

## The Sunday-School.

FIRST QUARTER,  
LESSON VIII.—Feb. 21.

## JESU S AND THE SABBATH.

Matthew 12: 1-13.

THE LESSON includes the parallels, Mark 2: 23-3; 5; Luke 6: 1-10, compared with Luke 13: 10-17, together with a brief review of the intervening events, the call of Matthew, the question about fasting (Mark 2: 13-38), and the healing at the pool of Bethesda (John 5: 1-47).

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—*It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.* Matt. 12: 12.

**HISTORICAL SETTING.**—*Time.* Spring or early summer of A.D. 28. Not many weeks after the last lesson, but before the sermon on the Mount.

*Place.*—Capernaum, and the neighboring fields.

*Place in the Life of Christ.*—Toward the middle of his second year. The early part of the rising tide of open opposition to the teachings and the claims of Jesus.

**LEARN BY HEART.**—Vs. 7, 8, and 12; the fourth commandment; Isa. 58: 13, 14.

1. Jesus called Matthew to follow him. He, in his zeal to help and save his old friends gave a feast at which publicans and sinners sat down. The Pharisees found fault with Jesus for eating with such people.

2. Then there came a complaint that Jesus did not fast as often as the Pharisees, and, therefore, was deficient in religious life.

3. After that their opposition took the form of criticizing Jesus' attitude toward the Sabbath.

**THE HEALING OF THE INFIRM MAN AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA.**—Jesus went up from Galilee to Jerusalem, to attend one of the three great annual festivals of the Jews, probably the Passover. Jesus, on the Sabbath, saw a sick man in one of the five porches of the pool of Bethesda, and cured him of his infirmity. "For this cause did the Jews persecute Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath." The answer Jesus gave to the healing of the withered hand, in today's lesson, applies equally to this case.

**THE PLUCKING OF GRAIN BY THE DISCIPLES ON A SABBATH MORNING.**—Vs. 1-8. *At that time.* During that part of his work in Galilee. Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn. Fields of grain. Jesus and his disciples were probably on their way to the morning service in the synagogue. His disciples were an hungered. The rabbinical law allowed no eating on the Sabbath, except in case of sickness. And began to pluck the ears of corn. There was no road with fences, but a mere path through the fields. But when the Pharisees, who regarded themselves as the guardians of religion and morality. Behold thy disciples. Jesus defend the right of his disciples to do so. That which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day. The act was lawful on any other day, being sanctioned by custom and law. But the fourth commandment forbade any work on the Sabbath, and the Pharisees said that reaping and

threshing were work, and that plucking corn ears was a kind of reaping, and rubbing them a kind of threshing. Pharisaic interpretations were mechanical rules and not general principles. The emphasis was on certain acts not wrong in themselves, and not on a right heart that wished to obey the law of God. Christ replies to them by two examples from Scripture which illustrate the true principles of interpreting the law of the Sabbath. The scribes were familiar with the story, but had not seen its meaning. *What David did, when he was an hungered.* He and his men were suffering from want of food. (1 Sam. 21: 1-6). *How he entered into the house of God.* The tabernacle then at Nob, a hill near Jerusalem. *And did eat the shewbread.* The bread that was kept on the golden table in the Holy Place. It consisted of twelve loaves, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel. *Which was not lawful for him to eat . . . but only for the priests* (Lev. 24: 5-9). *The argument* was that if David, to keep himself and his followers from suffering hunger, could, without blame, break a ceremonial law in its form, while keeping it in spirit, it must be right so to interpret the Sabbath law as to allow his disciples to do so much work on the Sabbath as was necessary to satisfy their hunger. *Or have ye not read in the law how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath. And are blameless,* because the law of the best good of man, his spiritual life and moral character, required what they did. *In this place is one greater than the temple.* Jesus Christ himself. *If ye had known what this meaneth.* If you had understood the principle which underlies defense of my disciples' conduct on the Sabbath. *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.* What helps and blesses men. All forms of worship are to help men, and any use of them to prevent good coming to man is contrary to their spirit and purpose. *For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath.* We best understand this when we see it in the connection with the words that precede it in Mark's account (2: 27), *The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.* Therefore the Son of Man (Jesus as the representative of man) is Lord even of the Sabbath to make it serve the interests of man.

**HEALING OF THE WITHERED HAND ON THE SABBATH.**—Vs. 9-13. *He went into their synagogue.* One way in which Jesus kept the Sabbath. *A man which had his hand withered.* This would hinder him in earning a living. *They asked him,* after watching to see what he would do, *saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?* Here was another opportunity for Jesus to explain his views about Sabbath-keeping. But the object of the Jews was that they might accuse him, and bring him to trial for Sabbath-breaking, and both discredit his teaching and prevent him from continuing to teach. *One sheep, and if it fall into a pit,* etc. Jesus appealed to their own interpretation of the Sabbath law, and then turned it against them by asking, *How much then is a man better* (of more value) *than a sheep?* Wherefore, according to their own rules, *it is lawful to do well,* to do good deeds, *on the Sabbath.* Then saith he to the man. He did one of the good deeds it was lawful to do. The man was commanded to do what he could not do of himself. But

he had faith, and obeyed. Then power was given to do the act.

