

The Sunday-School.

FIRST QUARTER,
LESSON—IX. Feb. 26.

THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES.

John 6: 1-14.

COMMIT VS. II, 12. READ John 6: 1-71.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*I am the living bread which came down from heaven.* John 6: 51.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Just before the Passover, April, A. D. 29, which began that year on April 16. It was nearly a year after our last lesson at Bethsaida in Jerusalem.

Place.—An uncultivated grazing region on the outskirts of Bethsaida (Luke 9: 10), called the Plain of Butaia. It lay on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee, at the foot of the mountains.

Place in the Life of Christ.—Early in the third year of his ministry, soon after the martyrdom of John the Baptist.

The Parallel Accounts in Matt. 14: 13-21; Mark 6: 31-44; Luke 9: 10-17.

After these things. How long the interval between our last lesson and this, depends on the feast alluded to in John 5: 1. If it was Purim, only a month had elapsed; if it was Passover, a year. *Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee.*

Two reasons are given why Jesus left Galilee.

1. The changed conditions produced by the announcement that John the Baptist had been beheaded. The whole region was excited. Herod might slay Jesus and his disciples. There was also danger of a political revolt into which the people might attempt to draw Jesus.

The other reason was the need of the disciples for rest. They had just returned from their first missionary tour through Galilee. There was need of physical and mental rest, of time for instruction in these troubled times.

And a great multitude followed Him. The multitudes of Capernaum and the other villages followed him because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. Some were attracted by mere curiosity; some because the miracles were signs of the truths which Jesus taught; others probably saw in Jesus the possible leader of the people in revolt against Rome; others had need of healing and help for themselves or friends.

The statement that *the passover . . . was nigh*, gives the reason why such great crowds assembled so easily. They were on their way to Jerusalem where sometimes as many as two million were gathered at this feast.

Jesus went up into a mountain. The mountain that rises from the plain back from the lake. *And there he sat with his disciples.* They could rest and report fully what they had done on the tour, could talk over their plans and receive instruction. Jesus had compassion on the multitudes who were sinful, hungry, ignorant, weary, and sick. Jesus went down from the mountain side and taught the people. He sympathized with their sorrows and pains, and was glad to relieve them.

When Jesus then lifted up his eyes. On the mountain side. *And saw a great company come.* Apparently in addition

to those who had come from Capernaum and vicinity. In this uninhabited place there was no opportunity to buy provisions. Many had come unsupplied. *Jesus saith unto Philip.* Why was Philip the one singled out? In v. 6 it is stated that he said this to prove him, to test him. It was to lead him and the other disciples to understand Jesus better. Philip's home was at Bethsaida, and he, therefore, was acquainted with the region and the people. *Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?*

Philip. Two hundred pennyworth (\$32.00) of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

The Apostles. Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge and get victuals.

Jesus. Give them to eat.

The Apostles. Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

Jesus. How many loaves have ye? Go and see.

Andrew. *There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes.*

The barley loaves were round, flat cakes like large crackers. The lad probably brought them for his own lunch, possibly to find a market for them. *Two small fishes.* The small and generally dried or pickled fish eaten with bread.

Make the men sit down for the convenience of distribution. *Now there was much grass in the place.* Mark tells us that they were arranged in ranks, by hundreds and fifties. *Jesus took the loaves, thin cakes. Given thanks.* The formula familiar to every Jewish household is, 'Blessed art thou Jehovah our God, king of the world, who causeth to come forth bread from the earth.' *He distributed to the disciples.* Jesus could have rained manna from heaven, or summoned angels to help, but he gave this privilege to his disciples. *As much as they would.* No one went away hungry.

Gather up the fragments. Broken pieces. *Filled twelve baskets.* The hand baskets of the apostles, such as Jews carried on their journeys. Let nothing be wasted or lost in God's work.

