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BIBLE LESSONS.

STUDIES IN MARK.

First Quarter.

Lesson XIII. March 31.

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.—Isa. 35: 1.

TIME.—Four years. From the mission of John the Baptist, in the summer of A. D. 26, to near the close of the ministry of Christ, March, A. D. 30.

PLACE.—Chiefly Galilee, especially the towns around the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee; but also the wilderness of Judea, the region around Caesarea Philippi, the country of the Gadarenes, Perea; and Jericho.

PERSONS.—Jesus Christ, about 33 years old, at the close of this period; John the Baptist, beheaded March, A. D. 29, at 35 years of age; the twelve disciples; various persons healed; scribes and Pharisees.

EVENTS.—Preaching of John the Baptist; curing a man with an unclean spirit, Peter's wife's mother, a leper, a paralytic, a demoniac, and a woman with an issue of blood; sending out the twelve disciples as missionaries; blessing little children; opening the eyes of Bartimaeus.

ISAIAH 35.—Isaiah prophesied between 759 and 628 B. C. This chapter was probably written by him about the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, king of Judah, B. C. 712.

THE BOOK OF STUDY.—Mark: its number of chapters; its author; general characteristics.

THE LAND.—Palestine: its location on the map of the world; its three main divisions. East of the Jordan, in which part most of our lessons for this Quarter belong. The chief river; the lake; the leading towns; the surrounding countries.

THE FORERUNNER.—General facts of John the Baptist's life and ministry (Less. I.). The place of his preaching. His relation to the ministry of Jesus.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST.—Birth, date, and place; parentage; early life; without incident; length of life; length of ministry; where most of it was spent.

MIRACLES.—How many described in this quarter? How many kinds? Object of these miracles. Proofs of Christ's divine mission. What they reveal as to His character. What they teach us as to the true way of carrying on His kingdom. Which of the miracles was the greatest?

TEACHINGS.—What parables are given? What teachings about missionary work? Which lesson is peculiarly a missionary lesson? Teachings about little children. About forgiveness. About ambition. About eternal life. About bearing the cross. What lessons show us the meaning of faith? What was the most important teaching?

Johnny's Experiment.

BY HELEN M. NORTH.

"No bicycle, no skates, no fun any way!" growled Johnny Sloan from his bed in his neat little room, where he had flung himself in a moment of anger and disgust. "He might have let me go to the Park to see the other fellows—doesn't care whether I have any fun or not!"

And Johnny fairly hugged himself in pity for his sad and neglected condition.

"I'll try him once more, and give him a chance."

And with swollen eyes and pouting mouth Johnny limped out to the cheerful, well-furnished dining-room—he always limped when he was cross, because he felt one-sided, I suppose—where Papa Sloan, with a careworn look on his still young face, was taking his seven o'clock dinner.

I have no doubt that if Johnny had known just what was passing through his father's mind at that minute—how he was mentally planning for the big supply of coal for the winter, four pairs of new shoes for the little ones and Johnny new overcoat, which he intended to be an unusually nice one—if Johnny had known all this, he would not have used the cross and very disrespectful tone in which he preferred his request for an evening at the Park. And had Mr. Sloan been interrupted at a different time he might have replied less harshly. But his patience was sorely tried with the boy's unreasonable requests and his lack of gratitude, and his cares were so many, poor father!

Quick words were exchanged, and Johnny's temper was easily roused. "I'll go off and take care of myself!" said he hotly.

A sudden thought came into his father's mind.

"Perhaps you can do better for yourself," said he, quietly. "Here is a two-dollar bill to start on. When you are tired of having a good time, come home."

"All right," said Johnny, as he stuffed the bill into his pocket, seized his hat and ran down stairs.

To the Park first, and he could stay as long as he pleased. No more hurrying home at nine o'clock, and no sisters to look after, either. Johnny tried to think himself very happy, with such freedom in prospect.

The ice was in capital condition. He rented a pair of skates, and he believed that he didn't see Jeff Ransom's glittering new ones, and in the keen December air, soon forgot everything in the delights of skating.

"Going home so soon, Tom?" he shouted to his friend, who took off his skates in the midst of a glorious spin.

"Yes; I promised father to be in at nine, and he always keeps his promises to me," said Tom, cheerily; and with a "Good night," he whistled himself away through the frosty air.

"I guess your father is out of town," Johnny said. "Jeff Ransom?" or has he extended your leave of absence? The old clock on St. Ann's says nine, and you are usually off by that time."

"I am my own man after this," said Johnny proudly. "I can stay as long as I please."

"Get a position and make my fortune," said Johnny.

"It strikes me that your father isn't just the sort of a man that I should like to say good-by to in a hurry," said Jeff. "However, suppose you begin by spending the night with me, if you have no other plan."

