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The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Second Quarter Lesson X June 5 '98.

JESUS CONDEMNED.—Matthew 27: 11-26.

Read Matthew 27: 1-34; John 18: 28-40.

Commit Verses 21-24.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.—I. Tim. 1: 15.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—The arrest was about one o'clock, Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30.

The trial before the high priest, from about two to five o'clock.

The trial before Pilate, from half past five till seven or eight o'clock.

Place.—The Palace of Caiaphas and the judgment hall of Pilate, probably in the tower of Antonia, just outside of the northwest corner of the temple area, in Jerusalem.

Rulers.—Tiberius Caesar, emperor of Rome (17th year); Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea (5th); Herod Antipas, of Galilee (34th); Caiaphas, high priest.

From the upper room in the city, where we saw Jesus instituting The Lord's Supper, they all went out of Jerusalem to a garden upon the lower slopes of Olivet, where took place the sorrowful scene of Gethsemane. At this time about one o'clock Friday morning, Judas came leading the chief priests and the Roman soldiers. He betrayed his Master with a kiss.

THE STORY OF THE TRIAL.—From a little after one o'clock Friday morning till sunrise, about half-past five, Jesus was enduring an unjust trial before the Jewish authorities.

The house of Caiaphas was probably in the southwestern part of the city. Here Christ was brought first for a preliminary examination before the high priests Annas and Caiaphas. Here probably was also the first gathering of the Sanhedrim and the trials described in Matt. 26: 59-66.

THE DENIALS OF PETER.—During this trial Peter and John were in the court of the palace. Peter, beset and worried by a crowd of menials amid unknown dangers, thrice denied his Master. Jesus' look of reproach pierced his conscience, and he went out and wept bitterly.

Observe (1) the depth and intensity of Peter's repentance. (2) Contrast it with the false repentance of Judas. (3) After a season of bitter sorrow, Peter was pardoned and restored. (4) Peter was permanently changed for the better. (5) The sincerity of his repentance was proved by a life of devoted service.

THE HALL OF THE SANHEDRIM was probably situated outside of the temple area, near the south end of its western wall. Here the regular meeting of the Sanhedrim was assembled, and Jesus was brought there from the palace of Caiaphas after daylight for condemnation; for it was illegal to try any person before this court during the night.

THE COURT consisted of the Jewish Sanhedrim, which was composed of seventy members and a president; chief priests, that is, the heads of twenty-four priestly classes; scribes, that is, rabbis learned in the literature of the church; and elders, who were chosen from amongst the most influential of the laity. This was the highest court of the Jews.

THE SENTENCE was pronounced, not from anything the witnesses brought forward, but from Jesus' own confession that he was the Messiah. This they construed as blasphemy.

STORY OF THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE.—The Sanhedrim had adjudged Jesus worthy of death, but they had no power to put it into execution. Hence they took him to Pilate's hall of justice that he might pronounce sentence.

THE CHARGE.—The accusation of blasphemy would be of no account in Pilate's courts, and hence it was suppressed. Instead of this, the Jews charged Jesus with treason. (1) Sedition, exciting tumults and revolt against Rome; (2) Rebellion, refusing to pay tribute; and (3) Open treason in claiming to be king.

The governor, having listened to the accusation, went within the hall to question Jesus. Asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? as the Jews accuse you of claiming to be. Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. This was a strong assertion that he was the King of the Jews.

Pilate had another conference with the Jewish leaders. He publicly declares the innocence of Jesus. There are no grounds for condemning him, and yet he fears to offend the Jews. A battle is raging with Pilate. Accused of the chief priests. He answered nothing. Reply would have no effect upon those who had determined to kill him. The governor marvelled greatly. Jesus had spoken freely to him when alone; why should he refuse to answer now? Jesus, conscious of his divine power, maintains a calm and impressive silence.

Pilate sent Jesus to Herod in order to escape a decision against Jesus (Luke 23: 5-12). Jesus was mocked by Herod and his soldiers, and sent back to Pilate in the mockery of gorgeous robes. Herod seemed to look upon the claims of Jesus as the visions of a fanatic.

