, and are laboring, as Christ did, for the salvation of men from sin. Leprosy is practically incurable by human skill, although under favorable circumstances there have been several cures, even in advanced stages, says Dr. Fox in his report to the New York Health Department (1896). "But that man was carefully treated in the hospital, and he received all the comforts of life, whereas, if he had been locked up in a lazaretto, probably he would have died. The great difficulty in curing leprosy is that as soon as a person learns that he has it he is made to believe that all hope is gone, that he is an object to be shunned by everybody." Better surroundings and care are a great aid in the cure of sin. Christ attracted and helped sinners because he brought hope. The sinner is not a doomed man if he will go to the Good Physician and will keep away from evil.

The sinner is utterly unfit for heaven and the society of pure and holy beings. One of the saddest things about the leprosy is this separation from the healthy and clean. (See Ben Hur.) In the Sandwich Islands the lepers are all sent to one of the islands, called Moleka, by the board of health; but there is intense opposition to it by many of the natives, on account of the separation from family and friends.

THE CRY FOR HELP.—V. 13. And they lifted up their voices (as to be heard a long way), and said Jesus, Master. Using, appropriately here, the term peculiar to Luke, which signifies rulers in authority. He was merciful on us. In what manner need-d no explanation. The plea was obviously equivalent to "Heal us of our dreadful malady." They realized their sad situation and need of divine aid. They were doubtless led to ask Jesus for cleansing, because they knew he could help them because he had helped others. Because Jesus has forgiven others, therefore he will forgive me. Jesus always brought with him an atmosphere of courage and hope. They were no longer doomed. They cried for help with all their heart. They did not wait. They did not search for excuses. They went to Jesus. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death! I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7: 24-25). THE LEPERS CLEANS-ED.—V. 14. And when he saw them. He turned and looked when he heard their cry. He saw their need, their desire, and their faith. He saw not only their diseased bodies, but their hearts. He said unto them. How ready the Saviour always was to grant his mighty healing power when he saw the faintest desire for his help, and faith as a grain of mustard seed! Go show yourselves unto the priests. When a leper was cured, before he could be re-torn to society, he was required to show himself to the priest, to make an offering, and to be officially pronounced clean. (See Lev., chap. 14; Matt. 8: 4.) Christ's command thus implied a promise of cure. They were to show themselves to the priests: because this was the law and by obedience to it they returned to the religious observances from which they had been excluded; because it was a great aid to their faith to have some definite work to do. It would be a test money to others. As they went, they were cleansed. After they had shown their faith by obedience, it was done unto them according to their faith. The blessing Jesus bestowed upon these men transformed their bodies and their whole earthly life. No one can express the greatness of the change of one defiled with sin into a saint. Faith was required in order to make the act of healing accomplish the moral purpose of Jesus. For men, having free will and a moral nature, cannot, in the nature of things, be saved without faith that accept, and chooses, and obeys. The test of faith was a means of increasing and strengthening faith. We are not to wait till we have full assurance before we take up Christian duties. If you have really chosen Jesus and decided to obey him as Master and be his disciple, go immediately forward and do everything a Christian should do. By that very action you will gain assurance. Do his will and then you shall know. Jesus sends you to definite religious duties, ordinances, and services, because these are a real help; a proof to yourselves and others that you have chosen "the good part which shall not be taken away." Old Testament Example. Naaman (2 Kings 5: 1-27). THE GRATEFUL ONE.—Vs. 15, 16, 19. And one of them... turned back. Not in disobedience to Jesus, for he would quickly obey, but in obedience to the higher duty of gratitude and love. The others went on in their cold and formal obedience. "In him the appropriate sentiment was awakened, and the right conduct followed. He recognized God as the source of the great blessing to him, and made the air resound as he retraced his steps with songs and shouts of praise to God. Fell down on his face. The customary token of reverence and honor. And he was a Samaritan. Untrained in the true religion, and probably separate from the others as soon as they found themselves cured. This man felt all the more the goodness of Jesus in healing him. Thy faith hath made thee whole. As all had been cured of the leprosy, this implies that the Samaritan found a higher spiritual healing, and was whole in soul as well as body. Gratitude for earthly blessings leads to spiritual blessings. It draws the soul to God in love. It realizes God's goodness and loving kindness. Expressions of gratitude are natural to a grateful heart. Not to express it argues a meagerness of gratitude. Expressing gratitude tends to increase and deepen the feeling.

Grateful expressions of love that is felt increases faith and bind the soul closer to God. THE THANKLESS NINE.—Vs. 17, 18. And Jesus answering. "Not to any words that had been uttered, but to the language of the circumstances and the occasion." But where are the nine? Where were they once? Where are they now? Where will they be hereafter? They had gone on in cold and literal obedience to the command of Jesus, not having love or gratitude enough to see that they could obey and express their love. There are not found that returned to give glory to God. Ingratitude is one of the most universal and deeply seated of human vices, and our Lord was perfectly familiar with it. But in this instance he was moved by the depth of the thanklessness.

The nine represent those many who are receiving unnumbered blessings from Christianity, whose comforts, education, wealth, liberty, homes, hopes are all the gifts of Christ, and who yet refuse to love him, serve him, or confess him. "The best of us are far too like the nine lepers. We are more ready to pray than to praise, and more disposed to ask God for what we have not than to thank him for what we have. Let us pray for a daily thankful heart.

A Sunday-School that Came of a Rainstorm.

