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THE SAVANA-SCHEU.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Second Quarter—Lesson I April 3, '98.

THE WOMAN OF CANAAN.

—Matthew 15: 21-31.

Read Matthew 15 and I Kings 17: 1-24.

Commit Verses 25-28.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Then came she, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.—MATT. 15: 25.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Early summer, A. D. 29.

Several weeks after the last lesson.

Place.—The first miracle was performed on the borders of the country of Tyre and Sidon, forty or fifty miles northwest of the Sea of Galilee; the others, in the region of Decapolis, on the southeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee (Mark 7: 31).

Jesus.—Nearly 33 years old, in the third year of his ministry.

JESUS RETIRES FROM GALILEE FOR A TIME.—V. 21. Then Jesus went thence. From Galilee, and probably Capernaum. And departed. Rather withdrew, as R. V. Into the coasts. The borders or parts of the district adjoining Galilee. Of Tyre and Sidon. Two flourishing seaports. Sidon was twenty miles north of Tyre, and Tyre about thirty-five miles from the Sea of Galilee.

The reason for this seems to have been the increasing opposition of the Jews. His disciples even murmured at his "hard saying," and many went back and walked no more with him. Then came a delegation from the Pharisees and scribes, asking questions, which he answered in such a faithful way, as gave great offense (Matt. 15: 12).

"The Jews sought to kill him." This led Jesus to avoid an open conflict, for his time had not yet come.

(2) The journeys away from the crowds that were pressing him enabled him to instruct his disciples privately, and prepare them for his death and the work that would fall upon them. He avoided public work.

THE AFFLICTED DAUGHTER.—V. 22. And behold, a woman of Canaan. A Syro-Phoenician that is one belonging to "that part of Phoenicia which belonged to Syria. Canaan was the older title of the country. Cried unto him. Jesus had gone into a house; the woman in her great anxiety had found him. She had doubtless heard of his miracles of healing. Have mercy on me. For her daughter's trouble was her own. O Lord, thou Son of David. From living in the neighborhood of the Jews, she was familiar with their Messianic expectations, and with the Messiah's title. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil: or demon. Mark calls it "an unclean spirit," because it produce unclean-ness of body and soul.

THE MOTHER'S VICTORIOUS FAITH.—Vs. 23-28. But he answered her not a word. He appeared to treat her with neglect and indifference. Various reasons are given for this silence. (1) To test and deepen the woman's faith. (2) It seems to us that this was not the reason so much as that he might show his disciples and all succeeding centuries what a dauntless faith this woman had. Not for her sake, but for ours, she was put off for awhile.

The mother overcame by pressing her petition, like the woman before her, until she was heard. They interceded for her, but partly because it was a trial to them to have her crying after them. For she crept after us. This touched their sympathies, and would, also, be likely to attract attention and further interrupt their quiet with Jesus.

But he answered, speaking to the disciples. The mother may have overheard it. I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This was his present work, and till his death, it was the best means for finally reaching the Gentiles.

Godet thinks that the difficulty was overcome by that flexibility in God's plans which gives liberty to needful action without really disturbing the divine plan; and that this was a most useful lesson for the disciples in their future upbuilding of the church.

Then came she and worshipped him. By prostrating herself before him in Oriental fashion. But he answered, with a comparison probably not unfamiliar to her as expressing the feelings of the Jews toward the Gentiles. It is not meet. Fitting, proper, to take (to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs. "The children" are the Jews; the "dogs" are the Gentiles. There was some reason at the base of the designation. The heathens around were, in the mass, exceedingly unclean and ferocious. And (but) she said. Truth Lord. The proverb is true; but out of its very truth she brings an argument for the granting of her request. Yet. It is not in spite of, but because of the truth of the proverb, that she argues for help. The dogs eat of the crumbs,

which fall from their master's table.

It was the custom during the meal for the guests after thrusting their hands into the common dish to wipe them on the soft white part of the bread, which, having thus used, they threw to the dogs. So let me have the crumbs, what is left over after you have done all you plan for the Jews. It will not take anything away from them if you help me. O woman, great is thy faith.

(1) Her faith was great in its love, being for her daughter. (2) It was great in its earnestness. (3) It was great in its foundations, the power and love of the Messiah, and his past good deeds to others. (4) It was great in its humility, conquering self. (5) It was great in overcoming obstacles. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. As she found on her return (Mark 7: 30); for she acted upon her faith and went home.