Pilate sought to save Jesus by a custom of release. At that feast. The Passover. Went to release unto him people a prisoner. A fitting accompaniment to a feast that celebrated the redemption of the nation from slavery. Whom they would. The choice lay with them. A notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Barabbas was a ringleader in one of those outbreaks against the Roman domination which fast succeeded one another in the latter days of the Jewish commonwealth. He probably had attractive and popular qualities; but he probably had committed robbery and murder under the name of patriotism. Barabbas, or Jesus. Pilate hoped to get the influence of the people on his side against the rulers, for he knew that for envy they (the rulers) had delivered him. Pilate hoped that the people would demand the release of one who had done so much for them. But the rulers stirred up the people, the fanatical crowd, and they shouted, "Not this man." Thus this plan of Pilate failed. There was no way out but by a simple act of justice. But this would cost. When he was set. During the trial. His wife sent unto him, etc. I have suffered many things this day in a dream. Which was to her a vision, to deter Pilate from this great crime.

What shall I do then with Jesus? Pilate asked this question where he had no right to. He should have asked it of his conscience, of right, not of an excited mob. So men now ask questions about duty.

This is a question every person must answer. "What shall I do with Jesus?" (1) Every person must do something with Jesus—he must accept or reject him. (2) Some try to escape this decision: by refusing to decide, but that is deciding against him; by laying the blame on others, on circumstances, on temptations. Rejecting Christ is the great sin of the world. There will come a time when the question will be,—"What shall I do without Jesus?"

Pilate, to avoid a tumult, took water, and washed his hands before the multitude. By this symbol, disowning all responsibility, as if his words could cleanse his soul from guilt, as the water washed his hands. His blood be on us, and on our children. And it was upon them. Many of the noblest of the citizens of Jerusalem, some of those who cried "Crucify him!" and thousands of their children shared in the horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem (forty years later, A. D. 70). And this was not from revenge. It was in spite of all that love could do. The Jews rejected their king, and lost their kingdom, and it never will be recovered till they acknowledge Jesus. Judas died by his own hand. Pilate was soon recalled, degraded, banished to Gaul, where he committed suicide. Herod died in infamy and exile; Caiaphas was deposed the next year. When he had scourged. While the Jews were making their choice, Pilate had Jesus scourged with the terrible Roman flagellum, whose lashes were loaded with pieces of lead, spikes, bones. Perhaps this was done to touch the hearts of the people. The soldiers again mocked Jesus, dressing him up in a scarlet cloak, and putting a crown of thorns on his head. Pilate led Jesus out before the rulers, and said, "Behold, the man!" Thinking that perhaps this would suffice for them.

JESUS DELIVERED UP TO BE CRUCIFIED. The trial is over. Pilate had failed. His history is a monument of warning to all who are tempted to yield to evil influences, and to sin against God and man and their own consciences.

Alcohol in Cooking.

We wonder if we are to answer for all sins of thoughtlessness; if so, a large number of Christian people will find a long score against them for tempting people who are trying to reform, or for creating an appetite for strong drink by using alcoholic liquors in their cooking.

Wine sauces, brandy puddings, and cider-flavored mince pies have been the stumbling-block over which many a man, trying to reform, has fallen.

A young man who had been a hard drinker, and had been taken to his palatial home dead drunk many a time, desired to reform and make something of his life. He signed the pledge and fought bravely to keep it.

One day he said to a friend, "I do not think I can remain at home and keep my pledge."

His friend asked why, and he replied: "I can make myself go past saloons; I can remain away from the club; but I must go to the dinner-table at home, and there often

I find wine sauces; and the very smell of them stirs up my old appetite so that it seems as if I would go wild."

The mother was told her son's trials, and said, "Oh, it's all nonsense; a little wine or brandy in cooking can't hurt any one; it's just an excuse."

We know other men who have given up strong drink, who never dare taste of a piece of mince pie or any kind of pudding away from home, for fear they might find some flavor of strong drink that would make it a hard fight for them to keep the pledge.

And yet women, when their attention is called to these facts, will say, "Men have no business to be so weak" and go on cooking with the recipes themselves, and keep recommending them to their neighbors, forgetting what the Bible says about making one of these little ones to offend.

If some voice or pen could only arouse these thoughtless women, and get them to banish wine, brandy, and cider from their pantries, it would not only be a blessing to the men who are trying to reform, but would save so many others from forming an appetite for strong drink at their mothers' tables.—Golden Center.

Object Teaching.

The following, from The Christian Herald, is an excellent illustration of object teaching. It may also contain a hint to the worker in the country as to how to begin or how to continue a Sunday school where circumstances seem to be adverse:

"I met a young man who lives in the neighborhood of a little blacksmith shop on the roadside. He said to me, 'Our folks wish me to ask you to come over there as soon as you can and show 'em how to carry on a Sunday-school—they never had one with tak'n' 'bout.'"

