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Jesus slept.

But when sudden grief was rending
Human hearts in sorrow bending;
When he saw the sisters weeping
Where the brother's form was sleeping,
"Jesus wept."
—Selected.

The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

First Quarter-Lesson IV.—Jan. 27.
FORGIVENESS AND HEALING.—Mark 2:1-12.
GOLDEN TEXT.—Who forgiveth all things iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.—Ps. 103:3.

PREACHING IN CAPERNAUM.—Vers. 1, 2. *And again.* At the close of his tour in Galilee, described in last lesson. He entered into Capernaum: which was his headquarters for more than a year and a half. After some days. Some days after the healing of the leper, and when the excitement had quieted. It was noted that he was in the house. Most commentators think his home was at Peter's house. Jesus had no home of his own, but he blessed with his presence the homes of some of his beloved disciples. We can have Jesus in our hearts and homes. *And straightway many were gathered together.* The fame of Jesus had spread, and among the numbers gathered we find "Pharisees and doctors of the law, out of every town of Galilee and Judea, and Jerusalem." *Inasmuch that there was no room to receive them.* Eastern dwellings of the better sort appear to have been built around a four-sided court, an interior space like a private yard enclosed. Into this area a passage from the street led by an opening through one side of the house. The place where Jesus would be stationed, would be the great inner court, itself a common room of the house, but surrounded on three sides by the other, smaller rooms. The roof is flat. *And he preached the word.* The Saviour sat talking with the people.

A MAN WITH THE PALSIE BROUGHT TO JESUS.—Vers. 3, 4. *And they come unto him.* A number of persons accompanied the sick man. *Bringing one sick of the palsy.* Palsy is a contraction of the word paralysis. *And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press:* crowd which filled the room, the court, and the street. *They uncovered the roof where he was.* They could reach the roof by means of outside stairs common in Eastern houses. *And when they had broken it up, they let down the bed.* A thin mattress, or a well-wadded quilt.

JESUS FORGIVES THE SICK MAN'S SINS.—Vers. 5-7. *When Jesus saw their faith:* that is, the faith of the bearers and the paralytic. *Son, thy sins be forgiven thee:* rather are forgiven. Matthew adds after son, "be of good cheer." Be encouraged; take heart. It is not at all necessary to imagine that the palsy was the direct result of any particular sins of this man; but his sickness had awakened his conscience and made him see his guilty condition. Hence his greatest need was forgiveness; and Jesus grants the greater blessing first.

Forgiveness of sins. The first great need of each human being is the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness is not merely the taking away of the punishment of sin, but it is restoration to the family of God, to his favor. Forgiveness includes the washing away of sin. It will be remembered no more. *But there were certain of the scribes.* The scribes, or rabbis, were the leaders of the nation, the theologians, the legislators, the politicians of Israel. They had been listening to the discourses of Jesus. *Reasoning.* They held a dialogue with themselves. But the Lord saw the reasonings of the scribes, just as he had seen the faith of the bearers. *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies?* The blasphemy consisted in forgiving sins, which is a prerogative of God alone. It was, therefore, in their eyes, assuming to be God. *Who can forgive sins but God only?* Sins are against God, and therefore only God can forgive them. The reasoning of the scribes was right: "only God can forgive sins." Jesus, forgiving sin, either blasphemed or was God.

JESUS PROVES HIS POWER TO FORGIVE BY HIS POWER TO HEAL.—Vers. 8-12. *And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit:* by his divine insight. *Whether it is easier to say, etc.* But that ye may know, that the Son of man hath power: authority to forgive sins, and the power which such authority carries with it. *Power on earth to forgive sins.* That authority to forgive sins is actually present, to be exercised on earth, by me, the Christ of God in humanity. *Arise, and take up thy bed.* Here was a test of the man's faith, as well as of Jesus' power. Nothing would have been reputed unless the man had believed. *And immediately he arose;* the cure

was complete at once. *Took up the bed.* Many an Eastern servant sleeps at his master's door, on such a bed, bringing it with him at night and taking it away in the morning. It is scarcely more than carrying a mat to sit or lie on. *Inasmuch that they were all amazed.* The miracle awakened a religious awe, such as men ever feel in the presence of a great and mysterious power. Here was one who could read their hearts. Here was one also who had unlimited power. But they also saw the goodness of God; his forgiving love; his readiness to help. *And glorified God.* They ascribed the honor and glory to God.

PRACTICAL HINTS.
It is a great blessing to have Jesus in our home, with all his sanctifying influences, his teaching, and his marvellous works.

Where Jesus is, living, loved, working, teaching; thither crowds will be attracted. No worldly attraction will draw so strongly to church and Sunday-school as the preaching and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Sin is like paralysis, sometimes stupifying the conscience and hardening the feelings, sometimes weakening the will, and deadening the soul.

The only hope of cure is in going to Jesus.

Most persons who come to Christ are brought to him by human instrumentality.

There are cases which will need the aid of a band of workers before they will be fully saved,—a wife, a daughter, a friend, a Sabbath-school teacher, a pastor.

What a blessed influence the afflicted exert in the world, refining men's feelings, drawing out their kindness, eliciting help.

Everything must go to pieces which stands between the soul and God. When four true hearts are set upon the spiritual good of a sinner, their holy hunger will break through stone walls or house roofs.

United faith is a great power. Christ forgives and saves only on condition of faith.

The root of spiritual paralysis generally lies in unforgiveness sin.

Note that each one gets what he sows after,—the sick man obtains forgiveness and health; the four gain the blessing they sought for their neighbor; the critics and fault-finders see the faults which they came to find.