SUGGESTIONS. 1. The individual soul and the world are grievously vexed with the evils of sin, lust, intemperance, selfishness, dishonesty, unkindness.

2. Satan and his kingdom are ever working ill to man, ruining body and soul, bringing poverty, wretchedness, disease, and death.

3. But Christ and his kingdom are ever undoing the works of the devil.

4. God is often silent for a time, and seems not to hear our prayers, but he is only preparing us for larger and better answers.

5. Sin in the heart is to be overcome by a faith like this woman's. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" from sin and its consequences.

The great evils of the world will be cast out through the same faith; a faith in Jesus Christ as the only power that can save; a persevering faith that takes no account of difficulties; an humble faith that cares more for the cause than for itself; a faith that has learned to pray, to labor, and to wait.

CHRIST THE HEALER AND HELPER OF MAN.—Vs. 29-31. One example of Christ's work having been given in detail a general picture is presented, so that we may see more clearly his character and what he came to do. Jesus departed. . . . thence. Going north through the territory of Sidon, then eastward through Northern Galilee, across the upper Jordan, and down on the east side of the Sea of Galilee, to the part of Decapolis (the ten cities) bordering on that lake. He was still out of Herod's territory. He was in the vicinity of Gadara, one of the ten cities. And went up in to a (the) mountain. The mountain range running along east of the lake. And sat down. The usual posture of a teacher. And great multitudes came. Attracted by his teaching and his healing power. And cast them down. Indicating their eagerness and haste. And he healed them. . . . The multitude wondered. Truly, this is the Messianic conquest and reign: and they glorified the God of Israel.

PRACTICAL HINTS.

A considerable portion of the Gospels is occupied with accounts of miracles.

A miracle is the personal intervention of God. It is not the "breaking of the laws of nature," nor "the suspension of the laws of nature," nor any change in the laws of nature, but simply God's doing with his infinite power the same quality of action, though vastly greater in degree, that we do every hour when we exert our personal will amid the forces of nature. I lift up a book. The act is a new personal force, which marks the power of my will. It breaks no law of nature, suspends none. It is the same when God, by his infinite power, lifts up a mountain or raises the dead. It is his personal will touching nature and showing that God himself is there.

If there is a personal God, it is as natural that he should work a miracle, for sufficient reasons, as it is that the owner of a factory should interfere to save a child who is caught in the machinery. If Jesus was the Son of God, the power to work miracles was a natural accompaniment.

The miracles are "signs" and object lessons of the gospel. They express the love of God, his desire to comfort and save men, and express it in language which all men can understand. Christ came to undo the evil which Satan had done, to counteract all the works of the devil. The miracles were proofs of his power as well as of his love.

The method of Christ should be the method of the church in spreading the gospel. Gospel deeds of love must always accompany gospel truths.

A Sermon for the Boys.

The old adage, that "fools rush in and win where wise men fear to venture," is not the rule, but the exception. The rule is that cautious, well planned procedure wins, while reckless ventures come to grief, and boys will do well to recog-

nize this fact. Even the lower orders of the animal kingdom learn to proceed against their enemies with caution any strategy. This fact is demonstrated by the following: A mountaineer farmer's boy, whom we will call "Cousin Martin," had two dogs—a rather small, old one and a large, clumsy, overgrown "pup." The boy's father kept a herd of a dozen or more swine, of the regular mountain-ranger breed. They could run fast, jump high, and "root" deep. They were much given to breaking through fences and getting into mischief.

One day the farmer noticed the hogs in the meadow, and he said, "Mart, go call the dogs and drive the hogs out of the meadow."

"Mart," went, "sicked" the dogs, and the hogs ran into the farthest corner of the field, and then faced about for a fight, with backs and bristles erect. The old dog, having far outrun the pup, knew too well from past experience that it was not safe to rush in upon the now ferocious swine. Hence he kept at a safe distance, running back and forth from side to side, barking savagely. But the inexperienced pup, coming up on a heavy, clumsy run, flung himself right in among the savage hogs. Did he "win"?

Not by a long sight. The swine instantly pounced upon him, downed him, unmercifully bit him; and, amid his unearthly howls, "Mart" rushed in and rescued him, or he would have been literally eaten up.