There was something inspiring in the atmosphere of Jeff's elegant home, and as Johnny strolled down the avenue after a nice breakfast next morning, he pictured to himself the day when he should return to his father with a pocketful of money, and he fancied that the family would then realize that they had made a mistake in their treatment of him.

It is hardly necessary to write out the story of that day; it is one that Johnny will never forget. All the big stores which he entered with confidence in the early morning, and the smaller ones which seemed to hold out some hope later in the day, are stamped clearly on his memory. Night came, and he had not the smallest prospect of work. The pleasant restaurant which his father always patronized when he was down town had absorbed one-quarter of his bill; and Johnny, who had never disturbed himself about prices, found that his fine, healthy appetite was a costly possession.

He dined at a small, poor place on a side street, where the napkins were moist from the laundry, and the men ate with their hats on and were very noisy over their beer.

He had very little idea about the price of a lodging, but was so sleepy that he took a room in a place near by, and longed, with bitterness of spirit, for the sweet-smelling little room at home, with its fresh linen and comfortable mattress. However, he slept well, and began the day in good spirits, with a quarter in his pocket, and some realization of what it must cost to get breakfast and potatoes for a family of six.

He bought a daily paper and looked over the "Wants." There were ten places where a boy was needed. Johnny hadn't a lazy bone in his body, and he determined to take anything that was offered. He tramped over miles of city pavement, fearing to spend anything for car fare, and everywhere found hordes of boys applying on the same errand with himself. They were a shabby-looking crowd, and Johnny's neat appearance attracted attention more than once.

"We shall expect you to be here at half-past five in the morning," said one merchant, "and you can go home at seven. Your duties are to sweep and dust the store, wash windows, run errands all day or do any work that we may require of you. Wages, two dollars a week. Of course you live at home."

"I don't think I want the place," said Johnny, with a chuckling voice.

Two dollars for seven days, and he had spent nearly that already, and had gone without his lunch for the first time in his life, because he would have no money for lodging and lunch both! What could a fellow do on two dollars a week?

Johnny had been offered the same kind of place in three places, and he had the good sense to see that, with no knowledge of business, his services were worth no more to an employer. The world was harder to meet than he had supposed.

Johnny walked on and on, regardless of where he went. His feet were almost blistered with the unusual exercise. A whole day spent in the open air had sharpened his appetite to its keenest edge. Most aggravating orders of food floated out to him from eating houses that he passed. Johnny clenched the lonely quarter of a dollar which must find him a lodging, and grew faint and dizzy as he realized that neither dinner nor breakfast were in prospect. He thought of the home table, the abundance of good bread and butter which he had so often despised, the nice slices of roast beef and the tempting puddings. He thought of his father's face, so kind and tender, and of the boy next door whose father had been borne away to his last resting-place only the week before. Johnny was not a bad boy, only a hungry one.

He thought of the nice slices of roast beef and the tempting puddings. He thought of his father's face, so kind and tender, and of the boy next door whose father had been borne away to his last resting-place only the week before. Johnny was not a bad boy, only a hungry one.

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The Toilet of the Fly.

The toilet of the fly is as carefully attended to as that of the most frivolous of human insects. With a contempt for the looking-glass, he brushes himself up and wobbles his little round head, chuckful of vanity, where he happens to be. Sometimes after a long day of dissipation and flirting with his six small legs and little round body all curled with syrup and butter and cream, he passes out of the dining-room and wings his way to the clean white cord along which the morning-glories clime, and in this retired spot, heedless of the crafty spider who is practising gymnastics a few feet above him, he proceeds to purify and sweeten himself for the refreshing repose and soft dreams of the balmy summer night, so necessary to one who is expecting to be early at breakfast.

It is a wonderful toilet. Resting himself on his front and middle legs, he throws his hind legs rapidly over his body, bending down his frail wings for an instant with the pressure, then raking them over with a backward motion, which he repeats until they are bright and clean. Then he pushes the two legs along his body under the wings, giving that queer strutting, thorough currying, every now and then throwing the legs out and rubbing them together to remove what he has collected from his corporal surface. Next he goes to work upon his van. Resting upon his hind and middle legs, he raises his two forelegs and begins a vigorous scraping of head and shoulders, using his proboscis every little while to push the accumulation from his limbs. At times he is so energetic that it seems as if he were trying to pull his head off, but no fly ever committed suicide. Some of his motions very much resemble nuzzing at her toilet. It is plain, even to the naked eye, that he does his work thoroughly, for when he is finished he looks like a new fly, so clean and neat has he made himself within a few minutes. The white cord is defiled, but floppy is himself again, and he bids the morning-glories a very good evening.—Church Union.

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