

The Sabbath-School

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

First Quarter, Lesson 7, Feb. 13, 1900.

JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL

John 4: 5-26.

Read John 3: 22-4: 45.

Commit Verses 11-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.—John 4: 24.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—December, A. D. 27. About eight months after the last lesson.

Place.—Samaria, at Jacob's well, near Sychar, at the foot of Mt. Gerizim.

Rulers.—Tiberius Cæsar, emperor of Rome; Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea; Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee.

In the earlier verses of this chapter we have a hint of two scenes. John is preaching in Judea. Jesus is preaching in Judea. There are crowds around each of them.

The crowds around Jesus grows faster than those around John. Jesus had more to give the people. It was also the proof of John's success. His work was to bring men to Jesus.

The Pharisees became more bitterly opposed to Jesus, and tried to awaken jealousy between the disciples of Jesus and John. Then cometh he, on his way from Judea to Galilee. A city... called Sychar.

The ancient Shechem between Mrs. Ebal and Gerizim. That Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Few places in Palestine after Jerusalem, have had so much of Bible history connected with them.

Abraham, Jacob, Joseph's bones from Egypt, the great meeting on entering Canaan, the decision to divide the kingdom, etc., are all connected with this place. Now Jacob's well was there.

One of the few sites about which there is no dispute. The well is seventy-five feet deep, and eight or nine feet in diameter. It was formerly much deeper, but has been filled up for thirty feet or more with rubbish.

There are other springs in the neighborhood, but the waters of Jacob's well have a reputation of purity and flavor amongst the natives. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey. He was not weary of his work, but only in his work. Sat (was sitting) thus on (by) the well, probably on the low curb around wells, resting, and waiting for the return of his disciples.

It was about the sixth hour. Either noon, according to Jewish reckoning, or 6 P. M., according to one method of Roman reckoning. There cometh a woman of (out of) Samaria. Not the city of Samaria, seven miles away, but from the country of Samaria. To draw water. Why did she go so far to draw water when there were abundant fountains close at hand? Because the water was so much better than the hard water flowing from the limestone rocks.

A CHARACTER STUDY.—The woman of Samaria was a most unlikely disciple. She was entirely different from the women who ministered to Jesus, such as Mary and Martha of Bethany, Salome, and the wife of Chuza. She was disreputable; rather bold and free in her manners; of some native ability; a Samaritan; of a perverted religious training. One would think she would be almost repulsive to Jesus, and yet he saw the open mind, and spoke to her.

A CONVERSATION.—Jesus saith unto her. The reason is given in the next verse. The disciples had gone to the city half or three fourths of a mile away to buy meat, food. Give me to drink. Jesus asked for water because he needed it, but he used the request as the best means of preparing the way for his teaching. How is it that thou, being a Jew, Jesus would be recognized as a Jew by his dress. The color of the fringes on his garments was probably white; that of Samaritans would be blue. Doubtless other peculiarities indicated his nationality. Asketh drink, etc. The wonder of the Samaritan woman was that a Jew should seek to make a friendly compact with a hostile race. For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. They have no dealings of friendly intercourse, though in buying and selling intercourse was allowed.

Compare the feeling toward the Jews so universal in the Middle Ages (see Shakespeare's Othello), so strong still in Russia and France; not wholly extinct even in England and America.

The difficulty was that if Jesus were too free with the Samaritans, he would prejudice his cause with the stricter Jews. But he went straight forward in the path of duty, leaving the consequences with God. It thou knowest the gift of God. The Messiah, and the salvation he was bringing to man. Thou wouldst have asked of him. Spiritually, our positions are reversed. It

is thou who art weary, and footsore, and parched, close to the well, yet unable to drink; it is I who can give thee the water from the well, and quench thy thirst forever. And he would have given thee living water. Springing from an unfailing source. Living water denotes the gift of the Holy Spirit. This was the promised gift of the Father. Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with. The usual leathern bucket and line. Note her change of tone. Sir, or Lord, reveals the dawn of reverence. Art thou greater than our father Jacob? Can you dig a better well, or find sweeter water? Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. This water satisfying only bodily thirst for brief periods, and a type of worldly supplies. This is the type of the intense human desires which impel men to activity, and in the satisfying of which lies happiness, life, and progress.

For every person is full of wants, longings, desires, hopes, both of the body and of the soul. There are the thirsts for pleasure, for power, for money, for respect, for love, for knowledge. There are thirsts for the friendship and love of God, for forgiveness, immortal life, holiness, happiness, usefulness, heaven, a larger sphere, and broader life. The larger the soul, the more and greater its thirsts.

