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BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1874.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, August 30th, 1874.

Power over Death.—Mark v. 22, 23, 35-43.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." John v. 25.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 39-42.

SUMMARY.—At Christ's command the dead lived again.

ANALYSIS.—I. The Father's request, vs. 22, 23. II. Christ's approach to the child, vs. 35-40. III. The miracle, vs. 41-43.

EXPOSITION.—Introductory.—The last lesson and this are closely connected. As we then learned, the woman with the "issue of blood" was healed while Jesus was going to perform the miracle of this lesson, and the delay caused by that may possibly have made of this a restoration to life rather than to health.—The two were performed soon after the return to Capernaum from the country of the Gadarenes. Compare the accounts of Matthew (ix. 18-26) and Luke (viii. 41-56).

Verse 22.—One of the rulers of the synagogue. A place where the Jews met for religious worship. Unlike the Temple these could be built in any town, and sacrifices were never offered in them. In the smaller towns each synagogue had but one ruler, while in the larger towns there were several, organized into a corps with one of their number as president. They had the general management of the affairs of the synagogue, the power to excommunicate, to regulate worship; presided over the meetings, and invited at their will occasional readers and speakers. Acts xiii. 15. As Capernaum was a large and flourishing place, its synagogue doubtless had a corps or college of rulers, and these are probably the same with "the elders of the Jews" mentioned in Luke vii. 3. He fell at his feet. Matthew says (ix. 18) "worshipped him," i. e., "he prostrated himself with the adoration paid to a person of high rank.

Verse 23.—Besought him greatly. It is fit for us in prayer to beseech greatly, with persistent outpouring of all that is in our hearts. It is not that we expect to drive or drag God into that which we approve and he does not. It is because the desire is in us, and as honest souls we speak to God, as to any other friend, out of the abundance of our hearts; and in every petition there is at least a latent "thy will, not mine." Such prayer pleases God. My little daughter. According to vs. 42 twelve years of age—just as old as was the disease of the woman whom he cured on his way to her father's house. Liek at the point of death. Luke says, "lay a dying." Matthew represents the father as saying, "She is now dead." He could not tell whether to think of her as living or dead. There is no contradiction between Matthew and the others when one looks at the matter in this light. Truth is not as some seem to claim, mere cold, formal precision of statement. Formal contradictions are very often essential identities. Come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed, and she shall live. The imposition of hands was a natural method of showing the connection existing between the person and his deed. This ruler very likely thought such contact indispensable, but is not proved to have had the view that an involuntary natural influence went forth from him when he touched the sick. See last lesson.

The Saviour now started with the ruler of the synagogue, attended by a large crowd, and on the way healed the woman with "the bloody flux." Vs. 24-34.

Verse 35.—While he yet spake. Christ to the woman. See vs. 34. There came... certain. Luke says "one" came (viii. 49). There was one specially sent with the tidings, and others accompanied him. Here again is harmony in apparent contradiction. Thy daughter is dead. The news was not unexpected. Why troublest thou the Master [teacher] any further? The people at the house had not the slightest suspicion that Christ would or could raise the dead. Like the multitude now they did not understand the greatness of either his power or his goodness.

Verse 36.—As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken. He did not wait to let the tidings work doubt or despair in the father. Very often now does he thus prove himself to his disciples "a very present

help," and yet he lets them come into extremest trial. Be not afraid, only believe. Here our Lord gave a clearly implied promise that he would raise the dead child to life.

Verse 37.—Suffered no man to follow him save Peter and James and John. As appears from Luke (viii. 51) and from the nature of the case, it was into the chamber of death that these only of the apostles were allowed to enter. Says Trench, "We read here for the first time of such an election within an election; the fact of such now finding place would mark, especially when we remember the solemn significance of the other seasons of a like selection (Matt. xvii. 1, 2; xxvi. 37), that this was a new era in the life of our Lord. That which he was about to do was so great and holy that those three only, the flower and the crown of the apostolic band, were its fitting witnesses. The parents were present on grounds altogether different."