**THE HEART OF THE LESSON.**—*Jesus did not Abolish the Sabbath.*—God has written the fourth commandment in the nature of man as well as in his Word. He ordained it for man.

*The Sunday Sabbath.*—Sunday is just as really the seventh day and the Sabbath day as is the Saturday Sabbath of the Jews. All the difference lies in beginning the count from a different point.

*Jesus Rescued the Sabbath.*—Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath, "to own it, to interpret it, to preside over it, and to enable it by merging it in the 'Lord's day' (Rev. 1: 10). Jesus would keep the jewel, but wash away the dirt which had accumulated upon it.

*The Sabbath is for all Men.*—The Sabbath law is the divine barrier and safeguard against the inroads of wealth, power, greed, and pleasure upon the rights of man. There can be no permanent slavery or oppression or degradation where the Sabbath rights are reserved to all men and women. One of the fundamental rules of Sabbath observance is not to use the Sabbath in such a way as to deprive others of its blessings.

*The Sabbath was Made for all of Man,* for all parts of his nature, for rest of his body, and most of all for moral and spiritual improvement and inspiration. The Sabbath should be especially used for good works, for helping the needy, visiting the sick, comforting the sorrowful, persuading others to enter the Christian life. The way to increase true Sabbath-keeping is by increasing the spirit of devotion and worship.

## BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Saviour's history is known in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. While in the book of Acts we hear of all the Apostles far and near. Then Paul, who wields a mighty pen, Gives his Epistles four and ten. First to the Romans writes with care A letter grand beyond compare. Then in Corinthians he shows The love of Christ, of which he knows. Galatians and Ephesians too Repeat the story always new. Philippians, the following book, Directs us where for faith to look. Colossians then calls us to prayer, And Thessalonians too is there. Next Timothy, whom he calls son, Titus and beloved Philemon. And last, in Hebrews he makes plain Why Jews did so his Christ disdain. Then follows James, whom each should read; Peter with words for every need. John has books which number three, And there is Jude, to each one free; While Revelation by St. John Completes for us the Gospel song.

## TAKING OFF HIS HAT TO NATURE.

Hamilton W. Mabie repeats a story which shows how one man at least was affected by the beautiful in nature. One day in the early spring a Scotchman was walking along the side of a mountain in Skye, when he came to a hut in which lived an old man he had known a great many years. He saw the old man with his head bowed, and his bonnet in his hand. He came up and said to him after a bit: "I did not speak to you, Sandy, because I thought you might be at your prayers."

"Well, not exactly that," said the old man, "but I will tell you what I was doing. Every morning for forty years I have taken off my bonnet here to the beauty of the world."

Beauty, wherever it is seen, is a reflection of God's face, the shining of heavenly light down upon the earth.

Ayer's

Take cold easily? Throat tender? Lungs weak? Any relatives have consumption? Then a cough means a great

Cherry Pectoral

deal to you. Follow your doctor's advice and take Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. It heals, strengthens, prevents.

"For 40 years I have depended on Ayer's Cherry Pectoral for coughs and colds. I know it greatly strengthens weak lungs."  
MRS. P. A. ROBINSON, Saline, Mich.

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for Weak Lungs

Ayer's Pills increase the activity of the liver, and thus aid recovery.

Wherever we come upon it, it should touch our hearts with a spirit of reverence. God is near; we are standing in the light of his countenance.

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*It is an Officer of the law of Health.*

—When called in to attend a disturbance it searches out the hiding place of pain, and, like a guardian of the peace, lays hands upon it and says, "I arrest you." Resistance is useless, and the law of health imposes a sentence of perpetual banishment on pain and Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil was originated to enforce that sentence.

It takes a great deal of grace to suffer defeat honorably and good-naturedly. Many people are so defective in self-discipline that they cannot stand the moral strain of friendly competition unless, indeed, they are always successful. —Rev. W. B. Pickard.

The weak and delicate people envy the strong and robust. We are told that "The D & L" Emulsion builds up solid flesh and that it does not disturb the digestion. Why not ask your druggists about it?

We live by days. They are the leaves folded back each night in the great volume that we write. They are our autobiography. Each day takes us not newly, but as a tale continued. It finds us what yesterday left us; and as we go on, every day is telling to every other day truths about us, showing the kind of being that it is to be handed on to it, making of us something better or something worse, as we decide.—J. F. W. Ware.

## After Work or Exercise

POND'S EXTRACT

Soothes tired muscles, removes soreness and stiffness and gives the body a feeling of comfort and strength.

Don't take the weak, watery witch hazel preparations represented to be "the same as" Pond's Extract, which easily sour and generally contain "wood alcohol," a deadly poison.