All growth of the soul is by means of these hungers and thirsts, and their satisfaction. It is a sickly soul that has no appetite. This World Can Never Satisfy the Soul. Its ambitions, its thirsts after wealth, power, pleasures, are never satisfied by what this world can give. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him. The water is a gift from Christ to humanity. God's good things can never be bought. Shall never thirst. The water that satisfies is not from without, an external supply, that may fail or be far away, but shall be in him a well (a fountain, a spring) of water springing up into (unto) everlasting life. Our natural wants must be transfigured to be perfect. The living water are inexhaustible. God's spiritual wells are deep. There are more of the influences of God's spirit waiting for us than we can receive. We might as well expect to breathe all God's air, or use all his sunlight, as to exhaust the gift of his Holy Spirit. Sir, give me this water. Her soul is being awakened, and yet she does not fully comprehend his meaning. Hence he teaches her in the following verses, the consciousness of her sin and need. Go call thy husband. A natural request, but leading to her confession of sin. Thou hast had five husbands. There were frequently divorces. I perceive that thou art a prophet. Both from his knowledge of her past life and from his treatment of her sin. Jesus kindly shows the woman her sinful character, that she may feel her need and then seek for the waters of eternal life. No one will seek a physician unless he feels sick, or takes food unless hungry. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain. Mt. Gerizim, at the foot of which they were standing. Jesus saith unto her. His answer is the plain truth told in a way not to repel her. The hour (the time) cometh, when ye shall, etc., i. e., when ye shall worship the Father. Showing the loving side of God, drawing us to worship above, but unrestricted by time or place. Ye worship ye know not what. The two questions at issue between Jews and Samaritans were those of holy place and holy Scripture. For salvation is of the Jews. Literally, the salvation, the expected salvation, is of the Jews, i. e., proceeds from them (not belongs to them). But the hour cometh, and now is. The Messiah has come. When the true worshippers. Who worship not in form merely, but with the heart. Shall worship the Father. The true object of worship. In spirit designates the worship of the mind and heart, as distinguished from a merely formal worship. In truth designates sincerity of worship. For the Father seeketh such to worship him. The Father loves to have true worship, even as parents delight in the love and reverence of their children. God is a Spirit. Therefore true worship must be of the Spirit. I know that Messias cometh. "Messias" is the Greek form of the Hebrew Messiah. He will tell us all things. What Jesus had been telling the woman implied that he could tell all things. I... am he. Your judgement is right. The woman accepted the truth, for she immediately went out and invited her friends to come. As soon as she recognized the good news and received it in her heart, she spread the news abroad.

and augs—and on the summit stands a lighthouse, its light being visible twenty-one miles away.

During the winter of 1896 the keeper in charge of the light was Angus Campbell, who kept vigil with his wife and two male assistants. The island itself is harborless, and its great frowning cliffs rise so precipitously from the sea that men and provisions have to be raised to the station, one hundred and forty feet high, by means of a steam hoist, and only when it is calm enough for a small boat to approach the cliffs from the supply steamer anchored in the open.

On the fifth of May, 1897, the Canadian government steamer Aberdeen reached the Bird Rock on its spring supply trip. For three months at a time the inhabitants of the lonely lighthouse have no intercourse with the outside world, and therefore await the arrival of the steamer with the greatest eagerness. When the Aberdeen neared the inhospitable island, the captain scanned the edge of the cliff with his telescope and was surprised to see a gray-haired woman alone where he had left a comparatively young wife and three men a few months before. In due time the officer reached the wind-swept summit and asked for the keeper.

Angus is dead! came the brief reply, in heart-broken tones. So is Jim Duncan, and so is George Bryson, and I'm all alone.

That was all, and yet what depths of tragedy the few words held; what heights of heroism on the part of Maggie Campbell. This was her sad story: Two months before her husband and his two helpers started out on a seal-hunting expedition. It was a bitterly cold day, but the floating ice from the great Northland had surrounded the Bird Rock for a distance of five or six miles, and on the shining floes could be seen hundreds of the little animals whose fur the men sought. There was apparently no danger, unless the wind should suddenly change; yet that is what happened.

A few hours after the men had set forth on their journey, the dreaded south wind set in unexpectedly. Mrs. Campbell at once hoisted a danger signal, whereupon the hunters hurried toward their refuge. But it was too late. The ice cracked in every direction and the poor fellows found themselves drifting helplessly on a cake of ice toward the open sea and to a certain and cruel death. In an agony of suffering the wife watched the little group of doomed men as they were relentlessly swept farther and farther away. Husband and wife waved messages to each other—the last in this world; each knelt in prayer for deliverance, but no deliverance came, and when the sun had set on the dreary scene Mrs. Campbell returned to her home a widow.