"An appointment was made, and the following Sunday found me at the wayside blacksmith shop. Here I found about forty lively-looking young people, all destitute of books, except two girls who came, bringing each a hymn book. In one corner of the shop, an old rusty anvil and a broken hammer lay on a block, and these utensils served a good purpose.

"Can any of you boys and girls tell me what it takes to organize a blacksmith shop?" I asked with book on the anvil.

"Three hands went up, one boy said: 'Some bellows to blow the fire.'"

"Another said: 'A pair of tongs and some horse shoe nails, a tub of water and a grime-stone.'"

"All very well so far," said I. "And now there is something it must have in order to run the business. Who'll tell me right, quick?"

"Here a little girl got in the first answer. 'I kin tell ye,' she said. 'Somebody to hit the hot iron.'"

"I said, 'Now, let us see if we can start up a Sunday-school on the same plan. How many of you will do some "blowing" for the school, and get up a good hot interest in it?'"

"A dozen hands went up. Then some agreed to act as 'tongs,' 'chain-links,' 'bands,' and 'bolts,' and other useful parts, and when we got the subject well heated the question was asked, 'Who'll be the man to stand at the Sunday school anvil, as superintendent, and "strike" while the iron is hot?'"

"Very appropriately, indeed, the choice fell on a good workman, who knows well how to "make the sparks fly." And quite smilingly did he accept the appointment."

An Interesting Puzzle.

Spellers of all grades and ages will find the attempt to write the following from dictation an interesting puzzle. A lady who was sure she could win the Webster, unabridged, offered as a prize in case she succeeded, missed only 22 of the 99 hard words. A professor of languages, who prided himself on his knowledge of orthography, missed 28. It was possible that some type may put them all up correctly. Let us see if some of our readers can detect the errors. Webster is the standard:

The most skillful gauger I ever knew was a maligned cobbler armed, with a poniard, who drove a pedler's wagon, using a mule-stalk as an instrument of coercion, to tyrannize over his pony, shod with calks. He was a German Saddle, and had a phthisical catarrh, diphtheria, and the bilious, intermittent erysipelas. A certain sibyl, with the sobriquet of "Gypsy," went into ecstasies of cackling at seeing him measure a bushel of peas, and separate saccharine tomatoes from a heap of peeled potatoes without dyeing or singeing the ignitable queue, which he wore, or becoming paralyzed with a hemorrhage. Lifting her eyes to the ceiling of the cupola of the capitol, to conceal her unparalleled embarrassment, making a rough courtesy, and not

harassing him with mystifying, rarefying, and stupefying innuendoes, she gave him a couch, a bouquet of lilies, mignonette, and fuchsias, a treatise on mnemonics, a copy of the Apocrypha in hieroglyphics, daguerrotypes of Mendelssohn and Kosciuszko, a kaleidoscope, a dram phial of ipecacuanha, a teaspoonful of naphtha for delectable purposes, a ferule, clarinet, some licorice, a surcingle, a carnelian of symmetrical proportions, a chronometer with movable balance-wheel, a box of dominoes and a catechism. The gauger, who was also a trafficking rectifier, and a parishioner of mine, preferred a woolen surcoat (his choice was refe able to a vacillating occasionally-occurring idiosyncrasy), and wofully uttered this apothegm: "Life is checkerred; but schism, apostasy, heresy, and villainy shall be punished. The sibyl, apologizingly answered: There is ratably an allegeable difference between a conforable ellipsis and tri-syllabic diacresis."

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Costums of Japan.

Japan is a queer country; it is a land of contradictions and inversions. We prefer sweet fruit, they sour; they make sauce-pans of paper; we weep at misfortunes, they laugh; we think white teeth beautiful, Japanese ladies varnish their teeth black; they put on the roof of a house first and build the walls afterwards; their carpenters draw the plane towards them; their horses' shoes are of straw; their tailors, in stitching, point the needle from them; in their locks the key turns from left to right; old men in Japan fly kites and spin tops while children look on; Japanese books begin where ours end; Japanese writers use paint-brushes, not pens, and write from top to bottom, from right to left; in Japan there are no lawyers, and Japanese doctors never make any charges or send in any bills; our mourning garments are black, theirs white; their horses stand with their heads to the stable, and they mount a horse on the off side.

What are Christians put into the world for, except to do the impossible in the strength of God?—General Armstrong.

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