Verse 38.—Seeing the tumult and them that wept and wailed greatly. "The occurrence of death in a family, in the East was attended with many outward manifestations of grief. The females for several days successively indulged in loud cries of distress. Persons also attended at the house for the purpose of chanting, in mournful strains, the excellencies of the dead. There were also employed on such occasions professed musicians and singers. Jer. ix. 17, 21." Similar practices are said still to prevail in the East, for example among the Arabs and Egyptians.

Verse 39.—Why make ye this ado and weep? Evidently spoken in rebuke, as appears from the next clause. The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. As death is often called a sleep, so there was a very special additional reason for calling that death a sleep which was so soon to give place to life. So spake Jesus of Lazarus. John xi. 11.

Verse 40.—They [the mourners] laughed him to scorn. How often do we in this world see just this thing—miserable, blind unbelief laughing to scorn the word of divine wisdom and revelation, and those who speak and hold to it. When he had put them all out. They had insulted both the father who brought our Lord, and our Lord himself, by their rude derision. He will have none of them witness his act.

Verse 41.—Took her by the hand. In token of friendly help, as he would in waking a sleeper. And said. Not as though the word were needed. Not as though the sound could wake that child. Power went forth from him for that effect. Yet the words were the sign of the forth-going power. And if we suppose that consciousness came back to her while the words were yet speaking, they would be to her a pleasing welcome to her new life, and pleasing always in remembrance of the hour and of him who made it what it was to her. Only Mark gives the very words in the Aramaic language which, with the Greek, was currently used in conversation in Palestine at that time. In the house of the ruler of the synagogue that dialect of the Hebrew, rather than the Greek, would naturally be most in use.

Verse 42.—Straightway the damsel rose and walked. There was the instant recovery, in proof of the divine power. Her age is mentioned in explanation of her rising and walking—thus to remove the conjecture of any that the rising and walking were in themselves due to miraculous agency. They were astonished. Luke says, "her parents were astonished." This shows that their faith had not risen to the greatness of the work. How often does Christ do to us better than we could believe.

Verse 43.—Charged them strictly, etc. He did not wish for mere outward excitement and stir because of his wonders. He wanted to change men's characters, and the miracles were but adjuncts of his teaching—subordinate not principal—needful to reveal who and what he was, and so furnish aids to faith, but as by themselves of no avail.

The Gospels record three miracles of resurrection by our Lord during his ministry. This one; the raising of the son of the widow of Nain; and the raising of Lazarus. The first followed immediately after death. The second was performed hours after death. The third after the body had lain in the grave for days. Thus each succeeding one marked more impressively the power of Christ, if not a higher power. But when his own body came forth from the tomb never again to die, we have the first fruits of that resurrection which will embrace all the sleeping millions of saints.

QUESTIONS.—Vs. 22. Where was Jesus

at this time? Vs. 1. Who came to him? What is a synagogue? What is "a ruler of the synagogue"? Why did he fall at Jesus' feet? Matt. ix. 18.

Vs. 23. What was his request? How old was his daughter? Vs. 42. What shows the earnestness of his desire? What does Matthew represent the ruler as saying? ix. 18. What request may we make of Christ for our friends? How did Christ receive the request? What happened on the way?

Vs. 34. What tidings were received? What did the messengers propose? What does this show as to their faith?

Vs. 26. How did Jesus save the father from doubt and despair? In what ways is he still "a very present help in time of need"?

Vs. 37. Why should he take these three apostles? Who else were admitted to the bed-side? Vs. 40.

Vs. 38. Was this "tumult" usual in the East on the death of a person? Eoc. xii. 5; Jer. ix. 17; Am. v. 16. Why were "the mourners" shut out?

Vs. 39, 40. What question did Christ ask? Why did he ask it? Was the maiden really dead? John xi. 11. Why should Jesus have said, she "is not dead but sleepeth"? How were his words received?

Vs. 41, 42. How did he raise the maiden? When will he raise all the dead? Who gives spiritual life to those dead in sin?

Vs. 43. Why this charge? Why the command?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 208, 209.

SUNDAY, September 6th, 1874.—Martyrdom of the Baptist.—Mark vi. 20-29.

Youths' Department.

WHAT JESUS WILL SAY.

Two young girls were walking leisurely home from school, one pleasant day in early autumn, when one thus addressed the other:

"Edith Wilbis, what will the girls say when they hear you have invited Maggie Kelley to your party?"