The effect of this miracle was to convince the people that Jesus was *that prophet that should come into the world*, the expected Messiah and deliverer; and th teyiderrwellw? ETAOINI erer; and they tried to make him a worldly king. Jesus resisted the temptation, and spent the night in prayer. The next day at Capernaum he met many of these people and taught them about the Bread of Life.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

Jesus is the source of spiritual life through his gift of the Holy Spirit. He raises men from the death of worldliness and sin to eternal life. He satisfies every hunger of the soul. Jesus is the bread of life because he feeds the soul, the character, the entire spiritual nature, and makes them grow.

Holloway's Corn Cure is a specific for the removal of corns and warts. We have never heard of its failing to remove even the worst kind.

LIVING UP TO OUR PRAYERS.

At the morning meal, the head of the family repeated, as was his custom, "Lord, we thank thee for these blessings thou hast so provided," and then as was also his custom began to grumble about hard times, the poor quality of the food they were forced to eat, the way it was cooked, etc.

"Father," interrupted his little daughter, "do you s'pose God heard what you said awhile ago?"

"Certainly," with a confident air of a religious instructor.

"And did he hear what you said about potatoes and coffee?"

"Of course," not quite so confidently.

"Then, father, which one did God believe?"

So, my dear young Christian, when you say in the meeting that you will "praise the Lord with all your heart," or that you are thankful to him for being so kind to you, and then complain of about everything that has fallen to your lot, which do you suppose God believes?—*Exchange.*

THE TENTH DIME.

"Have your shoes shined?" sang out a small boy near the Union Station, among a group of people just from the train. A young man who heard the cry stayed his steps, hesitating; for he had not much more money in his pocket than he had blacking on his shoes. But to hesitate was to fall into the boot-black's hands and the brushes were soon wrestling with splashes of rural clay.

When the shine was completed the young man handed the boy a dime, and felt that he had marked his way into the great city with an act of charity; for, at his heart, he did not care how his boots looked. But, as he was pulling himself together for a new start, he saw the boy who had cleaned his shoes approach the blind beggar who sits behind the railroad fence, and drop a dime into his cup.

"What did you do that for?" asked the young man.

"Yer see," said the boy, "that was me tenth dime ter day, an' me teacher at Sunday school told me I oughter give a tenth of all I makes to the Lord. See? An' I guess that ol' blind man wants a dime more than the Lord, so I give it to him. See?"

HOW THE CHILDREN READ IT.

The Sabbath school lesson for the day was "Joseph Sold into Egypt," and the teacher of the infant class asked a bright little boy to tell the lesson story.

He went on with it all right until he said, "His brothers murdered a little child, and dipped Joseph's coat in the blood."

"What?" asked the teacher.

"That's what my lesson paper said," persisted the boy. "So did mine," "And mine," added one child after another.

"Let me see it," said the teacher, and the children passed up a regular shower of little pink lesson papers.

"There, see!" said the boy. "They killed the kid and dipped the coat in the blood."

This actually happened in northern New England where the children are not familiar with goats.—*S. S. Times.*

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 druggist about it?

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

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

A religion that stays in the clouds is of no use to anybody. Religion must be definite, practical, useful — a binding rule of daily life—or else it is as much a mockery as the gilded prayer wheel of the Buddhist.—*Philadelphia Young People.*

SIR JAMES WATSON'S OPINION.

He says that the commonest of all disorders, and one from which few escape, is Catarrh. Sir James firmly believes in local treatment, which is best supplied by "Catarrhzone." No case of Catarrh can exist where Catarrhzone is used; it is a miracle worker, relieves almost instantly and cures after other remedies fail. Other treatments can't reach the diseased parts like Catarrhzone, because it goes to the source of the trouble along with the air you breathe. Catarrhzone is free from cocaine, it leaves no bad after-effects, it is simply nature's own cure. Accept no substitute for Catarrhzone which alone can cure Catarrh.

A statistician states that there are fewer Free Masons to be found among lawyers than in any other profession.

It Lays a Stilling Hand on Pain.—For pains in the joints and limbs, and for rheumatic pains, neuralgia and lumbago, Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil is without a peer. Well rubbed in, the skin absorbs it and it quickly and permanently relieves the affected part. Its value lies in its magic property of removing pain from the body, and for that good quality it is prized.

It is supposed that the average depth of the sand in the deserts of Africa is from thirty to forty feet.

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