And Cousin Martin, when telling the writer of the event afterward, gave it as his deliberate opinion that his pup learned more dog sense there in five minutes than he had learned in all his life before; for after that he always followed: the example of the old dog when "sicked" on the hogs.

Now, the difference between these two dogs in their method of attacking the hogs serves well to illustrate the difference in the procedure of boys. One class, like the old dog, proceed with caution, careful reckoning, and planning in all their under-takings; and they succeed. The other class, like the pup, have no special object in view; but when some opportunity for a venture offers, they rush in, pell-mell, without careful deliberation, and in nine cases out of ten they fail.

Here are a dozen country boys, aged from twelve to fifteen years. They all live in the same neighborhood and go to the same district school. The summer and fall work is done; school has just commenced, and they are all there. Most of them have no special object in view. They are at school because it is time to be there. They prepare their lessons and recite them in a mechanical way; but their minds are set on "having a good time."

But there are two boys intent on mastering their lessons. They are not any brighter than the other boys; but they are studious and thoughtful. After twenty years where do you find those boys? The thoughtless ones, who were intent only on having a good time, are down in the scale,—"hewers of wood and drawers of water."—working hard, and barely earning enough to support themselves and those dependent on them. Where are the two studious ones? One is a master mechanic, at the head of a great factory, still thoughtful, diligent, and painstaking, but receiving a salary of \$2,500 a year. The other is high up in the legal profession, has a good income, and is rapidly rising higher.

Now why this difference? Because these two began early to exercise the caution, thoughtfulness, and discretion represented by the old dog, while the others continued reckless and thoughtless, like the young pup. It is only in very rare instances that a man rises to prominence, and is able to hold himself there, by accident. The rule is that the thoughtful, industrious, persevering, who do not yield to, but surmount, difficulties and discouragements, are the men who come to the front, and are able to stay there.

Now boys, which will you imitate—the wise, discreet, strategic old dog, or the clumsy, reckless young pup? True, he became dog-wise after his terrible experience with the hogs, but at what a risk and at what a cost to him. Will you go on recklessly, and be kicked, and cuffed, and rolled about by a savage, grasping world, or will you begin now to exercise prudence, discretion, diligence, and forethought, and thereby avoid the pitfalls and miseries that await the reckless, indiscreet, lazy, and wicked? It is for you to say.—The Telescope.

Drank Like a Beast.

The following story of the late Doctor Kidd, of Aberdeen, and his beadle is told in the "Humor of the Scot":

The kirk officer, it would appear, was a victim to the national vice. He had often been censured, as often forgiven, and yet again would fall into his old ways.

One day the worthy Doctor was confronted by Jeems so intoxicated that all his customary caution and sleek humility had flown. In a reckless mood he challenged the burly old Doctor to come and drink with him. Recognizing the futility of trying to reason with a man in such a state, Doctor Kidd replied: "O, ay, Jeems, I'll come wi' ye, an' I'll drink like a beast, to please ye."

"Hooray!" said the beadle. "Come along!"

So they entered the inn, this strangely assorted couple, the mark of observation to many a curious eye. Jeems started to order a "mutchkin," but the reverend Doctor filled a glass with cold water, and quaffed that.

"Hoots!" expostulated the bacchanalian beadle. "Ye said ye wad drink like a beast, Doctor."

"Ay, Jeems, an' so I have," was the dignified reply; "for ye know a beast is wiser than a man, an' drinks only what's gude for it—an' that's water."—Selected.

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How Shall We Treat Those Who Wrong Us?

MATT. 5: 38-48.

1. Love them. Luke 6: 35.

2. Forgive them. Mark 11: 25, 26.

3. Pray for them. Acts 7: 60.

4. Have sympathy for them. Prov. 24: 17.

5. Do them good. Rom. 12: 20, 21.

6. Treat them as we would be treated. Matt. 7: 12.

How SOME PEOPLE LONG AGO TREATED THEIR ENEMIES. Joseph (Gen. 45: 5-15; 1: 19-21). Moses (Num. 12: 1-13). David (1 Sam. 24: 10-12). Samson (Judg. 15: 3-11). Esau (Gen. 33: 4-9). Shimei (2 Sam. 16: 5-8).

This world is a bad world only for those who have bad hearts.

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