Edith was silent for a moment, and then raising her soft blue eyes to those of her companion, she replied:

"Ella, when mamma told me to invite Maggie, I asked her the same question. She told me that it made no difference what the girls said, who thought Maggie quite beneath them, because she was poor and her school bills were paid by my papa; and she asked me if I would like to hear what Jesus would say. So she took her Bible and read to me these words:—'And the King shall answer and say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

Ah! little readers, never ask what this or that one will say while you are doing what is right; but what Jesus, your King, will say at the glorious resurrection morning that will soon dawn upon us.—Interior.

SAYING AND DOING.

Two brothers used to go to school together. One evening they thought they should like to have a holiday the next day; so they asked their father to give them one. He said, "I cannot, because it will put you back in your studies; so mind you go to school." One of the brothers said, "Yes, I will," but the other said he would not, and his father was very angry with him.

The next day the one that said "Yes" played truant, but the other that had refused went to school. Then the father said to them in the evening, "Both of you are in the wrong; but you that promised to go, and broke your promise, are the worse of the two."

Our Father in heaven speaks to us every day, and says, "Do my will"; and whenever we kneel down and say, "Thy will be done," we answer God and say, "Yes, I will." Now, if we say we will do God's will, and yet do not try to do it, are we not like the boy that first made a promise and then broke it?

Some people never pray to God at all, and never promise to do His will. Perhaps you are inclined to say, "They are very bad people." But if you promise, and do not try to keep your promise, are you not worse than they?—Parable for Children.

HOW WE ARE UNITED.

Little daughter—I wish the river would rise.

Father—Why, what have you to do with the river's rising?

Little daughter—A great deal, father; for then the boats will run.

Father—And what have you to do with the boats running, my child, eh?

Little daughter—They would bring the cotton down, father.

Father—(Looking over spectacles)—And what have you to do, darling, with cotton bales?

Little daughter—Why, if the cotton was down you will be able to sell it you know, dear father, smilingly.

Father—And what then?

Little daughter—You would have plenty of money.

Father—Well?

Little daughter—(Laying her hand on his shoulder and looking up his face)—Then you could pay mother that \$20 gold piece you borrowed from her, you know, father.

Father—And what then, child?

Little daughter—Then mother could pay Aunt Sarah the \$10 she owes her.

Father—Aye, indeed; and when then?

Little daughter—And Aunt Sarah would pay Sister Jane the \$1 she promised to give her New Year's, but didn't because she didn't have any cotton—and money, I mean, father.

Father—Well, and what else? (He lays down the newspaper and looks at her cautiously, with a half smile.)

Little daughter—Sister Jane would pay brother John his fifty cents back, and he said when he got it he would give me the half dime he owes me, and two dimes to buy marbles; and that is what I want the river to rise for, and the big boats to run! And I owe nurse the other dime, and I must pay my debts!

Pa looked at ma. "There it is," he said. "We are all, big and little, like a row of bricks. Touch one, and away we all go, even down to our little Carrie here. She has, as a child, as great an interest in the rise of the river as I have. We are all, old and young; waiting for money to buy marbles."

A good lesson for debtor and creditor too, and well enforced.—New Orleans Christian Advocate.

A HORSE WITH A LONG MEMORY.

Many years ago Mr. Abram Dodge, of the town of Ipswich, Mass., owned a beautiful horse which was the pet of the family. He was admired by all who knew his playfulness and good qualifications. In the summer it was Mr. Dodge's habit occasionally to have a frolic with his horse in his barn-yard, then let him out alone, and he would go to the river, which was about one-third of a mile distant, where he could bathe, then go to a common and roll on the grass, then with the freedom of air start for home. His stable was renovated for him while he was gone, and his breakfast put in his crib. If he met his master he would show some coltish pranks, bound for the stable, pull out the wooden pin that fastened the door with his teeth, and rush to the manger where he expected to find his food. One night the horse was stolen from the stable. At the expiration of sixteen years Mr. Dodge was at the tavern when a man drove a horse up to the door. Mr. Dodge at once recognized his horse, and he told the driver the reason for believing it to be his; the man told of whom he bought the horse, and said that he had owned him for several years. Mr. Dodge claimed his horse and it was finally agreed that if the horse would, on being taken to his old stable, go through the habit of bathing, rolling on the grass, and pulling the pin from the stable-door as above described, Mr. Dodge should have him. When this horse was let out into the old yard he reviewed the premises for a moment, then started for his old bath-tub, then for his green towel on the common, then to his stable, pulled the wooden pin, won for himself a good meal, and his old master his favorite horse. These facts are vouched for by reliable old residents of the beautiful picturesque old town, and show conclusively the long memory of our noblest animal.—Lowell Courier.