But what of the light—a vitally necessary beacon to the sailor? How did you manage to get along alone? inquired the captain.

I hardly know, myself, was her reply. Sleep almost deserted me. I hardly slept two hours together for the two months, and I ate only a meal a day. For hours during the daytime I swept the face of the waters with my glass in the vain hope of seeing the lost party—but I took care of the light all the time—Onward.

Dealing Wisely With Children.

The faculties of young children resemble a troop of raw recruits in the field of battle, who have not yet learned to comprehend their relative positions or to obey instinctively the commands of their officers. Each is full of his own activity and ardor, but the strength and well-directed force resulting from united exertion are wanting—the consequence is irregularity of action.

A simple but beautiful little anecdote in illustration of this point occurred to us, which, while it serves to prove the truth of the remark, will show how easily judicious treatment can overcome the irregular activity of certain faculties, necessary to themselves and highly useful when under the control of the superior sentiments. The mother herself related the fact to us as follows:

One day, happening to leave some change on the table, near which a little girl four years old, was playing, on returning to the room she missed the money. It immediately occurred to her that the child had taken it to play with, and accordingly she asked her where the money was.

The child denied that she had touched it, but in a manner that betrayed some uneasiness. The lady, however, did not notice this, and rang for the servant, who said that she had not been in the room since her mistress left it. The mother, now feeling certain that her daughter had the money, and seeing something folded in her apron, requested her, in a gentle manner, to show her what she had

there; the child turned away, saying she had been picking some stones up in the garden.

She wisely led the little girl into an adjoining room, where they might be quite alone, and then firmly but quietly unfolded the tightly-grasped hands and discovered the money. How difficult, in such a not uncommon case, to act wisely, namely, to prove to the child the greatness of the fault, and yet avoid the appearance of severity. The mother thus touchingly surmounted the trial: Instead of betraying anger—instead of upbraiding or inflicting punishment, she sank into a chair and burst into tears. The child instantly overcame by this direct appeal to her feelings of attachment and her highest sentiments, rushed broken-hearted into her mother's arms, and hid her tears of shame and repentance in her bosom.

The impression thus made has never been effaced, and the child was forever rescued from a tendency which, however slight in the first instance, might, if often repeated, have become a direct habit.—New York Ledger Monthly.

Word History.

The word imp once signified neither more nor less than boy. Cashmere was first woven in the valley of the same name.

The word yard once signified a stick or pole, whether long or short. The tarantula spider was so named from the abundance of this pest in Taranto, Italy.

The word map is derived from a Phœnician word, mappu, a napkin. The first maps were made on cloth. The buttercup has its name from an old idea that the yellow flowers, when eaten by cows, gave color to the butter.

The word parchment is derived from Pergamos, the town in Asia Minor, where sheepskin was first used as a writing material.

The wordcarat once signified a seed. Seeds of wheat or of the coral flower were once used by jewelers to weigh diamonds.

The word polite once signified merely polished. Three hundred years ago men spoke of polite swords and polite looking-glasses.

The word vixen is a corruption of foxen, the female fox being noted for her desperate courage in fighting in defense of her young.

Indigo is so called, some say, because it came from India, others maintain that the Indian city of Indigo was responsible for its origin.

The word calculate comes from the Latin calculus, a small stone or pebble. Pebbles were once used by both Greek and Roman in making calculations.

The foxglove is named partly from its resemblance to the fingers of a hand or glove, and partly because it was the favorite flower of the good folks or fairies.

Harebell is an English corruption of Ayrbell. The flower has its name, first, from its shape; secondly, from the county of Ayr, in Scotland, where it first came to the attention of botanists.

The word bogus was originally a proper name. Alexander H. Bogus, a resident of a Southern State, who, many years ago, perpetrated a noted swindle, and thus gave the English language a new word.

The word wife signified weaver; the word spinster, spinner. In the Anglo-Saxon households the spinning was done by the unmarried women and girls, the weaving by the woman of the house. She is to quit spinning for weaving, was a jocular way of saying that a girl was soon to be married.—St. Louis Advocate.

An English paper says that Rev. Mr. Newby, pastor of a church in Guthrie, during a sermon recently, stopped abruptly and asked: How many of you have read the Bible? Fifty hands went up. Good! said the pastor. Now how many of you have read the second chapter of Jude? Twenty five hands went up. A wan smile overspread the livid's face. That's also good; but when you go home read that chapter again, and you will doubtless learn something to your interest.

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