BY ADDISON P. FOSTER, D. D.
A little girl and her father are driving up a wild gorge in the mountains of Montana. It is snowing hard, and the storm is blinding and dangerous. Even the tough little bronchos, trotting over the levels and climbing the steep, shriek from the blast. The travelers are missionaries of the American School Union, seeking an Indian settlement where they are to hold meetings. They travel with a large wagon, and the little daughter Frances, a girl of thirteen, plays the organ and sings at the meetings her father holds. She is unable, just now, to go to school, and the outdoor life is bringing back the roses to her cheeks.

It was on a pleasant morning in September that they started for Pryor Creek Indian Agency, thirty miles away, but no sooner did they reach the higher altitudes of the mountains than it began to rain and snow. They could not keep on up the mountain, so they turned down the road, and struck across the country to Sage Creek. This creek comes tumbling down through a gorge in the Pryor Mountains, where wild animals abound,—deer, antelope, bear, and wolf. But settlers have come into the valley, and located their homes along the creek. Ten such families are there already. It was not long therefore, as Frances and her father were driving slowly against the sleet, before they came to one of these humble homes.

The missionary rapped at the door. A Norwegian appeared, and cordially invited them to stay at his home till the storm was past. They thankfully accepted the invitation, but were not further dependent on his hospitality, though freely offered, for they carried with them their food and bedding. It rained so steadily through the afternoon that the missionary and his daughter remained at the Norwegian's over night. Frances took her little gospel organ from the wagon to the house, and played and sang with the family through the evening. The wife in the home said she wished the missionary and his daughter would stay in the settlement and have a meeting, but he felt that he must push on and work among the Indians.

Accordingly the next day, which was Saturday, he started, traveling into the mountains till noon. All this time, however, the request of the Norwegian woman kept ringing in his ears, until he felt that he had made a mistake. So he turned about, and drove again rapidly down the mountain to the place from which he came. He reached the house at five o'clock, and, telling the people there that he would have a meeting the next day, which was Sunday, he started down the creek, and drove eight miles to notify every family in the settlement of the meeting on the coming morning.

The meeting was held. It was large and enthusiastic, and a Sunday-school was organized. But the people were poor, and unable to purchase the few lesson helps necessary to start the school. How were these secured? Fortunately the children of the primary department of a Sunday-school in Dorchester, Massachusetts, had just given a little sum for such an emergency as this. The money had been sent to Mr. Frady, the missionary, and it was with this aid that he and Frances fitted out with its needed supplies the Sage Creek Sunday-school in the mountains of Montana. —S. S. Times

Swallowed by a Whale.

It has been stated in various quarters that it is a physical impossibility for a whale to swallow a man. Here are some facts which bear upon the matter in an interesting manner: English papers report that in February, 1891, the whaler Star of the East launched two whale boats, with an equipment of men, to pursue a superb whale that was observed at some distance. The huge creature was harpooned and wounded to death. While it was writhing in its last agonies one of the whale boats was struck by its tail and shattered to pieces. The sailors who were in it were thrown into the water. All but two were saved shortly afterward by the other boat. The body of one was recovered, but the other, a man named James Bartley, could not be found. When the monster was dead it was hoisted alongside the ship and the work of cutting it up began. When the stomach of the whale was opened, what was the surprise of the whalers to find in it their lost comrade, James Bartley, unconscious but alive. They had much trouble in reviving him. For several days he was delirious. Not until three weeks had elapsed did he recover his reason and become able to narrate his impressions. I remember well, said he, the moment the whale threw me into the air. Then I was swallowed, and found myself inclosed in a firm, slippery channel whose contractions forced me continually downward. This lasted only an instant. Then I found myself in a very large sea, and by feeling around I realized that I had been swallowed by a whale and that I was in his stomach. I could still breathe, though with difficulty. I had a feeling of insupportable heat, and it seemed as if I were being boiled alive. The horrible thought that I was doomed to perish in a whale's body tortured me, and my agony was intensified by the calm silence that reigned about me. Finally I lost consciousness. The captain of the Star of the East adds that cases where whales have swallowed men are not rare, but this is the first time that he ever saw the victim come out alive after his experience.

In a Mysterious Way.

J. R. Miller tells an interesting incident in The Family Friend at our Canadian surgeon as follows: One of the most skilled of Canadian surgeons has recounted his own sharp but salutary lessons. When but a little lad the bent of his nature was plainly shown, but the death of his father, and the failure of a bank, made all but a rudimentary education impossible. At the age of ten he was apprenticed to the village carpenter, in whose employ he remained for ten years. At the end of that time he had become a skilled mechanic, but, better still, he had acquired the sterling qualities of industry and endurance. One day an accident befell him, and for a whole year he was confined to his bed. The enforced invalidism was most irksome to one of his industrious habits, but one day, in despair at his utter lack of occupation, he caught up his mother's sewing, which lay upon the bed, and essayed his skill with the needle. His hands were so broadened and coarsened by the heavy shop work that he was almost unable to take a stitch. His awkwardness both provoked and amused him, and he persevered until he was able to sew both quickly and well, and could relieve his mother of a large portion of her work.

About the time of his recovery a distant relative of his died, leaving him a couple of thousand dollars, and, with many misgivings as to his qualifications, he entered upon his surgical training. Suddenly the meaning of his years of discipline unfolded itself. No nervous tremor ever disturbed him. In the carpenter's shop he had gained what no university could have given him—the workman's habit of thought. He never took a surgeon's tool into his hands without feeling that a workmanlike job was to be done. He was conscious neither of himself nor his patient. In the same way he amazed his professional brothers by his delicate stitching, the like of which was seldom seen, but they ceased to marvel when they learned that his master had been that tiny shaft of steel—his mother's needle.

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(REV.) F. M. YOUNG
Pastor Baptist Church, Bridgetown, N. S.

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