The London Daily News says: "It is difficult to convert a nation which has been drinking deeply for more than a thousand years,—for the Saxons were mighty pot-pots, and all the Northern tribes have been drunken from the remotest antiquity,—to habits of strict sobriety."

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience should be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, which, if properly applied, might remove the cause.

HOSPITALITY.

One day Tommy rushed into the kitchen crying out, "Mother, mother, there is an old woman down in the road sitting on a log; shall I set Pompey on her?"

"Set Pompey on her!" said his sister, "what for?"

"O, because," answered Tommy, looking a little ashamed, "because—perhaps she is a thief."

"Go out, Esther, and see—if the poor woman wants any thing. Perhaps she's tired with a hard day's travel among the mountains," said the mother. Esther ran down the green, and peeping through the gate saw the woman sitting under the shade of the old oak tree.

"Should you like any thing?" asked Esther.

"Thank you," said the old woman; "I should be very thankful for a drink of water."

Esther scampered back to the house, and soon procured some cold water from the well, and hastened with it to the poor traveller.

"I thank you," said she after drinking. "It tastes very good. Do you know what the Lord Jesus once said about a cup of cold water?"

Esther was silent.

"I will tell you. He said, Whosoever shall give to one of His people a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward. May the Lord bless you, little girl, as I am sure I do."

And a happy feeling stole into the child's bosom at the old woman's words, for the blessing of the poor upon her.—Children's Friend.

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION.—Rev. D. H. Miller, D.D., late of Lowell, now pastor of the 51st Street Baptist church, New York, preached a sermon a few weeks ago in which he spoke plainly and forcibly on the attempt of Romanists to prevent Bible reading in our schools. In this attempt Catholics had, he said, aimed a blow at his religion. This sermon was reviewed in the Catholic paper. Soon afterward he received through the mail an anonymous letter warning him against any further discussion of the subject, which of course, he disregarded, and preached another sermon on the same subject, which probably deepened the enmity of Papists against him. Such freedom of speech was too much, and the offender must be destroyed. Accordingly last Sunday evening, as his study in the church was lighted, some would-be assassin made an attempt upon his life with a pistol. Two bullets were fired through the window, but providentially he escaped. The bullets were found, and the line of their striking and their holes through the window indicates that they were fired from the window of an adjacent tenement house.

This is an exhibition of the old spirit of Rome which still lives, and which opposition to her anti-Christian spirit and usurpations, is sure to evoke.

Pere Hyacinthe accompanied by his wife, has lately made a tour in Holland, at the invitation of the leading Dutch Universities. On one occasion he addressed the University of Leyden, in a conference on "The Roman Theocracy and Liberty," which was attended by a great and enthusiastic assembly, including Prince Alexander and other members of the royal household.

A young English gentleman, the son of Mr. William Birch, who has laboured so earnestly and successfully as a Baptist pastor and philanthropist in Manchester, was looking on at a Roman Catholic procession, at St. Aubin, near Elbeuf, when he had his hat knocked off by the mayor of the commune, because he did not make obeisance to the "Holy Sacrament." The case has caused intense excitement, the Protestants of the place wishing to prosecute the mayor. Mr. Birch is a pupil of M. Monchatre, the Protestant pastor of St. Aubin, and is highly spoken of. He was on his way to the railway-station when the procession crossed his path, and all he did was to remain motionless until it should pass.

A man's wealth depends more on his wife than his income. Some women will cause their husbands to become rich on five hundred a year; others can scarcely keep out of jail on five hundred. If married men are poor, in nine cases out of ten it is their wives' fault.

The application of soluble manures in a liquid form is better and more efficient than their application in a dry state.