Note the wickedness of hasty and superficial judgment of others' conduct.

Christ knows our inmost thoughts and motives.

Christ proves that he forgives sins, by the results that follow in renewed lives.

We prove our faith by acting in accordance with it.

Soap vs. Law.
A Missouri constable rode out to a farm near St. Joe, armed with a subpoena for a woman who was wanted as a witness in a case in court. He found her in her back yard, busily engaged in stirring a boiling, bubbling mass in a large black kettle. He started his business, and she said:

"I can't go to-day."
"But you must."
"What's the hurry?"

"Why, court's in session, and the case is now on trial. They want you by noon."
"Well, I ain't going. You think I'm going off and leave this hull kettle o' soft soap to spile, just to please your old court? No sirree!"

"Why my dear madam, you must. You really don't seem to understand."
"I understand that I've got a big kettle o' splendid soap grease on the fire, and it'll make this sticky soap if it ain't finished to-day. You go back and tell the judge so."
"You'll be fined for—"

"Pooh! I'd like to see the Missouri jury that'd fine a woman for not leavin' her soap bilin' when it was at a critical pint, as one might say. Tell the judge I'll come to-morrow, if we don't batcher our peeps then; an' if we do, I'll come some day next week."
"But I tell you that won't do. You must come now."
"Lookee, young man, you think I'm a fool? I reckon you never made any soap, did you? If you had, you'd know that—"

"What does the judge care about your soap?"
"Well, what do I care 'bout the judge, if it comes to that! Law's law and soap's soap. Let the judge tend to his law, an' I'll tend to my soap. The good book says there's a time for everything, an' this is my time for a bar'l o' soft soap."
"Well, madam, if you want to be fined for contempt of court, all right. You will be fined sure as—"

"Bah! I know all 'bout the law, an' there ain't anything in it, nor in the Constitution of the United States, nor in the Declaration of Independence, nor in nothin' else, that s'ys a woman's got to leave a kettle o' half-cooked soap, and go off to court when she ain't a mind o' it. I guess I know a little law myself."—*Tid-Bits.*

Toughening Boys.

Prince Albert's father was of opinion that one of the most important things in education is to teach children to bear pain with composure. He never inflicted pain upon his sons, but if they suffered from tooth-ache, or any other bodily inconvenience, he would not allow them to complain or cry out. They were expected to seek the proper remedy, but, in the meantime, bear it in silence; that is, without inflicting pain upon others.

Prince Albert followed this system in bringing up his own children, and his son, the Prince of Wales, acted upon it also. A guest at Sandringham was much surprised when one of the Prince of Wales's children fell upon an oaken floor with great violence, to see him get up, rub himself a little, and limp away without assistance or sympathy from any one, though both the child's parents were present.

The guest was informed that this was the rule of the house, the idea being to accustom the children to endure pain and inconvenience, of which princesses have an ample share. There is, in truth, no profession in Europe more arduous and exacting than that of prince.

But we all have to bear an immense amount of pain. We all have to do many things that we do not want to do, and to abstain from doing many things we very much want to do. This is the human lot, and there is no possibility of avoiding it. No people suffer so much as those who rebel against this law of our being, and no people suffer so little as those who cheerfully accept it.

The hardening system can be carried too far, but surely it is an essential part of training to acquire the power to endure inevitable pains with some resolution and dignity.

We heard the other day of a family of seven persons, no two of whom could take the same kind of drink at breakfast. One had to have coffee; one must have green tea; another would be wretched without black tea; another knew no joy in life until she had her chocolate; another compromised upon cocoa; the sixth could only drink milk, and the seventh water. These people had cultivated and indulged their preferences until they really thought their special beverage essential to the prolongation of their lives.

Many mothers sedulously nourish such fancies, and soften their darlings by bestowing torrents of sympathy upon every bruise and bump. Boys soon acquire the habit of exaggerating their mishaps, and learn how to get the dainties they delight in by pretending to loathe the food that is good for them.

"Don't give that puppy any meat," says the dog-doctor. "But he won't eat anything else," replies the boy.

"Then," rejoins the healer of dogs, "leave his meal with him till he does eat it."

As it is with dogs, so it is with boys. Foolish fancies depart from boys when they are so happy as to have a keen appetite, and the boy who knows that no one will pick him up and kiss him will get up himself and rub his own head if it is bruised.

Be a Man.
Not of the "dude" species.
Not of the kind that stands on the street corners.
Not the kind that prides himself on being a "masher."
Not the kind that sneers at the personal purity.
Not of the kind that thinks Christians a mild sort of fools.
Not the kind that owes the tailor, iveryman, and everybody else.
Not the kind that is a connoisseur of whiskey.
Not of the "yes, yes," kind.
Not of the kind that calls mother "old woman" and father "old man."
Not of the ignorant infidel brood.
Not of the coward kind.
Not of the iceberg variety.
Not of the "I can't" tribe.
Not the kind that is better acquainted with pool than the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy.
Not of the evading, scuffling, shuffling-through-life kind "having no hope, and without God in the world."

William Jones, of Carnarvon, when asked by Dr. Bunting what books he had read, replied, "I have read the Bible." "But," said Dr. Bunting, "have you read nothing else?" "Oh, yes," he said, "the Bible dictionary," meaning the concordance. He had read the Bible and concordance, and I presume he knew them from cover to cover. But what a preacher this man was! His sermons glowed with poetic imagery, kindled at the altar of prayer, and the learned and ignorant crowded to hear him by thousands.—*Bible Society Record.*

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